EXHIBIT B

Time Critics Lev Grossman and Richard Lacayo pick the 100 best English-language novels from 1923 to the present

Read the Complete List »

About the List

» Managing Editor James Kelly talks about the list and shares his John Le Carre favorite (which didn't make the cut).
» Richard Lacayo lays bare the process (and the pain) behind stacking up 100 novels.

Reader's Choice

1:
2: Lolita
3: A Passage to India
4: A Death in the Family
5: Ubik

See the full list »

Best Graphic Novels

TIME's Andrew Arnold picks *Watchmen* and nine other comix masterpieces

The Complete List

In Alphabetical Order

PRINT

A - B

• The Adventures of Augie March
Saul Bellow

• All the King's Men
Robert Penn Warren
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• American Pastoral
Philip Roth
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• An American Tragedy
Theodore Dreiser

• Animal Farm
George Orwell
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• Appointment in Samarra
John O'Hara
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• Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret
Judy Blume

• The Assistant
Bernard Malamud
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• At Swim-Two-Birds

L - N

• Light in August
William Faulkner
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• The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe
C.S. Lewis

• Lolita
Vladimir Nabokov
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• Lord of the Flies
William Golding

• The Lord of the Rings
J.R.R. Tolkien
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• Loving
Henry Green
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• Lucky Jim
Kingsley Amis
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• The Man Who Loved Children
Christina Stead
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• Midnight's Children
Salman Rushdie

Flann O'Brien

• Atonement
Ian McEwan
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Toni Morrison
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Christopher Isherwood
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• The Big Sleep
Raymond Chandler
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• The Blind Assassin
Margaret Atwood
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• Blood Meridian
Cormac McCarthy

• Brideshead Revisited
Evelyn Waugh
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• The Bridge of San Luis Rey
Thornton Wilder
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C - D

• Call It Sleep
Henry Roth
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• Catch-22
Joseph Heller
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• The Catcher in the Rye
J.D. Salinger
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Martin Amis
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• The Moviegoer
Walker Percy
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• Mrs. Dalloway
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William Burroughs
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Richard Wright
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• Neuromancer
William Gibson

• Never Let Me Go
Kazuo Ishiguro
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• 1984
George Orwell
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O - R

• On the Road
Jack Kerouac
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Ken Kesey
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Jerzy Kosinski

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Vladimir Nabokov

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Jonathan Franzen
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Nathanael West
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Willa Cather

• A Death in the Family
James Agee

• The Death of the Heart
Elizabeth Bowen
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James Dickey
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Robert Stone
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John Cheever
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Joan Didion

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Graham Greene

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Dashiell Hammett

• Revolutionary Road
Richard Yates

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F. Scott Fitzgerald
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H - I

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Carson McCullers
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Graham Greene

• Herzog
Saul Bellow
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Kurt Vonnegut
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U - W

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Iris Murdoch

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Malcolm Lowry
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Alan Moore & Dave Gibbons

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Don DeLillo
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• White Teeth
Zadie Smith
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• Wide Sargasso Sea
Jean Rhys

100 Best

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100 Best Novels

THE BOARD'S LIST

1. **ULYSSES** by James Joyce
2. **THE GREAT GATSBY** by F. Scott Fitzgerald
3. **A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN** by James Joyce
4. **LOLITA** by Vladimir Nabokov
5. **BRAVE NEW WORLD** by Aldous Huxley
6. **THE SOUND AND THE FURY** by William Faulkner
7. **CATCH-22**
8. **DARKNESS AT NOON** by Arthur Koestler
9. **SONS AND LOVERS** by D.H. Lawrence
10. **THE GRAPES OF WRATH** by John Steinbeck
11. **UNDER THE VOLCANO** by Malcolm Lowry
12. **THE WAY OF ALL FLESH** by Samuel Butler
13. **1984** by George Orwell
14. **I, CLAUDIUS** by Robert Graves
15. **TO THE LIGHTHOUSE** by Virginia Woolf
16. **AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY** by Theodore Dreiser
17. **THE HEART IS A LONELY HUNTER** by Carson McCullers
18. **SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE** by Kurt Vonnegut
19. **INVISIBLE MAN** by Ralph Ellison
20. **NATIVE SON** by Richard Wright
21. **HENDERSON THE RAIN KING** by Saul

THE READER'S LIST

1. **ATLAS SHRUGGED** by Ayn Rand
2. **THE FOUNTAINHEAD** by Ayn Rand
3. **BATTLEFIELD EARTH** by L. Ron Hubbard
4. **THE LORD OF THE RINGS** by J.R.R. Tolkien
5. **TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD** by Harper Lee
6. **1984** by George Orwell
7. **ANTHEM** by Ayn Rand
8. **WE THE LIVING** by Ayn Rand
9. **MISSION EARTH** by L. Ron Hubbard
10. **FEAR** by L. Ron Hubbard
11. **ULYSSES** by James Joyce
12. **CATCH-22** by Joseph Heller
13. **THE GREAT GATSBY** by F. Scott Fitzgerald
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15. **THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS** by Robert Heinlein
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Bellow

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27. **THE AMBASSADORS** by Henry James
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33. **SISTER CARRIE** by Theodore Dreiser
34. **A HANDFUL OF DUST** by Evelyn Waugh
35. **AS I LAY DYING** by William Faulkner
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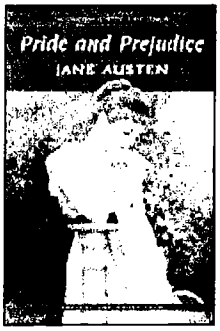

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Carroll, Lewis
Chabon, Michael
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Dickens, Charles
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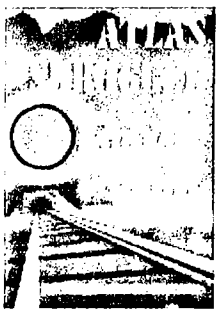

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TIME IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CNN

Monday, Jul. 16, 1951

With Love & 20-20 Vision

THE CATCHER IN THE RYE (277 pp.)—J. D. Salinger—Little, Brown ($3).

"Some of my best friends are children," says Jerome David Salinger, 32. "In fact, all of my best friends are children." And Salinger has written short stories about his best friends with love, brilliance and 20-20 vision. In his tough-tender first novel, The Catcher in the Rye (a Book-of-the-Month Club midsummer choice), he charts the miseries an ecstasies of an adolescent rebel, and deals out some of the most acidly humorous deadpan satire since the late great Ring Lardner.

Some Cheap Hotel. A lanky, crew-cut 16, well-born Holden Caulfield is sure all the world is out of step but him. His code is the survival of the flippest, and he talks a lingo as forthright and gamy, in its way, as a soldier's. Flunking fou subjects out of five, he has just been fired from his fourth school.

Afraid to go home ahead of his bad news, he checks in at a cheap New York hotel; in the next 48 hours, he tries on a man-about-town role several sizes too large for him. Getting sickly drunk at a bar, he slithers away in a Walter Mitty mood, pretending: "Rocky's mob got me ... I kept putting my hand under my jacket, on my stomach and all, to keep the blood from dripping all over the place. I didn't want anybody to know I was even wounded . . . Boy, was I drunk.'

Some Crazy Cliff. When the seedy night elevator man proposes sending a young prostitute to his room, bravado makes him play along. Besides: "I worry about that stuff sometimes. I read this book once . . . that had this very sophisticated, suave, sexy guy in it . . . and all he did in his spare time was beat women off with a club ... He said, in this one part, that a woman's body is like a violin and all, and that it takes a terrific musician to play it right. It was a

very corny book—I realize that—but I couldn't get that violin stuff out of my mind anyway." His enthusiasm for that kind of fiddling practice fades in hopeless embarrassment as soon as the tart snakes out of her dress.

Scolded by testy cab drivers, seared by his best girl's refusal to elope with him, and surrounded by an adult world of "phonies," he loses control of his tight-lipped histrionics. He sneaks home for a midnight chat with his perky ten-year-old sister, breaks down and cries on her bed. In a moving moment, he tells her what he would really like to do and be: "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 . . ."

