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# Setting a Course of Action

**P**INECONE MAGAZINE ha-ha, wha?

—Atticus

## The NotPynchon Interview

Okay, so is Shakespeare really THE greatest? I personally can't feel justified saying so, what I've read of his was amazing but I haven't read enough of him or enough literature in general to say with confidence.

I feel like the majority of these 'critics' who claim he's the greatest are English monoglots who feel satisfied knowing the greatest author of all time wrote in their language, thus reinforcing the English world hegemony. Are there many critics/authors of other languages who view Shakespeare as the greatest?

Shakespeare criticism is by and large an index of things not worth saying about Shakespeare.

He has a massive vocabulary, a command of differing high and low styles, and most importantly there's no biography we have that could 'explain' his work away. In other words, he's still a mystery in a way that Dante (who did meet Beatrice and wrote from that inspiration) or Joyce (who did meet Nora and immortalized the day she first gave him a handjob) are not. Because we figure, oh Dante or Joyce did it for a girl they loved and lost or didn't lose, or whatever.

Hence, the authorship debate. Freud thought the plays were written by the Earl of Oxford. Walt Whitman and Mark Twain believed the Bacon theory. HELEN FUCKING KELLER believed the plays were written by Francis Bacon. (See the new book by Shapiro, 'Contested Will', if you doubt me.)

You want to know my theory?

One English writer gets to be the most famous writer of all time. His name? Shakespeare (or so they say). Meanwhile, 400+ years earlier, the only Englishman ever to be elected Pope gets elected as Pope. He promptly uses his powers to give Ireland to the King of England, which says a lot about the Papacy and about Irish Catholics. What was his name?

Well, Pope Adrian IV. The only English Pope. Look it up. His real name was Breakspeare. Obviously Shakespeare was some kind of pen name. Obviously there is a conspiracy. I just find it hilarious that it's

only within the past one years or so that people have started to suggest (based on the 'Shake-shafte' found in a Catholic recusant household during Shakespeare's lost years) that Shakespeare might have been Catholic. DUH. Joyce noticed this, Antony Burgess noticed this, they both knew about Shakespeare / Breakspeare. They just had better things to write than more fapping over the supposedly greatest writer of all time.

Pic related: It's Hamlet's Uncle, the Roman who conquered Britannia and was deified there.

**That pope was 400 years earlier than Shakespeare. How the fuck are you connecting that to the illegitimate child of Elizabeth I and the Duc D'Alençon?**

Yeah, yeah. And yet.. the same Pope was connected to John of Salisbury, whose work Politicraticus gives the motto (by way of Petronius) to the Globe Theatre.

I'm not making this up. I don't have a theory. I just read more widely and think in different ways from Professional Shakespehearean Scholars.

I'm not [connecting that to the illegitimate child of Elizabeth I and the Duc D'Alençon]. I'm just listing facts that nobody ever bothers to adduce when they talk about Shakespeare. Read the life of Claudius in Suetonius' 12 Caesars. Remember nobody in Denmark is named Claudius in any source material given for Hamlet. Now ask yourself.. why does Polonius hide behind an arras in the same way that Claudius Caesar did after Caligula's assassination? It's a visual pun that nobody in 400 years of so-called 'scholarship' has pointed out. It takes somebody like me. Bill fucking Murray.

**I doubt you read more widely than most Shakespeare scholars. Shakespehearean?**

Doubt away. Do you think they've read all of Polydore Vergil's official history of England in Latin? If they have, why haven't they mentioned that you can find every historical character mentioned in Will's plays in this one volume, from Amlethus (Hamlet) to Maccabaeus (Macbeth)? Why? Because



For the original thread see:  
<https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S667543>

they have tenure and get lazy and don't read shit, except what other scholars publish. Go read Polydore Vergil yourself if you doubt me, buttmunch.

Shakespearean? What, you've never read the fucking Waste Land? Line 128. It's called a fucking ALLUSION, buttmunch.

