

# Comparing perks of being a wallflower and breakfast club.

[Psychology](#), [Abuse](#)



Comparing Perks of Being a Wallflower and Breakfast Club. In this essay, I will be comparing John Hughes' *The Breakfast Club* published in 1985 with Stephen Chbosky's *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* of 1999. The *Breakfast club* aims to highlight what went on in high schools as well as the larger society at the time, by using five unique stereotypes. In the movie, there was the jock: trying to live up to his dad's and friends' expectations; the brain, expected to be super-smart; the princess, who always wants to be a part of the popular crowd at school. There was also the criminal who is always negative, pessimistic and causing trouble. Finally, there's the basket case who was silent the whole time except for the odd break outs. The students meet in detention at school and initially think they have nothing in common since they are from different social cliques. They are instructed to remain quiet while fixed on their chairs. Although they were very much frightened by the authority figure- their vice-principal-they decide to rebel with John as their leader. As the plot unfolds, they eventually open up to each other using various means like talking, dancing, fighting and smoking pot. They come to realize that they, in fact, share a whole lot in common. The movie identifies the various challenges being faced by people including; social pressures to conform, inequality, bullying, instability of families and drugs. Sexuality was considered a "double edged sword" as clearly stated by Allison. If you were still a virgin you were called prude or a slut otherwise. Claire and Brian tried to conceal their virginity on several occasions for fear of being laughed at. It was also really obvious that there were lots of social pressures as suggested by the argument they had concerning their friendship the following Monday, outside of detention. Another important challenge was the longing for

parental approval. This is evident in the disclosure of how mistreated, John was at home and in Andrew admitting to hating his father. The problems the kids face are mostly influenced by family problems. The abuse of drugs was a rather disturbing issue too; it was not accepted because it was kept away from the authority. The movie, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* can be seen as a repertoire of the other movie. It shared a similar theme of 'messed up' kids who find solidarity outside their homes. It is mostly centered on high school kids. The various challenges recognized are bullying, identity crisis, drug abuse, family disorders, date rape, struggle to fit in and homosexuality. The whole concept of belonging to a clique seemed to have played out in this movie as well. There was a feeling of power derived from having a group of friends and this seemed to bring about a type a division or ranking which is evident in the society we are now. In comparison of the two movies, the various stereotypes are represented in both. All the kids are seen to be wrestling with self-identity and acceptance. They all have certain sides that they are trying to hide by presenting different faces. Most of the problems they face are caused by family problems or as a result of a family member. For instance, Charlie in the *Perks of Being a Wallflower* had a mental disorder which arose from the death of his aunt as well as being abused at a young age. Also, Sam was raped and had faced lots of problems in her past which she hardly ever talked about. In *Breakfast Club*, John was a drug user and a criminal. Evidently, this was a result of the abusive household he came from. They are faced with peer pressure with seems to be such a powerful force in society. A typical example in *The Breakfast Club* is when they smoke pot; the brainy kid was forced to do same although he never smoked. He probably

did this in order to feel accepted in the group. A similar scenario was when they had to run out of the room. The plan to do this was initiated by the criminal who led the group. Though they were not all in agreement with the idea, they all conformed for fear of being left out. An equivalent of this in the *Perks of Being a Wallflower*, was when Charlie made new friends who did drugs and a whole lot of things he never did. He began to date, do drugs, party, engage in fights, feel 'infinite' and so many new things. The only race that seemed to appear in both movies was the Caucasian, while all other races were left out. Contrasting the two movies, homosexuality which was recognized in the *Perks of Being a Wallflower* was left out in *The Breakfast Club*. It was a rather controversial issue because it was accepted among the kids but strongly refuted by the adults. The father of Patrick's partner beat up his son nearly to the point of death when he found them out. Another difference is that authority is not as feared by kids in *Perks* as in the *Breakfast Club*. This suggests that the relationship between students and teachers have improved over the decade. On a general note, both movies addressed the issues in society. However, the *Perks of Being a Wallflower* seemed to dig deeper into the real challenges we face in our generation than did the *Breakfast club*. The *Breakfast club* had a somewhat narrower view of societal problems; it left out quite a lot of controversies that happened in the era it was produced.