

Catcher in the what?

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my 2 cents

by [Bruce Leuthold](#) - Wednesday, 17 May 2006, 06:16 PM

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I cant stand this book on account of it says goddamn to much. I have read 50 pages and nothing big has happended, he just talks and talks and talks. Holden seems to be nuts. That boy just anit right. I do have to admit I might not like the book but it is a little interesting. That guy Holden gives alot of detail whenever he is describing something. I think that the author J.D. Salinger is really Holden, and the book is really a atuo-biography on his life. How could he go into the amount of detail that he goes into unless it is an experience of his.

-Bruce

What do you think?

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Re: my 2 cents

by [Corey O'Brien](#) - Wednesday, 17 May 2006, 09:59 PM

Some of this sounds like it can go into the vent room. Try keeping the focus of a response targeted at the room's prompt. I'll set up an extra miscellaneous room for your own questions that we can sift through to create separate forums to discuss them.

But about your post ... specifically Holden's choice of words. A question that I think Bruce here brings up is, do you think that Salinger is representing teenagers accurately through Holden's language use?

Thinking about this from my teenage years, as well as those now working with teenagers, I'm led to think that, for the most part, the representation is accurate, as far as Holden's use of words. Not even teenagers either, because thinking about this I recall being maybe in first grade, sitting on my front steps with my best friend Ray from down the street. Another kid from another block was sitting on his bike in front of us on the sidewalk. Neither Ray nor I liked this kid (I can't remember his name), and for some reason I remember thinking that my family was better than his. Where a first grader comes up with such ideas is an interesting wonder.

But the point of the memory is that I was whispering in Ray's ear all these horrible things about the kid and his family, using some of the worst words in the English language. Ray wasn't saying anything, and the kid wasn't saying anything too bad, though looking back at it now, I can attribute what he said to being an act of defense. This name calling went back and forth for maybe twenty minutes, until I realized that the kid wasn't looking at me anymore, but looking

behind me. That's when I felt the hair on the back of my neck stand straight up. And when I turned to see who the kid was looking at, my nightmares came true.

There was my mother, scowling like only a mother can. And boy, did I get the heat!

A first grader! Speaking like that! And putting this back to the question, I'm led to wonder if Holden's liberal use of words means something more than that. I wonder if it's an example of how, when growing up, we often test the rules and limits, sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously, to see what space is there for us.

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Re: my 2 cents

by [Gerald Obah](#) - Tuesday, 23 May 2006, 12:40 AM

I do believe there is a very...blatant use of the word "goddamn" in this book. As a christian myself, it is a sin to use the Lord's name in vein, though it still happens when people say things like, "Oh God," "Oh my God," "Jesus Christ," and the list goes on and on. However, i do not think that it is about the author's life. Like Brittany said, authors are supposed to be descriptive. For example, if there is a boy eating spaghetti in a book, an author could say, "he ate the spaghetti with the fork that was 12 inches long, silver, and pretty gaunt." Thats how detailed they have to be. So as a result, i do not think this is about the authors life.

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Re: my 2 cents

by [Nora Barenblitt](#) - Wednesday, 24 May 2006, 02:47 PM

Although, as like Gerald and Brittany said, that books are *supposed* to be detailed, I believe in what Bruce is saying. Houlden does use a lot of nasty language. If the book were a movie it would probably be rated R for language. The question is: Why does Houlden use this language? Could it have to do with the environment he grew up in? Where did he learn this terrible language?

In some ways I do believe that he is good representation of *some* teenagers. I have heard a lot of teenagers use this kind of language in the school hall ways and out of schools. However, not all teenagers are like that.

Obivously Houlden must have low values in religion for using his super being's name in bad context. Those are my thoughts.

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Re: my 2 cents

by [Jane Ostdiek](#) - Wednesday, 24 May 2006, 02:53 PM

If this was a perfect world, then I honestly think that nobody would be searching, and you wouldn't call your friend and find out that they just turned into a satanist, and now they're buddhist, and now they're hindu, and now they're christian...no. I think people would stop searching. But, and espicially in this time, everyone's just trying to find out who they are . It means there are a lot of wonderful people who are just lost. And it makes me sad. I'm lost, too, I mean, but I have my faith, which honestly is the rock that keeps me sane, and happy.