**There's a metric fuckton of evidence for Shakespeare being the author AND against all the other 'candidates'.**

Yeah, yeah. Oxford died before the Tempest was written, Bacon clearly didn't write them. What if Christopher Marlowe didn't really die? What if some other body were buried and Marlowe's death was faked? It happens in Cymbeline (Cloten's headless corpse) and in Measure for Measure (Barnardine).

Marlowe is the only person with the talent to have written Shakespeare's plays. But if it was Marlowe, it would be related to some kind of conspiracy / cover-up. And we know Marlowe WAS involved in conspiracies, cover-ups, and espionage. How can you so easily rule Marlowe out? Seriously.

**And that's how you cross from a valid line of questioning to insanity.**

Well my thesis advisor at Miskatonic U, Professor Charles X Kinbote, really thinks I'm on to something.

**What if Marlowe is STILL ALIVE?**

I'm pretty sure he's not. But I can't tell whether he was actually a somdomite or just posing as one. Until I can figure that out, I daren't try to put together the pieces of this Master Mystery, as my good friend Harry Houdini would call it.

And if you don't want to ask me about Joyce. James Joyce (Author of MRS. YES, the ultimate work of Irish Espionage), then ask me about Harry Houdini.

**Ah, well the authorship question was sort of a failed side-joke. I'm not sure I understand the Breakspeare connection.**

**I like what you have to say about the lack of biography, I pray to God that when Pynchon dies any information of his life will be spared and not sold out by some loosely-related acquaintance or family member. I prefer the mystery.**

Spelling was nonstandardized. Marlowe's name is variously given as Marley, Merlin, and so on, in all documents related to his life. Meanwhile Shakespeare would appear to have been using the name 'Shakeshafte' earlier in his career, before he headed to London. Maybe it's just a pen-name. Maybe he was the illegitimate child of Elizabeth I and the Duc D'Alençon. Maybe I'm Bill Murray. But no one will ever believe me.

I pray to God that before Pynchon dies somebody will point out that the secret answer to The Crying of Lot 49 is 'Torquato Tasso'. Thurn & Taxis? Torquato Tasso? The image of the badger on his back? Get it?

Torquato Tasso was a famous literary artist who went mad and got locked away. In other words, Oedipa's experience of paranoia is a form of artistic madness. That's it. It's a puzzle book, just like Pale Fire expects you to work out the puzzle that the crown jewels are hidden in Kobaltana. This, incidentally, is why my good friend Tommy basically disowned Lot 49 in the preface to Slow Learner.

Again, the fact that no academic has noticed this about Pynchon—even men as bright as Edward Mendelson or Tony Tanner—shows more about the limitations of the academic mindset than anything else.

**Explain. I like what you're saying, but what?**

Shall I lay it out in lemmata? (That being the proper Greek plural.)

1. The 'Taxis' in Thurn & Taxis is ascribed as being derived from the Italian word 'Tasso' meaning 'badger'. Here's the passage:

'Soon he had added to his iconography the muted post horn and a dead badger with its four feet in the

air (some said that the name Taxis came from the Italian tasso, badger, referring to hats of badger fur the early Bergamascan couriers wore). He began a sub rosa campaign of obstruction, terror and depredation along the Thurn and Taxis mail routes. Oedipa spent the next several days in and out of libraries and earnest discussions with Emory Bortz and Genghis Cohen.'

(If you don't believe me.)

2. Look up the Latin verb 'torqueo, torquere'. It means: to twist, turn, screw. 'Torquato' is a Latin past-participle. Torquato Tasso = Turned Badger.

3. Of course 'Thurn' is the German word for 'tower', like the tower in Remedios Varo's painting.

4. Of course there is a famous poem about Torquato Tasso (besides Goethe's) by Shelley (Julian & Maddalo) which describes Tasso as a madman locked away in a tower.

