

In the book *"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest,"* there is repetition of Chief Bromden and other patients of the psych ward having a "fog." As the readers, we are unsure of what exactly the fog is. Whether it is self induced, or medically induced is unclear. Regardless, this fog seems to present some negative side effects, while remaining comforting and safe to those who experience it.

On page 112, Chief Bromden explains that "...you can slip back into [the fog] and feel safe." While the fog clouds the patients' perception, Bromden often describes it with a fondness of sorts. The new patient McMurphy tries to "pull" and "drag" patients out of the fog. (pgs. 80,120) He does not understand why the patients succumb to the fog. This could be because he has not experienced it. To McMurphy, an outsider, there is no safety in the fog.

Currently, in the year 2023, social media has a huge effect on many lives. As a society we have normalized endless scrolling and countless hours on our phones. It is the sort of fog we live in. We know that it is bad for our eyes to be on a screen for that long. We know it negatively impacts our mental health to scroll on social media for hours. We know all this, but still we crave it, still we accept it. In our fog we are safe, endlessly scrolling through things that may as well not be real. We know that it is not good for us, but it feels good. It feels safe and we may not want to leave even if we could. Even if some are urging us away from it.

On the outside, this looks crazy. If a human, who had somehow lived under a rock for the past decade, suddenly had a typical American life, they would think we are crazy. Crazy for feeling safety in an activity that to them appears self harming. This can be compared to what McMurphy feels about the fog. He was just admitted to the psych ward and has also not experienced the fog for himself. To him, the fog doesn't seem safe. The fog does not comfort him. Just like, to the human that experienced social media for the first time, there is no comfort to endless scrolling.

McMurphy does not feel at ease with the other patients in the fog either. During one of the group meetings with the Big Nurse, Chief Bromden is experiencing the fog. Briefly he hears McMurphy arguing with the nurse. He is asking questions about why they should do this and why they should listen to her. "That's that McMurphy. He's far away. He's still trying to pull people out of the fog." (pg. 120) McMurphy is trying to break up the norms of the ward, that the patients just do as they are told without any questions, that the Big Nurse is to be obeyed. But the fog and these norms appear a safe option for Chief Bromden and the other patients so they are uncomfortable with the idea of him challenging it.

In school, many teachers have a "no phone" rule in their classrooms. They discourage students from their personal screens even after they have completed their work. Students are uncomfortable with these rules in particular. Phones are a comfort to students. Students have an urge to use their phones at every given moment. Teachers make these rules because they can see the harm of student's phones. On page 120, Chief Bromden's reaction to McMurphy trying to pull patients out of the fog by breaking rules is, "Why don't he leave me be?" That is the exact response that students have. The comfort of their phones restricts the ability to see through the harm they cause.

The fog is comforting to the patients and phones are comforting to students. Both dependencies look crazy from the outside. In *"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest,"* the dependents are "crazy." In 2023, the dependents are normal. This has expanded my perspective of who and what is considered "crazy" and also why someone is considered "crazy." Many things

look crazy from an outsider perspective, but crazy is just a word for things that we don't understand.