

# Newfoundland stereotypes essay sample

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Newfoundlanders are from the province of Newfoundland and they are just like most Canadians, they are good-hearted, hard working and friendly. One main difference separates Newfoundlanders from the rest of Canada.

Newfoundlanders are engulfed in stereotypes and tasteless jokes. This paper will discuss the Newfoundland stereotypes, how Newfoundlanders feel about these stereotypes and also how Newfoundlanders feel about being depicted the way they were in the novel *The Shipping News*.

Newfoundland stereotypes are plentiful. Newfoundlanders are stereotyped as being slow witted and talking in an accent. A stereotype is defined as a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment. People often think that Newfoundlanders are slow witted just because of common "Newfie" jokes that they hear. They judge Newfoundlanders, in most cases, without even meeting a Newfoundlander in real life. As Winston Churchill put it "A lie gets half way around the world before the truth has a chance to put its pants on" (Winston Churchill, <http://historyq.freesevers.com/quote.htm>). This has a great significance because it shows that a lie can be well known while the truth is known to few people and hard to convince that the truth is in actuality the truth.

It also shows that a simple "Newfie" joke can do more harm than people realize just because it spreads throughout the world. Some common misconceptions about Newfoundlanders are that they are slow witted. How can people say that a whole province is slow witted? Another misconception about Newfoundlanders is that they talk in a slang and use made-up words. Not all Newfoundlanders talk in slang or use made up words. For example, <https://assignbuster.com/newfoundland-stereotypes-essay-sample/>

Americans are stereotyped as knowing nothing about Canada, by a show called Rick Mercer Talking To Americans, but how many people asked every American about Canada. Chances are that there are many American who know a lot about Canada. This same statement can be made towards Newfoundland stereotypes.

Newfoundlanders are also stereotyped as all being fishermen. This is completely false due to the fact that there are businesses to run and there must be people to run these businesses. Newfoundlanders are stereotyped, by some people, as being excessive drinkers. This stereotype was depicted in the book when a drunken mob tore apart Nutbeem's boat. "' Ar!' he shouted. ' Wants to takes ' is leave, do ' e? Us'll ' ave ' im ' ere. Come along, b'ys, axe ' is bo't. Got yer chain saw Neddie?'"(Proulx, 279). This shows the stereotype that Newfoundlanders like to drink because they are a drunken mob ready to tear apart Nutbeem's boat. It also shows the stereotype that Newfoundlanders talk in slang by dropping letters and pronunciation. Newfoundlanders are very upset with these stereotypes.

Newfoundlanders are, for the most part, very offended by how people think they act. For good reason too, with jokes like " Did you hear about the Newfie terrorist who tried to blow up a school bus? He burnt his lips on the exhaust pipe" (www. just-jokes. co. uk/jokes/newfie. shtml) anyone would be offended. This joke is very significant because jokes like this are told all over Canada with little worry about offending Newfoundlanders. These jokes are very offensive to some Newfoundlanders, like Richard Tungsten who says " I consider myself a Newfoundlander.

If you think I'm uptight, that's fine. Just remember what 'Newfies' really are." . This statement is very powerful because it comes from the mouth of a Newfoundlander. It shows that Newfoundlanders are offended by stereotypes and that they too have feeling like the rest of us. If in fact they are like the rest of us how can people possibly say that Newfoundlanders are slow witted or any other stereotypes. Newfoundlanders are also upset with the fact that people believe these jokes about Newfoundlanders, that they are stupid and talk in slang. Newfoundlanders were also very upset with the novel *The Shipping News*.

*The Shipping News* is a novel about a low self-esteem man from the United States of America that moves to Newfoundland with his children as a result in his wife dying in a car crash. This novel is very controversial because it takes place, for the most part, in Newfoundland. This novel also has fake place names, which leads people to believe it is fiction. It also has many references to Newfoundland stereotypes; Newfoundlanders are very upset with this novel because they felt that Newfoundland was depicted in an unfair manner. Many Newfoundlanders like Marilyn Babineau say that "Annie Proulx didn't get the usage exactly right at times, probably because she used a dictionary of Newfoundland slang, rather than having heard the words spoken." (Marilyn Babineau, <http://134.153.160.118/educ4142/babineau1.htm>).

Another Newfoundlander that shared Marilyn's view of " *The Shipping News*" is Janice who says " Proulx has obviously focused on Newfoundland's harshness and has obviously overlooked some of the more positive, heart

warming characteristics associated with Newfoundlanders and their homeland.” (Janice, <http://134.153.160.118/educ4142/FirstImpress.htm>). However, there will always be people with opposite opinions. Some Newfoundlanders disagree and say that “The Shipping News” was an extraordinary novel. Melodie Muise is one Newfoundlander who enjoyed “The Shipping News”. She says “I laughed, cried and did a lot of reflection. By my standards, if a literary work can accomplish this in at least one person, then it is a success.” (Melody Muise, [http://134.153.160.118/educ4142/reaction\\_mlm.htm](http://134.153.160.118/educ4142/reaction_mlm.htm)). Melody overlooked the way that Proulx depicted Newfoundland and read the book for what it really was, fiction.

This paper has discussed Newfoundland stereotypes, how Newfoundlanders feel about these stereotypes and how Newfoundlanders feel about being depicted the way they were in the novel The Shipping News.

Newfoundlanders are known as being slow witted and talking in slang, we get this impression from the common “Newfie” joke. This is totally false, Newfoundlanders are intelligent and some of them may talk in slang, but to them everyone else talks in slang. Newfoundlanders have a right to be outraged by The Shipping News but they should also realize that it is fiction which the books states on the 4th page of the book.