For U.S. readers, the prize catch in The Catcher in the Rye may well be Novelist Salinger himself. He can understand an adolescent mind without displaying one.

Everybody's Caught "The Catcher in

By ROBERT GUTWILLIG

MANY an observer of the manners and mores of American youth contends that a first novel published ten years ago occupies much the same place in the affection of today's college generation as F. Scott Fitzgerald's "This Side of Paradise" did for their parents in the Nineteen Twenties.

The novel is "The Catcher in the Rye," by J. D. Salinger, which since its publication on July 16, 1951, has sold a total of 1,500,000 copies in the United States alone—1,250,000 of them, significantly enough, in paperbound form. This year, for the second successive year, so many bookstores, especially those in college communities, reported it among their most-wanted paperbacks that it has won a place on this Review's paperback bestseller list.

Of the 250,000 paperback copies sold this year, a goodly number went to students of Yale, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary and 275 other colleges and universities across the country who have adopted the book for required or supplementary reading in English, psychology and other courses. The appeal of "The Catcher in the Rye" extends also to the younger brothers and sisters of the college crowd. Thousands of secondary school students find themselves academically involved with Holden Caulfield and the week-end of his flight from Pencey Prep, although Holden's actions, thoughts and language have occasioned moral tremors in the past among parents and school officials in Tulsa, Miami and Louisville. There is currently a similar convulsion in Marin County, Calif.

"The Catcher in the Rye" is available in four editions, three in hard cover and the best-selling paperback. Little, Brown, Holden's original publisher, reports that its edition sold better last year than in the preceding several years. Grosset and Dunlap reprinted the book in 1952. New American Library, which offers the novel in its paperback Signet series at 50 cents, reports it as one of its steadiest sellers since it became available in March, 1953. Modern Library issued the novel in 1958 and has had a most satisfactory sale, again largely to college and university bookstores.

ONE of the more obvious tests of a book's quality, appeal and endurance, is the sale of translation rights for publication in foreign countries. There never has been a more "American" novel than "The Catcher in the Rye"; that is, a novel that in the publishing trade's opinion is so colloquial it will not translate easily or well and whose surface, values, interpretations and meanings are so right, unique and hidden that foreigners will find the book ultimately inscrutable. Imagine, for instance, what would happen to the rhythms of Holden's opening salvo if translated into Finnish.

"If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is 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."

And yet the novel has been published with great commercial and critical success in about a dozen countries, including Finland, Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Israel and Great Britain. In 1959, everywhere I went, England, France, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, I was asked if I knew Salinger and did I know what his new book was about and when it was coming out. "The Catcher in the Rye" will shortly be published in Russia, and perhaps a

J. D. Salinger in 1951.

mark of even greater distinction is that it was banned on moral grounds for short periods in Australia and South Africa.

Critically, ten years after publication, Salinger, his novel, and his previous and subsequent work are not only the subjects of numerous articles in Time, Newsweek, Harper's Magazine, Saturday Review, The Nation, New Republic and The Commonweal, but also are soberly and not so soberly evaluated in master theses, "little" magazines and literary quarterlies such as the Chicago Review, the Western Humanities Review, College English and American Quarterly. Currently, a mild critical reversal is in progress. Mr. Salinger, we are told, is a minor writer, a *brilliant* minor writer, to be sure, but still one who has published just one short (277-page) novel and a dozen or so serious short stories. But Salinger and Caulfield continue to move and amuse the current school and college generation, and the quarterly critics, most of whom are college teachers, know it. One of them wrote recently in some exasperation: "Mr. Jerome David Salinger is neither Molière nor Chekhov. He is not yet Mark Twain (and by a long shot)."

Clearly, "The Catcher in the Rye," its critical and commercial success past and present, are literary phenomena of the first order and, therefore, it might prove illuminating to look back and see how and why it all happened. On July 16, 1951, J. D. Salinger was 32 years old, but he was not an unknown young writer. He had been publishing short stories for ten years in the Saturday Evening Post, Collier's and elsewhere but most importantly, of course, in the New Yorker. In fact, seven of his 1953 collection, "Nine Stories" appeared between 1948 and 1951. Curiously, almost no one remembered that two chapters of "The Catcher" had already appeared in somewhat different form as short stories: "I'm Crazy," in Collier's in 1945, and "Slight Rebellion off Madison" in the New Yorker in 1946.

There's nothing quite like the Book-of-the-Month Club to give a publisher confidence, and when the club made the novel its midsummer selection there must have been joy as well as shock at Little, Brown in Boston. Clifton Fadiman wrote the board's report, concluding: "That rare miracle of fiction has again come to pass: a human being has been created out of ink, paper and the imagination." William Maxwell of the New Yorker wrote a brief profile of Salinger for the club news. It has been quoted and plagiarized for ten years now, chiefly, one suspects, because more literary and personal information about the author has not been forthcoming.

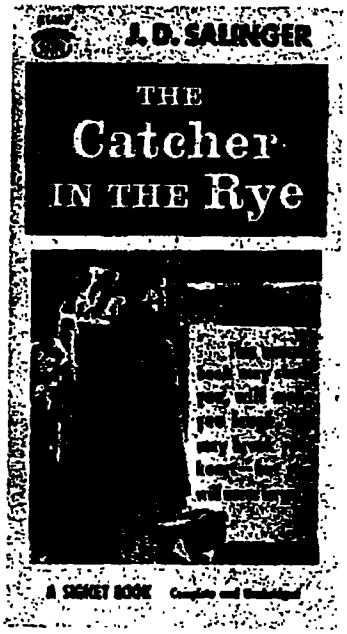
THE book was reprinted five times that July, three times in August and twice in September. Two weeks after publication it was fourteenth on The New York Times best-seller list; three weeks later it was fourth. And that was the summer "The Caine Mutiny" and "From Here to Eternity" shared the top two spots. Looking back over the contemporary reviews of "The Catcher in the Rye" one is immediately struck by two things: how many of them there were and how poor they were, too. Almost two hundred newspapers and magazines reviewed or commented upon the book; no more than twenty (if that many) were perceptive, let alone intelligent. A good many were inaccurate: Holden was misnamed Homer, his age was variously given as 15, 16 and 17 (he is 16), and the novel's action was said to have taken place over three, four or five days (three is correct). Mr. Salinger may have been pleased, bored or annoyed by these pieces; he could not have learned very much, nor could the readers.

Most of the reviews were wildly or mildly favorable. Time, Newsweek, Saturday Review liked it very much. Charles Poore wrote in Harper's : "• • • Probably the most distinguished first novel, the most truly new novel in style and accent of the year." The reviewers for both the daily and Sunday Times

Novelist and editor, Mr. Gutwillig is known for "After Long Silence" and "Fugitives."

The New York Times
Published: January 15, 1961

the Rye"



thought the book good. The critique in this review was written entirely in Holdenese, something to which a number of other reviewers partially succumbed (and it's still happening. John Wain gave it a go in his review of the Penguin edition of the novel in the Observer in 1959). William Foster in The Commonweal remarked unhappily and accurately that Salinger's idiom and style were "a tour de force the American fiction writer will probably find himself increasingly doomed to attempt * * *." Not only American, it's turned out.

"The Catcher in the Rye" was favorably compared to "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," "Seventeen" and "The Lost Weekend" (of all books), and Salinger also reminded people of Ring Lardner. But not everyone was so taken. Some reviewers, like The New York Herald Tribune's, simply did not like the novel: "* * * an irritated and irritating bore * * * the book just about killed me, it really did." Some felt the novel, which originally had been a ninety-page novelette, was attenuated, thin and merely a character sketch. Finally, a small but vocal minority felt "The Catcher in the Rye" was a dirty book. "* * * not fit for children * * * Many adults as well will not wish to condition themselves to Holden's language. Indeed, one finds it hard to believe that a true lover of children could father this tale," said the Christian Science Monitor.

What was it about the novel that struck Americans so squarely ten years ago and continues to hit the mark still? Primarily it was, I think, the shock and thrill of recognition. Many of my friends and this writer himself identified completely with Holden. I went to a school much like Pencey Prep. One of my friends had a younger brother like Allie, who had died, another an older brother like D. B., still another a younger sister like Phoebe. After reading the novel, several of us went out and bought ourselves red caps with earflaps, and we all took to calling each other "Ace" and "Prince."

