

Counter-stereotype

Authored by
mohammad looti

November 19, 2022

RECOMMENDED CITATION

mohammad looti (2022). *Counter-stereotype*. PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=39405>

A counter-stereotype, reverse stereotype, or anti-stereotype is the reverse of a stereotype. Although counter-stereotypes arise in opposition to stereotypes, they may eventually become stereotypes themselves if they are too popular.

Spike Lee popularized the term magical negro, deriding the archetype of the "super-duper magical negro" in 2001 while discussing films with students at Washington State University and at Yale University.

Examples

American popular literature in the 19th century contained stereotypical images of Black people as grotesque and servile. In protest, a counter-stereotype arose which showed Black people as graceful and wise.

In the USA during the 1970s, in response to feminist criticism, advertising agencies chose to display counter-stereotypical images of women as sexually assertive and intellectual.

In comic books, when the superhero began in the 1930s, he was an invulnerable, unalterably benevolent figure. However, a desire for increased dramatic potential led to a move away from this stereotypical character, until in the 1980s and 1990s, the counterstereotypical angst-ridden anti-hero had become so popular as to constitute a new stereotype.

Michael Moorcock's character Elric of Melniboné--a tormented, sickly albino sorcerer with a demonic sword and a sizeable evil streak--was intended to be the polar opposite of the typical fantasy heroes of the time, who were almost universally muscular, Conan-like figures. As in the above example, Elric's success was such that he inspired an explosion of similar characters in popular fiction.

Scott Adam's Dilbert featured a character called "Antina", created in response to allegations that Tina the Brittle Tech Writer was too stereotypical. Antina was, of course, considered to be too stereotypical.

The noble savage myth, used by supporters or admirers of indigenous peoples, is the opposite of the usual stereotypes implied by the word "savage".