5. Shall I go on?

#### **But why dismiss such a clever and efficient novella?**

I don't dismiss it. I think it's a lovely work of art, and I've read it many times. I like it better than Pynchon does, probably. However, I think it's interesting that literary critics are not capable of thinking like a professional writer, and professional writers are usually too jealous to inquire too closely into other people's success, etc.

Whereas I'm interested in learning HOW you write something like Crying of Lot 49, and yet still have nobody notice something obvious like this, even when there are books published by Pynchon specialists with titles like 'A Companion to The Crying of Lot 49' or 'Even More Footnotes To The Crying of Lot 49' or 'James Clerk Maxwell Was Right And His Demon Is Posting On 4chan'.

**Well, fuck me. My mind has just been blown a little bit. Go on if you've got more. I'd like to hear it.**

Okay. Why don't you write a letter to Mr Pynchon, care of his lovely wife:

The Melanie Jackson Agency.  
250 West 57th Street, Suite 1119,  
New York, NY 10019

And ask this:

Dear Mr Pinecone, In your novel INHERENT VICE you mention that Doc Sportello gets a hard-on every time Ida Lupino's name is mentioned. I want to know if Doc Sportello got a hard-on while watching the film Ida directed, THE TROUBLE WITH ANGELS, starring Hayley Mills, with Rosalind Russell as the Mother Superior of a Nunnery. This film has always confused me, because Rosalind Russell earlier played Gypsy Rose Lee's mother in GYPSY, and Ida Lupino cast Gypsy Rose Lee opposite Roz Russell in The Trouble With Angels. Incidentally, I noted from those liner notes you wrote for that Lotion album that you are a bit of a Love Boat fan, Mr Pinecone. Do you think there's a connection between Hayley Mills's work in Ida Lupino's film and her work in the all-important episode of The Love Boat? After reading INHERENT VICE, I now realize Maritime Law would apply to that episode of The Love Boat, and I'm interested, Mr Pinecone, if that's what you meant.

Sincerely, Oakley Hall

#### **Why call him Pinecone?**

It's a highly learned allusion to René Descartes theories concerning the pineal gland, which Mr Pynchon's friend Harold Bloom will confirm relates to Francis Crick's stated thesis that a biological basis for the human soul might very well be found one day.

Also, if Hawthorne spelled it 'Pyncheon' why not misspell his name? It might convince him to read such mishegas. If he's not reading it right now...

BTW: if I was Thomas Pynchon, or Bill Murray, or somebody else famous...would you even believe me?

Nobody believed me when I told them about that time Bill and I played Foosball with Pol Pot, although you can google it.

All Is True. (To give the correct title of Shakespeare's or Marlowe's or somebody's last history play.)



**So Oedipa's paranoia is really just madness and Inverarity wasn't trolling her hard? This way there's no ambiguity?**

You do realize that, among professional philatelists, an 'inverse rarity' describes a type of highly desirable mis-printed stamp, right?

For the record, I don't think Oedipa's mad. I think she's just on to something, she knows she's on to something, and she can't believe nobody else notices or cares. The question is: Is there a larger conspiracy that does notice or care, or is she really an artist manqué who is suddenly realizing that there is a sort of order to the world and nobody has noticed it? I can explain this better if you ask me about Joyce. James Joyce.

**Wait did you say your buddy Pynchon? What do you mean by that?**

Tee hee. How about if I just say this... if a man got a nickel every time Harold Bloom spoke the words 'my good friend Tommy Pynchon' that man would be a millionaire by now.

**Oh, and go on about Joyce.**

Oh, all I was going to say was...well, have you ever thought what it must be like to be James Joyce? Living as a poor Catholic in a country that is occupied by wealthy Protestants from an island next door? We live 100 years later now, and Protestant and Catholic are mostly just All Theists to the intellectual class, or to people who read Joyce. Yet imagine being Joyce. Imagine you hear that a Bureaucrat who works for the British Government shuffling papers to keep the Irish in their place—and if you're a Bureaucrat working for the British Civil Service in Dublin Castle, chances are you're a Protestant—has just published his first novel. And you're James Joyce and you read it and you see that this novel is full of clichés about the Wild Untamed Irish Natives of the West Coast of Ireland, and is just badly-written horseshit from beginning to end.

