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BUSTER**

The theme that the world has an outward appearance that seems fair and perfect but really they're as Holden put it "phonies." This is shown countless amount of times in his journey through New York and even before he left. The setting is in the 1950's; so I'm pretty sure that he didn't encounter any transvestites, lesbians, or anything that extreme of phoniest. Or on the other hand he could have liked them for being as Elmer said a "none conformist." But I doubt it, he seemed to like kids more than anything. And his job, as he felt, was to protect them in their innocents; of which I will talk about in my second theme.

The first example that stands out in my mind is the scene with Stradlater in the "can." If you remember Stradlater was getting ready for his other date while Holden watched him. "Stradlater was a secret slob" in public he always looked good and got all the girls but in fact he was a slob. His razor that made him look so good was "rusty as hell and full on lather and hair and crap." This proves that he is a slob to "never clean it or anything." If you think about it that's even worse than Old Ackley.

At least Ackley knew that he had a problem, that he needed to do something about his face; but Stradlater thought that he was a great guy. He actually thought that there was nothing wrong with never washing his razor. I think that what was mad, Holden so made Stradlater was perpetrating in other words being "phony" every time he went out all GQ after using that filthy razor. Another instance is when he calls that girl in New York, Faith Cavendish, that Eddie Birdsell had brought to a dance at Princeton. Anyway he called her and she almost went off until Holden dropped Eddie's name. Then all of a sudden "she was getting friendly as hell." The same person said "if you think I enjoy

bein' woke up in the middle-" was " getting an english accent all of a sudden." I think Holden caught her with her faade down.

When she first picked up the phone she was mad as anybody else would be in her shoes. But as soon as she processed " Eddie Birdsell from Princeton" she became so amicable. She most of thought that a friend of Eddie, from Princeton, most have been rich or at least well off. Faith was all ready to hook up with him for a date until she asked" Where ya callin' from? Where ya at now, anyways?" And " in a phone booth" was the wrong answer. When he said that she new he had no money and from that point on she had no time to meet up any more. This is a good example of the phoniest that Holden will talk about all through book. Oh and one I almost missed it is a little before the conversation with Faith it is a very important event. When J.

D. Salinger had Holden look about of the window I think it was a big simile, of which I think about more in theme number 3, of the theme of the book. I'm sure Holden didn't ride all the way to New York to pick a run down hotel. So I take it when he drove up it probably looked good on the outside. He even " took it off referring to the red hunting hat before I checked in I didn't want to look like a screwball or something." So we can assume it was nice, or at least on the outside. Salinger even throw Holden foreshadowed a little in the line " I didn't know then that the goddam hotel was full of perverts and morons.

" The first guy he saw out his room window " took out all these women's clothes, and put them on." Then he started walking around like a women, smoking acigarette, and looking in the mirror. And now I gwest I have to take back my sentence about transvestites in the opening paragraph.

Second he saw a couple squiring water and " they were in hysterics the whole time," a little strange. You see the outside of the hotel represents what society is or tries to be, all nice and neat. And the people acting silly in the rooms are what we really like. I'm not saying we are all perverts but we all have two different personalities; one outside and one inside closed doors.

Since I'm will into the second page and it's past my bed time or at least it feels like it is this is the last one for this theme. The one I had in mind is the one the date he had with Sally. From the jump she was phony.

Holden had already talked to her dad and told him how it was, but she still asked how it was. Holden when call her " quite a little phony," she even sounded phony through the book with lines like " I'd love to grand." And when they got through with the play on the Lunts it didn't get any better. They ran into this guy that Sally knew and both of their phoniest began to shine. " You've though that they hadn't seen each other for twenty years" they probably even hugged and kissed cheeks and all. And the funny thing is that " they probably met each other only once." And from that point on they went on a quest to outname the other.

" They both kept thinking of places as fast as they could" trying to get the upper-hand in a game of illusion. They both were trying to, I guess, show they are more popular than the other by making it seem like they know all these places and people, when in actuality they were two big phonies. The next Theme of this story that I want to talk about is the significance of the novel's title. First of all I have to say why the book was entitled as it was " The Catcher in the Rye." The title of the book is a mystery all the way until

chapter 21 when he sneaked back home to see Phoebe. When Phoebe confronted him about getting kicked out of school again saying " you don't like anything" Holden was forced to come up with something he would enjoy to be or do. After minutes of pondering Holden said " I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all.