Salinger has, to quote Arthur Mizener, "his own special insight into the meaning of experience," an insight and a method of expressing it that set him apart from other contemporary writers and seem to push him closer than anyone else to his characters and his readers. "The Catcher in the Rye" has become a crucial American novel without the help or hindrance of television, movies, or dramatization, for Salinger has always refused to permit any kind of adaptation of the book, possibly as the result of a film, "My Foolish Heart," starring Susan Hayward and Dana Andrews, based, as the saying goes, on "Uncle Wiggly in Connecticut."

The book has not only been bought, it has been read. I believe that, despite its flaws, it will continue to be read. As others have noted, toward the end of the book Holden fulfills his ambition to become a catcher in the rye when he refuses to let Phoebe run away with him. "What I have to do," Holden says, "I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff." So there is hope and, more important, there is moving, communicated urgency. Holden takes Phoebe to the carousel. He stands in the rain, watching her "going around and around in her blue coat and all." "God," he says, "I wish you could have been there." We are there.

The New York Times
Published: January 15, 1961

December 31, 2008

BOOKS

Still Paging Mr. Salinger

By CHARLES McGRATH

On Thursday, J. D. Salinger turns 90. There probably won't be a party, or if there is we'll never know. For more than 50 years Mr. Salinger has lived in seclusion in the small town of Cornish, N.H. For a while it used to be a journalistic sport for newspapers and magazines to send reporters up to Cornish in hopes of a sighting, or at least a quotation from a garrulous local, but Mr. Salinger hasn't been photographed in decades now and the neighbors have all clammed up. He's been so secretive he makes Thomas Pynchon seem like a gadabout.

Mr. Salinger's disappearing act has succeeded so well, in fact, that it may be hard for readers who aren't middle-aged to appreciate what a sensation he once caused. With its very first sentence, his novel "The Catcher in the Rye," which came out in 1951, introduced a brand-new voice in American writing, and it quickly became a cult book, a rite of passage for the brainy and disaffected. "Nine Stories," published two years later, made Mr. Salinger a darling of the critics as well, for the way it dismantled the traditional architecture of the short story and replaced it with one in which a story could turn on a tiny shift of mood or tone.

In the 1960s, though, when he was at the peak of his fame, Mr. Salinger went silent. "Franny and Zooey," a collection of two long stories about the fictional Glass family, came out in 1961; two more long stories about the Glasses, "Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters" and "Seymour: An Introduction," appeared together in book form in 1963. The last work of Mr. Salinger's to appear in print was "Hapworth 16, 1924," a short story that took up most of the June 19, 1965, issue of The New Yorker. In the '70s he stopped giving interviews, and in the late '80s he went all the way to the Supreme Court to block the British critic Ian Hamilton from quoting his letters in a biography.

So what has Mr. Salinger been doing for the last 40 years? The question obsesses Salingerologists, of whom there are still a great many, and there are all kinds of theories. He hasn't written a word. Or he writes all the time and, like Gogol at the end of his life, burns the manuscripts. Or he has volumes and volumes just waiting to be published posthumously.

Joyce Maynard, who lived with Mr. Salinger in the early '70s, wrote in a 1998 memoir that she had seen shelves of notebooks devoted to the Glass family and believed there were at least two new novels locked away

in a safe.

"Hapworth," which has never been published in book form, may be our only clue to what Mr. Salinger is thinking, and it's unlike anything else he has written. The story used to be available only in samizdat — photocopies of photocopies passed along from hand to hand and becoming blurrier with each recopying — though it has become somewhat more accessible since the 2005 DVD edition of "The Complete New Yorker." In 1997 Mr. Salinger agreed to let Orchises Press, a small publisher in Alexandria, Va., bring out a hardcover edition, but five years later he backed out of the deal.

Ever since, Salinger fans have been poring over the text, looking for hidden meaning. Did the author's temporary willingness to reissue "Hapworth" indicate a throat-clearing, a warming up of the famously silent machinery? Or was it instead an act of closure, a final binding-up of the Glass family saga — one that, coming last but also at the chronological beginning, brings the whole enterprise full circle?

"Hapworth," to summarize the unsummarizable, is a letter — or rather a transcription of a letter — 25,000 words, written in haste, by the 7-year old Seymour Glass, away at summer camp, to his parents, the long-suffering ex-vaudevillians Les and Bessie, and his siblings Walt, Waker and Boo Boo, back in New York.

Seymour, we learn, is already reading several languages and lusting after Mrs. Happy, the young wife of the camp owner. He condescends to his campmates and dispenses advice to the various members of the family: Les should be careful about his accent when singing, Boo Boo needs to practice her handwriting, Walt his manners, and so on.

The letter concludes with an extraordinary annotated list of books Seymour would like sent to him — a lifetime of reading for most people, but in his case merely the books he needs to get through the next six weeks: "Any unbigoted or bigoted books on God or merely religion, as written by persons whose last names begin with any letter after H; to stay on the safe side, please include H itself, though I think I have mostly exhausted it. ... The complete works again of Count Leo Tolstoy. ... Charles Dickens, either in blessed entirety or in any touching shape or form. My God, I salute you, Charles Dickens!" And so on, all the way through Proust — in French, naturally — Goethe, and Porter Smith's "Chinese Materia Medica."

"Hapworth," in short, must be the longest, most pretentious (and least plausible) letter from camp ever written. But though it's the work of a prodigy, it's also, like all camp letters, a homesick cry for attention.

Its author is the same Seymour who, while on his honeymoon in Florida years later (but — it gets confusing — 17 years earlier in real time, in the 1948 short story "A Perfect Day for Bananafish"), will take an automatic pistol from the bottom of his suitcase and shoot himself through the temple as his bride lies napping in the twin bed next to him. And the same Seymour — the family saint, poet and mystic — whom we've heard about at such length in the later Glass stories.

Or is he the same? The Seymour of "Bananafish," and "Raise High the Roof Beam," is more a sweetly charming neurotic than the ethereal, otherworldly figure described in "Seymour: An Introduction," who in turn seems not in the least like the superior, boastful little genius of "Hapworth." The discrepancies among the various versions of Seymour is such that some critics have questioned the motives and reliability of Buddy, Seymour's younger brother and the family scribe, who is our source for much of what we know (and also the transcriber of the "Hapworth" letter).

But that kind of tricky, Nabokovian reading feels forced in this case. Mr. Salinger seems less interested in keeping the details straight than in getting them right and offering some explanation, or justification perhaps, for that moment, still startling even after many rereadings, when Seymour blows his brains out. It's as if Mr. Salinger realized, belatedly, that he had prematurely killed his best character and wanted to make it up to him.

And at some point, it seems fair to say, he fell in love with this project — not just with Seymour but with the whole clan. Who can blame him? The Glasses are one of the liveliest, funniest, most fully realized families in all of fiction. The trouble is that like a lot of families, they occasionally take themselves too seriously and presume to lecture the rest of the world. In the early '60s, as a certain amount of sentimental and half-baked mysticism began to be spouted by some of the younger Glasses, the critics quickly turned on Mr. Salinger, and "Hapworth" was grumpily dismissed.

What makes "Hapworth" so fascinating, though, is that it's the only work of Mr. Salinger's in which the voice is not secure, as the young Seymour fidgets first with one tone and then with another — by turns earnest, anxious, playful and sarcastic. In effect he's always revising himself. He worries about his spirituality and then skewers his fellow campers. He wants to be like Jesus, and he wants to sleep with Mrs. Happy. He yearns to be left alone, and is desperate to be noticed. He wants to be a saint, and even if he can't quite admit it yet, he wants to be a great author. Intentionally or not, he seems like a projection of his creator.

In general what has dated most in Mr. Salinger's writing is not the prose — much of the dialogue, in the stories especially and in the second half of "Franny and Zooey," still seems brilliant and fresh — but the ideas. Mr. Salinger's fixation on the difference between "phoniness," as Holden Caulfield would put it, and authenticity now has a twilight, '50s feeling about it. It's no longer news, and probably never was.

