

Vol. 6, Issue-1
February 2015

ISSN: 0976-8165

The Criterion

An International Journal in English



6th Year of Open Access

Poetry | Fiction | Research Papers | Author Interviews | Book Reviews

Chief Editor
Dr. Vishwanath Bite

Managing Editor
Madhuri Bite

www.the-criterion.com

About Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/about/>

Archive: <http://www.the-criterion.com/archive/>

Contact Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/contact/>

Editorial Board: <http://www.the-criterion.com/editorial-board/>

Submission: <http://www.the-criterion.com/submission/>

FAQ: <http://www.the-criterion.com/fa/>

A Comparative Study between *The Catcher In The Rye* and “Bloodchild” in Terms of Their Aspects of Initiation

Irem Seklem

North American Studies
Philipps-Marburg University

Abstract:

The present paper investigates J.D. Salinger’s book of *The Catcher in the Rye* and Octavia Butler’s short story of “Bloodchild” in respect to their handling the concept of initiation. Exploring the types of initiation with the help of Mordecai Marcus’s classification of the concept as tentative, uncompleted and decisive, the paper depicts two different kinds of initiation. The journey of the protagonist of *The Catcher in the Rye*, Holden, will be discussed and demonstrated how he approaches maturity. Then, it will be depicted how Gan, the main character of “Bloodchild,” overcomes the trauma and enters the adult world. The paper aims at showing the possibility of reading *The Catcher in the Rye* as an uncompleted initiation and “Bloodchild” as a decisive initiation story.

Keywords: *The Catcher in the Rye*, “Bloodchild,” uncompleted initiation, decisive initiation, maturity.

1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper I will analyze *The Catcher in the Rye* and “Bloodchild” in terms of their aspects of ‘initiation.’ In order to achieve this, I will first deal with the concept of initiation in literary theory by consulting Mordecai Marcus’s classification of this concept. Basing on his three- part structure of initiation, I will aim to apply these criteria on these two works. *The Catcher in the Rye* will be analyzed first. I will demonstrate Holden’s, the protagonist, flight from the school and his lonely journey through Manhattan and his initiatory experiences in the hotel then his flight from there to his former teacher Mr. Antolini’s place as a safe place and his last escape after he understands of Mr. Antolini’s real nature, his being homosexual. Throughout these events, it will be shown how innocent Holden is and his insistence on not giving it up and also how these events harm him mentally that it is possible to see him in a mental institution in the end. He will not be seen as a new mature person. Therefore, I will claim this novel is an uncompleted initiation.

Secondly, I will be concerned with “Bloodchild”, the short story of Octavia Butler. I will show the process in which the protagonist, Gan, living among alien beings together with his family and some other human families, witnesses a Tlic way of birth that will lead him go through a change towards maturity. It will be demonstrated how Gan becomes aware of the Tlic power upon them especially after his experiencing a bloody birth which will be indicated as a “ritual,” and how he ends up articulating his feelings. In this sense, it will be illustrated that he gains agency and comes to a dominant position in the face of T’Gatoi by making her accept that the Tlic and the human live interdependently. I will also point out the confession of Gan’s love to T’Gatoi and that they come to understand each other in the end and thereby Gan’s crisis is solved. As a conclusion, my conviction will be that this short story represents decisive initiation because Gan’s self-discovery has been achieved, he has overcome the confusion of the experience and has no difficulty getting accustomed to his new knowledge, and much likely the effect of the experience will be permanent.

These two works have been chosen to analyze since they give a representative outlook on different types of initiation. Therefore, my overall objective will be to show the possibility of reading *The Catcher in the Rye* as an uncompleted initiation and “Bloodchild” as a decisive initiation story.

2. Aspects of Initiation in *The Catcher in the Rye* and “Bloodchild”

2.1. What is an Initiation Story?

Mordecai Marcus claims that the initiation story takes its source from anthropology and points out that initiation as an anthropological term amounts to “the passage from childhood or adolescence to maturity and full membership in adult society” (221). He indicates that ritual occurs in some initiation stories but in order to clarify the situation he suggests that ritual is not necessarily a characteristic of such stories. Moreover, as a working definition, he says that an initiation story is one in which a young protagonist experience “a significant change of knowledge about the world or himself, or a change of character, or both, and this change must point or lead him towards an adult world” (222).