And you ask around to find out about the author of this book and you find out he is a Bureaucrat whose only previous published work is a manual for British

Bureaucrats called 'The Duties of Clerks of Petty Sessions in Ireland'. And suddenly he thinks he can write a novel...

And so you (James Joyce) pick up the Bureaucrat's novel, because it is set in the Wilds of Western Ireland, and it's entitled 'The Snake's Pass' even though any fecking Irish Catholic knows there are no snakes in Ireland, St Patrick chased them out, so this Bureaucrat is clearly a complete incompetent.

And you read the book and you realize the heroine is named 'Norah Joyce'. Because she is. (Although James Joyce hadn't met Nora Barnacle yet when this badly-written novel was published.)

And then seven years later the Bureaucrat becomes world-famous for publishing a novel you probably have heard of, although it's not much better written than *The Snake's Pass*. It's called *Dracula*.

What would James Joyce do?

Well, I'll tell you one thing. There's only one reference to Bram Stoker or *Dracula* in all of *Finnegans Wake*. (And you can trust me on this, I've read the whole damn thing, so you wouldn't have to.) Page 145 in the Viking edition:

'Let's root out Brimstoker and give him the thrall of our lives. It's *Dracula's* nightout'

And yet... *Finnegans Wake* is about a man who comes back from the dead. Tim Finnegan is undead, you might say. So is *Dracula*.

But do you think there's any chance that James Joyce HAD read *The Snake's Pass* by Bram Stoker the way I described it, and saw the cliché Irish stereotype heroine written by a Protestant Bureaucrat Servant of the Brutish Vempire named Norah Joyce, and thought of that when Nora Barnacle gave him a handjob on Bloomsday?

It's possible. Although nobody in the thriving Joyce industry has ever mentioned it.

Bram's brother Thornley Stoker even pops up as a character in *Ulysses*. So who knows?

But there, I've given you a reason to take an interest in *Finnegans Wake*. It might be (as Gogarty suggested) the most colossal leg-pull in literary history. Or it might just be the Catholic's response to the Protestant *Dracula*. After all, *Dracula* literally drinks blood. Which—if you believe as Catholics do in the doctrine of Transubstantiation—is exactly why Protestants are afraid of Catholics in the first place.

Yet I've never seen any of this mentioned in Joyce criticism, because Joyce critics are mostly interested in holding on to their teaching jobs rather than trying to think: What would it be like to be James Joyce?

**Inspiring. You make me want to be what I oft pretend I am.**

Thank you, friend. I think we're all basically pretending. Or maybe I should say: Don't mock pretending. I just started posting here because I like getting people to think about literature in new and different ways, largely because I think about nothing but literature, and I don't even have anybody to share this kind of stuff with. I never sought to be an academic because I realized I would always be thinking about literature the way that either students (who love it) or writers (who maybe love it or maybe hate it but certainly don't feel like they have a choice) will think about it.

And I'd love it if somehow the academics of the world were forced to find out about 4chan. It might prove that the Time Magazine online poll was actually correct, and moot is the most influential man in America.

I hope it is, because then Harold Bloom could feel the anxiety of moot's influence. On that delightful note, I take my leave...

**One last thing. The authorship debate doesn't necessarily negate a discussion of whomever wrote the plays and poems attributed to Shakespeare. If indeed they were all by one writer, then it is entirely fair to say that man is the greatest writer in the history of the English language. Some might contest Milton, others Joyce, or any number of other writers, but the volume and brilliance of Shakespeare's work is undeniable; as is his**

**expertise with language, and not to be forgotten, the sheer entertainment of his plays.**

True [if indeed they were all by one writer, then it is entirely fair to say that man is the greatest writer in the history of the English language. Some might contest Milton]. But what if they were written by more than one writer? What would that do to our heroic ideas of authorship and lone genius?

