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The Hero's Vision of the World in The Boy's "The Catcher In The Rye" As A Model

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Abstract

"The Catcher in the Rye" is a bildungsroman, or a coming-of-age novel, written by J.D. Salinger. It was initially released in serial form between 1945 and 1946 before being compiled and published as a novel in 1951. It is a complex and controversial novel that has been praised for its honest and insightful portrayal of adolescence. It has also been criticized for its language and its negative portrayal of adults. However, the novel remains a classic of American literature and continues to be read and enjoyed by people of all ages. Holden Caulfield, a native New Yorker, is the central character and narrator of "The Catcher in the Rye". At just sixteen years old, he possesses keen intelligence and acute perception, yet grapples with profound inner turmoil. The novel follows Holden as he wanders around New York City for three days after being expelled from his boarding school. During this time, he reflects on his life and the world around him, often cynically and critically. He vehemently criticizes "phoniness" the insincerity he perceives in the world of adults and yearns for a bygone era of simplicity and innocence. He leaves his Pennsylvania prep school in a manner that avoids adult interpretation and spends three days beneath the surface of New York City. Drawing definitive conclusions about him or his story is challenging due to his mixture of simplicity and complexity. What can be confidently stated about Holden is that he entered a world where he was almost fatally drawn to beauty, not just greatly fascinated by it. The novel encompasses the voices of children, adults, and those existing in the underground, yet Holden's voice emerges as the most potent. He unleashes a beautifully articulated expression that combines both sorrow and elation, rising above his everyday language while remaining remarkably faithful to it. He does, however, reserve most of the suffering for himself, much like the majority of lovers, clowns, and poets of the upper levels. He offers or puts aside his pleasure wholeheartedly. The reader who can handle it can retain it if they choose. He visits his younger sister, Phoebe, at her boarding school. He tells her that he wants to be the "catcher in the rye," (Salinger, 1) a metaphor for someone who saves children from falling off the edge of a cliff. This represents Holden's desire to protect children from the harsh realities of the adult world.

الخلاصة

الحارس في حقل الشوفان هي رواية عن بلوغ سن الرشد بقلم جي دي سالينجر، نُشرت جزئياً في شكل مسلسل في ١٩٤٥-١٩٤٦ قبل أن يتم روايتها في عام ١٩٥١. إنها رواية معقدة ومثيرة للجدل وقد تم الإشادة بها لتصويرها الصادق والثاقب لمرحلة المراهقة. كما تم انتقادها بسبب لغتها وتصويرها السلبي للبالغين. ومع ذلك، تظل الرواية من كلاسيكيات الأدب الأمريكي، ولا يزال الناس من جميع الأعمار يقرأونها ويستمتعون

بها. البطل الراوي في الرواية هو طفل يبلغ من العمر ستة عشر عامًا، وهو من سكان نيويورك الأصليين يُدعى هولدن كولفيلد. ، شاب ذكي ومدرك ولكنه مضطرب للغاية. تتبع الرواية هولدن وهو يتجول بلا هدف في مدينة نيويورك لمدة ثلاثة أيام بعد طرده من مدرسته الداخلية. خلال هذا الوقت، يفكر في حياته والعالم من حوله، غالبًا بطريقة ساخرة وانتقادية. إنه يعارض "زيف" عالم البالغين ويعرب عن شوقه لوقت أبسط وأكثر براءة. من خلال الظروف التي تميل إلى استبعاد الوصف السلبي للبالغين، يترك مدرسته الإعدادية في بنسلفانيا ويذهب تحت الأرض في مدينة نيويورك لمدة ثلاثة أيام. الصبي نفسه بسيط جدًا ومعقد جدًا في الوقت نفسه، بحيث لا يمكننا الإدلاء بأي تعليق نهائي عنه أو على قصته. ربما يكون أكثر ما يمكن أن نقوله عن هولدن أمانًا هو أنه ولد في العالم، ولم يكن منجذبًا بقوة للجمال فحسب، بل كان ملتصقًا به بشكل يائس. هناك العديد من الأصوات في هذه الرواية: أصوات الأطفال، وأصوات البالغين، والأصوات السرية - لكن صوت هولدن هو الأكثر بلاغة على الإطلاق. متجاوزًا لغته العامية، مع بقاءه مخلصًا لها بشكل رائع، يطلق صرخة واضحة تمامًا من الألم المختلط واللذة. ومع ذلك، مثل معظم العشاق والمهرجين والشعراء من الطبقات العليا، فهو يحتفظ بمعظم الألم لنفسه ومن أجله. اللذة التي يمنحها أو يتركها جانبًا من كل قلبه. إنه موجود للقارئ الذي يمكنه التعامل معه للاحتفاظ به. يزور أخته الصغرى فيبي في مدرستها الداخلية. أخبرها أنه يريد أن يكون "الصيد في حقل الشوفان"، كناية عن الشخص الذي ينقذ الأطفال من السقوط من حافة الهاوية. يمثل هذا رغبة هولدن في حماية الأطفال من الحقائق القاسية لعالم البالغين.

Background

Jerome David Salinger was born in New York City on January 1, 1919. The paternal lineage of the individual in question, Sol Salinger, can be traced back to Jewish ancestry, while his maternal lineage, represented by Marie Jillich, may be attributed to Scottish, or Irish heritage. Due to the divergent religious affiliations of his parents, namely Christianity and Judaism, the emphasis on theistic belief was not very pronounced (Alter, 1966, 89). Salinger's family had a pattern of upward social mobility, as seen by their several relocations to progressively more wealthy residential areas throughout his formative years. Salinger went to the McBurney School when he was 13, but he failed out after a year and was sent to the Valley Forge Military Academy in Pennsylvania. While there, he developed a passion for writing. Before he finished in 1936, he wrote his first short stories (Bryan, 1990:37).

