

Essay summary of exemplification essay

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Cultural Misinterpretations A stereotype is a predisposed idea about a group of people based on limited information you have heard or seen and assumed to be true about every individual in that group. In “ Don’t Call Me a Hot Tamale,” Judith Ortiz Cofer describes how being Puerto Rican affects her every day. People make rude comments about her, based on her ethnicity, and without knowing her. Cofer describes how she was stereotyped in different situations. From being compared to a Latina character in a play to having her culture misinterpreted. She does not fight against this prevaricate ideas.

Instead, she travels around the United States and reads from her books and poetry trying to clear stereotypes about Latinos. As Cofer describe “ replace them with a more interesting set of realities” (Cofer 666). However, individuals are still being exaggerated categorized according to their culture. First, similar to how Cofer was compared to a character from the West Side Stories, popular Asian characters in movies also create stereotypes for Asian Americans. In Cofer’s essay she describes a man who walked up to her and sang the lyrics to a popular song from the West Side Story play.

This image of a character from a play may be the only thing that this man can associate with the Latino culture. As she puts it, “... to him, I was just a character in his universe of ‘ others’ ” (Cofer 666). A similar problem exists for Asian Americans in the United States. For example, most popular movies with Asian actors in Hollywood are Kung Fu performers and are usually playing a role as Kung Fu masters. For instance, Bruce Lee made many Kung Fu movies. Another famous Asian actor Jackie Chan was also in many action movies.

Moreover, Kung Fu originated in Asia which makes people expect that all Asians must know Kung Fu. The image of a Kung Fu artist is assumed to be true for all Asian Americans resulting in a stereotype that all Asians know Kung Fu. Secondly, Cofer's island culture was misinterpreted as a stereotype. Cofer describes that to beat the heat women usually dress with less clothing. However, people outside of that culture misinterpret that fashion as a way to attract attention. Similarly, there is a concept in Spain about a Siesta. A Siesta is a ten to twenty minute nap that is supposed to improve productivity.

This cultural act has been characterized for all Latinos. Moreover, there is a common picture that shows an example of a sleeping Mexican on a cactus. This image, as well as the act of a Siesta has been overstated to stereotype that all Mexicans are lazy. However, if that were true I would not be writing this essay because I am Latino. Also, they are categorized as lazy individuals because they do not continue to obtain higher education. However, the reason Latinos cannot afford going to school because they do not have enough money.

But others misjudged Latinos to be lazy even though they do not have the equalities as a citizen of the United States. In the end, the misinterpretation of culture is still at broad. For example, American culture creates such categories for all Asian Americans. For instance, the Asian American hiring in Hollywood has led to stereotypes that all Asians know Kung Fu. Everything seen on the media seems to also create stereotypes about Asians. Then, the cultural act of napping in Spain led to the stereotype that all Latinos are lazy.

Island culture and fashion resulted in the label that all women are whores. Although these categories about people have reasons for existing, they are not true for all members of the group. It may be difficult to fight these stereotypes but we need get to know each other and prove that these stereotypes are just assumptions. Stereotypes create barriers for people to get to know each other. When someone relies on stereotypes they assume to know information about all members of that culture and never learn about the details of the individuals.