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Revista de Antropología, Ciencias de la Comunicación y de la Información, Filosofía,
Lingüística y Semiótica, Problemas del Desarrollo, la Ciencia y la Tecnología

Año 34, 2018, Especial N°

17

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

ISSN 1012-1587/ ISSNe: 2477-9385

Depósito Legal pp 198402ZU45



Universidad del Zulia
Facultad Experimental de Ciencias
Departamento de Ciencias Humanas
Maracaibo - Venezuela

Social critique in J.D. Salinger's Catcher in the Rye

Azhar Hameed Mankhi

English Department, College of Education /Wassit University/2019

info@uowasit.edu.iq

Abstract

The aim of this research is to show the mental reasons behind the desires of the hero in Salinger's Catcher in the Rye (1950) to refuse the adult world in their societies via comparative qualitative research method. The author attempts to show how the post-war era affects the youth generation. A new countercultural voice emerged which refused all the values and standards of their parents. The result of this conflict is isolation and separation. In conclusion, Holden does not only act as the spokesman for all the youth but he succeeds in creating a character that represents all youth.

Keywords: Innocence, Adolescence, Adulthood, Phoniness, War.

Crítica social en J.D. Salinger Catcher in the Rye

Resumen

El objetivo de esta investigación es mostrar las razones mentales detrás de los deseos del héroe en Salinger's Catcher in the Rye (1950) para rechazar el mundo adulto en sus sociedades a través del método de investigación cualitativa comparativa. El autor intenta mostrar cómo la era de la posguerra afecta a la generación juvenil. Surgió una nueva voz contracultural que rechazaba todos los valores y estándares de sus padres. El resultado de este conflicto es el aislamiento y la separación. En conclusión, Holden no solo actúa como el portavoz de todos los

jóvenes, sino que logra crear un personaje que representa a todos los jóvenes.

Palabras clave: Inocencia, Adolescencia, Adulterio, Phoniness, Guerra.

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1950s American economy was booming. America was the strongest nation in the world after the end of War World II. A new teenage culture was created during this period of times. Youths were more free and liberal than preceding generations. They started revolting on the old conventional values and principles of their parents. They started dating more than one woman at the same time; making strange hairstyles; visiting places of dancing where they enjoyed their freedom without their parent's interference. They rejected the school system for being rigid and authoritative. This system treated children more like adults. This perspective destroyed the childhood innocence, therefore; this system of education was dissented by the youths of the 1950s. They were obsessed with fashion and music that were different from those of the preceding generation. They witnessed independence which shocked their parents. Their behavior was rejected by their families who did not like the new values the youths were holding. Their families' rejection led them to revolt. They suffered from seclusion and non-conformity. Pamela Steinle depicts the novel when she says:

Metaphorically, *Catcher* reads as recognition of America's own process of maturity, from innocent and idealistic 'childhood' to the 'adult' pursuit of status and power in both our private lives and as a nation. Hence, *Catcher* and the surrounding debate can be said to point out a disjunctive gap of moral ambiguity in American culture—for the adult as well as the child (2000: 18).

The adolescents during this period had to move on from parental care to no parental attention and guidance, which impacted their lives and implicated them with many troubles. They were also restless and felt awkward and uncomfortable because American society was changing rapidly. Gradually this negligence was transformed into hatred by families and authorities. Love, warmth, and sympathy are values that do not exist in the American society post-war period. These values are substituted by selfishness, greed, and carelessness. On the other hand, Sobral. (2012) observes that the Civil war and the Vietnam War resulted in a counter-culture movement in American society. The new generation youth reject the conventional norms and values s outdated. The adolescents are more satisfied with their different norms and values. They reject the adult world around them as phony and destructive, to which they do not have a sense of belonging. Therefore; the adolescents begin to search for their identities outside the adult world. Bernstein (2008) argues that the youths different behaviors and their rejections to the conventional traditions of their times leads to a reevaluation of cultural values, create new types of society, new kinds of livelihood, new personal identities.