1. Statement of the Problem and Questions of the Study

In this research, the primary concern lies in exploring how the worldview of J.D. Salinger is mirrored within the pages of "The Catcher in the Rye". The researcher aims to delve into the following inquiries:

1. How does the behavior of the majority of people in "The Catcher in the Rye" resemble that of the "baby boomer" generation?
2. How does the author's perspective in "The Catcher in the Rye" come over in the literary work?

2. Significance of the Study

In this study, the focus is on the analysis of the hero's vision of the world in the main character regarding several issues. The author's dislike for the baby boomer generation's lifestyle, music, reading preferences, religion, and culture can be studied, as can his opinions on these topics. **Holden Caulfield**, the primary character, interacts with peers, friends, and other individuals who are portrayed as members of the baby boomer generation.

3. Objective of the Study

By the outlined problem statement, the study's objective is crafted as follows:

First: To analyze the protagonist's worldview in "The Catcher in the Rye", with a focus on two key aspects: a) the dynamics of Holden Caulfield's relationships with other characters, and b) his interactions with the surrounding environment.

Second: To investigate the presence of similarities between real-world events during the 'baby boomer' generation and the events depicted in the novel "The Catcher in the Rye".

Third: To examine how J.D. Salinger conveys a humanistic worldview within the pages of "The Catcher in the Rye".

Finally: To evaluate how the literary work effectively conveys the author's worldview in "The Catcher in the Rye".

Furthermore, Holden's isolation, his yearning to evade the real world, and his struggles in adapting to the demands of growing up are formidable obstacles he faces. The entirety of the book is centered around Holden's adolescence. Navigating the journey toward adulthood is a formidable task, and the central theme of the novel revolves around the protagonist's struggle during this crucial period of his life. Holden had a breakdown because he no longer wanted to be a child but also because he was still learning how to be an adult. Holden is still a misunderstood and lonely boy. He has pals, but they cannot stay friends. His character and loneliness led to an emotional collapse. He fights with his buddies and isolates himself. In hotels and hostels, he lives alone. He only likes his sister. He decides to leave his home (Dunar, 2006:7). Holden cannot deal with his issues; therefore, he

keeps running away from them. He fails in front of others by arguing with or making fun of them to get out of school. Sally declines his offer to accompany her on the run, so he taunts her, and she departs. Holden wants to leave his nation of origin as a result. Modern literature provides a means of escape like this (Dormann, 2010:43). The search for the hat that gives him a distinctive appearance is another theme covered in the book. Such a hat doesn't exist. Thus, by donning the hat, he individualizes himself. Holden refers to people as "Phonies" because they pretend to be something they are not. Holden, however, pretends to be someone he is not. He also makes up his identity and age to get by challenging circumstances. Additionally, he makes up fiction for Mrs. Morrow about her son's intelligence and demeanor. Additionally, he admits to having a brain tumor (Gabbidon et al., 2002:25).

4. Limits of the Study

According to Lucien Goldmann, literary structures are conceptualized as thematic ideas. The relationship between the characters and their surroundings was the main focus of this investigation. A novel, according to Goldmann, is a tale about the search for real ideals in a world that has eroded values (Dromm, 2012:18). A literary creation is the product of the 'author's imagination', which is shaped by cultural and societal factors. These relationships between individuals and their environments exist within the framework of the social structure (Ellison, 2008:56). The study will examine each component in conjunction with societal reality. Culture, politics, economics, and social conditions can all be explained through literature (Dromm, 2012:56). Along with Lucien Goldmann, the author's viewpoint is evident in their self-perception, which extends beyond individuality to encompass their role within society. Therefore, literary analysis involves integrating the social structure with the author's perspective or ideology (Dromm, 2012:57).

5 Research Methodology

The sources will be largely used to gather information. Words, phrases, and sentences from the book "The Catcher in the Rye" will be used as the primary source of information. The secondary information will come from biographies of J.D. Salinger written by other authors, historical accounts of the subject, and academic studies on various related subjects. The writer follows a few phases in the entire procedure when conducting this research:

1. The main information and evidence to support it

a. The novel "The Catcher in the Rye" is the source of the major information in this study.

b. Supplementary information is collected from various sources, such as theoretical literature, author biographies, academic journals, critical essays, online resources, and pertinent books that pertain to the subject being investigated. This supplementary information aims to provide insight into the dynamic relationship between the author and "The Catcher in the Rye".

2. Method of Information Analysis

The process of analyzing the gathered information involves four distinct stages:

a. Read repeatedly: In this initial step, the researcher engages in multiple readings of "The Catcher in the Rye" to gain a comprehensive understanding of the novel's themes and narrative elements.

b. Analyze the inherent components: During this phase, the essential elements of the book, including its themes, storyline, characters, character development, and setting, are subject to examination and discussion.

c. Examine the extrinsic components: After addressing the intrinsic elements, the research proceeds to explore the extrinsic aspects rooted in genetic structuralism. This encompasses considerations of human realities, themes, worldviews, and dialectical elements.

d. Information classification: The researcher will divide the gathered information into categories in this step based on the many types of data categorization.

