

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

a) what is a bad guy ?

we often hear of a bad guy in films. Who is the 'bad guy' in ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST ? Is McMurphy a bad guy because he is a criminal ? Or is Nurse Ratched the bad guy. Who do you think Ken Kesey is presenting as the villain in the story ? And do you agree with this ?

b) what is segregation ?

Some of the patients are there at their own request. They don't feel they can cope in the outside world, they feel themselves to be imperfect, monstrous, unattractive, weak etc. Ask your students to describe examples in modern society when criteria of "perfection" become criteria for discrimination. How do people set themselves apart from Society ? Is there voluntary segregation here in this classroom ? In the school ? In society today ?

Activity 2:

"The public should be protected at all costs" ? Organise a class debate on the subject, allowing each pupil one minute to defend their point of view.

Establish a debating point together before beginning: e.g. "The public should be protected by any means necessary – for or against?" or "It is for their own good".

Then hold a blind vote on the subject.

After the vote, discuss in small groups of 5 or 6 students where the resulting class vote would take us. Enforced drugs, lobotomy, the death penalty? What is the view of the smaller group? Have a representative of each group summarize the group view to the class. The group representative should give the collected views of the group without giving his personal opinion.

Activity 3:

Stop the press !

Have each small group of 5 or 6 students design and write articles for the front page of an American newspaper. Include articles on prisons and hospitals. The following week display the front pages of each journal for the whole class to enjoy. No one's personal viewpoints should be visible. The collective view of each newspaper is of primary importance.