The adolescents find their consolation in separating themselves from society because they cannot afford its hostility. In the American

writer Salinger's (1951), Holden is one of the youths who are not satisfied with the change that happened in America post-war period. The transformation of American society from a depressed society into a wealthy society does not make everyone happy with this change. Holden is the representative of the youth because he led unsecured life after the War II. Holden is a young person who believes that his society is not fit for him. Steed (2002) on the other hand, argues that Holden's aims wishes and dreams co not be understood by the adults. Only the youth who experience the same events Holden had experienced could understand Holden's refusal of the world of the adults around him. Steed emphasizes: "These readers feel that their experience and Holden's are special because they are unique. In this case, the anxiety and disaffection of youth is a rare understanding shared between Holden and the reader" (Steed, 2002: 10), He adds. Only he and I understand it -- while the rest of the phony slobs out there would never get it. Holden and the youth share their dislike and dissention to the post-war culture. With their parents' wealth, the youth still had a sense of dissatisfaction and emptiness.

Holden is the narrator of the novel who decides to tell his story by means of flashbacks. He relates the fact that he was on the verge of madness because he could not accept the world around him. Holden relates his story from the hospital. He had a nervous breakdown. Heiseman & Miller (1963) describe that the reason behind his disturbed mind: It is not Holden who should be examined for a sickness of the mind, but the world in which he has sojourned and found himself an alien. To cure Holden, he must be given the

contagious, an almost universal disease of phony adulthood. Holden's objection to the conformity he sees in the world around him is evident from the opening lines of the novel:

If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you will 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 do not feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth. In the first place, that stuff bores me, and in the second place, my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece if I tell you my whole goddam autobiography or anything. Steinle (2000) notifies the reasons Holden introduces himself this way: The initial assumption is that the mid-twentieth-century reader want to know the family and position of a central character -- an assumption that is immediately challenged as irrelevant to the telling of the story itself and as contrary to middle-class expectations of personal and family privacy, Whitfield, on the other hand, elucidates the reasons why the youth feel strangers in their homes:

The powerlessness of American adults- as parents, professionals and community leaders- to provide a genuine sense of the future for the adolescents in their charge .the novel indicts adult apathy and complicity in the construction of a social reality in which the American character cannot develop in any meaningful sense beyond adolescence. What is more, there is no remedy for this condition as the story is recalled by Holden from a sanitarium in California. Holden is a

responsive adolescent who is no ability to cope with the rude and offensive American adult society and its economic principles. This phony society makes Holden suffer from many psychological problems which left him with two choices only: Either he accepts to become part of this vulgar society or he becomes insane. While adults are thinking about how to increase their economic advances post-war period the adolescents are thinking how to avoid the harsh realities of adulthood. The growth of the American economy makes the American society class-conscious and results in class discrimination which annoyed the youths. Holden's tragedy starts when his brother Allie died. Since his death, Holden does not feel safe. He always expects to face the same destiny. He continually questions his mortality in these sentences: I started thinking about how old Phoebe would feel if I got pneumonia and died. It was a childish way to think, but I could not stop myself, Anyway, I kept worrying that I was getting pneumonia, with all those hunks of ice in my hair, and that I was going to die. I felt sorry as hell for my mother and father and Try it sometime. I think, even, if I ever die, and they stick me in a cemetery, and I have a tombstone and all, it will say Holden Caulfield on it, and then what year I was born and what year I died.

This threat of death brings horror to all the youths in the post-war era. Margot Henriksen (1997) remarks:

The one group of postwar Americans least able to deny reality and block out their fears were the young of America, those children and young adults, like David in *Invaders from Mars* and Holden

Caulfield in *The Catcher in the Rye*, who was emotionally and psychologically susceptible to atomic nightmares and atomic insecurities. By focusing on the psychological troubles of America's young and by highlighting social deviance and rebelliousness of American youth, the culture of dissent illuminated the social and psychological disruption that characterized life in the age of anxiety.

Probably this is the reason behind the youth's rejection of the institutions like school because they do not view life in them in the long term. Holden does not only hate school, but he also criticizes his parent for their belief in these in these institutions. When he is expelled from this school, people, including his parents, look at him a loser. He is homeless physically and emotionally. Holden makes it clear that his father is a rich man who sends to the best school to get the best education to be proud of. Holden thinks that his father's social status and his prestige destroy his innocence. It is like exploiting his childhood. Holden criticizes his school saying that: Pencey Prep 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. Holden dislikes all people around him, and he describes them as not genuine and authentic. Nardi (2009) points out that: Holden is under the impression that he alone possesses a supreme degree of insight and intelligence knowing what is best for the world and him. Holden is unwilling to take any advances toward self-improvement, which is itself an indication of immaturity. Holden complains that the adults cannot understand the wishes and dreams of the youths and they ask them more than they could accomplish. He

relates a scene in the theater when a woman watches with her little child watching a movie. She cries at some emotional scenes in the movie. When her child asks her to take him to the bathroom she shouts at him asking him to sit still. She asks him to behave like adults when he is only a child. He criticizes her as:

The part that got me was, there was a lady sitting next to me that cried all through the goddam picture. The phonier it got, the more she cried.... She had this little kid with her that was bored as hell and had to go to the bathroom, but she would not take him. She kept telling him to sit still and behave himself. She was about as kindhearted as a goddam wolf. You take somebody that cries their goddam eyes out over phony stuff in the movies, and nine times out of ten they are mean bastards at heart. Holden is annoyed at the fact that those self-centered adults do not understand the very nature of childhood innocence in the society. When his wish to live in a world that appreciates childhood authenticity denied access he does not have but one choice which is retiring to his inner world by disconnecting himself from the external world and his phoniness. He says: I thought what I would do was, I would pretend I was one of those deaf-mutes. That way I would not have to have any goddam stupid useless conversations with anybody. If anybody wanted to tell me something, they would have to write it on a piece of paper and shove it over to me. They would get bored as hell doing that after a while, and then I would be through with having conversations for the rest of my life. Everybody'd think I was just a poor deaf-mute bastard and they would leave me alone. Holden's decision to seclude himself from his parents

and his society makes him confused, shattered, and awkward. He does not have a clear plan for modeling his future life. He believes that his parents' standards are not worth following.

Holden wishes he could find a job in a place where people did not know me and I did not know anybody. He longs to live in a quiet, and unmoving, conventional and unchanging world. His anger against these people he encounters in his life is clear when he refers to them as sometimes I act a lot older than I am. I really do- but people never notice it. People never notice anything, and he complains that: people are always ruining things for you. Holden thinks himself as different from people he describes. Holden's favorite place is the National Museum which he visits whenever he feels insecure and disillusioned. He feels that this place gives him security because in it nothing is changed; nothing is growing up. He says: The best thing, though, in that museum, was that everything always stayed right where it was. Nobody would move. You could go there a hundred thousand times, and that Eskimo would still be just finished catching those two fish, the birds would still be on their way south Nobody would be different. The only thing that would be different would be you. 44, But he is greatly disappointed when he reads Fuck you written on the wall of the Museum. He tries to rub off the inscription before his sister and other children come and read it. This secure place is corrupted by the rudeness and offensiveness of adult people in his society in which he finds it impossible to live and communicate. He angrily adds:

I kept wanting to kill whoever is written it. I figured it was some poverty bum that would sneak into the school late at night to take a leak or something and then wrote it on the wall. I kept picturing myself catching him at it, and how I would smash his head on the stone steps till he was good and goddam dead and bloody. But I knew too, I would not have the guts to do it. I knew that. That made me even more depressed. I hardly even had the guts to rub it off the wall with my hand, if you want to know the truth. I was afraid some teacher would catch me rubbing it off and would think I would write it. But I rubbed it out anyway, finally.

Holden imagines himself as a savior who is responsible for saving children from losing their innocence. His pessimism extends to the educational system. He finds this system authoritarian and severs, and it motivates Holden and other children to leave school. This educational system is not different from other rigid institutions that attempt to control children and suppress their desires. Psychologically speaking, his strange refusal to all people around him results from some experiences he underwent when he was a child. Rowe (1991) explains reasons for Holden's troubled mind. He says: Boys suffer deeply as a result of the destructive emotional training our culture imposes upon them, that many of them are in crisis, and that all of them need help. Probing deeply into his life he told the story of his dead brother who died out of leukemia. His mother transferred her sorrow and grief to Holden. The absence of his mother care makes things worse for him. His mother participates in Holden's destruction. As Rowe (1991) describes Holden's mother as, too nervous and anxious

about her to do more than pay perfunctory attention to her children's need. There is no interaction between him and his parents. They are like non-existent creatures for Holden because the perception of the family for him brings dissatisfaction after all hostilities of the world which the war brings to American Society. Holden does not find compassion, love and attention with his parents. Rosen (1990) observes that Holden needs his parental care and some religious bases. But his parents are not giving him the attention he needs; therefore, Holden is a lost individual who does not have anyone to advise him about the world of adults.