" He just wanted to save the little innocent kids from falling. The kids I think represent the innocents of the young just playing and when they fall off the cliff they discover the world. He wants to protect them and keep them pure will. All through the story Salinger used Holden as the catcher on the rye to protect or try to protect the innocents of kids. The biggest and most memorial of this protection is when he went to Phoebe elementary school to talk to her before he had to leave. Anyway he saw the word fuck you on the hall walls and " it drove him damn near crazy." He couldn't stand the idea that Phoebe or her friend had seen that on the wall.

If they saw it they would wonder and eventually " some dirty kid would tell them" and they would know the cruel the world thus falling in the rye. As his duty as the catcher in the rye Holden tried to erase the first one that was on the walls, but later said " it's hopeless anyway. If you had a million years to do it in, you couldn't rub out even half the fuck you signs in the world. Its impossible." Now I think the word tragedy goes right there. If the job that Holden is set out to do is inevitable then it's a tragedy. Salinger illustrates a full blown tragedy with a 15 year old boy; it sounds a lot like the classic we read last year Romeo and Juliet.

A young boy, even the same age, is placed in a no win situation. The next one I just thought about is the time Holden got a snow ball off the window cell.

This has nothing to do with protecting but it is about purity. Holden got some snow from off the window pane and he "started to throw it" but after looking out at the scene he decides not to. He said he started to throw it at a car and fire hydrant but they looked "too nice and white." Holden is consumed with finding and protecting purity, and when he found something pure he didn't want to disturb it. But it's strange how he used the words "nice and white," I know that the snow was white but there's something more there.

White is often associated with pure and even holiness. He may be comparing it to a holy site; because he does ask Ackley about joining later in the book. You never know. Theme number three is going to be a discussion about Salinger and his symbolism. Salinger is a master of the subtle symbolism.

He lays his symbols so subtle that most of the time they're not even found or addressed even by a commentary over the book. I really enjoyed reading and rereading this book to find embedded symbols. I think that's what made it so good. A very important character that is referred to all through the story by Holden is Allie. Allie is Holden's younger brother who died of leukemia when he was just thirteen. Holden loved his brother more than anything and when he died he punched out all the windows in the garage. He said that "my hand still hurts me once in a while." This is symbolic of the love he had and still has for his little brother; he even quotes later that "you don't stop loving someone because they die" proving that he still cares for him.

He may even think he had something to do with his death or he caused it. Sometimes little kids think stuff like that. Holden also says that " I can't make a real fist anymore-not a tight one." If his fist represents his love for his brother or his heart than maybe he can't love again. When he meet up with Sally he said he felt like marrying her than he discards it by saying" I don't even like her much." Holden is afraid to love again because of the way his heart and fist was broken by Allie.

Another symbol is his own sister Phoebe. First you must understand that Phoebe came from the Greek word meaning Sun. Holden is lost in the world and feels that everything is " phony." Phoebe is his symbol of hope in the world. All Holden needs is hope. Just as the sun comes out and shines it's beautiful color and truth to the world to nourish and feed the plant; so did Phoebe come with her innocent hands saving Holden from the world.

" The first thing I did when I got off at Penn station, I went into this phone booth." Holden first started to call his brother but then he thought of his sister Phoebe, then he went on about her and how she wouldn't mind being woke up. All through the book he will think about call and eventually sneak home just to see her. This shows he sees her as his only light in this world of phonies hint the name Phoebe Greek for sun. I read a very interesting point in a book review about The Catcher in the Rye that explains the Holden behavior all through the book. In short it said his activities " describes a developing nervous breakdown." And if you think of the symptoms you would agree. Unexplained depression, show countless time in the story as " I felt depressed as hell.

" And the why that Salinger keep using the world depressed, not bad or mellow but depressed he may have been hinting at it. Impulsive spending, that is obvious through the fact he only had " 3 dollars and some change" after just 2 days in New York. Erratic behavior, example is Holden just jumping up and put Stradlater in a " half Nelson." All of this is prior to his eventual nervous collapse. This book has been a joy to read. Holden was very funny at times especially when he called Sally to ask her about " trim a tree" for Christmas.

Salinger is either a great writer or he just lucked up this good of a story. Sometimes I wonder if the author of books always think as deep as the reader. I mean do authors read a commentary over a book they wrote and say, hmm I didn't think of that.

Writers like Edgar Allen are obvious that they have a deeper meaning. But with Salinger it's hard to tell if this is a simple story of a boy rebelling or is it a great big metaphor for the world and how we are. Now if you ask him I, m sure he would say " oh that's what meant exactly," and he might as well have meant that; but who is to say. English