6. Character Analysis Holden Caulfield

It's incredibly amazing how many readers were able to relate to Holden and make him their hero. Readers from very different backgrounds can nonetheless identify strongly with him because of something about his discontent and the vivid manner in which he expresses it. Instead of attempting to determine what is wrong with him, it is alluring to adopt his viewpoint and enjoy his conceit. Holden has faced expulsion from four schools, displayed complete apathy toward his future, undergone hospitalization and psychoanalytic treatment for an unspecified ailment, and grapples with a profound inability to connect with others. These are just a few instances that demonstrate how difficult and untrustworthy Holden's narration is. The suicide of a fellow student and the death of his brother Allie are two earlier incidents that are known to have affected him emotionally. However, even armed with this understanding, it's important not to dismiss Holden's idiosyncrasies as mere manifestations of a

simple illness. One of Holden's "peculiarities" that stands out the most is how harshly he judges practically everything and everyone. He berates and philosophies about those who are uninteresting, insecure, and, most importantly, "phony". Holden takes his propensity for making snap judgments so far that it frequently turns into hilarity. Holden uses the term "phony" to describe those who are too conventional or usual rather than those who are genuine. His frequent use of the term implies that his assessments of people tend to lack depth. He virtually always chooses simple categorical judgments over more sophisticated ones.

7. Themes.

Themes are the fundamental and often universally relevant concepts that undergo exploration within a literary work.

7.1 Alienation as a Form of Self-Protection

Throughout the entirety of the book, Holden presents himself as an outsider who is subjected to mistreatment from the world around him. In a conversation with Mr. Spencer, he expresses a sense of confinement on the "other side" (Salinger, 6) of life, and he grapples with a persistent struggle to find his place in an environment where he does not feel a sense of belonging. As the narrative unfolds, it becomes evident that Holden deliberately withdraws from others as a means of self-protection. Analogous to his utilization of the hunting cap (see symbol below) as an emblem of his individualism, his seclusion becomes a manifestation of his perceived superiority over those around him, thus justifying his avoidance of engagement. In truth, his interactions with others often lead to bewilderment and emotional overload, prompting him to adopt a cynical air of superiority as a defensive mechanism. This self-imposed isolation serves as one of the few constants in his tumultuous life. However, it's clear to us, as readers, that his isolation is the primary source of his inner turmoil. Despite his need for affection and human connection, his formidable emotional barrier prevents him from seeking it out. Both Holden's vulnerabilities and his resilience stem from this sense of alienation. For example, his desire for solitude drives him to invite Sally Hayes on a date, but his outburst of insults leads to her departure. Similarly, he yearns for the deep connection he once shared with Jane Gallagher, yet he remains paralyzed by fear, preventing him from reaching out to her. While his isolation offers preservation, it also catalyzes his suffering.

7.2 The Painfulness of Growing Up

"The Catcher in the Rye" is a bildungsroman, or a book portraying a young character's development into maturity, according to the majority of assessments. Although it is legitimate to talk about the book in these terms, because his major goal is to thwart the development process, Holden Caulfield stands out as a distinctive bildungsroman protagonist. Holden's anxiety revolves around the concept of change and his struggle to cope with intricacies, especially evident in his perspective on the Museum of Natural History. Holden desires simplicity and permanence in a manner akin to the statues of Native Americans and Eskimos at the museum. He grapples with fear, both due to his engagement in the very shortcomings he condemns in others and his inability to comprehend the complexities unfolding in his surroundings. However, he refrains from doing so, except for one instance when he talks about sexuality, confessing, "[s]ex is something I simply can't fathom. I really can't, I promise." (Salinger, 63). Rather than confronting his apprehension and bewilderment about growing up, Holden constructs the notion that adulthood is a realm of shallowness and hypocrisy (termed "phoniness"), while childhood embodies innocence, inquisitiveness, and honesty. The essence of "the Catcher in the Rye" image best encapsulates his interpretation of these two realms: he envisions childhood as a serene field of rye where children play, while adulthood resembles a perilous precipice—a harrowing plunge—for the young inhabitants of this domain. Holden's presuppositions about childhood and adulthood serve as a defensive mechanism, allowing him to distance himself from the external world by donning a cloak of cynicism. However, as the narrative unfolds, Holden's interactions, notably those with Mr. Antolini and Phoebe, unveil the limitations of his worldview.

7.3 The Phoniness of the Adult World

One of Holden's cherished concepts is "phoniness," arguably the most renowned phrase in "The Catcher in the Rye". Just before disclosing his vision of "The Catcher in the Rye", Holden asserts that adults are consistently insincere, and to make matters worse, they remain oblivious to their insincerity. This term functions as a comprehensive descriptor for the shallowness, affectation, hypocrisy, and superficiality he perceives in the world. For Holden, phoniness acts as a justification for retreating into his cynical solitude, as he regards it as a representation of all that is awry in the world. Holden's observations, although often simplistic, do not entirely align with reality. He possesses a knack for storytelling infused with keen insight and a heightened awareness of the petty behaviors of others. Throughout the novel, we encounter characters like Sally Hayes, Carl Luce, Maurice, Sunny, and even Mr. Spencer, who appear affected, arrogant, or superficial. Individuals like Sunny and Maurice pose genuine threats. Holden expends considerable effort highlighting the falsehoods of others but

consistently avoids acknowledging his own. He admits to a compulsion for lying and acknowledges that most of his falsehoods serve no constructive purpose and are, in fact, unkind. For instance, during a train journey to New York, he plays a cruel and senseless prank on Mrs. Morrow. While Holden seeks to portray himself as a paragon of goodness in a contrived society, his actions belie this portrayal. His desire to believe in a clear divide where morality and innocence reside on one side while superficiality and phoniness inhabit the other is challenged by his conduct. The world, as Holden discovers, is far more complex than he wishes—and needs—it to be. Even he cannot adhere to the stringent standards he applies to judging others.

