The Faulty Syllogism Of Popularity

Ever since we were young we have been automatically placed into categories, shipped off like boxes. However, some of us don't fit this mold and the ones that understand it and disapproved of it don't speak up. We have been unknowingly placed into these groups and perceived as such ever since.

Social hierarchies have existed since the dawn of time, the animal kingdom survived off such hierarchies. Similarly, the workforce has similar systems to allow operations to work effectively. This idea of hierarchies cannot take place in high schools as the stage of adolescence is a time of growth and personal development, which entails colossal stress and debilitating pressure. The aforementioned pressures suffocate us, however, the social hierarchy asphyxiates our generation. The toxicity of this social death sentence comes in 3 main categories; The Popular Kids, The Accepted Kids, and The Rejected Kids. The Popular Kids are the "alpha males" and the "queen bees". All having two things in common, their social skills and conventional attractiveness. This can be demonstrated in the well-known teen film, Mean Girls when the Queen of the Plastics, Regina George says, "Spring fling queen is always pretty." The Spring fling queen is a representation of the girl that is at the top of the social hierarchy, this captures the idea that even the "Queen bee" of Mean Girls, Regina, knows that the most popular girl has to be pretty. This unhealthy conception is not only absurd but signifies, the pernicious social hierarchy in today's society.

Due to them being easily manipulated by The Popular Kids, the second-highest in this social hell is The 'Accepted Kids'. They include the majority of high school kids and are well known. To be suitable in this category under the malicious social hierarchy you must be smart and outgoing. You are required to be a follower and not a leader. They are a possible threat to the pathological hierarchy but The Popular Kids purposely have the ability to read them like books, therefore, consuming any chance of overturning the unethical value system. Then there are the highest at social risk, The Rejected Kids. Furthermore, their 'rejected' nature, causes them to be submissive, aggressive, and purposely act up to gain attention from others. Fitting with this craving for attention are the social climbers.

The Ladder and How to Climb It

These days' adolescent social scenarios are defined on popularity. Popularity being the purpose, popularity being the goal, popularity being the inspiration. The signs of social climbing involve, that they are status-driven, name droppers, overly concerned with appearances, are selective friend poacher, likes to use people, lacks empathy, and attempts to maintain control over groups. In many ways the social-climbing parade is an attempt for a high schoolers to build their self-esteem and self-confidence, helping them to feel good about themselves. Their insecurity and their urges for attention cause them to act in ways cultivating an image of popularity seeming "god-like." Social climbing allows for consequences. According to Mahatma Gandhi, "For every action we do, there is an equivalent action for that." This idea can be observed in social climbing, where after failing to climb the ladder the social climber may face status challenges. They will lose friends, lose trust and most importantly lose themselves. The climber loses their originality as well as identity in trying to be someone they are not. They

struggle to climb up the ladder forcing themselves into a toxic cycle apart of the social hierarchy.

Power-hungry high school kids are detrimental not only to the social hierarchy but to their own self-development. During this stressful phase in their lives, they should be focusing on schoolwork and their own self-expression. It is a time where morals are established that are not poisoned by the social hierarchy and its enforced categories. At the top of the hierarchy, The Popular Kids, the “alpha males” and the “queen bees” unknowingly also experience the agony of the social categories. Bee Colonies are divided into statuses just like the social hierarchy. Without the Queen, the colony cannot survive so it relies on her to keep it alive. But the Popular Girl is actually at the mercy of her colony as she fears others as a threat to the system she has invested in maintaining and cannot see what is outside its structure. It’s ironic to see the Popular Kids fighting to preserve a status quo that ultimately makes everyone suffer, including themselves. The Accepted kids are in social danger due to the fact that they are losing their own self character through attempting to impress the Popular Kids. In order to stay accepted in the hierarchy, they must act in a way almost proving themselves to the Popular Kids. This unsaid deadly idea is a part of the social hierarchy and is allowing a toxic environment for high schoolers to be developing in. The Rejected Kids are badly wanting attention causing them to act up or even blow up if made fun of. They have been bought up socially unaware of the dangerous social hierarchy and are unable to define themselves or the person they want to be as they are too caught up in craving attention, producing social climbers.

The ill-fated hierarchy has not given the ability for self-expression as well as self-defining during an important period of most student's lives. We need to acknowledge each other, for our differences, similarities and accept each other. We are all unique in our own way and we should be celebrating our uniqueness. This notion is summed up by the iconic movie “The Breakfast Club” “You told us to write this essay telling you who we think we are. You see us as you want to see us. In the simplest terms, in the most convenient definitions. But what we found out is that each one of us is a brain…and an athlete…and a basket case…a princess…and a criminal…does that answer your question? Sincerely yours, The Breakfast Club