

# Essay on i've been stereotyped



He couldn't possibly know more... (Stereotype Essay) While I have not faced too many specific cases where I've been overtly stereotyped; the most common stereotype I encounter is one where people underestimate my abilities based on my looks. Be it a language I know, knowledge specific to technology, or my level of education in general. After finishing high school, my type of dress (urban) in concert with my skin color, have lead people I encounter to assume that I know less than I know. This happened commonly due to the fact that because I dressed similarly to " hoodlums" at the time, it was easy for most people to lump me into that group. Growing up in a hispanic neighborhood has led to many instances where, because of the way I look, people believe that I don't understand spanish. One time, while in line at a local Apple Bank, I overheard an elderly spanish couple complaining that they should be able to go in front of me because I was probably not depositing much. This was a rare situation as I was stereotyped twice. Once based on the fact that I am dark skinned and don't know spanish, and the second that I would not be depositing much because of the way I was dressed. The couple was quite shocked when I turned around and told them that it is rude to talk about people (in spanish). Another way that I'm stereotyped based on my looks, is that people tend to assume I know nothing about technology. A perfect example of this was when I was shopping at Best Buy for a new computer. One of their lead computer specialist who was assisting me, repeatedly attempted to get me to buy a lesser computer by continuing to misrepresent facts. While I'm not sure why it would benefit him to lie and get me to buy a lesser product. He was very surprised when I could no longer put up with the lies and told him why everything he was telling me was wrong. After I demonstrated that I knew

about computers, he quickly grew agitated and left stating “ you know more that I thought you did, let me know when you find something. ” Most of these stereotypical assumptions come from my style of dress and have resulted in people underestimating my overall level of education. The last sharp memory of this form of discrimination took place during a job interview. I had an interviewer ask very early on in the conversation “ Considering this is a full time job, do you have any plans on finishing up high school while working with us? ” My short answer was “ Finish high school? ”, and at that instant I know I would have a lot of explaining to do. Sure enough, by the time I finished explaining my qualifications, I was hired on the spot. After all was said and done, a few week into the job, the person who interviewed me told me that based on my looks alone (style of dress), he would have assumed that I hadn't gone to college. Unfortunately for all of us stereotypes do exist, and yes, many people do default to them. My case is not one of rarity, these and other stereotypes just like them are levied on to unsuspecting victims every day. However, through my experience, I find that there is a sign of hope. In each one of these examples I was at least able to help the people stereotyping me understand why these assumptions were wrong. And that is stereotypings ultimate caveat, most of them, especially the negative ones, are almost always wrong.