

Dumber than a doornail essay sample



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Stereotypes are assumptions made about a group of people based on commonalities shared among that group. These assumptions normally have to do with religion, ethnicity, cultural values, and even outward appearances. One of the common reasons stereotypes exist is that it is easy to identify individuals without interacting with them. A person can identify a face and immediately categorize him or her based on information derived from upbringing, past experiences, and the media. Some labels have the capability of harming individuals who are judged based on appearances or nationality. These stereotypes can lead to the mistreatment and prejudices against a particular group of people. For example, after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, a religious group called the Sikhs have been attacked on numerous occasions because they were mislabeled as terrorists (NPR).

Stereotyping can start at a young age when children are taught to make assumptions. For example, a mother will caution her child not to talk to any strangers. This can lay a foundation for future stereotypes. The child may grow up to be a person who stereotypes and who is prejudice. The child may not know that the assumptions being made rarely apply to each member of a group. Even though there are examples of dumb blondes, many intelligent blondes do exist. Diane Sawyer is a prominent figure in the world of news. In 1984, she broke new ground as the first woman to work as a correspondent on the award-winning news magazine 60 Minutes (Bio. True Story). She also has blonde hair. This proves that stereotypes do not apply to everyone of a certain group. Some common examples of stereotypes are people who wear glasses are nerds or all Asians are very intelligent. One of the most commonly known stereotype is the dumb blonde persona. It has been

presented in film, music and even in literature. Not only is the blonde stereotype being represented in the media, but also in marketing.

There is a shampoo made by Bed Head called Dumb Blonde. The blonde's label states that the lack of intelligence is based on hair color. This leads the blonde to be depicted to rely on looks rather than intelligence to be successful in life. Many jokes are made based on the stereotype as well. An example is "What do you call a fly buzzing inside a blonde's head? A Space Invader." (Cracked.com). In the sitcom *Three's Company*, a blonde character named Chrissy is ditzy and gets a lot of attention from many groups of men. She is easy to confuse and is quick to fall for men. The media takes the blonde label and dramatizes it with the persona of Chrissy. One of the most famous blondes that seems to fit the stereotype is Paris Hilton. She has been quoted as saying many outrageous statements such as, "I don't really think, I just walk." (Brainy Quote). She is successful at exploiting the dumb blonde persona.

Another statement said by Hilton is, "I get half a million just to show up at parties. My life is, like, really, really fun." (Brainy Quote). Hilton uses her dumb blonde character in order to get farther in life. With an in depth look into Paris Hilton it may be found that she possesses more intelligence than what she portrays. It is known that she is an American heiress, socialite, television personality, fashion designer, model, actress, producer, author, and singer. Paris Hilton is a good example of the dumb blonde. She gives people the idea that all blondes are like her, when in reality, they are not.

From the sitcom *Three's Company* in 1977, to the rich and famous Hollywood

star Paris Hilton, the dumb blonde can be found almost anywhere. However, the media is taking small steps to counter represent the blonde.

In the 2001 movie *Legally Blonde*, the main character Elle Woods evolves from the stereotypical blonde to a Harvard Law graduate. In the beginning, she was the president of her sorority, had a pet Chihuahua and majored in fashion merchandising. She states, "Two weeks ago I saw Cameron Diaz at Fred Segal, and I talked her out of buying this truly heinous angora sweater. Whoever said orange was the new pink was seriously disturbed!" (*Legally Blonde*). She then applied to Harvard Law School with an application video that showed her in a bikini with her and her friends. Surprisingly, she was immediately accepted and later graduated with high honors. In *Legally Blonde*, Elle displays her intelligence by solving a murder in an unconventional way. This movie does show the classic stereotypes of blondes in the beginning but then turns it around to make the blonde an intelligent honors student who goes on to be a successful attorney.

Stereotypes can be stopped by preventing assumptions or getting to know someone instead of pre-judging them. It should be understood that stereotypes rarely apply to everyone of that group. The media can reduce stereotypes by ignoring them instead of marketing them. By making characters who portray their stereotype, audiences come to believe that the label applies to everyone in a particular group. If the stereotype is not represented at all, it can help the general public forget that stereotypes ever existed. Everyone has the capability of putting stereotypes to rest, it is just a matter of having an open mind. An example can be set to others and soon stereotypes will come to an end.

Works Cited

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