

Defining my identity

[Science](#), [Anthropology](#)



Defining My Identity Anthropologists have identified various cultural and social positions which are occupied by humans and serve to shape their identities. By my being a teenager, African-American female living in a predominantly white community, my age, gender and ethnicity are great determining factors of my current social and cultural identities. Essentially, especially because of my age, I categorize myself to be in a transitional space. The main reason for placing myself in a transitional space is because I am still growing and attending college to acquire life skills with which I intend to make my life better. At 19 years of age, I believe the greater part of my life still lies ahead. I know that one day I will no longer be living under my mother's rules, and that is my motivation as to why I strive to be a better person and avoid struggling in future life. I have built my identity mainly by being determined not to be like many people I know. Some are not in school, doing drugs or serving jail terms. Others messed their lives by getting pregnant while still young. But for me, I am a responsible young adult already doing two part time jobs. Most importantly, I am a future-oriented person.

My age, gender and ethnicity often cross over each other in the determination of my identity. At 19, I have seen my age mates succumb to peer pressure, but I am not that kind of a person. The culture shock that I suffered when I joined college could easily have led me into self-destructive habits, like the drug abuse that many teenagers indulge in. Instead, I chose not to go out much, opting to stay at home when not working or in school, as well as limiting the number of friends. Despite living with my mother, I pay my own bills, feed myself buy my own clothes and take care of my own

doctor's visits. Apart from that, I also ensure that I provide food for my sister when there is no food at home. My gender means that I must be responsible since, traditionally, women are home keepers. However, as a result of my uniqueness, I want to enjoy the power of providing for myself, rather than taking up stereotyped gender roles. I want to look at gender and ethnicity differently, and more positively when I am more mature, hence the aspect of age defines me in a dynamic manner.

Inadvertently, I belong to a specific gender, race and ethnicity. It is not my wish to associate myself with any socioeconomic class because such divides only serve to magnify stereotyped differences. So long as one can be responsible enough, get an education and provide adequately for themselves, social classes should not really be divisive factors. I would assist those who genuinely lack, but those who get themselves into destructive lifestyles should not make all African-Americans look bad. My family struggles, so I also place myself in a philanthropic position because I ensure my sister goes to school despite having two elder brothers and another elder sister who would, conventionally, assume that responsibility. I acknowledge and appreciate my ethnicity, and I know I do not support stereotype perceptions, not only towards African-Americans, but also the stereotype perceptions African-Americans hold against Caucasians.