When Holden refers to his father as, Nice... but touchy as hell. Rather than being somebody on whom he can depend, Holden's father is undependable and uncaring. His feeling of isolation drives him to seek a shelter in hotels and nightclubs, museums, and theaters but these places do not compensate him for his home. Another reason behind his tribulations is the death of his schoolmate who committed suicide because of the dictator system in his school. These two incidents strongly influenced his life and make him lose any hope or dreams for the future. The death of his brother, his schoolmate and the aggressiveness and carelessness of his family all contribute to make Holden the negative guy he becomes. As Graham (2007) declares: In the grip of this grief, Holden becomes ever more grimly convinced of his own imminent death. Holden expresses his inner thoughts to his school teacher: You take somebody old as hell, like old Spenser, and they can get a big bang out of buying a blanket. He decides to separate himself from his world. His journey to New York lacks aims and

motives. He says: I do not even know what I was running for--I guess I just felt like it. He does not have a real cause for criticizing his world. His sister blames him: you do not like anything that is happening this perception of the rebellious teenager is adopted by the adolescent's post-war period and the rebellious Holden becomes a representative of all the youth in the counterculture in this post-war America. Steinle (2000) describes the reaction to the novel: In the postwar period, however, recognition of the increasing dissonance between American ideals and the realities of social experiences has unavoidable, and it is precisely this cultural dissonance that is highlighted by Salinger's novel.

When Holden decided to stay in a hotel, the elevator guy asks him about his age but Holden lies saying without thinking: Twenty-two. He justifies his lie by claiming that he was depressed when that man asked him about his age: That was the whole problem when people feeling very depressed, they could not even think, the man sends a girl to his room to have sex with. But Holden is not ready to have sex. For Holden, sex is the passage to adulthood. His opinion of sex is clarified when he claimed: Sex is something I really do not understand too hot. You never know where the hell you are. I keep making up these sex rules for myself, and then I break them right away I spent the whole night necking with a terrible phony named Anne Louise Sherman. Sex is something I just do not understand. I swear to God I do not Graham (2007) remarks that the process of sexual maturity is a process that Holden fears because it implies the loss of

innocence He adds that his fear of sex is a fear that children will be introduced to the world of phony adult callousness.

Holden is unable to separate the concept of phoniness from adulthood. For him to be an adult is to be phony. Rowe (1991) clarifies Holden's attaching phoniness to the adult world: He [Holden] quickly establishes himself as an outcast, swift to ridicule the phoniness of the adult world and the hypocrisy that he detects hidden in their empty promise to value individuality... Holden stands out as a prototype of the youth culture that was to explode upon the scene in the middle class of the decade. This word is repeated many times by Holden when he describes adults in his school, or in his neighborhood. He does not in fact desire to sleep with this prostitute because he is determined to maintain his virginity. He only needs someone to talk to. He asks her do not you feel like talking for a while? Even the prostitute refuses to listen to him. What the heck you want to talk about? He does not intend to be like those corrupted, sexy adults in his society. He wishes that time is stopped in order not to lose his childhood innocence. In his world, no one is ready to listen to what revolves in his mind. Holden wants to talk about his wish to become a catcher to save children from falling into the destructive adults' world. He pays for the prostitute to listen to his wishes. Moreover, Holden does not intend to be part of her moral degradation. Bloom (2000) says that Holden refuses to victimize the girl but ironically he is made a victim by the girl and her friend who beat him and takes his money as if he was punished for being too innocent. Harper (1967) argues that Holden is neither a child now nor

is he an adult because he behaves like someone who is stuck between two distinct worlds:

[Holden] is conscious of being trapped in the no-mans-land between two worlds, between his beautiful but impossible ideals and a sordid but inescapable reality. . . his acceptance of society (in the end) is an acceptance of the fact that he will always be deeply estranged from its dominant social values and, in a sense, a stranger to its people as well. He realizes that putting oneself in a cynical shell is not a solution for overcoming the identity crisis. Even though the outer world is phony and deceptive but he needs to communicate with people in this deceptive world every now and then. Part of Holden desires a compassionate friend who would provide him with moral support but the other part of him encourages his withdrawal. I felt so damn lonesome. Wakefield (1962) observes: The things that Holden finds so deeply repulsive are things he calls phony... and the phoniness in every instance is the absence of love, and, often, the substitution of pretense for love, His desires to communicate are clear when he says:

