

Mccarthyism and the one flew over the cuckoo????????s nest assignment

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At that time, ' the news Of Soviet atomic bomb and the trial and conviction of Alger Hiss were fresh in the publics mind" (McCarthy P. 72), so his speech about anti-communist was very effective. In his speech, McCarthy claimed not only that he had a list of the names of 205 State Department Communists, but also that the administration in the State Department knew who they were and approved what they did. He used this imaginary list to criticize his opponents that they were complicit in treason or maybe traitors themselves. This list functions in a very similar way as the log book.

Nurse Ratchet uses the log book as a tool to collect the hearsay from the patients. Then, she sets up meeting, which she claims is a " group therapy" (Cuckoo's Nest P. 134), with the patients to discuss about the hearsay and humiliate individual patient who has bad hearsay. Thus, the log book functions in a way that gives her control over the patients. The character that is initially able to fight against Nurse Ratchet is McCarthy. His arrival and uprising gradually influences the other patients to challenge Nurse Ratchet's authority. She tries to retain her authority by using a number of ways.

First, she confiscates the patients cigarette (used as money in the ward) and the tub-room privilege. But then her tactic fails because McCarthy and the rest of the patients are unsatisfied and seize to get back their cigarettes as well as the privilege of the tub-room. Because of the failure of this tactic, Nurse Ratchet decides to utilize electro shock therapy as her next manipulating weapon. In the novel Nurse Ratchet mentions, " it might be beneficial that he chive some shock therapy-?? unless he realizes his mistakes" (Cuckoo's Nest P. 53), indicating that electro shock therapy is <https://assignbuster.com/mccarthyism-and-the-one-flew-over-the-cuckoos-nest-assignment/>

used as a punishment. Similarly, lobotomy is also a punishment tool, but it functions more intensely, as this surgery turns the patient into "vegetable." The relationship between Nurse Ratchet and McCarthy directly relates to the relationship between Joseph McCarthy and Alger Hiss. Alger Hiss was a government official of the U. S. State Department and official in United Nations, and was accused of having been a spy for the Soviet Union while working in the U. S. State Department.

Although Alger Hiss claimed that he was innocent, it demonstrated that Communist party engaging in high position in the U. S. Government was possible. People thought that if government official like Alger was suspicious, then anyone could be a communist. Hiss was also accused of perjury under oath earlier. During the discovery process, Chambers provided more evidence indicating that he and Hiss were members of the communist party. Finally, Hiss was judged guilty of perjury, and he was put into jail for three and a half years (Alger Hiss). But he claimed that he was innocent until his death.

Even though there was no definite evidence to prove that Hiss was a Soviet spy, people were afraid of another outbreak of Soviet spy, and thus eventually led to the anti-Communist McCarthy. Likewise, Nurse Ratchet indicates McCarthy as an insane person, but in fact he is one of the most normal person in the mental ward. Nurse Ratchet's use of electro shock therapy and lobotomy to McCarthy parallels with McCarthy use of accusation and imprisonment to Hiss. McCarthy believes that he is not insane parallel to Alger Hiss's claim of innocence in trial.

As Nurse Ratchet serves as coercion in the novel, Chief rivers as a victim who is coerced under Nurse Ratchet's authority. He suffers from paranoia and harassment from the black workers and Nurse Ratchet. The fact that he is frequently put into a room full of hallucinated fog demonstrates his weakness and intention of escaping reality, as he says, " They start the fog machine again and its snowing down cold and white all over me like skim milk, so thick I might even be able to hide in it if they didn't have a hold on me. " From the quote, one understands that Chief is weak in the inside because he always wants to hide.

The fog room in many ways can homelike the relocation of Native American peoples during the 1 ass's, as Chief is put into this space without his consent. In fact, Chiefs speechlessness in many ways represents the loss of the Native American voice in American history, and specifically in the process of relocation in the 1950. Both Nurse Ratchet and Chief serve as an important role historically; Nurse Ratchet becomes the symbol of the oppressive government and McCarthy, and Chief represents the Native American in the 1950s.

