



SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY
College of Education

DIÁLOGOS VIRTUALES

A COE Lecture/Discussion Series on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & the Global in Education

Monday, March 29, 2021, 12:00 – 1:10 PM (PT)

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"Ethics, Identity, and Education: A Levinasian Perspective."

Dr. Donald S. Blumenfeld-Jones

"Identity would seem to be the garment with which one covers the nakedness of the self." --James Baldwin.

A person's identity is one of thorniest issues of our time. Our politics, our education, our daily activities are all tinged with identity questions. Baldwin says we cover our nakedness with our identities. What does he mean by this and what is this identity we fashion? We can understand identity in three dimensions. Identity is who a person sees her/himself as being in his/her many capacities and attributes. This intersects with how others assign us an identity which affects how we live in society. Thus, identity becomes a daily negotiation of the collision between our inner visions of self and society's outer visions of who we are and who we can become.

In this talk I will present Emmanuel Levinas' thinking on how each of us crafts an identity covering our nakedness (what Levinas calls our infinite possibilities), as well as how each of us has a common motivation for crafting a self, live in relation to others who are also crafting identities, and come to live in an ethical manner of responsibility and care for each other. We will also discuss implications for our education projects.



About the Speaker

Donald S. Blumenfeld-Jones, Ed.D., served as faculty in the Mary Lou College of Education at Arizona State University. His scholarly work focuses on the intersection of aesthetics, ethics, and education. He has published numerous articles, book chapters, and three books devoted to educational theory and practice: *Curriculum and the Aesthetic Life: Hermeneutics, Body, Emotion, Ethics, and Education* (2012, Peter Lang), *Ethics, Aesthetics and Education: a Levinasian Approach* (2016, Palgrave-Pivot), and *Teacher Education for the 21st Century: Creativity, Aesthetics and Ethics in Preparing Teachers for Our Future* (2017, Information Age Publishing). He is presently working on a new book (2022, Springer): *The Dialectics of Imagination and Freedom - A Curriculum Mosaic of Human Possibilities*. At Arizona State University (ASU), Blumenfeld-Jones founded and directed ARTs (Arts-Based Reflective Teaching), an elementary education teacher preparation program dedicated to aestheticizing the curriculum and making ethics central to both curriculum planning and teaching. ARTs served as the basis for his book, *Teacher Education for the 21st Century*. Blumenfeld-Jones was part of the founding team and also directed "Teaching for a Diverse Future," an ASU program focused on teacher preparation through an anthropological, multilingual, social justice, and aesthetic set of lenses.