The first thing I did when I got off at Penn Station, I went into this phone booth. I felt like giving somebody a buzz [...] but as soon as I was inside, I could not think of anybody to call up. My brother D.B. was in Hollywood. My kid sister Phoebe [...] was out. Then I thought of giving Jane Gallagher's mother a buzz [...]. Then I thought of calling this girl [...] Sally Hayes. [...] I thought of calling [...] Carl Luce. [...] So I ended up not calling anybody. I came out of the booth,

after about twenty minutes or so. Kegel (1957) observes Holden inner world claiming: His [Holden] problem is one of communication: as a teenager, he simply cannot get through to the adult world which surrounds him; as a sensitive teenager, he cannot even get through to others of his own age. Holden and other youth do neither want to communicate with their society nor do they want to remain alone. Instead of attending a social gathering he was off by himself. He does not seem to grasp the idea of spending time with others who he should want to connect to but instead considers them phonies. According to Heiseman & Miller (1963) claim s that persons intend to seclude themselves when they experience failure in personal relationships; social prejudice; racism; the horror of war, some traumatic experiences the individual witnesses during childhood. He refuses the limitations and boundaries that are forced upon the children from the constructed perspectives of the adults. The children, he thinks, must be given a complete freedom to behave and decide for themselves. He clarifies:

Then the carousel started, and I watched her go round and round... All the kids tried to grape for the gold ring, and so was old Phoebe, and I was sort of afraid she has fallen off the goddam horse, but I did not say or do anything. The thing with kids is, if they want to grab for the gold ring, you have to let them do it, and not say anything. If they fall off, they fall off, but it is bad to say anything to them. Holden decides not to stop his sister, Phoebe, to grab the gold ring, symbolically to experience an adolescent error. The more Holden maintains the real child perspective, the more he repudiates adulthood. He appears to be in a psychological battle with the world around him.

Finding in his Pency Prep school, a mad world or a phony world full of creeps and hypocrites, Holden makes his final decision to leave school because he does not desire to be part of this artificiality and hypocrisy. Moreover, he rejects the process of maturation which fears most. Berger (1981) remarks that the youth dislike learning the values of the adults because these would disrobe them of their innocence:

The association between the innocence of childhood and the (romantic) idea of childhood's elemental intelligence or wisdom is understood as connected by the fact that children have not yet had the opportunity to learn the taboos in terms of which an adult perspective is defined. This devaluation of the adult world carries with it a devaluation of its association of competence with conventional learning, thus strengthening the belief of communards that it is important to unlearn much that they were taught. He desires to sustain his childhood innocence and never to undergo any change. He travels to New York City, but he is introduced to creeps and hypocrites in a larger perspective. Holden is giving the readers a piece of advice at the very end of the novel: Do not ever tell anybody anything. If you do, you start missing everybody. In this Don Quixote type of battle Holden fails to make any kind of reform to the American society. He realizes that he is weak and impotent. This awareness leads him to understand the unavailability of maturation at the end of the novel. Isolation results in the expelling of a person from all social affairs and interactions, depriving him/her to become a full member of society. Actually the identity of a person is created through certain social and cultural interactions with people, but isolation prevents him/her of

acquiring the completeness of identity. Bloom (2000) emphasizes that Holden was fundamentally alone. His loneliness does not result from his dislike of adults but from other people's inability to understand how Holden thinks and what he needs. His poor school record was a sign of his crash and his impotence to deal with this problem.

Keniston (1965) indicates the reason behind the youths' alienation saying: Alienation is a response of individuals especially sensitized to reject American culture by their early development, a development which in part reflects their families' efforts to solve dilemmas built into American life; and it is in part a response to social stresses, historical losses, and collective engagements in our shared existence. For Holden, the American society is not fit for him and for all other children. He criticizes the American society as a hierarchy and pervasive and phony which tries to impose its corrupted values and traditions on the innocent children. Therefore, growing up in this society means becoming a passive, phony and unauthentic. Holden has a similar prejudice towards religion. He describes all the priests' stupid bastards. He refuses to be labeled a catholic because his father was a catholic. Catholics are always trying to find out if you are a Catholic. It happens to me a lot, I know, partly because my last name is Irish, and most people of Irish descent are Catholics. As a matter of fact, my father was a Catholic once. He quit, though, when he married my mother. He claims that preachers are phonies, if you want to know the truth, I cannot even stand ministers. The ones they have had at every school I have gone to, they all have these Holy Joe voices when they start giving their sermons. God, I hate that. I do not see why the hell

they cannot talk in their natural voice. They sound so phony when they talk, and provides an example of such a preacher, Rosenberger, an alumni of Pencey Prep who attempts to give the students spiritual guidance: Then he started telling us how he was never ashamed, when he was in some kind of trouble or something, to get right down his knees and pray to God. He told us we should always pray to God--talk to Him and all--wherever we were. He told us we ought to think of Jesus as our buddy and all. He said he talked to Jesus all the time.