8.1 Motifs

Motifs are recurring patterns, contrasts, and literary techniques that contribute to shaping and enriching the text's development and meaning.

8.2. Major themes.

A. Loneliness.

At the core of the novel lies Holden's pervasive loneliness, which serves as a prominent symptom of his larger issue of feeling disconnected. Throughout the majority of the book, his intense yearning for companionship and his erratic navigation through inconsequential encounters are vividly depicted. While Holden's actions hint at his loneliness, he consistently avoids self-examination and grapples with an incomplete understanding of his behavior. Despite his yearning to alleviate his loneliness, Holden repeatedly stumbles in his attempts. Strangely, he clings to his isolation as a means of preserving his detachment from the world and safeguarding a certain level of self-defense. This inclination towards solitude renders interactions with individuals like Carl Luce and Sally Hayes unpleasant due to his discourtesy. Similarly, he terminates his conversations with Jane Gallagher for a similar reason—to safeguard his fragile and treasured sense of identity. The emotional manifestation of Holden's profound sense of alienation is embodied in his loneliness, a paradoxical state that provides both a semblance of security and immense distress.

B. Relationships, Intimacy

Intimacy and relationships serve as recurring themes closely tied to the overarching subject of alienation. For Holden, these connections offer the potential to break free from his self-imposed isolation, both emotionally and physically. However, they also symbolize the elements of adulthood that he dreads the most: intricacy, unpredictability, the prospect of conflict, and change. Holden has a preference for a serene, unchanging, and predictable world, as exemplified by his reverence for the Museum of Natural History. Holden envisions an idealized childhood for Phoebe as he observes her drifting off to sleep, contrasting it with his romanticized version of what childhood should be. However, real-life interactions with people are characterized by responses, and Phoebe candidly expresses that her childhood did not align with Holden's idealized vision. People present Holden with challenges that force him to reassess his perceptions of self-worth, primarily because they are unpredictable. Holden's struggle with this complexity is deeply rooted in complex, unspoken reasons, seemingly linked to the loss of his brother, Allie. Consequently, he has become reclusive and harbors a fear of intimacy. Despite encountering opportunities for both physical and emotional closeness, Holden squanders them by barricading himself within a psychological fortress of harsh cynicism and bitterness. He persists in his desperate quest for new connections, often sabotaging them at the last moment.

C. Lying and Deception

Lying and deception constitute the most overt and detrimental components within the broader category of phoniness. Holden's understanding of phoniness is largely built upon a form of self-deception, and he reserves his harshest condemnation for those who refuse to confront their imperfections or who assume false identities. Yet, deception of others also constitutes a manifestation of phoniness, a form of manipulation that conveys heartlessness, aggression, or even a lack of empathy. Paradoxically, Holden himself commits both of these transgressions. His persistent and irrational lying, a result of his unwillingness to acknowledge his flaws or consider the repercussions of his actions on those around him, underscores his self-deception. Holden's behavior underscores that he is no less artificial than the very individuals he condemns for their deceit and dishonesty.

D. Childhood innocence and phony adulthood

Holden lost his brother Allie, which caused a significant hole in his mental makeup. His thoughts are continuously focused on grief and what it means to him. Holden's passion, nevertheless, goes beyond simple sibling love because he aspires to be nothing more than his mother's object of desire. Allie was the center of Holden's mother's attention and desire. Holden makes an effort to win her mother's love to fill his absence. Allie also represents a time in his life when he experienced unending joy, which has since passed away. The kid

experiences "the initial state of blissful union" in a manner akin to the "Lacanian method" (Foner, 2009: 55). Whether "insiders" want it or not, the loss of youthful innocence is a natural and unavoidable process. (Solomon, 2006, 85) Holden finds refuge in his dreams from his anxieties about dying, losing people, and the suffering of growing up. When in danger, he retreats into two distinct fantasies. The first happens after his altercation with Maurice, the lift host. After trying unsuccessfully to contact his girlfriend, Sally, the other fantasy has him envisioning his burial. Holden just stepped aboard a budget hotel. The lift attendant gives Holden the chance to engage in sexual activity. The unpleasant reality of losing his virginity when the prostitute arrives at his door makes him rethink his former assumptions. He struggles to motivate himself to carry out the act. Holden informs Sunny that he cannot have sex because his "clavichord" underwent surgery recently. He invents such a ridiculous defense because sex is an act reserved for adults. Holden would need to undergo sexual initiation to reach this dimension. He prefers to remain in the secure environment of childish innocence, though. Holden stays away from sex because of its defiling character. Once realized, there is no going back to an innocent state; it is an experience from which one cannot recover. Jonathan Baumbach asserts that despite his professed seductiveness, he is innocent, and as a result, his fear is caused by this innocence (Baumbach, 1961:99). Maurice snaps a finger on his pajamas after attempting to extort money from him, inflicting both bodily and mental pain. Holden explains; "he snapped his finger very hard on my pajamas. I won't tell you where he snapped it, but it hurt like hell" (Salinger, 135). Holden starts fantasizing after this humiliation. When he returns to reality, his true feelings manifest: "I felt like jumping out the window" (Salinger, 137). Later, Holden's unsuccessful attempt at entering maturity prompts a fantasy about his death.