This is the theme, though, that comes increasingly to dominate the Glass chronicles: the unsolvable problem of ego and self-consciousness, of how to lead a spiritual life in a vulgar, material society. The very thing that makes the Glasses, and Seymour especially, so appealing to Mr. Salinger — that they're too sensitive and exceptional for this world — is also what came to make them irritating to so many readers.

Another way to pose the Glass problem is: How do you make art for an audience, or a critical establishment, too crass to understand it? This is the issue that caused Seymour to give up, presumably, and one is tempted to say it's what soured Mr. Salinger on wanting to see anything else in print.

Sadly, though, Mr. Salinger's spiritual side is his least convincing. His gift is less for profundity than for observation, for listening and for comedy. Except perhaps for Mark Twain, no other American writer has registered with such precision the humor — and the pathos — of false sophistication and the vital banality of big-city pretension.

For all his reclusiveness, moreover, Mr. Salinger has none of the sage's self-effacement; his manner is a big and showy one, given to tours-de-force and to large emotional gestures. In spite of his best efforts to silence himself or become a seer, he remains an original and influential stylist — the kind of writer the mature Seymour (but not necessarily the precocious 7-year-old) would probably deplore.

July 16, 1951

Books of The Times

By NASH K. BURGER

THE CATCHER IN THE RYE
By J. D. Salinger.

It is just before Christmas and 16-year-old Holden Caulfield has been kicked out of exclusive Pencey Prep, a boys' school in Pennsylvania. Considering everything, this reflects more credit on Holden than on Pencey. Life at Pencey is dreary, regimented, artificial and, of course, expensive. This happens, however, to be only the latest of a series of schools from which Holden has been expelled. Understandably he is in no hurry to encounter his parents, but he is also reluctant to linger a moment longer than necessary at Pencey. He therefore takes what money he has and departs for New York, where he passes several days in a weird jumble of adventures and experiences, is involved with a variety of persons including taxi drivers, two nuns, an elevator man, three girls from Seattle, a prostitute, and a former teacher from whom Holden thinks it best to flee in the middle of the night and most of all from himself.

Holden's story is told in Holden's own strange, wonderful language by J. D. Salinger in an unusually brilliant novel, "The Catcher in the Rye." The Book-of-the-Month Club has chosen it as its current selection.

Adolescence Speaking for Itself

Holden is bewildered, lonely, ludicrous and pitiful. His troubles, his failings are not of his own making but of a world that is out of joint. There is nothing wrong with him that a little understanding and affection, preferably from his parents, couldn't have set right. Though confused and unsure of himself, like most 16-year-olds, he is observant and perceptive and filled with a certain wisdom. His minor delinquencies seem minor indeed when contrasted with adult delinquencies with which he is confronted.

Mr. Salinger, whose work has appeared in The New Yorker and elsewhere, tells a story well, in this case under the special difficulties of casting it in the form of Holden's first- person narrative. This was a perilous undertaking, but one that has been successfully achieved. Mr. Salinger's rendering of teen-age speech is wonderful: the unconscious humor, the repetitions, the slang and profanity, the emphasis, all are just right. Holden's mercurial changes of mood, his stubborn refusal to admit his own sensitiveness and emotions, his cheerful disregard of what is sometimes known as reality are typically and heart breakingly adolescent.

The author evidently takes a dim view of prep-school life, and few writers have presented it with more effortless devastation. Holden's reminiscences and observations are short and to the

point. "Pencey," he tells us, "was full of crooks. Quite a few guys came from these very wealthy families, but it was full of crooks anyway. The more expensive a school is, the more crooks it has. I'm not kidding." Holden is sometimes, but not for long, a little bitter, and it may be he has a tendency to generalize from too little evidence (in this case his camel's-hair coat had been stolen out of his room), but he has seen and done a lot for a 16-year-old, and a lot has been done to him. Mr. Salinger gives us a peek at Pencey's headmaster, who knows just which parents to talk with, which to ignore, gives a glimpse, too, of alumni and assorted students. Then there is a fine chapter in which Holden calls to say good-by to an ancient teacher, an unlovable Mr. Chips without wisdom or imagination.

Poignant Reflections of Youth

In New York Holden's nightmarish efforts to escape from himself by liquor, sex, night clubs, movies, sociability--anything and everything--are fruitless. Misadventure piles on misadventure, but he bears it all with a grim cheerfulness and stubborn courage. He is finally saved as a result of his meeting with his little sister Phoebe, like Holden a wonderful creation. She is the single person who supplies and just in time--the affection that Holden needs.

Certainly you'll look a long time before you'll meet another youngster like Holden Caulfield, as likable and, in spite of his failings, as sound. And though he's still not out of the woods entirely, there at the end, still we think he's going to turn out all right. We wouldn't even be surprised if he grew up to write a few books (he talks about books quite a lot), books like "Of Human Bondage," "Look Homeward, Angel," or "The Catcher in the Rye"--nothing so childish and innocent as "Seventeen," though.

A pretty good small volume of Holden's observations could be put together right now out of Mr. Salinger's book; call it "The Maxims and Moral Reflections of Holden Caulfield," say. Thus, On the Movies: "I can understand somebody going to the movies because there's nothing else to do, but when somebody really *wants* to go, then it depresses the hell out of me." On Life Is a Game: "If you get on the side where all the hot-shots are, then it's a game, all right. But if you get on the *other* side, where there aren't any hot-shots, then what's a game about it? Nothing. No game." On Teachers: "You don't have to think too hard when you talk to a teacher." On War: "I don't think I could stand it if I had to go to war. It wouldn't be so bad if they'd just take you out and shoot you, but you have to stay in the *Army* so * * * long."

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The New York Times
nyt.mes.com

October 6, 2002

Ideas & Trends; Lousy Childhoods Ain't What They Used to Be

By JANET MASLIN

REMEMBER phonies? They drove Holden Caulfield crazy. They were dishonest and self-involved and distant, loaded with lousy values and crumby tricks. Take the phony who said "How marvelous to see you!" to Holden when she really meant "How's your big brother?" And yet the phonies of J. D. Salinger's preppie-meltdown classic are looking pretty good these days.

"The Catcher in the Rye" remains the playbook for smart, sensitive adolescents trying to navigate the shark-infested waters of the adult world. But those waters are much murkier than they used to be. Mr. Salinger's postwar New York looks almost as distant as Edith Wharton's in the face of current films and books derived from his story. And while he imagined a quirky, dysfunctional family for Holden, he stopped somewhere short of "The Royal Tenenbaums."

Latter-day versions of Holden still drop out and wig out. But they must face tougher situations than, say, taking a phony to a Broadway matinee or fielding a quasi-pass from a former teacher. And the world they observe is a much more dangerous place. Holden worried about the ducks in Central Park. The eponymous hero of the movie "Igby Goes Down" hears obscenities shouted by uniformed schoolgirls in the park as they clobber each other with hockey sticks.

Igby drops out of his latest school. As with Holden, this failure is not his first. ("He's already done the Protestant circuit," says his mother.) So he gravitates from school to the Upper East Side, which is still as solid a bastion of phoniness as it was when the Caulfields lived on East 71st Street. The West Side of Manhattan, on the other hand, has an intellectual aura, and downtown (a Greenwich Village nightclub for Holden, SoHo and TriBeCa for Igby) signifies creativity and abandon. Some things never change.

Igby is disaffected, though less so than White Mike, the Upper East Side teenager in Nick McDonnell's recent novel "Twelve," who drops out of school, deals drugs and winds up caught in a shootout involving an Uzi. Igby merely hates his mother, an extreme and outlandish version of the wealthy, distant matron who left Holden feeling so alone. One thing that has changed most conspicuously since "The Catcher in the Rye" is the behavior of women in these tales. Igby's mother is so overbearing that he literally wishes her dead. And he is bowled over by the sexual assurance of the film's younger women. "You've come a long way, baby," he says to one of them, watching her light up a joint.

