

Mikerline Laurent

DEV107 : Critical thinking

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Ted Talks: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: The Danger of a Single Story

This Ted Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie describes the perspective of our history, the culture and the long road ahead of accepting what is different and normal. As mentioned in the Talk you cannot think about the perception of a single story without thinking about power. In a way the Single story creates a hierarchy by allowing one group to paint the other as less than. In the talk Chimamanda stated that all she knew about Fidel's family in her home is that they were poor and that single story stripped away all their ability, intelligence, and hard work, only labeling them as poor and that became their identity, their known story. As mentioned in the film, how stories are told depend on power and with that power they have the ability to tell the story of another person. Have you ever been in a situation where you've stereotyped or have done it to someone ? What I told you what seemed as a short joke of a Mexican or a black person is actually the danger of a single story. What is a single story ? A single story is created by telling or showing a group of people as the same thing or idea over and over again. With this this is what they become in perceptions to others. In 2009, Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie spoke on what is to be one of the most popular TED talks out there. "The Danger of a Single Story" is a 20 minute video of humor and a cultural perspective that opens our eyes to the things people experience and the dangers of this.

The purpose of the TED talk is to encourage people to broaden the stories we consume about other people and cultures. Listening to the talk, Chimamanda uses around ten different smaller stories to share the core message itself. All of them fit beautifully together, combining her personal experience as a Nigerian in America as well as her Nigerian experience with its own limitations in literature and so on. Adichie's purpose was not to judge or punish her audience for a lack of knowledge, but rather to explain that these misunderstandings and limitations are universal. It makes her a more human narrator, and also adds humor to the story in a way that helps the audience feel like she is a close friend, not merely an lecturer.