

Power and control in one flew over cuckoo's nest essay sample



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Both Ken Kesey the author of the novel *One Flew Over Cuckoo's Nest* and Milos Forman the director of the film version, expose us to power and control strong nurses and aids acquire. Men carrying problems with women are placed in the mental institution ruled by Nurse Ratched. McMurphy a strong man that carries power in the outside world ends up joining the world of Nurse Ratched for his own problems. " My name is McMurphy, buddies, R. P. McMurphy, and I'm a gambling fool" (Kesey 11). He immediately shows off his confidence as he steps in the ward. In *One Flew Over Cuckoo's Nest*, Kesey and Forman focus on how two leaders with different views and gender aim for power and control.

Nurse Ratched has all the power and control in her hands at the institution. Whether it is the patients' medication time to bath time, she determined that. Her therapy method of getting men to speak loudly about their issues and women problem is her way of control. " Not a man here" (Forman). Ratched wants to put men down. She treats them like children and proving to them they are not true men. In the article " Fixing Men: Castration, Impotence, and Masculinity in Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*," by Michael Meloy states, " Nurse Ratched—a sterile, distant, and oppressive feminine force who psychologically castrates the male patients" (3). Then men there are afraid of disobeying her because she is able to break them down in front one another like children.

Meloy proves this by explaining, " That to castrate a male is to take away the very essence of his being, or his ' spirit'" (4). Nurse Ratched takes away who their character is. She is able to dominate very single man in that institute.

Chief Bromden describes the fear she creates among them men. The way
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she unlocks the door or stares at them through the window as she jots down notes. "I hide in the mop closet and listen, my heart beating in the dark, and I to keep from getting scared" (Kesey 6). She creates fear like a scary movie would do or even a haunted house. Being at a mental institute should be a place to feel safe and taken care off. Nurse Ratched believes what is she is creating at the ward is what's best; however she is completely destroying the ward and the men.

The difference between McMurphy and Nurse Ratched is that he is trying to earn his freedom back and she has the power and control to keep it with her. In the article, "The Rhetoric Of Disability: A Dramatistic-Narrative Analysis Of One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest, by Rudi Roose states: McMurphy is romanticised as a rebel who legitimately questions the illegitimate authority of Nurse Ratched. This scene is presented as a place of structure and order for Nurse Ratched, where she can use and abuse her power over patients who are too often treated against their will. For McMurphy, the ward is a scene against which he needs to rebel to restore his freedom and autonomy. An important element in this scene- agent ratio is the opposition between power (staff) and powerlessness (patients) (639) McMurphy walked in the Nurse Ratched's control zone. He came from the outside world where he not only had freedom but control as well. He challenges Ratched for control and to win over the patients.

He has an advantage to gaining those weak men on his side. In the article "Different Generations Review One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest Milos Forman (Director)," Deborah J. Boschini explains, "She addresses their inconsistencies and failures, but does not demonstrate the warmth that <https://assignbuster.com/power-and-control-in-one-flew-over-cuckoos-nest-essay-sample/>

would put them at ease” (76). On the other hand, McMurphy give them confidence and strength. He is a man he relates to those men. McMurphy brings them life to the ward; he has them play basketball, cards, and takes them finishing. He brings candy his friend and some liquor to throw a party. He was able to bring the real men in them and make them happy. After Billy one of the men in the ward commits suicide after he is with candy at the time Ratched caught him; she threatens to tell his domineering mother. McMurphy assaults her in front of all the men by shocking her and ripping off her top that showed her big breast, which was her insecurity. This shows that she also is weak and has insecurities, but is able to hide them till that moment.

Finally, the men decide to leave the ward with confidence. McMurphy wins but Nurse Ratched is and will continue to be in control of the ward. Ken Kesey and the director Milos Forman of *One Flew Over Cuckoo’s Nest*, exposed us to power and control by two leaders of different gender.

Works Cited

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