

Robinson crusoee, fight club, and the issue of self- fulfillment

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I am Robinson Crusoe's wasted life: The Comparison of Fight Club and Robinson Crusoe regarding the theme of self-Fulfillment.

When asked, most people would say that money is not the important aspect of life. In the case of self-fulfillment, this is a very true case. Money alone, after-all, can not bring a feeling of self-fulfillment to someone. Or can it?

Many materialistic items are able to be used to achieve one's own feeling of fulfillment. When thinking of materialism we often think of money as being on top of the list, this of course being rightly attributed to the notion that anything of material value can usually be attained with money. The process of self-fulfillment is one that goes hand in hand with finding one's purpose in life and achieving happiness.

Money is often referred to as "the devil". It arguably is something that goes along with greed, materialism, and corruption. However it is also the same thing used to purchase food for a homeless man and allows scientists to work on cures for deadly sicknesses. One's sense of materialism can be an integral point that determines whether or not they achieve a feeling of self-fulfillment. Whether or not this is achieved morally is up for debate however morals aside, it is important for the development of a character as well as a real person to achieve this. In Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe, the process of self-fulfillment is a prominent theme however the way it is achieved is a bit different. This case in Robinson Crusoe is similar to the process of self-fulfillment seen in the development of the main character in Fight Club by Chuck Palahniuk.

Robinson Crusoe is an engaging story that has many dynamic aspects akin to an adventure, religious, or philosophical novel. The main character and the work's namesake Robinson Crusoe is a very tantalizing character. His story is full of dramatic ups and downs and quite complex. We see him through various points in his life and each part of his life comes with its own issues moral and otherwise. At its core, the story of Robinson Crusoe is that of self-exploration which leads to self-fulfillment. Robinson is a man who basically had his life drawn out for him and he decided to leave his vanilla wife and family to see if there was more to life. He came from a long line of law enforcers who all had a decent living in the colony they lived in. After failing repeatedly, Robinson's family, being very religious, attributed his failure to God sending him a sign. They told him that God's message was that there were only hardships ahead. They cared for Robinson and said this to persuade him to come home and stay. Robinson however saw his failures rather as God testing him and opted to return to sea. This part of the story is where we first notice how religious beliefs play a role in his decisions and how they affect his sense of materialism and self-fulfillment. Even though he could have chosen to stay home amongst his family and physical comforts. He rather chose to abandon his cozy lifestyle for a life of adventure on the open sea in order to hopefully achieve self-fulfillment.

He sets sail once again and successfully makes it out to sea only to get attacked by pirates. When he escapes them he befriends a slave named Xury. They both manage to survive for a time and although he and Xury had been through a lot, he sells his friend to secure his freedom and obtain some

capital. This is an interesting point in the development of Robinson. He went from an adventurous energetic sailor with a strong belief in God who didn't care about money to a man who sold his friend for his own personal and monetary benefit. When he left the place he was being held, he managed to obtain a plantation using some of the capital he acquired from selling his friend. The plantation ends up doing well and he accumulates enough money to retire and live off of his plantation if he wanted to. However, after all of this, he still doesn't feel fulfilled in his life and decides to set sail again. When it comes to his own sense of fulfillment, it doesn't seem to coincide with his sense of materialism. He repeatedly manages to do very well financially and yet always feels as if it isn't enough. Money seems to lack importance to Robinson in comparison to other priorities of his. Even though he sells his friend for money and freedom, when he's safe and making good money running a plantation he still feels a lack of self-fulfillment. This leads him back onto the sea once again in search of adventure or something that can manage to fill the hole in his heart. Something always felt like something was missing in his life and that something is not money. When he sails once again he ends up getting caught in a storm. After the storm subsides, Robinson finds himself on a beach of an island he doesn't know and realizes that his ship is wrecked beyond repair sinking somewhere in the ocean. As he travels into the island in search of food, water, and possible civilization, he comes across a group of natives performing a ceremony of human sacrifice. He manages to save one of the native men that were about to be sacrificed. After they get to safety they attempt to communicate and once he realizes he can't communicate with the man he saved, he names him Friday.

Friday becomes his very close friend on the island and after managing to teach Friday some English, he starts to teach him about Christianity and God.

After some time of showing Friday the ways of Christianity and pushing to convert him, Friday speaks of his own religion. The religion of the natives on the island was a very savage and violent one in which those that ate certain things were believed to be granted power. Friday tells Robinson about it was taught to him that if you eat more fish you become a better swimmer, if you eat lizards you get better at climbing, and lastly if you kill a man and eat his heart, you become strong. Robinson, being offended that the one he was teaching about God would speak of such a religion says Friday is speaking blasphemy. This causes the two of them to have a falling out and they stop speaking with each other for weeks if not months. They even isolate themselves from each other to avoid interaction. The reason that I brought up this part of the story is because even as Robinson is stranded on an island he does not know that he is most likely cohabiting with natives who would literally rip his heart out, he chooses to alienate his only friend over a difference in religious upbringing. Robinson Crusoe is a very complex character. In this paper I am speaking on the importance of money to people and whether it or other things bring characters self-fulfillment however when referring a character such as Crusoe, his sense of fulfillment and the importance of material items vary in different times. Through all of this it seems, when he has nothing of true material value on the island and an obviously lacking of self-fulfillment he most likely was receiving by converting Friday to Christianity, one difference in upbringing and religious