Holden himself was no babe in the woods in these matters. Although his desire to be the catcher and rescuer of little children and his tenderness for his little sister Phoebe stand out, he had a worldlier side. He must have seemed alarmingly experienced when the book was published in 1951: a 16-year-old who gets drunk (albeit at a piano bar), checks into a Midtown hotel and hires a prostitute (although he decides it would be wrong to have sex with her). But that's still tame compared with Igby's hotel room encounter, in which he winds up serving as a drug courier and making a delivery to two rich, giddy, champagne-drinking teenage girls.

THE hero of "Tadpole," a 15-year-old named Oscar, goes to a school named Chauncey (Holden flunked out of Pencey Prep) and is even more seasoned than Igby. He spouts Adam Smith and Voltaire, instructs a waiter at one of Manhattan's fanciest restaurants in French and winds up sleeping with his stepmother's seductive friend. "You're a grown-up," she tells him. "Or close enough."

So he becomes involved in an affair that is "very 'The Graduate,' " according to Oscar's otherwise oblivious father. (Adds his stepmother, whom Oscar would really like to seduce: "Except that Oscar hasn't graduated.") Where will this lead him?

Ultimately, down the same path taken by Holden, Igby and others modeled along these classic adolescent lines: They are destined to melt down and grow up, leaving behind the much-maligned rat race of New York careerism.

The framework of this teen parable is still Mr. Salinger's, but the decadence level has changed. That may be an essential adaptation to popular culture, in the same way that Eminem's obscene rap vernacular ratchets up the immediacy of his Dylanesque rebelliousness. It is as if the same song is being played in a different key, at a higher volume, though its melody remains constant. The rare thing about "The Catcher in the Rye" remains its myopic honesty, even when its story line is adapted to different times.

In "The Good Girl," a young store clerk living cultural light-years from New York City takes the name Holden as his declaration of independence. (It is also a harbinger of his fragility.) He piques the curiosity of a co-worker played by Jennifer Aniston, who asks him to explain Caulfield's story. "He's put upon by society -- hypocrisy of the world," says Holden, who is actually Tom ("It's my slave name," he explains) and wants to emulate Mr. Salinger. So he is a writer. And like many a novelist and filmmaker, he wants to make his escape from the mundane by reinvigorating a classic.

"It'll be like 'Catcher in the Rye,' " he says, about the fiction he is writing. "Only by me."

Photos: . . . and Kieran Culkin, the angst-ridden hero of "Igby Goes Down." (Myles Aronowitz/United Artists); Angry young men: Jake Gyllenhaal in "The Good Girl" . . . (Dale Robinette/Fox Searchlight Pictures); . . . Aaron Stanford, at left, dining with phonies in "Tadpole" . . . (Theresa Dillion/Miramax Films)

The New York Review of Books

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1 · FEBRUARY 1, 1963

Organization Kids

By Edgar Z. Friedenberg

Education and the New America
by Solon T. Kimball, by James McClellan Jr.
Random House, $6.75

This extraordinary work is clearly the most literate, intellectually agile, and sharply focussed analysis of the function of American education in its historical and cultural context to be found in the professional literature of education. This statement does it less than justice; I by no means wish to imply that the book stands out only in comparison with the low, prevailing standard of the area. In any field it would be outstanding; in my own it is, by its quality—though not its import—reassuring as well. It is the sophisticated work of exceptionally cultivated men; indeed, its sophistication is its chief challenge to a reviewer. What immortal hand or eye could frame its fearful sophistry? Still, I shall try, and so will a good many others, for this book raises moral issues that are much more important than its educational implications. It is destined to be both eulogized and damned. This is not a prediction. It is a promise I intend to carry out here and now.

There will certainly be little disagreement with the authors' selection or definition of the central problem they discuss:

> Unless we can find an educational solution to the problem of commitment, then the wonderfully dynamic, ordered, and free society of America will neither achieve nor merit long continuation. Perhaps we may be allowed a few personal words to explain our attitude....As we sought a panoramic vision of American life, what caught our attention most strongly at first was evidence of the enormous physical costs that our civilization demands of its citizens. Our strategic vantage point in the educational system of America, as well as considerable time spent abroad over the years, enabled us to see with shocking clarity what America was doing to people. The experience left us for a time curiously cynical and hostile. There were times when the direct question, "What distinctly American traits in contemporary culture are worth preserving?" would have drawn a direct "None!" for and answer.
>
> But we are suited neither by training nor temperament to be consistent nihilists. As we gradually learned to see and to describe the system of American life with at least partial success, we also came to know and value the goods which cost Americans so dear in the currency of the soul....We did, in our own way, learn assent to this new society, a society that offers no fixed and eternal ends in life, but only powerful dynamic means, as its major gifts to the individuals that make it up...Learning assent to the new society does not mean easy and passive acceptance of the status quo, a facile adjustment to life as it is encountered in the immediate vicinity. It does mean taking one's full part in the impersonal, complex (and therefore overwhelming) public, corporate world, as well as in the intensely personal, private

> (and therefore overwhelming) world of the mobile small family. In short, it means knowing the costs of modern life and being willing to pay them on demand. Believing that the world is worth the cost, we direct this book toward a conception of education through which our youth may learn assent to America.

A major reason that we make ourselves miserable in America, the authors believe, is that we cannot make the values appropriate to a more individualized society operate effectively in the corporate and bureaucratic world we live in, and they maintain that these values must be revised and made relevant to the conditions of modern life in America. In a brilliant and original chapter on Dewey and progressive education, they demonstrate that, despite his experimentalism—they call it pragmatism—Dewey could not quite perceive how well-suited modern life and his philosophy of continuous reconstruction of experience really were to each other:

> There is a lesson to be learned form Dewey's mistake here. In the final analysis his conservatism overcame his devotion to change, growth and process. Deeply convinced that ultimate human values were to be found in a particular form of face-to-face community, Dewey was so concerned to see that community survive and grow that he forgot to notice one particular fact: the world no longer has a place for it. The full acceptance of change does not admit of the reservations which Dewey never overcame....But we have to acknowledge and accept that structure. We cannot regard Tom Sawyer as an acceptable model for intelligence in the modern world. Neither can we take the Vermont village of Dewey's childhood as representative of the needed social commitment of our time.

In their context, these comments are not snide; they are the concluding sentences of a discussion in which both Tom Sawyer and Vermont are treated with understanding and respect, though they are finally rejected. This rejection of personal experience and loyalty as obsolete responses is the recurrent and insistent motif of the book. A deft, though familiar, historical analysis of the development of American culture from the agrarian to the metropolitan; a thoughtful discussion of the American conviction that science is the only possible metaphysics; an original and highly provocative synthesis and presentation of the evidence that the modern corporation destroys the moral and political as well as the economic basis of the small, local community without replacing it, provides a firm foundation for the authors' argument.

But their social analysis, of course, is not and cannot be very different in its implications from those of Riesman, Whyte, Galbraith, Mills, and Berle, whom they briefly but cogently cite. What makes Kimball and McClellan different is their insistence that we are stubbornly resisting these implications and thereby refusing to assent to America. Life in America today demands that we learn to live so as to make virtues of transiency and flexibility; we are not to seek for roots; for us, the authors assert, to stand still is to die: "A blind necessity to keep moving is the most obvious fact about all contemporary valuing behavior." Only in the family can we look for stable ties; yet the ability of the family to supply them is weakened by its own rootlessness in the succession of communities in which it must try to establish itself, and even more by its anxious involvement in grooming its children for mobility. All this must be accepted. How, then, is commitment to be achieved?

To answer this, Kimball and McClellen argue that in any society with well-defined social roles people learn to do, and desire to do, what their role requires. What they believe to be their personal commitment, then, is not nearly so much a matter of feeling as of social function. If the young can be instructed in the arts of manoeuvre in the modern world, they will, in effect, become committed to the socially essential postures of

manoeuvre; and the fact that this precludes strong personal feeling about what they do or strong personal ties to the people they do it with merely means that this is a new *kind* of commitment—commitment to particular individuals or groups outside the family, or to specific social goals, having become invalid and nostalgic. Toward the end of their book, the authors bring this argument to a focus:

> The final part of our task is to defend our analysis against the obvious charge that commitment is something other than the purely intellectual or cognitive activities that we have described under the heading "disciplines." Commitment is a matter of guts, of will and heart, the objection runs; commitment means a certain state of the emotions and not merely of the mind, as our argument would lead one to believe.
>
> Let us meet this objection head on. It is an idea that is deep-rooted in our culture, and we shall have to make several detours to show why it is entirely misplaced...We shall have to offer an interpretation of individuality and individual responsibility that is different from the one our culture inherited from its agrarian past. With these arguments we shall make our case proof against the objections that seem, at first glance, so destructive.