8.3 The Catcher and the Counterculture Movement

The postmodernist movement in America had its start with the countercultural movement. It started as a young person's query about their identity, age, and goal. This answer is reflected in The Catcher's recurring themes, which also give the book's postmodern philosophy a historical backdrop. Holden's identity crisis is related to youth counterculture because, as postmodern America begins to emerge, young people progressively come to be seen as rebellious youths. Instead of seeing adolescence as a period of growth and potential, many young people identify with The Catcher's confusion, distance, and sense of disconnection at that stage of life. That feeling was becoming very public in postwar America: "...In the post-war period, however, recognition of the increasing dissonance between American ideals and the realities of social experience has become unavoidable, and it is precisely this cultural dissonance that is highlighted by Salinger's novel" (Edsforth and Bennett, 1991:131). Holden's repudiation of phoniness, his pursuit of authenticity and uniqueness untainted by the norms and regulations of adults, and his recognition that achieving sincerity is an elusive endeavor, collectively contribute to his embodiment as a symbol of the postmodern character and the countercultural movement.

8.4 Existential Themes in The Catcher

Upon its release, "The Catcher in the Rye" garnered both acclaim and criticism. It was formerly off the required reading list for academics in America, which led many critics to treat the book with more respect. Others complimented it for being more frank in its portrayal of Americans in the post-war era, while others harshly denounced it for being too immoral to represent a child smoking and drinking. Holden develops a scary view of the world, where death is pervasive through the narration. Holden constantly criticizes most people as being fake since he notices how shallow their morals are throughout the entire book. Only Elizabeth Kurian and Willam Wiegand made the association between the book and existentialism. They both acknowledged Kierkegaard's effect on Salinger's way of thinking (Meriem, 2016; 27). Through an exploration of existential themes encompassing death, alienation, and authenticity, this chapter aims to establish Holden Caulfield as an existentialist protagonist. In doing so, it will underscore how "The Catcher in the Rye" engages with existentialism. Consequently, the novel will be comprehended as a comprehensive embodiment of existentialist literature.

8.5 Death

One of the fundamental concerns and topics of Existentialism is death, as was already established. Holden's reflections on death are used in our corpus to convey the theme of death. David Burrows (1974) notes that the novel extensively delves into the theme of death: "The profoundest level of the book's power lies [...] at the level where we sense that there is little of significance in life except the necessity of death, and that the motivation of most religion, philosophy, and art— literature especially – in some way related to man's attempt to understand the fact of death. The death by leukemia of his brother Allie, three years earlier, is Holden's obsessive concern in this book; his fear of growth and change, expressed throughout the novel, is the result of his realization that **one grows**

towards death, and that death is the ultimate change." (qtd in, Sartre, 1992; 107) The work contains more than twenty mentions of death. In the corpus, the issue of death is consistently addressed. Holden considers not only his brother's death but also any circumstance that could result in death, such as an illness. He also imagines his demise and disappearance. Holden deeply contemplates the passing of his younger brother, Allie: "He's **dead** now. He got leukemia and **died** when we were up in Maine, on July 18, 1946. You'd have liked him. He was two years younger than I was, but he was about fifty times as intelligent. He was **terrifically** intelligent. His teachers were always writing letters to my mother, telling her what a pleasure it was having a boy like Allie in their class. And they weren't just shooting the crap. They meant it. But it wasn't just that he was the most intelligent member of the family. He was also the nicest, in lots of ways. He never got mad at anybody" (Salinger, 33).

8.6. Alienation.

Humans will become identical to one another, little more than conformists if they play by the rules of tradition, social standards, or any other system. One of the main existentialist ideas was surely not to adapt to society's norms. America appears to be the nation where people are most free. The reality is that people can use their freedom within the constraints and guidelines set by society. Holden doubted societal ideals, rules, and directives. He initially seemed to be against all of these conventions and customs. Holden cannot connect with people in society. He is largely left alone during the entire book. Right from the beginning, he expresses his aversion to adopting a conventional storytelling style: "If you want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that **David Copperfield** kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it if you want to know the truth. In the first place, that stuff bores me, and in the second place, my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece if I told anything pretty personal about them. They're quite touchy about anything like that, especially my father. They're nice and all--I'm not saying that--but they're also touchy as hell. Besides, I'm not going to tell you my whole goddam **autobiography** or anything." (Salinger, p. 1) From the outset, Holden harbored a distaste for employing an antiquated writing style. This disdain signifies his rejection of conventional writing norms. He resists the idea of providing exhaustive descriptions of various aspects, be it his own life, his parents, or even his autobiography, as exemplified in the writing of "David Copperfield." This inclination towards non-conformity in writing mirrors his enduring sense of alienation. Notably, Holden chose not to attend the final football game, where all his friends were gathered: "Anyway, it was the Saturday of the football game with Saxon Hall. The game with Saxon Hall was supposed to be a very big deal around Pencey. It was the last game of the year, and you were supposed to commit suicide or something if old Pencey didn't win. I remember around three o'clock that afternoon I was standing way the hell up on top of Thomsen Hill, right next to this crazy cannon that was in the Revolutionary War and all. You could see the whole field from there, and you could see the two teams bashing each other all over the place. You couldn't see the grandstand too hot, but you could hear them all yelling, deep and terrific on the Pencey side, **because practically the whole school except me was there.**" (Salinger, p02). Holden's observation of the game from the vantage point of Thomsen Hill starkly illustrates his profound sense of alienation. This comment underscores his isolation from others. Feeling disconnected from both the people present and the school he has recently departed, he chooses to abstain from a conventional activity, a football game that everyone else partakes in. His detachment from the game serves as a testament to his aversion to the environment at Pencey and his estrangement from those surrounding him.

