
The Dangers of a Single Story: Exploring the Perception of Filipinos and the Importance of Multiple Perspectives

Challenging Stereotypes and Seeking Out Diverse Voices in the Philippines



This piece was inspired by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED Talk "The Dangers of a Single Story," in which she discusses the harmful consequences of relying on a limited and often biased perspective when understanding a place or group of people.

According to my father, who has traveled to Maine on multiple business trips, the Philippines is often portrayed as a country of water buffalos and farms, leading to the perception among Westerners that Filipinos are less capable. This stereotype is reinforced by the fact that many Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are maids, leading some Americans to view all Filipinos as house helpers and treat them with disrespect. However, it is important to recognize that this does not give anyone the right to deny Filipinos respect and that the country is much more than just a place for tourism and agriculture.

As I wrote about my experiences and observations, I realized that I had also fallen victim to the "single story" of the Philippines, feeling strong emotions when watching videos of Americans mistreating Filipinos. This reminded me of the importance of considering multiple perspectives and not relying solely on mainstream media for our understanding of a place or group of people. As Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie said, "we are all the heroes of our own stories." It is important to remember that every

individual has their own unique experiences and perspectives, and it is vital to seek out and listen to diverse voices in order to gain a more complete understanding of the world around us.

By [Carl Kho](#) on [December 26, 2022](#).

[Canonical link](#)

Exported from [Medium](#) on October 31, 2025.