They fail to do so, however, and reiterate their point in the statement:

> In short, part of the price of being an American is *being* an organization man. Autonomy is not, as Whyte would have us believe, a viable alternative. On the contrary, the very attempt to discover an alternative is a form of mental and social illness, a denial of reality. The important question is not whether, but what kind of an organization man? One who simply occupies a niche on an organizational chart? Or one who strives to extend the bounds of his own freedom to act with initiative and resourcefulness at whatever level he finds himself? Truly to understand the reality of the dynamic world we live in is to see that the second sort of individual is not only preferable ethically but that without him our emerging social structure will not stand.

"The rat-race-and-withdrawal theory of public life is so much a part of the climate of opinion among contemporary intellectuals that its public expression," Kimball and McClellan write, "cannot seem other than trite." They underestimate the opposition; and calling it nostalgic and socially ill does not wholly disarm it. Matthew Arnold, over a century ago, understood the reality of the dynamic world we live in well enough to plead:

> *Ah, love, let us be true*
> *To one another! for the world, which seems*
> *To live before us like a land of dreams,*
> *So various, so beautiful, so new,*
> *Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,*
> *Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;*
> *And we are here as on a darkling plain*
> *Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,*
> *Where ignorant armies clash by night.*

"Dover Beach" is familiar, but not trite; and Arnold's vision of the world is very similar to Kimball and McClellan's. Only assent is lacking.

What is the nature of the assent that Kimball and McClellan demand? They do not ask that our society be enthusiastically endorsed; only accepted as what in fact exists, as Margaret Fuller ultimately accepted the universe. This is sound advice; but to accept reality implies no obligation to approach it pragmatically. A woman awakening in bed with a strange man ought to be mature about her problem. But it does not follow that she is obligated to go into the kitchen and start cooking breakfast. It might be wiser to kill him; in part, it depends on how she feels.

"We must force the question," the authors write, "whether it is humanly possible to develop a viable sense of relatedness of self to a world within the contemporary urban-industrial culture." Indeed, we must; but some answer it differently. Thus E. M. Forster wrote in "What I Believe:"

> I have, however, to live in an Age of Faith—the sort of epoch I used to hear praised when I was a boy. It is extremely unpleasant really.....And I have to keep my end up in it. Where do I start?
>
> With personal relationships. Here is something comparatively solid in a world full of violence and cruelty....Personal relations are despised today. They are retarded as bourgeois luxuries, as products of a time of fair weather which is now past, and we are urged to get rid of them and devote ourselves to some movement or cause instead. I hate the idea of causes, and if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country...There lies at the back of every creed something terrible and hard for which the worshipper may one day be required to suffer, and there is even terror and hardness in this creed of personal relationships, urbane and mild though it sounds. Love and Loyalty to an individual can run counter to the claims of the State. When they do—down with the State, say I, which means that the State would down me.

That, of course, depends of the State; ours would, and often has. Forster published this essay, however, in 1939, at a time when Britain was not altogether unconcerned with survival.

Kimball and McClellan's stigmatizing of the preponderance of contemporary intellectuals as morbid and narcissistic would seem to leave such people as E.M. Forster out of account, although their mixed and distinguished bag includes Freud, Fromm, Tennessee Williams, Norman Mailer, and that most pied of pipers, J.D. Salinger. By citing Arnold and Forster I do not, to be sure, refute Kimball and McClellan's basic contention that all these men are dinosaurs. But I can, perhaps, refute their assumption that the dinosaurs are all impotent or dead. No book dealing formally with education is ever likely to influence secondary education so much as *The Catcher in the Rye,* which by now has helped millions of youngsters to diagnose their plight and learn an effective defensive stance, even though that stance has often been a pose. And the most dynamic of American moralists and social critics—the greatest of these is James Baldwin—can certainly not be accused of turning away from society, although I'll bet society wishes they would.

Reviews of books are written for people who have not yet read them; and Kimball and McClellan's potential readers may well feel that I have not given their specific educational recommendations the attention they deserve. I think I have; their concern with "the formal disciplines of logic and mathematics," "experimentation," "natural history," and "esthetic form" add up to far less than an adequate program for bringing about the kind of changes they advocate in students, although they would certainly improve the intellectual tenor of the schools if they could be made to work there. Here, however, the

authors are blithely unpragmatic, neglecting the context in which such changes must occur—the public schools—except to complain, justly enough, that they are overly bureaucratized; and therefore deny the student the opportunity he needs to practice the skills of group-functioning under conditions conducive to autonomy.

This is sensible and consistent: organization men, surely, should be protected from exposure to futile and incompetent organizations during their formative years. But the authors' devotion to the ideal of functioning well in a highly organized society leads them to ignore most of the issues that educationists think important; and this is not simply because the educationists are more naive than they. Kimball and McClellan, though occasionally noting the plight of the poor in America, actually concern themselves wholly with middle-class education and the task of filling up the emptiness of suburban life-in-transition with their new type of commitment. Yet the crucial failure of American education to provide slum youngsters, or working-class youngsters who are not on the make, with anything the kids see as valuable constitutes a national emergency. The book does not discuss human development in childhood and adolescence. On its terms, it cannot; adolescence is a period of life that makes no sense at all to an observer unless he *does* understand and care about the youngster's *individual* identity and commitment, and quest for *self*-fulfillment. But these authors state that:

> This period poses special educational problems for two reasons: 1) It will see the termination of that period in which formal education is conducted apart from occupational interests and the beginning of the period in which formal education is closely integrated with occupational pursuits. 2) It will constitute the period in which the disciplines of thought and action of the adult society become conscious and foundational to all future learning.

Those two reasons, impressive as they sound, don't quite cover the special educational problems of adolescence: and anybody—especially any pragmatist—who thinks they do could easily learn better almost any evening in the course of a ten-minute stroll through upper Central Park. Two pragmatists together might take a little longer.

No, this is primarily a moral treatise, not a book about education. The style of the authors is quite frequently hortatory; and sometimes offensively so. The first lines of the preface assert that:

> The present volume is the offspring of an academically un-sanctioned union of anthropology and education. In popular mythology, natural children are supposed to be marked by excessive vigor and ruthlessness in the pursuit of goals. If these qualities are present in this book, we should count them assets.

So should I; but what comes out is not so much an effect of strength as a kind of seductive insolence. On two or three occasions, the authors step into parentheses to admonish the stupid reader directly: "(It is idle chatter to introduce the bogey of transfer of training to this discussion....";"Please do not interpose the trite objection that the social contributions of Bartok, Bergson, and Bohr cannot be explained by their group affliations!...)." Ordinarily, I would not object to this kind of thing; it is even refreshing after so much blandness in books about education. But in this book, otherwise so elegant and satisfying in style, it began to affect me very unpleasantly. One need not be a Swinburne to get a certain satisfaction from being pushed around by rough, manly chaps, even intellectually; and Kimball and McClellan leave the susceptible reader all a-tingle. But they also left me feeling, as sometimes happens on these occasions, slightly taken. By treating me with such engaging roughness, they almost made me forget that the new brand of commitment

they are selling, that works on an entirely new principle, was so delightfully smooth. I enjoy myself. I am grateful for our romp together, but I am not going to buy their product. Freud, Fromm, and Salinger are high-priced, it is true; more than I can any longer afford. But they carry my brand, and their goods last a lifetime, such as it is.