Marcus also remarks that initiation stories focus on various experiences and the initiations show varieties in terms of effect (222-23). Therefore, he divides initiation stories into three types “according to their power and effect” (223). This classification can be said to further aid the reader in analyzing initiation stories:

First, some initiations lead only to the threshold of maturity and understanding but do not definitely cross it. Such stories emphasize the shocking effect of experience, and their protagonists tend to be distinctly young. Second, some initiations take their protagonists across a threshold of maturity and understanding but leave them enmeshed in a struggle for certainty. These initiations sometimes involve self-discovery. Third, the most decisive initiations carry their protagonists firmly into maturity and understanding, or at least show them decisively embarked towards maturity. These initiations usually center on self-discovery. (223)

He calls these types as tentative, uncompleted and decisive initiation respectively (223). Marcus points out that tentative initiation stories display “shocking experiences” by leaving their protagonist confused and such experiences do not necessarily bring maturity and they might not show “permanent effect on the protagonist” (223). He also states that the dividing line between tentative and uncompleted initiation is sort of impossible to determine accurately yet the protagonist in such stories struggles more towards maturity. Initiation into knowledge of sex and sexual relations is said to fit into three types. Concerning decisive initiation, Marcus remarks that it is an evident entrance into the adult world, and it provides full membership in the society (227).

2.2. An Analysis of *The Catcher in the Rye* in Three-part Structure of Initiation

Holden Caulfield is the sixteen-year-old protagonist in this novel. He is such a character who is in quest of innocence, truthfulness. At the beginning of the novel, it is learnt that he has been flunked out of his third school since he has not applied himself. From the beginning, it is easy to realize his nonconformist and rebellious attitudes.

Holden’s innocence is first realized in his conversation with his roommate Stradlater about Jane Callagher, a girl that Holden has idealized. However, it is easy to see that the intimacy between Holden and Jane has not gone beyond holding each other’s hands. Stradlater, on the other hand, has not much interest in Jane emotionally but his “only

interest in Jane is sexual” (Graham 38). When Holden talks about the checkers that Jane and he once used to play, the difference between his and Stradlater’s attitude towards love can be discerned: “She wouldn’t move any of her kings. What she’d do, when she’d get a king, she wouldn’t move it. She’d just leave it in the back row. She’d get them all lined up in the back row. Then she’d never use them. She just liked the way they looked when they were all in the back row” (Salinger 41). He wants Stradlater ask Jane whether she is still holding her kings in the back row. He, himself, cannot go to talk to Jane. As Graham suggests, he is afraid of discovering that she will have changed and already lost her innocence (38).

After Stradlater goes out assigning Holden to write an essay for him, Holden reluctantly decides to write it on his deceased brother, Allie. Not until this part of the novel, is it learnt that his brother Allie died three years ago, which means Holden has met the knowledge of death and it is possible to see the impact of this experience throughout the novel. It must have been a trauma for Holden as the following demonstrates:

I was only thirteen, and they were going to have me psychoanalyzed and all, because I broke all the windows in the garage. I don’t blame them. I really don’t. I slept in the garage the night he died, and I broke all the goddam windows with my fist, just for the hell of it. I even tried to break all the windows on the station wagon we had that summer, but my hand was already broken and everything by that time, and I couldn’t do it. (Salinger 49)

When Stradlater is back from his date with Jane, he rejects to tell Holden what has happened between him and Jane, which makes Holden feel depressed and gloomy when he thinks of Stradlater and Jane “parked somewhere in that fat-assed Ed Banky’s car”. He feels like “jumping out of the window” (Salinger 60). Repeatedly Holden utters suicidal words, and in such a mood he makes for New York. He feels the loss of Jane and thinks she has lost her innocence. As Baumbach indicates, “destruction of innocence is an act of irremediable evil in Holden’s world” (61) and thus, feeling the loss of Jane prompts him to leave that school earlier than he is supposed to do. During his journey in the streets and some locations of Manhattan, he will go through initiatory events and “a series of disillusioning experiences” of the adult world (Baumbach 57).