Or put it this way: Sir William Empson, who was a very well-read and intelligent man, and a good poet, so I won't knock him for being a critic, at the end of his life declared that he had read Marvell's satirical poems 'Advice to a Painter' and decided that it was clearly the work of 6 different people. Most professional Marvell scholars thought Empson was just off his trolley (as they say in the UK), and he probably was.

But seriously... what if? We act like geniuses act in isolation, that they owe nothing to other people... and then suddenly somebody discovers that John Milton plagiarized one of the best phrases in *Lycidas* from a lousy poem called 'Sir John Van Olden Barnavel't'.

The phrase, incidentally, describes a writer's desire for fame... 'that last infirmity of noble minds'...

It's true [others might contest Joyce, or any number of other writers, but the volume and brilliance of Shakespeare's work is undeniable]. But did you ever think maybe Joyce realized that people were so obsessed with Shakespeare that they were not prepared to acknowledge another great writer, and so to make them pay attention, he just gave his book the title of the character who has the longest, most boring single speech in Shakespeare's work: Ulysses?

Ulysses, whose father, incidentally, had the same name as Ophelia's brother. Laertes. Nobody mentions this in the National Library chapter of Joyce's novel. It's probably irrelevant. But what if it isn't?

Agreed [as is his expertise with language, and not to be forgotten, the sheer entertainment of his plays]. Although try sitting through 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' someday. Bonus dormitat Homerus. [FIN]



## 'He Rapes His Sister Phoebe' Explained

What is it about the *Catcher in the Rye* that makes it different from other YA [Young Adult] fiction? It's usually treated in a different way than other YA fiction, mainly that its tolerated at all.

Also, I'm not asking for justifications of past and present acclaim for *Catcher* compared to other YA, such as 'It was the first of its kind' and 'People get to it before other YA works'. I'm asking for your own personal reason.

It's probably when he rapes his sister.

Use spoiler tags when you're revealing the most important part of a book. You probably ruined it for someone.

If you think that's the most important part of the book, then you have reading comprehension difficulties.

Given that [the question] has contextualized this as YA, [you] probably lack sufficient reading equipment to realize that Holden repeatedly rapes his sister.

Wait, what—I'm the one that lacks sufficient reading equipment to realize that Holden repeatedly rapes his sister?

I've never heard that he rapes his sister. When I read it, I thought he had a slightly creepy—but probably non-sexual—relationship with his sister. Are you sure about this? Any supporting evidence?

Read the Freudian slips. They're pretty blatant if you aggressively read Holden as an unreliable narrator.

Is Holden in a TB ward? Bullshit, he's in a fucking mental asylum. Also he's probably finger fucking her when he invades his parents' house at night when they're out at the party: it's obvious because he tries to ring up an 'easy' girl to give the time to before he gives the time to Phoebe.

Probably feels guilty he wouldn't let his brother rape her.

Also if you read Holden's age, he started when Phoebe was around 6.

Ok I believe he's mental but is there anyone but yourself that believes he rapes his sister?

Wow. They really raise naïve readers. I bet you think Humbert loved Lolita. Or that Lolita wasn't being regularly fucked before and after Humbert.

There is a difference between valid analysis and deduction. Particularly deduction that has no supporting information within the literature.

I've given you the evidence:

- Repeated Freudian slips.
- A sexualized date with his sister that includes severe lacunae.
- Flashbacks combined with elisions on sexual themes that match his past interactions with Phoebe.
- Continuous latent pedophile threats projected from Holden
- Catch her body in the rye.
- The guilt from the brother being related to not letting the brother participate in an activity.
- And most obviously, supporting the above, the unreliable narrator set in an asylum and Holden repeatedly providing psychological clues in his unreliable narration.

