

Holden Caulfield was a high school student at a boy's academy by the name of Pencey Prep. He feels as though he had fought the world and lost, everyone is against him and that little can bring him joy. He had lost his innocence, and saw himself as a "catcher in the rye", trying to save children from his fate.

Holden is quite the eccentric individual. I say this because of the incident with Sally Hayes where he proclaims his love for her and how they should run off together. The reason this makes him an eccentric is, he hates her and in his own words "Sally you're a pain in the ___!" Holden Caulfield has many bad qualities including one of his favorite pastimes getting rip-roaring drunk. A good example of this is one of the many bar scenes when he gets quite drunk and asks the waiter to complement the singer. This is a show of his drunkenness because the singer is awful or at least the thought so before he started drinking. This is one among a plethora of bad habits like smoking, cursing, and being extremely cynical (everyone is a phony). Holden is by far not all bad, inside he is moral and generous. There are very clear examples of these good qualities. He had some moral sense because when "bought" the prostitute Sunny for a throw he could not go through with it, so he paid her anyway and sent her away from him. Holden was charitable when he gave a considerably large donation of twenty dollars to the two nuns. This action was nothing other than an act of pure kindness.

Holden Caulfield has a foil or an opposite in the story, The Catcher in the Rye. This person is his younger sister, Phoebe. She has a positive outlook on life, while Holden hated it and thought he was doomed. She was his "ray of hope" in life and she was the only thing that brought them true joy. Phoebe was also the only person Holden knew who was not a phony about life and being happy (Sally Hayes).

Holden Caulfield seems to change and evolve throughout the book. In the beginning, he is said to be very irresponsible for reasons like forgetting the foils for fencing at the subway or for getting kicked out of school. Later, he Holden seems to become nicer, by giving twenty dollars to the nuns. He also develops the idea of being a catcher in the rye, protecting children from the outside world, and from losing their innocence.

I enjoyed this book greatly and I find that Holden Caulfield's life story is not that far fetched. Holden is seen by most as just another flunkie, but he is much more than that and I hope my paper has proved this fact. This book has stirred much controversy in its time (as many good books do), but I believe it is just true to life showing the workings of a single teenager's mind.

