Alienated People Essay, Research Paper

The Oxford dictionary defines alienation as; to estrange, isolate,

detach, distance, to put a distance, to turn away from another person.

Alienation, like a lot of other social attitudes and concepts, can give a

wide variety of interests. I have found six main points in The Encyclopedia

of Psychiatry, Psychology, and Psychoanalysis that have gotten the most

attention and things written about alienation; A) Powerlessness: The feeling,

belief, or expectancy that a persons behavior can’t control some events

whether positive or negative, B) Meaninglessness: The person feels

incomprehensive in his/her social life and feels the "absurdity of life", C)

Normlessness: High expectancies for, or commitment to socially unapproved

ways to achieving a goal, one will go about achieving a goal in a not

normally excepted way, D) Cultural Estrangement: person’s individual values

rejected by society, the image that the alienated value’s not being standard

to that of the environment around him/her, E) Social Isolation: The

individuals low expectancy for inclusion and social exceptance, being lonely

and commonly found a member of a minority or physically disabled, F) Self

Estrangement: This focuses on the discrepancy or differences between one’s

ideal self and one’s actual self.

In the novel, The Metamorphosis, Gregor wakes up one morning as a giant

insect and feels out of place. When Gregor sees his father and his attitude

to him, Gregor feels alienated in that fact that his father yells and shows

his anger and frustration to his son and throws an apple which gets stuck in

his slimy backside. His father feels Gregor has not become successful and a

failure. He probably also feels that he has let his sister down along with

his mother for not being supportive enough as the father was not.

Continuing with the same concept of Mr. Samsa not being a good father,

Gregor felt alienated again by his mother and sister by not filling in the

father role while his father was out or doing whatever. His mom and sister

took things out of his room and the only thing left was a picture of a woman

who he probably felt was the only thing close to him. His boss surely wasn’t

and his family was sure not there either.

In I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, Maya gets an incredible toothache and

is taken to the dentist who refuses to work on her because of her race.

Because of Dr. Lincoln and his nurses, Maya feels distrusted, hated, and

these things prevent her from receiving her share of community respect. She

remains unacknowledged except by her black neighbors.

Towards the end of the novel, Maya lacks parental support and runs away.

Sleeping in old cars and meeting other run away children as independent as

she is. She feels abandoned by family but gains trust in the gang members and

enjoy the illusion of freedom. She has nowhere to go and has no choice but to

go with these hoodlums and try to survive, she’s lost on the inside.

Looking at my workbook and the notes I have taken, I find some

interesting points on alienation. The modernist growing sense of

self-fragmentation, alienation, and self-violence in the name of trying to

find some comprehensive vision of human purpose (the CD-ROM to workbook) has

become completely impossible for some humans. The media and new technologies

are disrupting the way we want to live and corrupting our everyday lives.

There is no perfect way to live but these things are blocking us and trying

to pursue us into believing that these are the things that will make life

better.

In the same light as the media, these people have constructed the truth.

They have twisted some forms of it making the interviewed seem more demented

and pre-mediated in the things they do. Doing articles to get paid and not

all truly into the article or having any interest in it at all. I feel most

reporters want to get the dirt on people because the story will sell or

people want to only see the nasty things about people which I also believe is

very true. We need to stop looking at the bad things as interesting and focus

on the good things people are doing today and acknowledge them. The media

really separates the two ideas.

Urban life and huge cities have alienated us from the real American way

of living compared to a small town or country. Driving through small cities

we don’t see large buildings and bright lights, but average farmers putting

in a decent days work to provide us big wigs with food everyday. Fields and

roadside markets with the old American style. We probably sometimes feel

different entering these places but we are not use to seeing it and it makes

us believe in something but we don’t exactly know what that something is.

Whether it’s the way we live or the way we want to live, urbanized life has

changed our society as a whole.

The density of our population has come to be so great that we feel alienated

even in our own community. I feel alienated in college because of the

enormous amount of people and the way people treat each other. Only knowing a

small amount of people compared to the population is hard and can sometimes

be mentally tiring on a person especially if they have one or two friends.

Moving to another city is another great example of being alienated because

you don’t know anybody. When I first came here to Arizona State I felt weird

because I didn’t know anyone and it took me some time to get know the people

and the professors teaching me. Life can be much easier I feel if you meet

new people everyday and get to know the diversity around you.