**Nationality Stereotypes**

A stereotype is a fixed set of ideas that is generally held about the characteristics of a particular type of person which are wrongly believed to be shared by all the people of that type. In my opinion it is a dangerous thing to judge about a people or a group of people by existing stereotypes but nevertheless a certain stereotype does exist. There are experimental ways of investigating stereotypes. One of the most obvious is to ask a group of people what trades characterize the British, the Russians, the Americans. Results of such studies of the whole agree well with what might have been expected. English are said to be prim. Weather is the most important topic in the land. In English this is an ever – interesting, even thrilling topic and you must be good at discussing the weather. You must never contradict anybody when discussing the weather. Should it hail and snow, should hurricanes up root the trees, should someone remark to you "Nice day, isn’t it?" – answer without hesitation "Isn’t it lovely?" On the continent people either tell you the truth or lie, in Britain they hardly ever lie but they don’t tell you the truth either. The British like people of every country tend to be attributed with certain characteristics which are supposedly typical. However you should be cautious about accepting such characterizations too easily. Societies change over time while their reputations lag behind. Many things which are often regarded as typically British are no longer representative of modern life. One example of this is the popular belief that Britain is a land of traditions. This is what most tourist brochures claim. The claim is based on what can be seen in public life. And at this level – the level of public life it is undoubtedly true. However in private everyday lives the British as individuals are probably less inclined to follow traditions than other people of most other countries. According to the stereotypes English are also thought to be reserved, conservative, shy of strangers, suspicious of change and slow to accept new ideas, responsible, honest and unemotional. But I think this stereotype pictures are far from true, especially in today’s world.

Nationality stereotypes are often described in anecdotes, humorous stories, private diaries. For example American westerns are dynamic and thrilly. They show us men strength in fights, gun fighting and horse riding skills, but to my mind it was various that made American character. You can easily spot Americans abroad by their toughness. It comes from their sense of individual freedom. Americans realize that individuals must rely on themselves, otherwise they risk to loose their freedom. So, self-reliance usually is the second trade and moral value supposed to be obligatory to a true American. The third national value accounts for their confident and unaffected manners. The fourth American value is competition. Sixty percent of the Americans believe in competition and so desire to win is healthy. In spite of the fact that society can’t consist only of winners the Americans are optimistic. They believe that every problem has a solution. The fifth national value is material wealth. Most Americans believe wealth is a reward for hard work and that it’s possible to have good standard of living if a person works hard. God helps those who help themselves – says the proverb. The sense of humor is often the most revealing aspect of a culture. Surely, humor has never been valued more highly in any other civilization than in this one.

The Russian are considered to be industries, tough, brave and progressive. These stereotypes are derived from books, films and other cultural media. As any nation the Russians have both positive and negative qualities. On the one hand, people who belong to this nationality are hard-working, willing to respect the opinion of other people. They regard other racial or ethnic groups as equal. They are fond of being with other people, enjoying social life, hospitable to foreigners. On the other hand sometimes they are inclined to cheat and unwilling to respect the views, ideas, opinions opposite to their own. This is my point of view on this problem.

I also would like to say stereotypes are a part of human life though they may present one sided exaggerated view of religion, racial ethnic groups of people as well as of classes of people. Stereotypes are certainly not reliable description of individual people but they still exist.