views was enough to make him throw all of it away for a term of isolation. Eventually the two characters get over their mild conflict however this short term in their lives holds quite a piece of significance in character development of course but also in observing what it is that Robinson holds dearest to him. He didn't really care about money and its affect on him nor did he show great consideration for those close to him. Rather whenever his ideas or beliefs were challenged he stood firm in their defense. When his family told him his failures at sea were signs from God to do something else at home and avoid hardship, he stood with his belief that his failures were instead signs from God as a test of his worthiness. Now when Friday challenges Robinson's beliefs with his own from his culture, Robinson feels the need to defend his faith especially because he had been attempting to convert Friday to christianity. When he gets back to England he gives his entire fortune to his sisters and marries. When his wife passes away he goes back to sailing and leaves everything behind once again. For Robinson Crusoe, materialism isn't very prominent for him however when it comes to his feeling of self-fulfillment, it is his religion coupled with his need for adventure that seem to affect him most.

In the novel Fight Club by Chuck Palahniuk, the main character who is not named in the novel but states that he is "Joe". Joe starts a club where men can go and relieve their stress and feel a pleasing rush of adrenaline, testosterone, and dopamine. This is done through two members of the club taking part in the brutal, yet classical art of hand to hand combat. The story opens up in the regular day to day activities of average Joe. He has a decent

job and has the basic essentials to that a person in their mid-twenties should have. He ends up meeting a character by the name of Tyler Durden. Tyler is the polar opposite of Joe. Where Joe is more reserved and polite, Tyler is open, bluntly honest, and straightforward. Joe works a nine-to-five job during the week he's come to hate but needs the money. Tyler is unemployed and goes with the flow. Tyler gets in the head of Joe and convinces him to change his ways. To be more exploring and reckless and to not care about what people think. Tyler ends up convincing Joe to destroy his house with him as well as giving him the necessary mindset to wreck his boss' office and quit his job. Tyler shows Joe he doesn't really need much to live, that money is not as necessary to live daily as he had thought. Tyler takes Joe under his wing and shows him how to play by his own rules and to live in the moment. Joe and Tyler move into an old house that Joe describes as " huge but terrible". Tyler and Joe then begin a cult with the men who participated in the fight clubs. Even though Joe is the protagonist of the story, he watches Tyler commit all of the vicious crimes he does and can't seem to stop it. Morality plays a large role in this novel mainly because the morality of one's actions can be decided on the point of view you decide to view the story through. While Tyler's actions may not be morally sound by traditional means, his rationalization often strikes the reader as sound and somewhat reasonable.

This story tends to play with the idea of materialism quite a bit. The main characters live in an old beaten down home with the bare necessities and while neither of them have been the type to want much, seeing them live

day to day doing the interesting crimes and other activities they manage to do by living in the moment and not worrying about normal issues you or I would consider important. It's a fascinating tale of self-fulfillment that examines different parts of the human mind. As the story continues, the reader learns that Joe and Tyler actually are not two strangers who met and began a crime spree leading a cult of recruited fighters. Tyler and Joe are actually the same person. Joe has two personalities living in him and his alter ego Tyler Durden, being the polar opposite of him, is one formed from a need to achieve self-fulfillment. Without Tyler, Joe would still be the average guy walking down the street, working his nine-to-five job barely getting by without a bit of excitement in sight. Tyler Durden however, is a persona that embodies everything that Joe wants to be. Tyler is tough, charismatic, intelligent, suave, and a natural leader. Through Joe's own feeling of lacking meaning in his life, Tyler Durden was born.

All of the crimes Tyler committed, the fight club, the cult, the fights he got into, and even a plan to blow up buildings housing credit card companies were all him. He became tired of being told how to live and act. He got sick of needing to work every day to continue a meager existence. When Tyler had revealed to Joe his plan to blow up buildings housing credit card companies he at first thought it was insane. Over time, although Joe did not agree with committing an act of terrorism, he still saw the rationalization of Tyler Durden. The self-fulfillment so sought after by Joe only came from one thing, freedom. The freedom to control one's life without the need for societal norms to tell you what's right or wrong. When Joe realizes that him

and Tyler are one in the same, he has an epiphany as to why he did all of the things that he did. He states "The things you own end up owning you. It's only after you lose everything that you're free to do anything." By blowing up the credit card company buildings housing the records, the world would become filled with Tyler Durdens. Millions of people would be debt free and be allowed a fresh start in life. There would no longer be anything owning them and they would go out into the world without concern. Joe realized that following the norms of everyone else, and living the regular life of a normal person, wasn't fulfilling. It wasn't until he became Tyler Durden, a classless citizen with no laws or restraints that he was finally getting what he and many people truly yearned for. Freedom.

Robinson Crusoe and Joe both have very similar paths. They both realize that there is more to life than monetary possessions. They both realize that money isn't everything by going so long without it. Going through what both of them respectively did allowed them to see the side of life not governed by money. That's the side of life where you have more freedom than you realize. When living like that you no longer have to achieve the societal norms expected of you. Robinson Crusoe and Joe both had their own ways of escaping the world in search of themselves. In the end, both of them were only fulfilled when they were free from society. Even when he went back, Robinson Crusoe always felt the need to go back out at sea, to see what was out there and what adventures he can get into. In a more modern world, the case was still the same for Joe. He may not have been sailing the sea, but by developing the persona of Tyler Durden, he subconsciously found an escape

from everyday life and responsibility. It was this freedom that the two of them sought after and it was this that allowed them to achieve their own self-fulfillment by realizing there is more to life than making money and being a regular citizen. You need to have a sense of individuality.