

# Discussion Guide: Why Should You Care About Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination?



This guide is intended to introduce the definitions of stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination while facilitating a discussion regarding the specific context of the Guinness Collection. We hope to inspire you to become engaged in current topics and take action against active prejudice and discrimination today. While all ages are welcome to use this guide, we recommend that adults use this to facilitate discussion with younger individuals.

## Definitions

**Stereotype:** A preconceived, oversimplified, and often negative idea of the characteristics of a person.

**Prejudice:** Unreasoned dislike, hostility, or opposition towards a race, sex, or other class of people.

**Discrimination:** Unjust treatment of a person or group, especially on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

**Orientalism:** The representation of the Orient (Asia, the Middle East, some parts of Africa) in Western academic writing, art, or literature.

**Othering:** To see a person or a group as excluded and different from oneself.



**Let's Get Started!**

## Activity: Deep Looking



**Look closely at each of these objects. What do you notice in each of them?**

The objects shown here and in the gallery display non-Western figures created by Western artists. The three automata displayed, Turc Fumeur, Harpiste Mauresque, and the Chinese Opium Smoker all show a Western view of the Middle East and Asia, known as *orientalism*. In the late 19th century, orientalism often portrayed people from the Middle East and Asia as practicing recreational activities, to fulfill the idea that the Orient was fantastical and exotic. These objects along with the Street Barrel Organ with Animated Figures are examples of what many people now consider to be stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination.

## Questions for Discussion and Reflection

What are some differences you notice about other people?

How do our differences define us or makeup who we are?

In what ways are discrimination and prejudice the same?

What recent events can you think of that indicate some kind of discrimination or prejudice?  
What do these events make you think or feel?

When seeing something that is unfair or not right, what can you do to help?

## Morris Museum

A SMITHSONIAN AFFILIATE

This activity was developed by graduate students in the Master of Arts in Museum Professions program at Seton Hall University in conjunction with the student exhibition, *A Contemporary Spin: The Guinness Collection Re/Imagined* at the Morris Museum. This discussion guide was created by Taylor Cavanaugh and Sutherlyn Nichols.