8.7. Authenticity

Holden subjectively experiences death, as we have described in our analysis of the death topic. Humans should be aware that death is an ever-present occurrence, as discussed in the section on the connection between death and authenticity. Additionally, being genuine with death means that even we worry about it or look forward to it, and both can be shown in Holden and his idea of death. Holden has an honest perception of death; he keeps thinking about it and eventually concludes that life is a projection of death and that it is an unavoidable occurrence. According to Gill and Sherman, an authentic person always attempts to become self-conscious and, rather than adhering to safe and conventional pathways that are essentially foreign to him, chooses to become aware of his self (p.20). In the culture in which he lives, Holden makes an effort to find his true self. Holden has a unique outlook on life: "What'd he say to you?" "Oh . . . well, about Life being a game and all. And how you should **play it according to the rules.** He was pretty nice about it. I mean he didn't hit the ceiling or anything. He just kept talking about Life being a game and all. You know." "Life is a game, boy. **Life is a game that one plays according to the rules.**" "Yes, sir. I know it is. I know it." "Game, ... Some game. If you get on the side where all the hot-shots are, then it's a game, all right--I'll admit that. But if you get on the other side, where there aren't any

hot-shots, then what's a game about it? **Nothing.**" (Salinger, 08). Holden rejects the idea that life is a game that he must play by the rules. He believes that life is not a game and that there are no set guidelines that he must adhere to in particular. Holden does not need to be educated or a college graduate because he already knows what he wants to do with his life. He just wants to be: "Anyway, I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around—nobody big, I mean—except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff—I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day. **I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all.** I know it's crazy, but that's **the only thing I'd like to be.**" (Salinger, 125) Holden possesses unwavering clarity regarding his career aspirations. His sole aspiration is to assume the role of a catcher in a rye, a protector of young children against the perils of cliff falls. This aspiration underscores his independence and commitment to their safety. While at that time, most individuals would not have considered themselves as potential "catchers in the rye," Holden adopts this notion as a means to advance his quest for self-discovery.

8.8 Myth

As indicated in the second chapter, Barnes (1961) identified three fundamental characteristics of existential literature: the utilization of myth, the expression of human freedom within specific contexts, and a sense of societal responsibility. While not immediately apparent, "The Catcher in the Rye" encompasses all of these traits. Myth, as previously mentioned, encompasses both contemporary legends and events as well as ancient Greek myths. Usually, myth is portrayed in a positive light, but in the instance, we are about to examine, there is a widespread understanding of its actual nature, which is occasionally less than favorable. "The Catcher in the Rye" portrays Hollywood as a kind of myth. During that era, Hollywood was perceived as a vibrant destination, inhabited by esteemed and distinct actors who carried out their roles there. However, unlike the general perception, Holden holds a strong aversion to the place and harbors a low opinion of those associated with it, including his brother D.B., whom he refers to as a "prostitute" in Hollywood. Holden's sentiments are exemplified in his declaration: "Now he's out in Hollywood, D.B., being a prostitute. If there's one thing I hate, it's the movies. Don't even mention them to me" (Salinger, 2). When considering the analysis of existential themes, particularly authenticity, it becomes clear why Holden remains unimpressed with Hollywood, even during periods when it garners admiration from others. Despite his disdain for Hollywood, Holden paradoxically succumbs to its influence, highlighting the intricate interplay between his convictions and external pressures: "But I'm crazy. I swear to God I am. About halfway to the bathroom, I sort of started pretending I had a bullet in my guts. [...] I'd hold on to the banister and all, with the blood trickling out of the side of my mouth a little at a time. [...] Then I'd crawl back to my room and call up Jane and have her come over and bandage up my guts. I pictured her holding a cigarette for me to smoke while I was bleeding and all. The goddam movies. They can ruin you. I'm not kidding." (Salinger, 176). The quotation unequivocally highlights Hollywood's portrayal as a myth in our corpus. We included the other themes previously examined in the research as well. Since human psychology cannot be segmented, there will inevitably be overlap between the themes.

8.9 Basic Situations

Due to his privileged background as the son of a prosperous lawyer, Holden is burdened with specific societal and familial expectations. Communicating his desire to become a "catcher" in a poetic sense proves challenging for Holden when it comes to conveying this aspiration to his parents, as it might undermine his elevated social status. When Holden's younger sister responds solely with these words to his admission that he was once again expelled from school, it is evident that social pressure is exerting itself upon Holden: "Daddy's going to kill you. He's going to kill you" (Salinger, 172). Phoebe listens intently as Holden elaborately describes his desire to be a "catcher in the rye," but she only echoes: "Daddy's going to kill you" (Salinger, 173). The aforementioned is Barnes' suggested overarching situational theme. The Catcher contains all of the time, unique, and social limits; as a result, the central situational subject is well-established and supported. Along with the issues discussed above, the novel also explicitly presents the ideas of myth and fundamental conditions, which positions it among existential literary works. The second question's answer may be found here, and the second hypothesis is confirmed.

