

Oregon Daily EMERALD

From The Shelf

Moral Not Clear; But Story Is Good

By Allyn Herzog
Allen Reed

Catcher In The Rye,
by J. D. Salinger

There is often a thin dividing line between pornography and literature. "Catcher in The Rye" is saved from the former by Salinger's insight into the adolescent mind and by a less than successful attempt to emphasize youthful sensitivity to beauty in contrast to cultural vulgarity.

The novel is centered around the experiences of Holden Caulfield, a sixteen year old neurotic boy who flunks out of a "ritzy" preparatory school and goes on a wild, emotional drunk for three days in New York City. Narrated in first person, it exploits Holden's meditations regarding women, sex, perversions, schools, people and the "existential" problem of life's value to youth. The narration flows smoothly and rapidly over a series of violent emotional episodes so dear to the hearts of the leisured, intellectually incompetent middle class.

Holden, philosophizing all the way, fights with his room-mate because he feels that his room-mate had seduced a girl that Holden knew and liked; gets drunk in a New York bar with some women tourists from Seattle; calls a hotel prostitute into his room; is beaten up by her pimp; has a long, incomprehensible talk with his ten year old sister ("the only real person he knows"); is accosted by a homosexual teacher; and ends up suffering ecstasies at the sight of his little sister riding on a merry-go-round.

Holden's favorite words, which are used liberally, are "crummy", "punkey" and "crap". His favorite complaint is that most people are "phonies". Holden is a mixture of sensitivity and vulgarity, sophistication and callowness, of insecurity and independence. In short, he is, to our only recently vacated adolescent perspective, a fairly accurate portrait of ourselves and our friends.

From these grim circumstances Salinger manages to create a character of almost sentimental stature. The reader who can view the events calmly and who isn't disturbed or pleased by the numerous four letter words with which the text abounds (some of which are a rarity, even in the roughest of modern literature) will come away from the book with the feeling that he has met an extraordinary and very real character.

Holden is a well-potrayed adolescent, but he is an adolescent endowed with an extreme degree of artistic sensitivity toward the people and objects around him.

Although his speech is vulgar and many of the things he sees are vulgar. (Socially speaking) he is not a vulgar person. His predilection for the beautiful carries him to the point of neuroticism and simultaneously raises him above vulgarity.

Salinger's moral, which is rather maladroitly inserted into the novel thru a long speech by the homosexual teacher via a quotation from the psychoanalyst Stekel is we quote, "An immature person is characterized by the desire to give his life nobly for some cause, whereas a mature person is one who will suffer humbly for the same cause." This ties up with the title of the novel, but

unfortunately it has little bearing on the rest of the text. The more obvious theme seems to us to be that in a society constituted as our own is, in order to be happy it is necessary to become less sensitive, less critical, and more plastic and adjustable. We don't agree with this thesis but there it is for what its worth.

In "Catcher In The Rye", Salinger transcends his usual New Yorker preciosity and in selecting this volume, the "Book of The Month Club" also reaches somewhat above its ordinary low level. This may be praising with faint damn. The book, however, is enjoyable.

So THIS Is Oregon

Hit The Deck, Chum

The Outlook Seems Glum

By Jim Haycox

This story, for what it's worth, comes from a friend of mine.

He met a gal the other day who was slightly goofball over some guy . . . and probably said so to this friend of mine so he'd run and tell this other guy. It's very involved.

Anyway, according to my friend, she has become a walking dictionary (unabridged) of this guy's habits, likes, dislikes, pleasures and pains. Doubtless she plans to sink her hooks in him and eventually winch him up to the altar. If she does so it will serve her right for I know something about this medium-sized god that she doesn't (or shouldn't) know yet.

Jones (which we will call him) is one fine fellow all right. He is all she says he is. However, he is not and probably never will be fit for marriage. He does not get up in the mornings. . . the downfall of even the most happily married.

I come to know about Jones and, for that matter, about quite a few people through the use of the wake-up list on the tong. It is a very simple device, this list, a piece of paper divided into 4 sections marked 6:30, 7, 7:30 and 8. Nobody, incidentally, gets up at 6:30 of their own volition.

The analysis of the individual comes through study of their method of signing this thing. The average guy just puts his name in the last convenient slot before him and his class and that's the end of it.

The first indication of irregu-

larity is a parenthesis following the name with the word—Hard—inscribed. At this stage, however, it is difficult to tell if waking him up hard will do the trick . . . or if he's really kidding himself.

In the list of importance, the next inscription is—Very Hard—which is supposed to be just that. The sleeper now admits that it's partially out of his hands.

Next in importance is—Blankets Off! This guy knows it's going to be a struggle but hopes the wake-up man can outwit him.