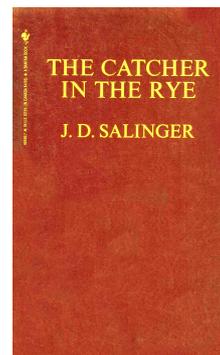
Examples of Freudian slips?

The fucking title of the novel, which he gets wrong from the folk song but protests he's saying correctly, for the most obvious fucking example.

There are about two a chapter. They stand out as stark one line sentences without prevarication amidst all the phoney damns.

Point taken. Lacunae on the date?

Reread when Holden goes over to Phoebe's place, drunk. Holden first calls up other easy girls for sex, fails, wants to call up Phoebe at exactly the same moment in his evening he got a hooker the night



For the original thread see:  
<https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S4540983>

before, goes over, and there are gaps in the conversation where other things should have taken place. The conversation is halting, as if Holden has deleted portions of what happened from the dialogue and narrative.

Holden has censored that incident, and you can tell from the gaps in the record.

Does nobody teach aggressive or even hostile reading as an approach to unreliable narration? Shit, Salinger is repeatedly prompting you to aggressively read Holden by having Holden repeatedly indicate that he is unreliable.

**I think you might be reading too aggressively there. Even as an unreliable narrator, Holden deserves the benefit of doubt. His going to visit his sister doesn't really come from his desire for sex, rather he's calling those girls because he's lonely. His sister is his last resort of human contact, and it's a sign he's coming close to breaking down. I really don't think Salinger intended for it to be interpreted that way.**

I don't know if you're ignorant about mid twentieth century US slang, but in the novel Holden already indicates that 'giving a girl the time' is to fuck them, and Holden rings up girls late at night to give them the time.

There's also the 20 disturbing sexual incidents Holden discusses.

**So the only reason Holden ever calls anybody up on the phone is to fuck them? Seems like pretty bullshit reasoning to me.**

**But let's suppose for a second that Holden really does rape his sister. Why is it in there? What does it add to anything? It really does not strike me as meaningful in any way.**

Please deny the meaning of giving a girl time while simultaneously accusing me of a tendentious and hostile reading.

Holden raping his sister explains his self-loathing, it explains the double meaning of catcher in the rye, it

explains his guilt over his brother's death, it explains his inability to complete sex with women his own age, it explains his fear of older male sexual interest, it also explains why a bourgeois family that could have sent him to military college chose instead to psychiatrically hospitalize him.

It explains why Holden wants to know off adult males where the ducks go in winter. [sic]

It has powerful explanatory meaning. It also acts as a deep irony given the number of sentimental adolescent bourgeois and professional-managerial class who empathize with Holden as if they were in his position, rather than understanding him and reviling him: that such adolescents are unwilling to engage in a deep reading of a complex text because at the heart of their nice suburban Lawyer Lifestyle like Holden's own, are socially unacceptable actions: thus 'phonies'.

**Him saying 'giving a girl the time' doesn't mean he wants to rape Phoebe.**

**He is a lonely young boy, who is trying to figure out the line between innocence and sexuality, which means he calls girls because he's lonely, but then he also wants to have sex with them. He tries calling a lot of people, including a girl who he likes, innocently, and then when he starts to feel lust for her, he decides not to call her. In the same way, he visits Phoebe because he has an innocent relationship with her.**

**Holden raping his sister explains his self-loathing, So does his brother dying?**

**So does his idealism and his own hypocrisy. So does being 16.**

**It explains the double meaning of catcher in the rye?**

**So does the irony of him trying to find innocence in things that aren't innocent**

**It explains his guilt over his brother's death**

**What the fuck you talking about?**

**It explains his inability to complete sex with women his own age?**

**So does the above.**

**It explains his fear of older male sexual interest?**

**So does the above**

**Look, if we all hear a box fall in the closet, and we look inside and a cat runs out, we can believe that the cat knocked over the box.**

**Or an invisible monster came over and raped your invisible little sister you didn't know about, then left and knocked over a box because he's clumsy like that.**

You're deaf to the text and trying to impose a reading that denies Holden's psychiatric incarceration and his elision and avoidance on topics where he's guilty.