BOOKS

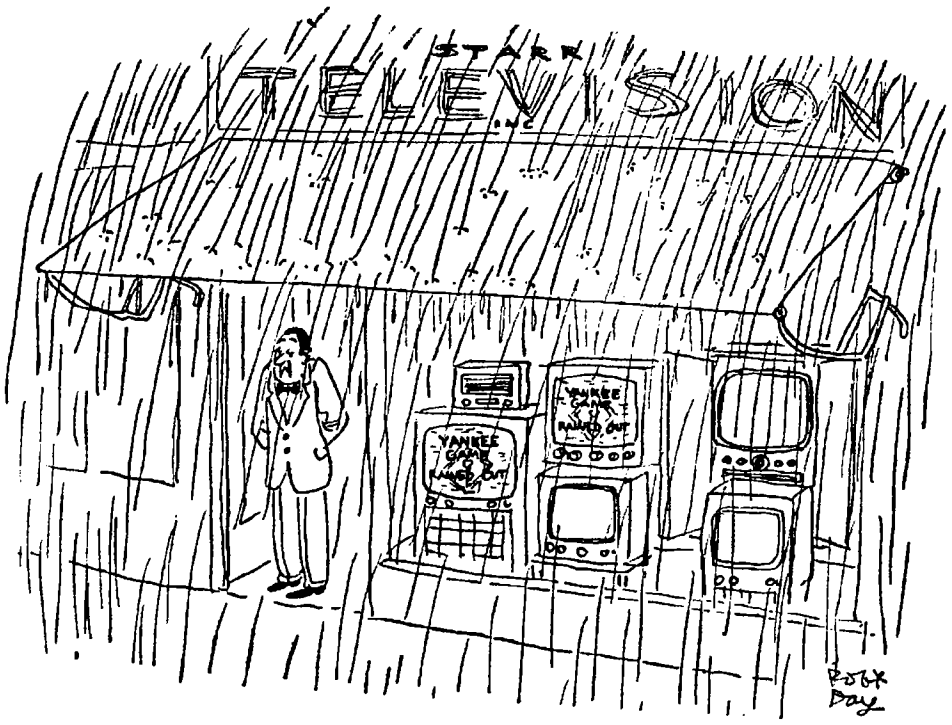
The Vision of the Innocent

HOLDEN CAULFIELD, the sixteen-year-old protagonist of J. D. Salinger's first novel, "The Catcher in the Rye," which has been published by Little, Brown and chosen by the Book-of-the-Month Club, refers to himself as an illiterate, but he *is* a reader. One of the tests to which he puts the books he reads is whether he feels like calling the author up. He is excited about a book by Isak Dinesen and feels like calling her up. He would like to call up Ring Lardner, but an older brother has told him Lardner is dead. He thinks "Of Human Bondage" is pretty good, but he has no impulse to put in a call to Maugham. He would like to call up Thomas Hardy, because he has a nice feeling about Eustacia Vye. (Nobody, evidently, has told him the sad news about Hardy.) Mr. Salinger himself passes his unorthodox literary test with flying colors; this reader would certainly like to call *him* up.

Mr. Salinger's brilliant, funny, meaningful novel is written in the first person. Holden Caulfield is made to tell his own story, in his own strange idiom. Holden is not a normal boy. He is hypersensitive and hyper-imaginative (perhaps these are synonymous). He is double-minded. He is inexorably self-critical; at various times, he refers to himself as yellow, as a terrible liar, a madman, a moron. He is driven crazy by "phoniness," a heading under which he loosely lumps not only insincerity but snobbery, injustice, callousness to the tears in things, and a lot more. He is a prodigious worrier. ("When I really worry about something, I don't just fool around. I even have to go to the bathroom when I worry about something. Only, I don't go. I'm too worried to go.") He is moved to pity unconscionably often. He has few defenses. For example, he is driven frantic by a scrawled obscenity some vandal has chalked on the wall of his ten-year-old sister Phoebe's school. Grown men sometimes find the emblazoned obscenities of life too much for them, and leave this world indecorously, so the fact that a sixteen-year-old boy is overwhelmed should not be surprising. When another boy steals his gloves, Holden can't just go up to the boy's room, accuse him of stealing his gloves, and hit him in the jaw. He is scared by what he imagines the culprit's face will look like while his jaw is being demolished. ("I can't stand looking at the other guy's face, is my trouble. It wouldn't be so bad if you could both be blindfolded or something.") He is also worried by the lack of an acute sense of ownership; he didn't really care about losing the gloves in the first place.

The book covers Holden's last day at Pencey, a fashionable prep school, from which he has flunked out, and the following two days, which he spends in hiding in New York City. Stradlater, Holden's roommate, is handsome, gross, and a successful amorist. On Holden's last night at school, a Saturday night, he is in a frenzy of jealousy because Stradlater has dated up Jane Gallagher, with whom Holden is in love. The hero and heroine of this novel, Holden's dead brother Allie and Jane Gallagher, never appear in it, but as they are always in Holden's consciousness, together with his sister Phoebe—these three constitute his emotional frame of reference—the reader knows them better, finally, than the characters Holden encounters, who are, except for Phoebe, marginal. It is characteristic of Holden that although he is crazy about Jane, always thinking of her, always wanting to call her up, he never does call her up. He is always about to but doesn't, because he's never "in the mood." ("You really have to be in the mood for that stuff.") Perhaps he means that circumstances and his feelings are always too chaotic at the particular moment—that he wants to appear before Jane when everything is in order and he is in control of himself. Or perhaps he wishes to keep his memory of Jane inviolate and consecrated, like his memory of Allie; perhaps he is afraid of finding her innocence tarnished—not in a sexual sense, because eventually he is sure that Stradlater didn't "get to first base with her," but simply of finding her no longer what she was, possibly finding that she has become, in short, a phony. He keeps calling up a girl named Sally Hayes, whose manifest phoniness gives him "a royal pain," but he writes that off as the overhead of sex. He can never risk it with Jane.

While Stradlater is shaving before going to meet Jane, he asks Holden to write a classroom composition for him. "Anything descriptive," Stradlater says. "A room. Or a house. . . . Just as long as it's as descriptive as hell. . . . Just don't do it *too* good, is all. . . . I mean don't stick all the commas and stuff in the



right place." The implication that all there is to writing a composition is a sense of direction about commas also gives Holden "a royal pain." "I mean," he explains, "if you're good at writing compositions and somebody starts talking about commas. Stradlater was always doing that. He wanted you to think that the only reason *he* was lousy at writing compositions was because he stuck all the commas in the wrong place. . . . God, how I hate that stuff!"

While Stradlater is out with Jane, Holden, knowing his roommate's technique on the back seats of cars, takes terrific punishment from his imagination. Nevertheless, he sits down to write a composition for the absent Don Juan:

The thing was, I couldn't think of a room or a house or anything to describe the way Stradlater said he had to have. I'm not too crazy about describing rooms and houses anyway. So what I did, I wrote about my brother Allie's baseball mitt. It was a very descriptive subject. It really was. My brother Allie had this left-handed fielder's mitt. He was left-handed. The thing that was descriptive about it, though, was that he had poems written all over the fingers and the pocket and everywhere. In green ink. He wrote them on it so that he'd have something to read when he was in the field and nobody was up at bat. 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. . . . They really meant it. But it wasn't just that he was the most intelligent member in the family. He was also the nicest, in lots of ways. He never got mad at anybody. . . .

When Allie died, Holden took it hard:

I was only thirteen, and they were going to have me psychoanalyzed and all, because I broke all the windows in the garage. I don't blame them. I really don't. 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. . . . It was a very stupid thing to do, I'll admit, but I hardly didn't even know I was doing it, and you didn't know Allie. My hand still hurts me once in a while, when it rains and all, and I can't make a real fist any more—not a tight one, I mean—but outside of that I don't care much. I mean I'm not going to be a goddam surgeon or a violinist or anything *anyway*.

Holden copies Allie's poems from his baseball mitt. He tells you casually, "I happened to have it with me, in my suitcase." Very much later, we discover that the only person to whom Holden has ever shown this mitt is Jane. ("She was interested in that kind of stuff.") Allie is always there. Sitting in his hotel

room in New York, Holden feels he is sunk, and he starts talking to Allie. He remembers that he and another boy were going on a bicycle jaunt with their BB guns, and Allie asked to come along, and Holden wouldn't let him:

> So once in a while, now, when I get very depressed, I keep saying to him, "Okay. Go home and get your bike and meet me in front of Bobby's house. Hurry up." It wasn't that I didn't use to take him with me when I went somewhere. I did. But that one day, I didn't. He didn't get sore about it—he never got sore about anything—but I keep thinking about it anyway, when I get very depressed.

