



Identity

Who are you?

Or, perhaps, more importantly...who are they? We've become comfortable living our own realities, but how often do we stop to think about how the person who sits next to us in class every day sees things? How often do we try to strike up a conversation with someone less familiar? Or when have we actually stopped to walk in someone else's shoes?

The pieces chosen for this section encourage the reader to consider life from another's point of view. These pieces are a window into social issues many face on a daily basis. Some from a research standpoint, others from personal experiences, these stories provide insights on how people judge. We're all members of a society struggling to define who we are. This section is about stereotypes, racial profiling, domestic violence, and race and gender abuse.

The contributors in this section allow readers to get a glimpse into the complexities of race and gender. In "A Black Male," readers explore the implications of what it's like to have an identity marker you cannot rid yourself of. The author, Roland Cody Jr., explains in a refreshingly honest manner the hardships of bearing the responsibilities of being black in a so-called "post-racial" society. "Scars of a Culture" explores

the hypocrisy behind Indian men worshipping traditional goddesses yet beating their wives in an analysis of the Abused Goddesses campaign. "The Invisible Cage" deals with everyday racial prejudice in the streets, schools, and public spaces in America. It opens your eyes to the injustices some people face on a daily basis. It shows us how we sometimes misjudge others with no knowledge of who they are and what they have gone through.

People say we're living in "post-racial" and "postfeminist" times, but these pieces beg to differ. With so many racial and gender issues arising today—often brought to our attention by the media—we can say that the "perfect" society where everyone is accepting of one another is just another dream waiting to become a reality.

Each in its own way, these three pieces work together to enhance our understanding of identity and the dangers of judging before knowing.

As you read these stories, you may feel uncomfortable at times, maybe even judged or misrepresented, but you may also laugh, cry, and maybe, just maybe...identify.

—Maryann Akinboyewa, Jaye Michelle Harris, and Gilmarie Perea-Ruiz