When he is in the cab he asks the cabdriver; “You know those ducks in that lagoon right near Central Park South? That little lake? By any chance, do you happen to know where they go, the ducks, when it gets all frozen over?” (Salinger 74). I believe his concern about the ducks underlines his own situation. He now cannot go to his home since his parents do not expect him on that day and he is also not sure about their reaction to his third failure at school. Therefore, he has no place to go. His curiosity about whether they have a place to go emerges from his loneliness. As Graham points out “ducks signify absence; it is winter and they have left the Park and Holden knew in childhood. Like Allie, the ducks are part of Holden’s past and he finds their absence inexplicable. (...) His inability to answer his own question thus suggests that traumatized by Allie’s death, he sees incomprehensible loss everywhere” (45).

One of the main themes of the novel is Holden’s attitudes towards sexuality and women. He obviously has no nasty feelings towards women. As Edwards indicates; “In fact, what he likes about Jane is that a relationship with her will not go beyond the hand-holding stage” (556). The relationships of him with other girls suggest that he is escaping from sexual intercourses on purpose. When he checks in Edmont Hotel, he agrees a prostitute to come to his room but he cannot continue although the prostitute, Sunny, is

ready for the sexual intercourse. He stops her when she is “getting funny. Crude and all” (Salinger 118). What he feels about the girl is noteworthy: “I took her dress over to the closet and hung it up for her. It was funny. It made me feel sort of sad when I hung it up. I thought of her going in a store and buying it, and nobody in the store knowing she was prostitute and all. The salesman probably just thought she was a regular girl when she bought it. It made me feel sad as hell” (Salinger 117). This situation clearly demonstrates his naiveté. He is not only concerned with his own innocence but also every child’s innocence. As the ideal job on his mind indicates:

Anyway, I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody’s around- nobody big, I mean- except me. And I’m standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start go over the cliff- I mean if they’re running and they don’t look where they are going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. (Salinger 208)

He wants to be the “protector of children” (Evertson 119). When he sees “Fuck you” writing on the school wall of his sister, Phoebe, he “nearly loses his mind in a murderous rage” (Evertson 119). Baumbach remarks that Holden is ready to “shed his innocence and move like Adam into the fallen adult world, but he resists because those no longer innocent seem to him foolish as well as corrupt” (56). After he meets Phoebe and tells her his ambition, he decides to visit his former teacher Mr. Antolini. Holden likes him because of Mr. Antolini’s being gentle and his interest in one of Holden’s dead friend, James Castle: “He was the one that finally picked up that boy that jumped out of the window I told you about, James Castle. Old Mr. Antolini felt his pulse and all, then he took off his coat and put it over James Castle and carried him all the way over to the infirmary.” He finds his teacher’s attitude very likable since “he didn’t give a damn if his coat got all bloody” (Salinger 210). However, Mr. Antolini becomes another trauma for Holden. When he wakes up in Mr. Antolini’s home, Holden finds his teacher sitting beside him patting his head: “I woke up all of a sudden. I don’t know what time it was or anything, but I woke up. I felt something on my head, some guy’s hand. Boy it really scared hell out of me. What it was, it was Mr. Antolini’s hand” (Salinger 231).

Mr. Antolini’s interest is interpreted by many critics as a homosexual one. It is clear that it comes as a shock to Holden. His naiveté cannot accept such a situation. He escapes from Mr. Antolini’s house, like he has escaped from the school, and from the prostitute at the hotel. As Baumbach suggests, it is “an attempt to escape evil” (61). He, later, pays a visit to Phoebe’s school and sees “Fuck you” written on the wall, which drives him crazy because he thinks it is a threat to children’s purity. After deleting this writing he sees another one and then he, in a way, realizes that it is impossible to prevent growing up and protect children from evil. In this part of the novel, it is possible to say that Holden approaches maturity. It is also embodied in these sayings of him when he is watching Phoebe on the carousel: “All the kids kept trying to grab for the gold ring, and so was old Phoebe, and I was sort of afraid she’d fall off the goddam horse, but I didn’t say anything 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’s bad if you say anything to them” (Salinger 254). Holden comes to terms with more mature outlook. When readers start to think that he steps into maturity, and he learns from his initiatory experiences, they learn he is in a mental institution in the end. The conversation between him and his brother, D.B. suggests some uncertainties about Holden’s current situation. When D. B. asks Holden what Holden thinks about the story he has finished telling us he

says: "If you want to know the truth, I don't know what I think about it. About all I know is, I sort of miss everybody I told about. Even old Stradlater and Ackley, for instance. I think I even miss that goddam Maurice. It's funny. Don't ever tell anybody anything. If you do, you start missing everybody" (Salinger 256). These lines are the closing remarks of the novel and, obviously, his telling his own story does not show any sign of healing. As Graham indicates, "there are no easy cures for Holden" (77).