Holden is always regretting that you didn't know Allie. "You'd have liked him," he keeps saying: the human impulse to make a silent voice audible to others, a lost essence palpable.

By the time Stradlater returns from his date with Jane, Holden is sure that he has slept with her, and Stradlater helps him to think so, without being actually caddish. Stradlater asks for the composition; he is furious when he reads it, because it is about a baseball glove rather than a room or a house. Holden tears the composition up. He has a fight with Stradlater and gets a bloody nose. Shortly after that, he decides he can't stay another minute in Pencey and will go to New York, though his parents don't expect him until Wednesday.

Holden goes to say goodbye to Mr. Spencer, his nice old history teacher. It worries the boy that while his teacher is saying edifying valedictory things to him, he becomes acutely concerned about the winter quarters of the ducks in the Central Park lagoon. ("I was wondering if it [the lagoon] would be frozen over when I got home, and if it was, where did the ducks go. I was wondering where the ducks went when the lagoon got all icy and frozen over. I wondered if some guy came in a truck and took them away to a zoo or something. Or if they just flew away.") This worry about the ducks stays with Holden all through his adventures in New York. On his second night, he has an irresistible impulse to go to Central Park and see what the ducks are doing. In his avidity to find them, he pokes in the grass around the lagoon, to see if they are sleeping there, and nearly falls in the water. No ducks. Beginning to shiver, he is sure he is going to die of pneumonia, and he decides to sneak into his parents' apartment to see Phoebe once more before he dies.

This Phoebe is one of the most exquisitely created and engaging children in any novel. She is herself a prolific

novelist, who is not deterred from starting a new book merely because she hasn't finished the last one. They are all about an attractive girl detective named Hazle Weatherfield. Hazle's father is "a tall attractive gentleman about 20 years of age." When Holden tiptoes into Phoebe's room, she is asleep. As befits an author, Phoebe has numberless notebooks. Before Holden wakes Phoebe, he has a look at her notebooks and her schoolbooks. Phoebe's middle name is Josephine, but Holden finds "Phoebe Weatherfield Caulfield 4B–1" written on the flyleaf of her "Arithmetic Is Fun!" Phoebe keeps changing her middle name, according to caprice. In a little list of variations, Holden finds "Phoebe Weatherfield Caulfield, Esq." "Kids' notebooks kill me," Holden says. He devours Phoebe's.

Holden wakes Phoebe. The moment she opens her eyes, she wants to know whether Holden has received her letter announcing that she is going to appear in a school play, "A Christmas Pageant for Americans." "It stinks but I'm Benedict Arnold," she tells him excitedly. "I have practically the biggest part." Then, after her theatrical excitement simmers down, she remembers that Holden wasn't expected home until Wednesday, and she learns that he has been kicked out of school. She hits him with her fist. "Daddy'll *kill* you!" she cries. Holden lights a cigarette and tries to explain, but can't get much further than saying that the school was full of phonies and they depressed him. "You don't like *any*thing that's happening," she says. This accusation, in which Holden recognizes that there is a fundamental truth, also depresses him. He tries desperately to justify himself. He enumerates things and people he does like—his brother Allie, for instance. Phoebe replies sagely that it is easy to like people who are in Heaven. Holden, miserable, cannot marshal all his likes. There was, he remembers, a frail boy who was so bullied by some thug schoolmates that he jumped out of a window to escape them. A teacher, Mr. Antolini, picked the boy up and put his own coat around him—"He didn't even give a damn if his coat got all bloody"—and for this teacher Holden has always had a special feeling. Near Phoebe, Holden begins to feel better. They turn on the radio and dance. Holden's parents come back from a late party, and Holden hides in a closet. Phoebe, to allay her mother's suspicions, says she has been smoking. Then, when Holden is about to leave, she gives him her Christmas money. She is terribly distressed by her

brother's plight, but she cannot resist flaunting a private triumph:

While I was walking towards the door, old Phoebe said, "Holden!" and I turned around.

She was sitting way up in bed. She looked so pretty. "I'm taking belching lessons from this girl, Phyllis Margulies," she said. "Listen."

I listened and I heard *something* but it wasn't much. "Good," I said.

Everybody, says Holden, accuses him of acting twelve years old. It's partly true, he admits, but not all true, because "sometimes I act a lot older than I am—I really do—but people never notice it." These perpetual insistences of Holden's—"I really am," "I really do," "It really does"—after he has explicitly said something, reveal his age, even when he is thinking much older, as when he says, "People always think something's *all* true." Although Holden thinks lots of things are funny, he hasn't much sense of humor; he has the deadpan literalness and the all-or-nothing combativeness of the passionate adolescent. Salinger's use of reiteration and redundancy in Holden's self-communion conveys this. After a passage describing his schoolmate Robert Ackley as pimply, dirty, disgusting, and nasty, and as having a terrible personality, he tells you, "I wasn't too crazy about him, to tell you the truth." He had been to the movies, which he hates, with this boy and another, and they both "laughed like hyenas at stuff that wasn't even funny," and then he tells you, after this harrowing experience, "I didn't even enjoy sitting next to them in the movies." The "even" is odd and characteristic. After a full confession about how he feels when Jane and Stradlater are out in the car, he tells you, "I don't even like to talk about it, if you want to know the truth." He is so aware of the danger of slipping into phoniness himself that he has to repeat over and over "I really mean it," "It really does." When he is not communing with himself but is in actual situations, these reiterations disappear; the dialogue and the descriptions are economical and lean.

The literalness and innocence of Holden's point of view in the face of the tremendously complicated and often depraved facts of life make for the humor of this novel: serious haggles with belligerent taxi-drivers; abortive conversational attempts with a laconic prostitute in a hurry; an "intellectual" discussion with a pompous and phony intellectual only a few years older than himself; an expedition with Sally Hayes, which is one of the funniest expeditions,

surely, in the history of juvenilia. Holden's contacts with the outside world are generally extremely funny. It is his self-communings that are tragic and touching—a dark whirlpool churning fiercely below the unflagging hilarity of his surface activities. Holden's difficulties affect his nervous system but never his vision. It is the vision of an innocent. To the lifeline of this vision he clings invincibly, as he does to a phonograph record he buys for Phoebe (till it breaks) and a red hunting cap that is dear to him and that he finally gives to Phoebe, and to Allie's baseball glove. He has a hunger for stability. He loves the Museum of Natural History because the figures in the glass cases don't change; no matter how often you go, the Eskimo is still there catching fish, the deer drinking out of the water hole, the squaw weaving the same blanket. You change the circumstances of your visit—you have an overcoat on one time when you didn't before, or you may have "passed by one of those puddles in the street with gasoline rainbows in them," but the squaw and the deer and the Eskimo are stable. (It was the reason Keats liked the suspended attitudes of the figures on the Grecian urn.) Holden knows things won't remain the same; they are dissolving, and he cannot reconcile himself to it. He hasn't the knowledge to trace the process of dissolution or the mental clarity to define it; all he knows is that he is gasping in the avalanche of disintegration around him. And yet there is an exhilaration, an immense relief in the final scene of this novel, at the Central Park carrousel with Phoebe. ("I felt so damn happy all of a sudden, the way old Phoebe kept going around and around.") Holden will be all right. One day, he will probably find himself in the mood to call up Jane. He will even become more tolerant of phonies—it is part of the mechanics of living—as he has already had to endure the agony of saying "Glad to've met you" to people he isn't glad to have met. He may even, someday, write a novel. I would like to read it. I loved *this* one. I mean it—I really did. —S. N. BEHRMAN

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DIVORCES ASKED

Barbara Stoy from Walter Denn Stoy, charging neglect. They were married Jan 2, 1947 at Sedan, Kas. She asked for custody of two minor children, provisions for their support and a property settlement.

MORE MORE MORE MORE
—*Bartlesville (Okla.) Examiner-Enterprise.*

That's the woman of it.