Beyond this point people seem to take off in all directions, each choosing what, to him, seems most emphatic. Very often it is a frank plea for help which goes—Please, GET ME UP. From here it is only a small step to final admission of defeat—Water!

The guy who puts this up has lost the fight and knows it. But his only alternative is staying up all night. So it's the squirt gun in the kisser every am.

But back to Jones, whose most recent theory seems to be, "Given enough time, I'll be all right."

So he starts off at 6:30 with merely his name. This call is supposed to disturb him . . . but not to wake him up. It's a fine point the wake-up man must draw. At 7 he gets down to business.

—Hard—This is important—, at 7:30 it's—Very Hard, Blanket's Off—Pull Me Out If You Have To—and at 8—Water—I Must Get Up This Morning. And he generally does make it down by noon.

Saturday and Sunday mornings, the tone sometimes changes noticeably. The list becomes a place for cross and intimate remarks . . . except for one which, if I recall, went—Hit Me Easy, I Am Full Of Popcorn. I never went up to find out.

From the Morque...

20 YEARS AGO

Oct. 9, 1931—Houses favor continuing the "Bunion Derby" according to an all-campus poll. Only three living organizations cast negative votes.

The opening of a faculty golf tournament was announced. The two teams will be captained by Howard Taylor, associate professor of psychology, and Donald Erb, professor of economics.

10 YEARS AGO

Oct. 9, 1941—Capt. Harry Blythe's women's rifle class shuddered with apprehension when one of the timbers supporting the roof of the rifle range split.

The general extension division has scheduled evening classes in mathematics for army, navy, and air aspirants.

5 YEARS AGO

Oct. 9, 1946—A special plan to alleviate campus traffic problems will be recommended to the city council. The plan calls for the blocking off of 13th between University and Kincaid for 10 minutes each hour.

More Than Just A Speech

President Harry K. Newburn's speech about this University of ours is one which students can help footnote—if they're interested enough.

And they can help set a precedent. This is the first time a student assembly has featured the University President speaking to the students and the students speaking back to the president through the medium of written questions. Thank Merv Hampton for this one. If it's a successful experiment other such assemblies will probably follow the same pattern.

We think it'll be worthwhile to assemble for this assembly. For years students have made the complaint that education has become a cold, impersonal procedure where the student starts in at one end of the machine and comes out the other end more or less a finished product—even to a numerical symbol indicating his quality.

Nothing personal nowadays, they say, in obtaining a degree in big-time education. You just fill out the necessary forms, write the necessary answers to questions and answer roll at prescribed intervals.

If you fall by the wayside, it's tough. There isn't enough time to give each student individual attention. Besides, there are always plenty more where you came from.

And they're right up to a certain point. Sheer weight of numbers in a classroom or student body leaves no other course. That's why we like the idea of this student assembly where the president and students have a chance to size each other up.

Perhaps it's not a big step, but it's the first such step around here for the big man on the campus to revive the personal aspect between students and that fearful group, "the administration."

We figure the students attending this one o'clock Tuesday can learn a thing or two. Perhaps even enjoy the experience.—B. C.

Might As Well Relax

It's all over but the shrieking now. Early-morning breakfasts at 16 sorority houses this morning will bring to a close Oregon's latest women's formal rush period—one distinguished by many innovations.

While all the furor is still fresh in our minds, we'd like to make a few suggestions regarding next year's rushing.

First, it seems to us that it would have been advisable to continue the practice of having open houses, which give all women interested in rushing a chance to see all of the sorority houses, and vice versa. It would have been possible to have such a period this year, on the Sunday preceding rushing, when the fraternities held open house.

The chief benefit of the open houses to women from small towns who may not be known by sorority actives. Frequently a sorority will become interested in such a woman after having met her. Panhellenic, however, reports that they have not always been satisfied with the results of open houses and the thought was to try something different this year.

Second, it seems unfair to ask a rushee to cut down to three houses after only two rush periods, and continue carrying only three houses for her last three days. It seems to us that early in the period a rushee should not be asked to limit herself so strictly, as it gives her very little leeway if she should be dropped or become disinterested in one of her three houses. We realize that the time factor was an important consideration in this year's ultra-condensed rush period, but adding one more date to the third rush period schedule should not cause much inconvenience.

Panhellenic's answer to this is that by cutting down early, a rushee gets to know the actives in the houses in which she is interested better; and also, since sororities are cut down more rapidly on the number of rushees which they can invite back, it gives the rushee a better idea of how she stands with each house.

We give Panhellenic credit for not being afraid to try something different; but we feel that suggestions for improvement are in order, and should be given consideration in planning for next year.—(C. C.)

Sorority Row



"I guess ours is the first sorority to have an outside dressing table—we use it to get ready to go in."