8.10 Holden as an Existentialist

The quotations that were chosen demonstrate that Holden has a reliable relationship with death, which contributes to his partial authenticity as a person. Holden, however, rejects becoming a conformist and acting like society, which highlights the issue of authenticity. Even though he is not completely an outsider, he

frequently tries to be. Holden does not trick himself into embracing social norms, which keeps him from having a false vision of life also possesses a clear objective that underscores his sense of responsibility. While Holden openly acknowledges his atheism, a stance that aligns with Kierkegaard's concept of alienation, he surprisingly finds a sense of belonging among the nuns. The novel adeptly and comprehensively conveys the concepts of death, alienation, and authenticity as outlined by Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Sartre, despite Sartre's focus on social alienation (1992;89). Through Holden's ideas and actions, which position him as an existentialist hero, these three themes are discernible throughout the book. Here, the initial query is addressed and the initial hypothesis is verified.

8.11. Holden's Estrangement from Society.

Throughout the majority of the book, Holden embarks on a journey through New York in pursuit of companionship and a means to suppress his emotions. However, the need to shield himself from the possibility of abandonment or emotional distress, stemming from the painful loss of his sibling, leaves him perpetually distant from genuine connection. He rationalizes his actions by categorizing people as phonies, a tactic to drive them away and convince himself that solitude is preferable. Consequently, Holden finds himself entirely isolated, unable to establish meaningful connections with anyone except his sister, who shares his fear of abandonment due to her own experiences with sibling loss. Despite its simplicity, the actual plot of the story remains consistent throughout. The way Salinger revealed Holden's story—that he is a young kid going through a struggle—is what truly made the book a masterpiece. He has been experiencing stress for some time and is unsure of how to handle these emotions and strange occurrences. He has evolved from an average character to one that is highly interesting because of the way he expresses himself and the linguistic choices that were seen to be extremely antagonistic at the time. The first indication of Holden's isolation appears in the book when he chooses to watch the football game from the top of Thompson Hill rather than with his pals on the field: "Anyway, it was the Saturday of the football game [...] I was standing the way the hellfire up on top of Thomsen Hill. [...] You could see the entire field from that point and you could see the two groups bashing each other everywhere. [...] You could hear them all hollering" (Salinger, 2). Holden views his seclusion as proof that he is better than everyone else around him and so above conversing with them. He does this by donning a red hunting cap, according to Erich Fromm: "The alienated individual can experience himself as a unique individual entity with its particularity and uniqueness only if he breaks away from the influences of the society" (Salinger, 22). Even though he finds speaking with others to be confusing, his sense of superiority serves as a form of self-defense. The hat also serves as a symbol of his seclusion and independence from the outside world. It proves that he is distinctive and different from those around him. He always specifies the time when he is wearing the hat and covers it up when he is around people he knows since he is self-conscious about it. His need for both separation and friendship is manifested, and this is the major conflict of the book. The hat is described as a deer-shooting hat by his pal Ackley, Holden gets mad, stating: "Like hell it is." I took it off and looked at it. I sort of closed one eye, like I was aiming it. "This is a people shooting hat," I said. "I shoot people in this hat" (Salinger, 19) this quote shows that the hat is only a way for Holden to convey his displeasure with them, as evidenced by this comment, and he will not shoot anyone while wearing it. Due to Allie's passing, which severely exacerbated Holden's problem and gave him hope that he could keep the kids' innocence, Holden wants to prevent the kids from losing it. He engages in self-destructive behavior to handle this crisis: "I slept in the garage the night he died, and I broke all the goddam windows with my fist, just for the hell of it" (Salinger, 39). This text demonstrates that Holden isn't concerned about breaking his fist; instead, he wants to wreck his family's garage, which means he intends to ruin his parents' shelter—the one that hasn't been able to shield his brother. He therefore tries to chat to him anytime he feels down to keep Allie's memory alive: "Boy, I felt miserable. I felt so depressed, you can't imagine. What I did, I started talking, sort of out loud, to Allie. I do that sometimes when I get very depressed" (Salinger, 98). Moreover, by speaking with him, he is defying death, as if to declare that even though he cannot see his brother, he will continue to act as though he is still alive. Holden believes that Allie's passing signifies adulthood, which is an actual determinant of childhood, and therefore connects all of his problems and difficulties to her passing. All children eventually grow up and die, which makes him determined to do everything in his power to preserve childhood for himself and other kids. Phoebe is his second opportunity at redemption because she is alive and developing every day, making the possibility of her losing her innocence probable. He recognizes Allie in Phoebe because they both have red hair, for him she is: an "emblem of unattainable childhood beauty" (Salinger, 9) he repeatedly expresses his desire for her to stay the same throughout the narrative, particularly when he visits the museum, where everything remains immobile and never changes: "I kept thinking about old