During the Cold War, many non-white citizens were more easily abused and oppressed by government policies. An example would be the Native American. Policy- makers in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in an attempt to liberate Native Americans from the constraints of federal trust restrictions, passed an act called the Termination Policy of the sass. This was a relocation program that relocated Native American, ranging from eighteen to forty-five years old, to urban areas with federal assistance. Essentially, many Native

Americans were forced from their land and their homes into cities without their consent.

In addition, the policy would “ nullify the special minority status that Native American held because of their 389 treaties and agreements made with the United States between 1778 and 1871” (Termination and Relocation).

Furthermore, the three black orderlies treat Chief very badly. Even though Chief appears to be a strong man, they bully him as much as they can. For example, they “ stick a mop in my hand and motion to the spot they aim for me to clean today/” (Cuckoo’s Nest P. 11). Also, they make fun of him by calling him “ Chief Broom” (Cuckoo’s Nest P. 11).

Moreover, they eat the breakfast that is supposed to be for Chief and lock him in seclusion. It is interesting to note about the relationship between Chief and the black workers. This relationship s interesting in the context of history because it represents in many ways the relationships between Native Americans and African Americans. Despite both groups being heavily oppressed by the government, Native American voices and histories had been silenced much more than African Americans. However, African Americans still faced serious oppression and silencing, but it was not the same as Native Americans.

Nurse Ratchet’s relationship with the black workers and their relationship with Chief all parallel these relationships in history. Nurse Ratchet has control over the workers and Chief, but Chief as character does not speak at all, and the workers to some degree have control over what he does. The fact that they call Chief “ Chief Broom,” force him to wipe the floor, and steal

his breakfast demonstrates that they have more power than Chief. Similarly, in history, slavery ended with the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 (Lincoln Emancipation Proclamation).

So in *1937*, the African American had more freedom than they had before. But comparing the treatment to African American and to Native American, Native American was treated worse. This is demonstrated in the novel where Chief is bullied by the black orderlies. Another important aspect of Chief's character in relationship to the government in *1937*'s is his childhood. His father's name is Chief Tee Ah Immolation, meaning "The Pine That Stands Tallest on the Mountain" (The mixed heritage of the Chief).

His mother, Mary Louise Broaden, is a white woman who plays a dominant role in the marriage. We can see that because Chief's last name follows his mother instead of his father. Chief tells the story about his childhood, which he emphasizes that it is one of the elements that weaken him. He says that when the government officials come to speak to his father about buying the tribe's land, he is the only person at home. They ignore him when he tries to talk to them. Later on, his mother also helps some members in the tribe to force Chief's father to sell the land.

His father's powerlessness implicitly affects Chief in his childhood, causing Chief to become even weaker in the mental ward. The fact that the white government officials ignore him demonstrates that the white's systemically had more power than other races. In addition, Chief's mother plays a dominant role in her marriage also explains that in reality, white Americans

wield more power than the Native American. Essentially, most government officials in the 1950s were white, thus had the most power in the U. S.

They were able to relocate the Native Americans to their cities with just the termination policy. Also, they forced the Native Americans to sell their tribal lands for government usage. This illustrates that they dominated Native American freedom. Chief represents not only the public, who are controlled by the Government and McCarthy, but also the Native American people. From the historical background, one can see that the government forced the Native American onto a life that was not their own without taking into consideration their thoughts and feelings.

Relocation of the Native Americans has consistently been happening throughout American history, but *Once Over the Cuckoo's Nest* specifically deals with Native Americans in the 1950s. This can be seen in Chief's childhood and the time when he is in the mental institution. Overall, Keyes' novel *One Flew Over Cuckoo's Nest* serves as a strong commentary on the government's control over the people during the 1950s. As we can see through the character of Nurse Ratchet, Keyes directly talks about the domination of government in the 1950s.