

THE SLANTED SCREEN DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

STEREOTYPING

What is a stereotype?

How do stereotypes affect the way people are perceived?

Are some stereotypes good? Others bad?

Are some stereotypes true? Others false?

Can you think of ways that certain people are stereotyped?

Why do stereotypes exist?

Who creates stereotypes?

How are stereotypes passed down between people?

What are some of the stereotypes of (White/African-American/Native American/Latino American/Asian American) men/women?

Do you think that these stereotypes affect the way people view, behave or perceive themselves?

Do you think that stereotyping can result in violence, such as a hate crime?

Can you think of examples where stereotype can lead to false assumptions about people?

Do you think that stereotyping sometimes can be helpful?

Can you think of a situation where you wrongfully assumed something about someone because of a stereotype?

How did you try to correct the situation?

Has anyone ever made an assumption about you because of a stereotype that was untrue? How did you react to the situation? Did you feel hurt? Did you express the way you felt to the person who made the erroneous assumption?

Think of at least two negative stereotypes that you relate to each of the following words:

Rapper
Lousy driver
Gangster
Violent people
Terrorist

What did image did you think of when you thought of each word? What caused you to think of it?

Think of at least two positive stereotypes that you relate to each of the following words:

President of the United States
Business leader
Wealthy person
Beautiful model
Homeless person

Again, ask yourself what caused you to think of the stereotype that you imagined as you thought of the word.

MEDIA

What is the media and how does it work?

Do you think that the media has too much power?

Do you believe that the media is distorted or mostly based on the truth?

Why do you think that the truth might be distorted through the media?

Do Hollywood filmmakers and studios have a responsibility to create truthful portrayals of characters in film and television?

How should a group of people or person that feels offended by a stereotype respond? How can media be held responsible for creating its programming? Does this violate the First Amendment freedom of speech guarantee?

How should society regulate its media?

What alternative means of media exist to one who is dissatisfied with mainstream media?

RACE RELATIONS

Why do you think that people of different ethnic backgrounds sometimes misperceive each other?

Can you think of some misperceptions you have had about other people based on their ethnicity or background?

How did you overcome the misperception you held about someone you just met?

Do you think it's important to learn more about the history, culture, religion and ethnic background of different people?

What is it about yourself and your beliefs that makes you unique from other people, and how might these practices or beliefs be misunderstood or misperceived by another who does not understand your background?

Have you ever had the experience of realizing that the initial perceptions you held about someone were wrong?

How did you come to the conclusion that your initial perception of the person was wrong?

Did you communicate your feelings to the person you misperceived?

Have you ever saw a person or a stranger on the street, and made assumptions about them?

Think of a person you recently saw who you didn't even know, but you formed certain impressions about them. What were those impressions? What were they based on?

GROUP EXERCISES

Interview a person of a background or ethnicity that you are familiar with.

Identify at least five things that you believe are different or unique about that person's culture or background that is related to their ethnicity (i.e. food, religion, language or other beliefs or customs).

Next, ask the person whether these beliefs are untrue, and if not, explain why you have perceived them to be true.

Interview a person of a background or ethnicity that you are not familiar with at all.† Ask them to identify at least five things that are unique and different about them that is related to their background or ethnicity. Ask them how they acquired these customs or characteristics, and their significance.

Now pick five things about yourself that are unique to you because of your ethnicity, background, culture or religion. (i.e., a saying that your grandmother told you, your favorite food that your mother prepared, a cultural practice of not eating certain foods).

Think of a story that incorporates all five things. Compare the things that make you and the other people similar yet different. Now, tell the story to another person, using a Fictional character.

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