Holden's just one of those people who's searching, who's trying to find the answers for themselves and find out what's real. There's a loss of innocence which demands that everything they were taught in childhood is false, that the innocence of childhood was a lie. Maybe that's why we're told to have faith like a child, maybe that's the point of the book.

Allie's death, I think, was the moment Holden lost his innocence. And I think he wants Allie, and his innocence, back. Maybe that's why he says, "Alright, get your bike and meet us at the house." He wants to go back. But there's this new part of him, and it's saying, "no, no". "you were brainwashed". And regardless of whether it's right, or wrong, he can't get over that. And he feels trapped. Maybe that's why he thinks he's crazy.

This book is confusing. And I really want him to stop using the word crumby, it makes me think of toenails and I want to vomit. And there's waaaaay too much going on in the back.

Oh, and Bruce, you're right. J.D.Salinger refused to speak with the press, but they had the same thought. One day, a couple of high-school girls from a high school newspaper met him, and begged him to let them interview him. He agreed. Then, in privacy over a few cokes, he confessed that a lot of it was auto-biographical. I know this because last year I had to research Beatniks. I ended up really researching writers of the 1950's, and that was cool. A guy wrote an entire manuscript on this one really big paper. Jack Kerovack..?I know how to say, not spell it, anyway, that's something I found out through research. Thought you'd like to know.

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Re: my 2 cents

by [James Cowan](#) - Wednesday, 31 May 2006, 12:53 PM

i think that Salinger uses goddamn a lot in an attempt to give a more distinct, different, and unique voice and character to Holden. I think when your reading something that has a unique or different type of language used, it is more interesting to read. Im guessing that Holden doesn't care much about swearing, or he just really doesn't like a lot of things. I think the repetitive use of the word helps the reader create a better idea of what kind of person Holden is, and gives the reader a way to differentiate themselves from Holden, or show similarities using language

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Re: my 2 cents

by [greg lewis](#) - Wednesday, 31 May 2006, 01:00 PM

I agree with Bruce in that the author is writing an autobiography on his life. How can you describe things with so much detail if you've never experienced them? Yeah it's authors' jobs to write with detail, but most of the time if it has a lot of detail they've experienced the situations.

I really like the book and I think the use of "goddamm" helps portray the character better. Some people don't like that Holden uses this word so much, but I think that's what the author intended. The author might not want you to like Holden, which gives the book a certain appeal. In most books, you look at the main character as cool, or you can relate to them.

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Re: my 2 cents

by [Mark Boules](#) - Wednesday, 31 May 2006, 01:13 PM

Yes, i agree with you Greg because the author having "goddamn" so much is intended. I think that the author has a purpose of doing this to make you feel something towards Holden. This also shows the personality of Holden. I don't think, though, that Holden represents *every* teen through his behavior. What do you think??

~mark

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**Re: my 2 cents**

by [Bruce Leuthold](#) - Tuesday, 6 June 2006, 03:13 PM

Thanks Greg on the first part of what you said. And thanks Branden.

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**Re: my 2 cents**

by [Branden Paugh](#) - Sunday, 4 June 2006, 09:19 PM

Bruce,

I do agree with you that it takes the Lord's name in vain way way way too much. Drives me mad... although I find Holden funny and a lot like me in some ways about thinking people can be phony and thinking they are idiots, he says things way too harsh. I don't understand why we are made to read this book as it challenges almost anything a parent would want their kid to learn/do. Personally, i hate this book, but I do find it funny on occasion.

Branden Paugh

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**Re: my 2 cents**

by [Corey O'Brien](#) - Sunday, 4 June 2006, 11:34 PM

Are there any situations you can think of when an adolescent should challenge his or her parent(s)?

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**Re: my 2 cents**

by [Bruce Leuthold](#) - Tuesday, 6 June 2006, 03:10 PM

Yes, Mr O'Brien. I think an adolescent should challenge his parents if they are not living a Christian lifestyle. Thats the only one I can think of.

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