

# Self Discovery in Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment and Camus' The Outsider

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## Self Discovery in Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment and Camus' The Outsider

In every society, it is important for individuals to adhere to a set of principles in order to maintain order. In Dostoyevsky's Crime and Punishment and Camus' The Outsider , however, both protagonists ignored the values of their society. [Raskolnikov](#) and Meursault felt their own beliefs were significant, and through their actions they were able to express them. As a result, one man was judged as a social deviant, while the other man suffered psychologically. Through dealing with this strife, Raskolnikov and

Meursault gained a better understanding of their values and personal worth.

In the beginning both men rejected the fundamental values of society and formed their own ideologies. Raskolnikov, for instance, believed that "we have to correct and direct nature. But for that, there would never had been a single great man"<sup>1</sup>. In fact, he had written an article titled "The psychology of a criminal before and after the [crime](#)". It stated that 'ordinary' men live according to the law and exist only to reproduce the human race, yet 'extraordinary' men may break laws "if in his own conscience it is necessary to do so in order to better mankind"<sup>2</sup>. Raskolnikov believed that indeed, he was an "extraordinary man"<sup>3</sup>, but like Meursault, his beliefs were untested. As a result, he murdered an old pawnbroker woman in order to prove himself. Meursault, as well, acted against the social norm. For example, even though it was expected of a son, he did not show sorrow at his mother's funeral<sup>4</sup>. He did not think this was shallow, however, he just refused to falsel...

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... was finally able to declare them.

Raskolnikov and Meursault were not afraid to cross the boundaries their societies had set for them. They were free-thinkers, and although they were seen as heretics, men like these play an important role in the growth and improvement of any society.

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