

Literary analysis of the outsiders

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This quote says that Ponyboy and his gang of Greasers were judged as being trouble and bad people whereas the Socials (a high class group known as the Socs) who were decent looking were considered to be good people. However, Ponyboy realizes that many “Greasers” are actually decent people while the Socs are not. Would Society be shallow enough to not care what’s underneath a person’s exterior? Yes it would. Even in a fictional book Judgment is essential in order to show common day society.

Ponyboy ponders about how people judge by looks and do not bother looking at what is underneath.

Even in today's world where inequality is intolerable, labeling people based on their looks and passing judgment is tolerated. Judgment and labeling have become a daily part of the world. People argue that it is human nature to label and judge, however is it human nature to treat people they understand one way and those they do not another. Initially individuals will say they treat people the same and do not judge but in society labeling and judgment are roots common people cannot escape.

Many individuals are forced to follow these labels created by society, which may result in negative effects such as being publicly disgraced, facing internal dilemmas and taking drastic actions, as shown in *The Outsiders* and “On The Sidewalk Bleeding”.

People who try to break social labels and join different groups face many challenges: one of them being the internal dilemmas resulting from external pressures. In this quote from *The Outsiders* Ponyboy's disapproval towards a

Soc girl, Cherry is portrayed when she tries to join the Greasers (a hooded rival group).

Ponyboy tells her "you're a traitor to your own kind and not loyal to us" (Hinton 129). This quote when directly said to Cherry puts doubt in her mind for whether she should stand up for the right thing and switch groups or since afraid of losing her social standing, not do the right thing and be part of unnecessary violence. Therefore inflicting dilemmas on her due to the external world and its judgmental powers. This shows that the pressure for those people who try to be sympathizers is no less for those in the gangs themselves.

Because of this the people who try to break labels should not be labeled with a different name or judged since they face the same amount of pressures that people who are trying to make statements and stick up for what they believe in do.

This is definite evidence that Cherry makes influenced decisions much like the modern world today where others influence people's decisions/actions before their own thoughts. Many times internal dilemma is brought forward by pressure from others or fear of the moment.

In Evan Hunter's "On The Sidewalk Bleeding" a girl named Angela has to choose between letting a person bleed to death or not to do anything since he is part of the other rival gang. In addition she has another member of her own gang with her. Angela asks him "We can't just leave him, in the rain can we?" (5). Her partner Freddie's response is that they could since the gang "would have them by their necks" (5). However is it really right to let <https://assignbuster.com/literary-analysis-of-the-outsidere/>

someone pressure people's thought and not help a dying person because they are not part of said persons gang. Everyone would help that boy right? Wrong.

Under the pressure of living up to a social standard many people choose to do what is wrong in order to keep their position in society. Angela decides to go home that night. When she comes back two hours later it is too late since a person dies on the account of her not being able to do the right thing because of external pressures such as members of her gang and the fear of being caught doing something unforgivable. This shows that though the characters are making wrong decisions there is a lot of people who influence them through the fears of society and what would happen if they broke these so called norms".

Sometimes people just happen to break the labels upon them. They do not try but others influence them and they end up taking drastic actions in result of these other influences.

This is shown in The Outsiders where Dallas Winston (Dally) who is supposedly a leader of the Greasers gets attached to Johnny, the gangs under wing. When Johnny realizes the fighting is useless he changes, after killing someone and seeing the emotional trauma both groups suffer, and when he dies after saving some children Dally realizes his love for Johnny and decides to die to be relieved of this pain and follow Johnnys good deed.

Johnny leaves a note in a book before he dies, which says, " There's still a lot of good in the world. Tell Dally. I don't think he knows". Johnny is right Dally did not know what was left for him in the world.

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He was trying to live up to society's image of what a Hood or Greaser is. He made sure that even though he did many good things in his life society viewed him as a gangster or hoodlum. Someone who did not follow the rules and was determined to be a bad person. Dally took a drastic action by forcing policemen to kill him. However when looking closer it shown that this was brought on by society's expectations and

Johnnys death. Society expected Dally to die a hoodlum, which is why he went to extravagant means to prove society right.

He took drastic actions in order to prove society right. When he tried to break these labels society gave him more labels, which resulted in him taking drastic actions. Hence when trying to break labels many people take drastic actions. Many people are forced into being outcast and publicly disgraced. This is shown in The Outsiders where the Greasers are social outcasts since they follow a different set of beliefs.

Many are forced to be a greaser and they are displeased with their circumstances.

However society views them as scum and does not want them to be part of the high class and public activities. Cherry says " We couldn't let our parent see us with you all. You're a nice boy and everything...

" (Hinton 46). After that was said Ponyboy and Johnny later reason that " It's because we're Greasers. We couldVe hurt her reputation. " (Hinton 47). This shows that the Greasers are misjudged and then they are forced to live with this downgraded reputation.

However many Greasers are actually decent human beings such as Darry who has a very good background but is forced to be a Greaser by circumstance.

He has all the qualities of being a Soc including the high class mind however when his parents die he is forced to support his two brothers and give up his dreams of following the Soc lifestyle. However how the Socs view Darry changes the moment he is branded a Greaser and Darry ends up fighting against his former friends due to this. This is evidence that Greasers are considered a public disgrace and also have to face many challenges.

Overall people who try to break away from labels set by society are just named with new labels and misjudged as traitors to their own kind which forces them to live with these enforced new labels. Those who are trying to break away from labels are forced to live under society's unjust names/labels. After looking at many characters from both *The Outsiders* and "On the Sidewalk Bleeding" there is definite evidence that when individuals break away from their labels they are socially disgraced, face internal dilemmas and also take drastic actions.

One of the examples are that many groups of people are being misjudged and then publicly disgraced when forced to live by the social norm set by them. This is shown in the case of Darry where he in heart is a Soc but is forced to live as a Greaser and misjudged because of that. Also many people face internal dilemmas due to external pressures and fear as seen in Cherry and Angela when trying to help or join the other disliked social group.

Lastly the sources portray many individuals who take drastic actions when under the influence of others and trying to live up to or break social labels.

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Such as when Dally dies when he realizes that the fighting is useless but still dies with his label branded on his soul and as much as he tries to escape it he cannot.

This is all evidence to prove that when society labels people the individuals who try to break away from these labels result in them being socially disgraced, facing internal dilemmas brought forth by external pressures and taking drastic actions such as killing themselves.

The only way to stop this reign of judging and labeling is to inform the world about how it is wrong. Once people know about labeling and its effects on others maybe these people will stop labeling and make society a better place to live in. Works Cited Hunter, Evan. "On The Sidewalk Bleeding" The Literary Link.

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