Phoebe going to that museum on Saturdays the way I used to. I thought how she'd see the same stuff I used to see, and how she'd be different every time she saw it [...] Certain things they should stay the way they are. You ought to be able to stick them in one of those big glass cases and just leave them alone" (Salinger, 122) Harold Bloom, a literary critic, explains that Holden wants to protect Phoebe no matter what: "time of innocence which he [Holden] would like to recapture or perpetuate" (2014, 67). Holden's profound sensitivity has ignited an intrinsic urge within him to shield children's innocence from the corruption of the adult world. To fulfill this mission, he envisions a scenario where he stands in a field of rye while numerous children engage in play. Positioned on the edge, he is poised to catch any child who might inadvertently tumble. In this self-imposed role as a guardian, Holden undertakes the responsibility of preserving the children's innocence. Essentially, he aims to prevent them from transitioning into adulthood, a phase tainted by the world's impurities. Robert Burns' poetry served as the basis for his inspiration for "The Catcher in the Rye", notwithstanding Phoebe's correction that "it's" if a body meets a body coming through the rye" (Salinger, 224). Because people "often have daydreams that are removed from reality, which reflect their isolation and alienation" according to psychiatrist Anthony Storr (qtd, in Galloway, 1981; 78). Holden clings to this dreamlike vocation to protect children's virtue from the obscenity of adulthood. When he asks the taxi drivers where the ducks go during the winter when the lagoon is frozen, it adds intrigue to his story, but no one appears to care about the ducks. He concludes that the Ducks are like children in that only he seems to care about them. Towards the conclusion of the novel, Holden reaches the understanding that he must permit children to undergo the process of growing up, recognizing that he cannot remain as the guardian beneath the cliff. Holden takes Phoebe to the carousel and tells her, "All the kids kept trying to grab for the gold ring, and so was old Phoebe, and I was sort of afraid she'd fall off the goddam horse, but I didn't say anything or do anything. The thing with kids is, if they want to grab the gold ring, you have to let them do it, and not say anything. If they fall off they fall off, but it's bad if you say anything to them" (Salinger, 211). Holden now thinks that to avoid keeping her stuck in her childhood, he must allow her to mature on her own; he cannot stop her from moving forward forcibly. According to literary analysts Keith Dromm and Heather Salter, this is a chance for him because he embraces this truth along with embracing Allie's death and his maturity: "to empty [his mind] of any false hopes of the inauthentic" and innovate his "quest for what is real, genuine, valuable, and beautiful" (2012: 212). He is worn out from all of these incidents and mental disorders. By overanalyzing and worrying about all the kids, his life, Phoebe, his parents, and the future, Holden eventually feels exposed and under stress. All of these results in him having a nervous breakdown, according to author Clinton W. Trowbridge: "the catcher wants to be caught, the savior saved" (1966, 682). Although he still criticizes society, his illness has helped him make the transition from infancy to adulthood, and his attitude toward society is now more adaptive and acceptable. He understands that while he cannot change the world or the people who live in it, he can make certain concessions to his way of life to be more acceptable.

Conclusion

Friedberg regarded "The Catcher in the Rye" as the most outstanding literary creation of the contemporary era, considering it an embodiment of what he aimed to convey. Friedberg commended the novel for its comprehensive expression of Holden's character, which serves as an embodiment of the youthful tragedy wherein, as Friedberg stated, "when he attempted to enter the human race, there was no human race there". (Friedberg, 1976: 520) The novel details Holden's three-day journey throughout New York after his expulsion from Pencey Prep. Through the first-person narrator, the narrative delves into Holden's perspectives on the people and objects he encounters, offering distinct descriptions of each. This narration serves as a mirror to Holden's mental state and his interpretation of the world around him. As the story draws to a close, Holden observes his beloved sister Phoebe enjoying a ride on a carousel in the rain. The language employed in the novel is notably unadorned, or, more precisely, informal. This study examines the repercussions faced by a contemporary American individual in a culture that places little value on interpersonal connections. It delves into themes of existential crisis, melancholy, and alienation. The most vivid accounts of these unsettling experiences and distressing encounters can be located within American literature. The literature of the 1950s, which is deeply intertwined with the historical, social, and cultural milieu of that era, serves as a lens through which the troubled psyche of characters is illuminated. It underscores their role as essential pawns in the government's perilous pursuit of victory during the Cold War, a pursuit that extends beyond defeating the adversary to encompass the potential annihilation of humanity at large. Drawing from his personal experiences, American novelist J.D. Salinger portrays the postwar realities of his time. By shedding light on the perspectives of ordinary individuals, particularly those who conform to societal norms, he provides a perceptive depiction of

the psychological effects of living in a postwar, capitalist, and affluent society. "The Catcher in the Rye" serves as an emotionally charged portrayal of profound issues prevalent in the 1950s. Through the protagonist's voice, the narrative contends that society is governed by unjust regulations executed by deceitful and hypocritical individuals. The narrative is replete with cutting observations and a harsh critique of societal norms. The author's artistic expression distinctly reveals his convictions regarding the uncertainty encompassing the present and the future. This artistic creation presents both the character and the reader with a novel, challenging scenario, prompting contemplation on pivotal life aspects such as family, religion, and, most notably, one's sense of identity. Salinger is successful in portraying the necessary understanding of the challenges faced by postwar America in "The Catcher in the Rye". His book describes the protagonist's quest for interpersonal connections and the sincere character of people in the face of a global catastrophe. Holden Caulfield serves as a sensitive adolescent protagonist, emblematic of a spiritually depleted era marked by rapid technological advancement and political turmoil. His arduous experiences contribute to the reinforcement of his belief that the world is an illusion, and notably, he lacks the motivation to become an artist. Consequently, he retreats into seclusion, using his sense of alienation as a shield to preserve his innocence. Since its publication, the novel has attained a revered status within the realm of young-adult literature. Holden is venerated as a hero by young individuals worldwide because he articulates their frustrations and anger toward a culture that pushes them to conform to their parent's expectations. He forges a profound spiritual connection with them, embodying the struggles of an entire generation of youth.

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