The traumas he has experienced have left him confused. He is, by his own term, "sick" (256) as a final state. He regrets having told anybody anything. Edwards illustrates that his rejection to talk about the events of his past comes to mean he will remain sick (555). We hear from Holden's mouth that he does not desire to tell about his childhood and does not care about his future either: "What school I'm supposed to go to next fall, after I get out of here, but I don't feel like it. I really don't. That stuff doesn't interest me too much right now" (Salinger 256). As Edwards asserts about his situation; "It is a symptom of his inability to express his feelings easily and naturally" (563).

Taking all the considerations above into account I claim that *The Catcher in the Rye* marks uncompleted initiation into maturity. Holden has contacted with violence, loneliness, evil and homosexuality. Even if those experiences have taken him "across a threshold of maturity and understanding" they have left him "unmeshed in a struggle for certainty" - as he signifies that he is still confused, he cannot explain anything about what has happened to him and what he is expecting from future. His ongoing desperation and inner conflicts suggest that he will struggle towards maturity more and carry on striving for understanding.

2.3. An Analysis of "Bloodchild" in Three-Part Structure of Initiation

The young protagonist Gan is a member of a human family living on the Preserve together with a different alien species named the Tlic. The story focuses on the relationship between Gan and T'Gatoi who is responsible for the Preserve. Gan is the one raised to be a host body for T'Gatoi's eggs- since every family has to give one of their sons to the Tlics- and who "must face both his love for this maternal figure and his growing repulsion from her as a controlling alien being" (Helford 260).

Marcus indicates that ritual takes place in some initiation stories (222) and he adds that the predominance of rituals in decisive stories is "striking". Even if it is not the fundamental demand for the stories of decisive initiation, ritual is seen as a "distinct likelihood" for them (227). In this short story, it is easy to see a ritualistic element which is called by Helford as "blood ritual" (260). In this bloody course, the human is cut open by the Tlic and the young of them is removed from the body. Not until Gan witnesses this process does he experience a change of character within himself. He starts to tell his own story at the very beginning of the story by recollecting his "last night of childhood" (Butler 3).

As Gan narrates, it is understood that T'Gatoi, the Tlic leader, is the family friend of Gan's family, one of the human families that run away from Earth to live in peace in the Preserve, and as the story unfolds it is learnt that Gan has already been promised to T'Gatoi to carry her offspring. T'Gatoi is, in a way, a protector of the humans against the other Tlic: "I had lived outside with her. I had seen the desperate eagerness in the way some people looked at me. It was little frightening to know that only she stood between us and that desperation that could so easily swallow us" (Butler 5).

However, after a while, Gan becomes distrustful towards T'Gatoi. He realizes that humans are, in a way, manipulated by the Tlic. Any time T'Gatoi comes to their place, he observes how authoritative she is: "Now T'Gatoi used four of her limbs to push me away from her onto the floor. "Go on, Gan," she said "Sit down there with your sisters and enjoy not being sober. You had most of the egg. Lien, come warm me" " (Butler 5). He notices that the humans and the Tlic are not equal and starts to think that power has not been equally distributed between humans and the Tlic. One of his observations display this situation: "I would like to have touched my mother, shared that moment with her. She would take my hand if I touched her now. Freed by the egg and the sting, she would smile and perhaps say things long held in. But tomorrow, she would remember all this as a humiliation. Best just be still and know she loved me under all the duty and pride and pain" (Butler 7). We get the sense that he is sensible of what his mother has to endure in the face of T'Gatoi but he also knows there is no way for him to help his mother. He becomes aware that his mother gets more nervous as the time of Gan's implantation draws near, yet he cannot fully understand the reason until he witnesses a "blood ritual" which has gone bad. Throughout this experience, Gan seems to be willing to get initiated as in the following:

