

The outsiders' still matters 50 years later

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



The Outsiders by S. E. Hinton, a novel which tells the story of the conflict between two rival gangs, Greasers and Socs, captures the voice of ponyboy and his friends to talk about stereotype threats. In Ponyboy's role as the narrator and main character in the story, he talks about the expectations of Greasers being violent delinquents, which sways his internal expectations, giving him labels he thinks he has to live by. Ponyboy's love for literary and academic accomplishments sets him apart from the rest of his gang, but they are still like family to him. Johnny, the "pet" of the Greasers, is a shy sixteen-year-old in a group known for being tough and having a sense of invincibility. Dallas Winston, the toughest hood in the Greasers, takes pride in his criminal record, yet works the hardest. Although Greasers don't have the same open doors as Socs, Ponyboy soon learns that they too face internal and external expectation. Stereotype threats challenged Greasers choices, making them prone to the conformity of being a violent Greaser.

Johnny was prone to the conformity of being a violent greaser, challenging his decisions, affecting his external and internal expectations. In the article, "Nothing Gold Can Stay", by Robert Frost, it stated how gold things don't stay forever, which shows that precious things, like youth, don't last forever. This means that all good things come to an end, just like Johnny's childhood and innocence when he killed Bob. This means that after he saved the children from the burning church and the headline in the newspaper "Delinquents turn hero", this showed that Greasers aren't as violent as Socs portrayed them to be." It seems like there's gotta be someplace without Greasers or Socs". After the incident with the Socs, Johnny wishes how there's a place with no rival gangs. This means that Johnny wants to push past all the social

divisions between the groups and not have to worry about being attacked all the time. This matters because this shows exactly how much the constant threats from Socs influences him, desperately wanting him to find a world without class division, so he can feel peace. Although Johnny faced challenges and pushed through most of them, he still was hurt within his external expectation of being a violent Greaser.

Some people challenge their decisions when they are given expectations on how to act, but others conform to the expectation given by others, like Dallas Winston. In the Outsiders, “ Dally had spent three years on the wild side of New York and had been arrested at the age of ten. He was tougher than the rest of us tougher, colder, meaner”, which shows that Dally had a reputation in New York. This means that Dally conforms to his role as a Greaser because he is an actual hood, coming from having a reputation in New York. This matters because even if Dally wanted to switch his life into being better, he couldn't because of the stereotypical expectations of Greasers. “ They spoiled him rotten. I mean, most parents would be proud of a kid like that— good-lookin ‘ and smart and everything, but they gave in to him all the time.” This shows that Dally was spoiled, but he had a reputation of being a delinquent in New York before he met the rest of the Greaser gang. This means that Dally's parents wanted Dally to change into a person with a better lifestyle, but it was too late, so they gave up on him. This matters because people sometimes make mistakes they wouldn't have done if they didn't have an expectation of what to be, like stereotypes affecting Greasers. In conclusion, these examples show a reason for stereotypes because when

people view these personalities, it gives them an expectation to follow up on, rather than be themselves.

Greasers and Socs have different lifestyles, yet still have many things in common with each other, such as being prone to stereotype threats, challenging their decisions. "I don't really think a beer blast on the river bottom is super-cool, but I'll rave about one to a girl-friend just to be saying something", to show that Cherry says things she doesn't mean. This means that Cherry tries to fit in by acting fake and cool, not her true self. This matters because Cherry feels to fulfill the needs of belonging by doing something she doesn't really mean to do, but because of stereotype threats, she is forced to. In the article, "Herd Behavior" by CommonLit, "Psychologists posit that a "group mind" can overtake a mob and embolden people to act in ways they would not individually, increasing the likelihood that situations become violent." to show that Cherry acts in ways she would not if she was thinking individually. This means that Cherry's external expectation of being sophisticated and cool can affect how she feels internally. This matters because Cherry facing the stereotypes of being a perfect Soc affected her inner thoughts of needing to be like every other Soc to fit in and not feel left out. Cherry was affected by societal expectations, making her think she had to conform to be like everyone else.

Stereotypes can affect the internal and external expectations of a person, especially when they are being pressured, being a part of a rival gang. Socs had expectations of wearing expensive clothes and always being sophisticated, but also cool and popular. Greasers were expected to be

delinquents with raggedy and worn down clothes, rather than seen as individuals. This affected both Greaser and Socs making them think they had to live up to that expectation, and always fit in with the crowd, rather than be what they wanted to. Although stereotypes made Socs and Greasers conform to their expectations, they still found a way to prove and realize that they are individuals with their own lifestyles and choices.