**I gave you a number of reasons for why Holden is fucked up. I showed you how these reasons can easily replace your interpretation.**

**Your interpretation of the text is exotic simply to be exotic. There is no reason to believe this for another. In the same light, let me do you one over. Instead of him raping Phoebe, he raped his little sister, and his little brother! That's *actually* why he feels the way he does!**

Unlikely. When Holden took Phoebe off alone, his brother was jealous for being left out. Nice try but both your interpretations deny features in the text.

**You're retarded aren't you?**

Resorting to personal abuse because you can't defend your reading of the text? I'll accept your concession.

**Ok, just checking.**

Alright shut up and I'll settle this once and for all.

The Great Gatsby reference:

'I was crazy about The Great Gatsby. Old Gatsby. Old sport. That killed me.'

Who else does Holden call in this manner? Old Phoebe. Any of you guys remember that scene where Nick and Gatsby both wake up in their underwear?

Freudian slips:

'I couldn't wait to get to the park to see if old Phoebe was around so that I could give it to her.'

In the middle of a scene otherwise completely unrelated to Phoebe 'I started thinking how old Phoebe would feel if I got pneumonia and died. It was a childish way to think, but I couldn't stop myself. She'd feel pretty bad if something like that happened. SHE LIKES ME A LOT. I MEAN SHE'S QUITE FOND OF ME. SHE REALLY IS. Anyway, I couldn't get that off my mind, so finally what I figured I'd do, I figured I'd better sneak home and see her, in case I died and all.' By this time, Holden asserts he isn't even drunk or tired, but this is some frighteningly drunken/tired logic he's displaying, unless, of course, he had other reasons for going to see Phoebe. (Emphasis mine)

'...I figured that if I didn't bump smack into my parents and all I'd be able to SAY HELLO TO OLD PHOEBE AND THEN BEAT IT and nobody'd even know I'd been around.'

'She says she likes to spread out. That kills me. What'd old Phoebe got to spread out? Nothing.'

You should all know, being literate, that 'nothing' is Shakespearean slang for vagina. This would be a stretch unless there was a previous Shakespeare reference in the book... remember the nuns? Even if you don't want to accept that, these sentences still have some blatantly suggestive overtones.

'I mean Phoebe always has some dress on that can kill you.'

'She's very affectionate. I mean she's quite affectionate, for a child. Sometimes she's even *too* affectionate.'

'I noticed she had this big hunk of adhesive tape on her elbow. The reason I noticed it, her pajamas didn't have any sleeves.' Seems like some unnecessary detail.



'Then, just for the hell of it, I gave her a pinch on the behind. It was sticking way out in the breeze, the way she was laying on her side. She has hardly any behind. I didn't do it hard, but she tried to hit my hand anyway. She missed. Then all of a sudden, she said, 'Oh, why did you *do* it?' She meant why did I get the ax again. It made me sort of sad, the way she said it.'

There's more, of course, but this seems enough.

Freudian slips that show evidence of Holden previously being molested:

'...my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece if I told anything pretty personal about them. They're quite touchy about anything like that, especially my father. They're *nice* and all—I'm not saying that—but they're also touchy as hell.'

'Now he's out in Hollywood, D.B., being a prostitute.'

'When something perverted like that happens, I start sweating like a bastard. That kind of stuff's happened to me about twenty times since I was a kid. I can't stand it.'

**Does he ever use language like this when talking about things that aren't Phoebe or his parents?**

**If not then I'm pretty much sold.**

No. He never notices nudity in other people. There are no stark disjoints regarding his parents excepting around their suspected molestation of him. He has a couple of slips about homosexual desire *but he realizes these and covers them up*. He very deliberately does not realize what he's saying when he talks in his 'story' that he's told over and over to everyone about abusing Phoebe.