Rowe (1991) points out that the novel received a wide welcome not only by the youths of the 1950s but also by readers who were attending colleges and universities to whom, Holden Caulfield is meant to be a sharp critic of such 'phony' values, and his desperate search for a more authentic, more spiritual alternative linked him with other postwar rebels. Holden and all the youth alike believe that reaching adulthood, metaphorically, means their death is approaching. . They desire to immortalize their youth by refusing adulthood. Peter Braunstein (2002) explains the youth's desire to remain immortal: At first glance, the generation gap dividing youth and adult society seems a fit antagonism to place on the mantle alongside such other hallowed 1960s binarisms... The image of rampaging youth who rejected the values of their parents and surrogate parents vowed never to trust anyone over thirty, and hoped to die before they got old He sees that the deterioration of society results from the deterioration of the people living in it. Holden, therefore; prefers to spend time with his little sister who is still holding her innocence. He wonders how he lives with all that phoniness and deception in his society. His revolt against his

society remains an inner rebellion. He does not have the courage to give it a voice. His rejection of his society leads him to think of suicide: What I really felt like though, was committing suicide. I felt like jumping out of the window. His inner rebellion and revolt lead him mental breakdown. He does not have anyone to talk to except his sister. He has no friends; no relationships with teachers; or relatives. He has only one wish which is the children do not lose their innocence by becoming phony adults. When he realizes that this wish is impossible to be granted he feels more depressed and frustrated. Holden realizes he is useless and starts to lose his mind, but his sister helps him just in time when she asks him to take care of her. He begins to realize that he can save at least his dear sister, and he gradually regains his self –confidence. Holden's nervous breakdown is strong because he isolated himself from society .The thing that could help him to recover is the feeling that he is useful to his sister. He also realizes that he should come back to be connected to the society he strongly rejected. Communication with people helps him to recover. As long as Holden is still afraid of the unknown, he cannot feel happy in his life even after he gets a therapeutic treatment. He continues yearning for the past and wishes time could stop. Phoebe knows that everyone has to grow up someday and she is not afraid of adulthood like Holden is.

She already realizes the natural course of life and she helps Holden to grow up and to stop his immature demeanor. Phoebe is a foil character in this book because she makes Holden seem that much more immature because of her level of maturity at such a young age. She is more mature than Holden and he is six years older than her. Phoebe

also knows how to save her brother at some points in the story. When her parents come home she tells her mom that she was the one smoking. She lied to her mother's face to protect Holden. Phoebe is mature for the reason of Holden being immature. She makes him a better person. She does have some problems though. She wants to leave her whole life to go and run away with Holden. Phoebe should have a bright future because of her early development into a mature young girl. Holden's feeling of unrest, disillusionment, and isolation from society following World War II lead him to enter in an unrecoverable spin of depression. He criticizes the American society for the rapid change that took place in post-war period. This change does not satisfy the adolescents who are not able to adjust themselves to the adult world around them. While *The Catcher in the Rye* takes place at a certain place in a specific time, Holden's struggle with a traumatic past and the transience of life are eternal. Rowe (1991) indicates that Holden is not sure of what his future holds for him: Holden leaves the reader with the same sense of doubt as to what the future holds for him...In this passage, it is evident that Holden does not make a decision... Holden frequently uses the word phony with regard to the situations and people in his surroundings, which is not an open attitude towards growth and self-awareness. His perception of reality is basically negative, and there is no indication by Salinger that Holden's life in the future will become authentic. When the psychiatrist asks Holden to behave like he used to before he got a nervous breakdown. But Holden is still confused. He does not know what do next because he still has no hope for the future.

2. CONCLUSION

This novel becomes a popular novel among the youths because Holden's opposition to his world stresses the fact that the adolescents are different from their parents. Therefore, they come up with new values, standards, and principles that are not received well by their parents. Holden represents the countercultural voice. Issitt (2009) argues that Salinger is searching to find an advocated self-enlightenment and individual experience...and sought to create a society in which the group did not obscure the individual. Holden does not only act as the spokesman for all the youth but he succeeds in creating a character that represents all youth. Guimont (2001) argues that this novel becomes a living bible for an entire movement.

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Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

Año 34, Especial N° 17, 2018

Esta revista fue editada en formato digital por el personal de la Oficina de Publicaciones Científicas de la Facultad Experimental de Ciencias, Universidad del Zulia.
Maracaibo - Venezuela

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