

## Why Am I Judged

Why am I judged by the color of my skin?  
Why does it matter if I am fat or thin?  
Why am I judged for who I love?  
Why can't I receive the treatment I deserve?

Why am I assessed by what I look on the outside?  
When isn't the part that matters on the inside?  
Why must assumptions and prejudices be made about me?  
When in reality, I am being judged by someone who barely knows me?

Is it so hard to understand,  
That I don't like being told who I am?  
Is it that there is something wrong with my identity?  
Is that why do people try to rectify me?

If I was not judged by these meaningless constructs  
one would discover a multitude of things that they cannot deduct  
Like how I love to dance and sing and smile and laugh.  
Like how I love to play with my dog or that I like to draw and craft

It is not my loss that people chose not to know the real me  
Because I know who I am, that I guarantee  
All your judgment was to make me feel weak  
But hear me now as I speak

Your words may have caused pain  
But I broke society's chains  
Wiped the blood with my hands  
And got up and took my stand

Yet I still wonder, why are people so full of hate?  
When the goal of the world should be to create  
A world where everyone is accepted  
Instead of being constantly rejected

Imagine a world of  
no hate, no judgments, only internal love  
Where everyone got along  
And everyone felt as though they belong

Alas, no world like this exists  
But that does not mean that the status quo is fixed  
Together we can rebuild our society

though this is not a task to be taken lightly

It is not impossible to achieve  
But will take years of hard work until people can truly perceive  
That we need to love instead of critique  
And that it is our differences that make us unique

### **Explanation**

All that I have learned in Ethnic Studies has really opened my eyes. Before taking Ethnic Studies I had a very vague idea about identity, race and ethnicity, and sexuality, and did not think that they were important concepts. But now, after gaining knowledge about these subjects, I realize how important they are and how many injustices are being committed on these topics. Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexuality, and Identity, are all social constructs that have been made important by society. Although much effort has been made to eradicate these social constructs, many prejudices and stereotypes still remain. Furthermore, oppression has been ingrained into our institutions, making it extremely difficult and unfair to minority groups as they do not receive the same opportunities as privileged groups. This oppression starts with the idea that one group is inferior to another and once that idea has made a place in our brains, it starts trickling into our systems, way of life, and the way we view ourselves. In order to combat the oppression in our society, we must first recognize the oppression and then move to dismantle it. In my poem, I talk about how society is full of hate and how people constantly oppress one another based on meaningless social constructs and allow their prejudices and stereotypes to make them jump to conclusions about one's character. I outline this issue in my poem, but along with that emphasize that if society works together we can achieve a world where everyone is accepted for who they are. Furthermore, I highlight that one mustn't allow criticism and hateful words to change who they are, and to combat societal oppression, one has to be strong. I hope that with my poem, I can inspire other people to stand up in the face of oppression so that we can work to eliminate it from our society.