He uses some variant of 'giving it to her' exactly two other times besides when he's talking about Phoebe. Both are in this quote:

'All he did was keep talking in this very monotonous voice about some babe he was supposed to have had sexual intercourse with the summer before. He'd already told me about it about a hundred times. Every time he told it, it was different. One minute

he'd be giving it to her in his cousin's Buick, the next minute he'd be giving it to her under some boardwalk.'

The other instances with Phoebe:

'I could hardly wait to get to the park to see if old Phoebe was around so that I could give it to her.'

'Then I took my hunting hat out of my coat pocket and gave it to her. She likes those kind of crazy hats. She didn't want to take it, but I made her. I'll bet she slept with it on.'

'Then I gave it to her. She was standing right next to me.'

**Well fuck, I need to stick around here more and read into shit more because I completely missed this somehow, and it explains a fucking lot.**

**The book was already brilliant to me in a sort of meta way, reading it and sympathizing in youth and then reading it again almost as a comedy later on and realizing how much a shit he (ergo, I) was. But this makes absolute sense. Viewing it as Freudian slips, as almost a key set to figure it out it all comes together, *especially* with the random, stark reference to 'sexual intercourse' when he dances around it and about everything else the entire fucking novel. That always did bother me...**

**Well, shit.**

No one wants to talk about the Gatsby reference? You know who else he calls 'old'? Sexy Stradlater.

No one wants to talk about him pinching Phoebe?

No one wants to talk about him saying he goes to visit Phoebe because he's afraid he'll die? And asserting he's not drunk or tired anymore, which is in stark contrast to this logic?

No one wants to talk about the amount of attention he pays to Phoebe's clothes and body and how she looks?

No one?

These aggressive reading techniques are New Criticism, friend. Absolutely no reader response has occurred here, and the text is being held up as the formal source of truth.

Enjoy: you know nothing about literary criticism except something you read on the back of a cereal box about how Pomos denied author.

**I wish cereal boxes actually had literary criticism textbooks printed on them.**

**AUTHORIAL INTENT WARNING (PLEASE DISREGARD).**

I wrote a novel (unpublished). The main character reads 'The Catcher in the Rye' and thinks Holden kills his sister at the end. It's one of many 'clues' that I worked into the text to try to get readers to suspect that the main character is secretly a serial killer. He isn't a psychopath at all, though, and by the end the reader should feel like shit for suspecting him, if they picked up on the clues in the first place. I guess it's a commentary on why you shouldn't judge people for shallow reasons, or something. Still, if I ever get this thing published I know I'm going to get letters asking if the protag is a serial killer and it's going to piss me off.

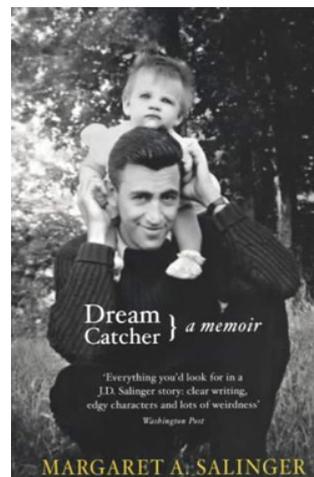
Oh gee, maybe if a text contains a plurality of interpretable meanings, maybe, just maybe, if you were the one with your name on the cover there are meanings that you wrote that escaped your conscious decision making, and the language that you used was so overloaded with meaning that meanings escaped your choice of language.

Holy fuck if you don't like it put a fucking pseudonym on it and return letters without fucking opening them.

When a text hits a reader, the only 'intention' left is the plurality of meanings that can be legitimately interpreted without breaking the text's skein of language referentiality.

P.S.: your subtext won't be, you're not that good a writer. You've just completed 100,000 words of your 1,000,000 word juvenilia. Remember to burn them all. [FIN]

*'Edgy characters!'*



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# NEXT TIME

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