

Latina



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The Myth of Latin Woman Throughout life people may be involved in racial abuse, especially if they are Latin women; discrimination by people that believe they are superior just because they have been born in a different or better country. In “Myth of the Latin Woman: I Just Met a Girl Named Maria” by Judith Ortiz Cofer, the writer tries to show part of her life and how people in different countries act in the situation of having someone in front of them with a different culture or skin color, in this case Latin woman.

In the essay, she had to fight with three situations of discrimination: (1) Stereotypes, (2) Culture Clash, and (3) media. First of all, the term stereotype is used as a negative sense. Throughout the essay, Ortiz writes about the experiences she passed through her childhood, her experience as a Latina woman and the stereotypes that involved a Latin woman. In paragraph 2, she is upset about how her Hispanic appearance called forth from many people she met from different countries. Ortiz thinks that a Latin woman is seen as a sex object as a result of her way of dressing.

She declares that her mother taught her how to do it. Our parents influence us in our way of dress. For example, if our parents are from an Indian region and they use Indian clothes, they are going to influence us to wear the same clothes. Also, she narrates about her experience on a bus trip when a white man started reciting the lines of “Maria” because she appeared to be Latino. Secondly, culture clash carries a big influence. She explains in her essay how hard it is growing up in a country with a totally different culture.

Even, one day when she went to school to Career Day, they had gone “dressed as if for a job interview.” She went dressed the way a Puerto Rican dresses. The way she dressed with too much jewelry made her a victim of

mockery. Furthermore, some people who move to another country are victims of discrimination by people who believe that bringing their culture and traditions from another country is wrong, they think that if you move to a their country you need to adapt to their culture, and forget yours. These people not even think about mix cultures.

Thirdly, the media plays a role not only in this essay, but in the real world too. The media have influenced the white people about Latina's concept especially, those who see a TV series in which a Latina is inferior. In this case, she writes about her Chicana friend who worked at a major university. Even her incredulous doctor questions himself about how she knows " big words. " Regarding how the media sees Latina as inferior workers, Ortiz writes about her experience in Miami in one of her poetry events. When she was walking in, an old lady called her to her table to order for a cup of coffee.

If Judith Ortiz Cofer was a white woman, it would not happen. In addition, the media nowadays influences everyone a lot about Latina women and their culture. In another way, she explains how people think about what jobs the Latina women can do, because white people believe that a Latina's brown skin; white people think that they came from an inferior culture, a culture of servitude. For this reason, some people cannot believe when they see a Latina woman succeed in a country with their backward culture about Latinas.

In conclusion, it is sad to see how people feel superior over others, chiefly because their skin color is different. It is also sad to see how others want to humiliate a Latina just because her culture is completely different to ours, or

simply because they watch how the TV denigrates Latina women, regardless of their feelings. Ortiz focused her essay on how Latina women can be successful in this country regardless of stereotype, culture, or what the media says about them.