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I am challenging the decision of the main character, Laura, from the short story, "The Fan Club". The first reason as to why I challenge her is because she chose the group over Rachel. Rachel and Laura would talk in the halls and Rachel would be kind to Laura but Laura knew that the group laughed at the two of them. Laura finally realized that all the teasing and jokes were about Rachel, not Laura and Laura was wrong by deciding to go with the group that bullied Rachel. The second reason why I challenge Laura is because according to "Quirk Cachet: Why Geeks Shall Inherit The Earth", the author states that "...being excluded in high school or middle school doesn't mean that there's anything wrong with you." Laura excluded Rachel by joining the "popular" group and wearing the card that said "Honesty Fan Club". Lastly, the final reason is based off a video clip from Alan Alda's "Brain on Trial". It explains that people are tempted to do risky things or perform differently when their friends are around due to peer pressure. Therefore, Laura decided to choose the group over Rachel because the rest of the class was clapping to take the card because of the pressure that everyone was watching her.

The first reason why I am challenging Laura's decision to choose the group is because Rachel was the person that was always friendly to Laura because she was quiet and didn't really have any friends. Laura originally thought that the group was stuck up and were cruel for snickering, laughing, and joking about other people including, what she thought was herself and

Rachel. In the short story, "The Fan Club", Laura realizes, "So that was what the whispering had been about all morning. She'd been wrong. They weren't out to get her after all. It was only Rachel." Laura had thought the group was very snobby and rude until Dianne handed Laura a card that said "Honesty Fan Club" to pin to her clothing. "For a moment Laura stared at the card. She looked from Rachel's red, frightened face to Diane's mocking smile, and she heard the pulsing, frenzied rhythm of the claps and the stamping, faster and faster. Her hands trembled as she picked up the card and pinned it to her sweater. And as she turned, she saw Rachel's stricken look." Laura made the awful decision by pinning the card to her shirt because she wanted to fit in and because she thought Rachel was odd or different than other people. Rachel would complement Laura and invite her over but Laura never truly appreciated her sympathy which is the reason why she chose the group over Rachel.

The next reason as to why I challenged Laura's choice to join the group instead of Rachel is because Laura excluded Rachel from everyone else and wanted to be with the "in" crowd. Laura excluded Rachel by choosing to take the card and pin it to her sweater so that Rachel would be the only one without a card even though it was making fun of Rachel. In "Quirk Cachet: Why Geeks Shall Inherit The Earth", the author says, "...number one, being excluded in high school or middle school doesn't mean that anything is wrong with you. And number two, popularity also doesn't make you happy." Rachel was excluded from the rest of her class because Laura chose to take the card to join the group so that she could be popular. Rachel was nerdy and dorky which made her different, which is why Laura decided to join the group. In the beginning of the short story, Laura thought, "Why were they so cold and unkind?... They were clods, the whole lot of them." Laura had been thinking about how rude the group was to people, including

what she thought was her and Rachel. She complained about how they would talk about others, giggle, and tease other kids but she still decided to choose the group that talked about Rachel behind her back over Rachel, who was friendly and was Laura's only friend.

The last reason why I think it was wrong of Laura to choose the group instead of Rachel is because Laura didn't want to be excluded from the group or crowd like Rachel. Laura felt peer pressured to take the card from Dianne and pin it to her shirt because the whole class was clapping and staring at her, encouraging her to take the card and join the group. In the video, "Brains on Trial", Laurence Steinberg says that "...teens tend to be influenced by their peers and tend to struggle when being watched." This quote helps explain that Laura had been peer pressured by her other classmates to take the card to join the group and be like everyone else. In "The Fan Club", it says, "For a moment Laura stared at the card. She looked from Rachel's red, frightened face to Diane's mocking smile, and she heard the pulsing, frenzied rhythm of the claps and the stamping, faster and faster." Laura heard all the clapping and murmuring of the students which caused to her to pin the card to her shirt and join in on the clapping. The class peer pressured her into taking the card by creating a big applause and then they started to clap faster and faster to put more tension on Laura to join the group.

In conclusion, I decided to challenge Laura and her decision making. First, it was wrong of her to choose the group over Rachel because she stuck by Laura because Laura didn't really have friends and she was lonely. Rachel was kind enough to invite Laura over and compliment her poetry. But Laura still chose the group that bullied Rachel. Next, Laura was wrong in making her decision by excluding Rachel from the rest of the class because she was corks, weird, and different from the rest. Laura just wanted to fit in with the group because she found out that they

weren't making fun of her, they were making fun of Rachel. Lastly, Laura was peer pressured into taking the card and pinning it when she could of done the right thing and stuck with Rachel. Because Laura's classmates were watching her, Laura felt obligated to pin the card to her sweater and join the group. If Laura had been alone, then the situation would have been different. Therefore, I challenge Laura's decision as to joining the group over Rachel.