

Midterm

Sociology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest Randle Patrick McMurphy is the leading character in the film played by Jack Nicholson. The social commentary narrates the story of a notorious criminal who decides to fake insanity in order to serve his jail term in a mental institution rather than prison. However, his plans do not yield the expected results. Randle realizes that that prison is far much better than the mental asylum. He decides to amend the rules to enjoy some of the privileges he enjoyed in prison. His actions create a constant tag of war between him and the head nurse, Mildred Ratched. McMurphy's plot to overthrow Nurse Ratched's rule involves inciting other inmates, gambling and even stealing drugs from the institution's pharmacy. His plans, however, do not succeed as one of the patients Billy Bibbit commits suicide and Nurse Ratched blames McMurphy for his death. The death of Billy saddens McMurphy. Eventually, he escapes from the institution.

One social aspect tackled in the film is the existence of mental institutions in the society. The society designed mental institutions to separate mentally impaired members of the society from able-minded people. In addition, mental asylums provide a healing and rehabilitation process to reintegrate these members to the society. Ironically, the film portrays a small society where rulers like Nurse Ratched impose authoritarian unrealistic rules on their subjects without their consensus. McMurphy, together with the other inmates represent a group of people who cannot operate their lives under the standard measures of the society. McMurphy defies strict routines laid to them by Nurse Ratched while other characters in the film like Billy, Harding, Bromden, and Taber become social misfits because they do not qualify as well functioning members of society.

Symbolically, Nurse Ratched represents a tyrannical leader whose actions

and methods of administration are indisputable. The audience view nurse Ratched as an absolute system whose command and influence goes beyond treatment and medication of patients. Her role involves policymaking and absolute control over how patients should carry out themselves. Nurse Ratched character and system of administration intimidates most patients. None of the patients can stand up to her. In fact, in a dictatorial system of government she represents the oppressor while the patients represent the oppressed. McMurphy enters as a messiah and liberator with a noble course to save the other patients from the fate subjected to them by the nurse. In summary, the mental institution in the film is a representation of how dictatorial the standard of social norms in the society can become.

Individuals who do not fit in this criterion like Billy who is a virgin and afraid to interact with the opposite sex, become retards not fit for the society. The fate of these unfortunate individuals lies in the mental institution. These individuals are subject to isolation and rehabilitation to deliver them into normalcy.

Work Cited

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