INFORMATION AND MEDIA LITERACY

MEDIA STEREOTYPING

2nd LEARNING, TEACHING AND TRAINING ACTIVITY

Falticeni – Romania
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In our everyday life we often confront ourselves with prejudices and stereotypes.

- This happens because, as specialists point it out, in our relation with the others we seldom "base our perceptions on information which refer to a person as a part of a certain group, rather than the person itself".

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A *stereotype* is defined as:

- *A conventional , formulaic and oversimplified conception, opinion or image*

or as

- *A simplified and fixed image of all members of a culture group (based on race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin)*

A related term is *prejudice,* defined as:

- A negative, unfair opinion about a person or a group, usually based on limited information experience

or as:

- An irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a race, or their supposed characteristics

- While *prejudices* are <u>always</u> NEGATIVE, *stereotypes* can be <u>either</u> POSITIVE or NEGATIVE

"a picture in our heads"

- Although stereotype was used before it was the American journalist Walter Lipmann that introduced the term with its actual sense into social and cultural vocabulary of modern life in 1922, defining it as "a picture in our heads" deeply rooted into our traditions and education.

- The use of implicit and/ or explicit stereotypes guides the reader to a certain interpretation, so we can hardly say that most of the stereotypes are dangerous for all types of media consumers (readers, listeners or viewers).

Some examples of *stereotypes* which are used quite often in media bun not only:

- **Age**: - *all teenagers love rock and do not respect their elders*

  Gender*: - men want one thing from women*
- *- all women drive worse*
- *- all blondes are stupid*
- **Race:** *- Chinese look the same*
  - all Blacks are good athlets
- **Religion:** - *all those who are of Islamic religion are terrorists*
- **Vocation:** *- all lawyers are greedy*
- **Nationality:** *- all Roma people are dirty*
  - all Arabs are terrorists
- *- Eastern girls are prostitutes*
- **Things: -** *all Swiss watches are perfect*