"Gan, go to the call box," she said. She put the man on the floor and began stripping off his clothing. After a moment, she looked up at me, her sudden stillness a sign of deep impatience "Send Qui" I told her. "I'll stay here. Maybe I can help." She let her limbs begin to move again, lifting the man and pulling his skirt over his head. "You don't want to see this," she said. "It will be hard. I can't help this man the way his Tlic could." "I know. But send Qui. He won't want to be of any help here. I'm at least willing to try."(Butler 10)

However, Gan does not live it through that easily. He has to start with hunting an animal, which he has not done before: "My mother, Hoa, and Qui could kill them will knives. I had never killed one at all, had never slaughter any animal" (Butler 11). He, somehow manages to kill an achi- with a gun which is, as a rule, forbidden to have by human families in the Preserve- for the grubs that will be taken out from the body of Bram Lomas. When Gan is back from killing the animal, he seems to hesitate to get into that room. He is absolutely afraid of what he will see: "I swallowed. I had not imagined a single moving of the feet could be so difficult. I realized I was trembling and that shamed me. Shame impelled me through the door" (Butler 13).

Once he enters, the scene he witnesses shocks him. It is more than difficult for him to bear the experience. He expresses his first feelings in the face of the happening in this way: "I stared at Lomas in panic, realizing that I did not want to touch him, let alone hold him. This would not be like shooting an animal. Not as quick, not as merciful, and I hoped, not as final, but there was nothing I wanted less than to be part of it" (Butler 13). Nothing he has been taught before- "drawing or diagram" (Butler 16)- as a preliminary information for the present event has helped him to stomach it. After he sees how the grubs are removed by T'Gatoi in a very bloody process and witnesses the pain Lomas suffers- "I had never heard such sounds come from anything human" (Butler 15)- vomiting and then crying become his first reactions: "I staggered out, barely made it. Beneath the tree just beyond the front door, I vomited until there was nothing left to bring up. Finally, I stood shaking, tears streaming down my face. I did not know why I was crying, but I could not stop" (Butler 17).

Things Gan has gone through have made him become more skeptical about how little humans have security in the face of the Tlic. After this experience Gan displays a notable change in terms of his way of thinking. It is, now, possible to speak of agency in Gan. His newly-gained understanding manifests itself with these statements: “No one ever asks us. You never asked me” (Butler 23). T’Gatoi remains silent. He persists in questioning her with unanswerable questions: “What are we to you” (Butler 24). He wants her to ask him to bear her child thereby making her “acknowledge the coercive nature of the relationship” (Helford 268). When T’Gatoi starts feeling controlled by Gan’s words, she suggests she should impregnate Xuan Hoa, Gan’s sister, who is willing to do that. In this case, Gan cannot be free from implantation unless he sacrifices his sister.

This conversation signifies that Gan has fully gained awareness of the pressure put on himself by T’Gatoi. Therefore, instead of conforming to the decision, he wants to make T’Gatoi feel that the whole power is no solely in the hands of the Tlic. Though T’Gatoi does not answer his questions satisfactorily Gan receives what he has been asking for. T’Gatoi is, first, surprised after Gan’s request and then says “Would you really rather die than bear my young, Gan” (Butler 25). As Helford remarks that “this is the best he will get verbally. He knows he has caused T’Gatoi to feel some of the pain he must live as a human under Tlic control” (268).

After he has made the Tlic government official acknowledge that the Tlic and the human need one another to be able to live, he asks for one more thing before the implantation: He wants his family to keep the gun as a means of security of his family:

I lowered the gun from my throat and she leaned forward to take it.

“No,” I told her. “It’s the law,” she said.

“Leave it for the family. One of them might use it to save my life someday.”

She grasped the rifle barrel, but I wouldn’t let go. I was pulled into a standing position over her.

“Leave it here!” I repeated.

“If we’re not your animals, if these are adult things, accept the risk. There is risk, Gatoi, in dealing with a partner. (Butler 26)

Therefore, it would not be wrong to state that gun constitutes a ritualistic detail if the birth is “blood ritual” of the culture of Preserve. At the end of the story, Gan faces his love for T’Gatoi. We witness his confession that he has accepted the implantation not to save his sister, but he tells T’Gatoi “to keep you for myself” (Butler 28). It constitutes his final realization. It is easy to notice that a communion between T’Gatoi and Gan has been achieved in the end:

“I wouldn’ have shot you,” I said.

“Not you.” She had been taken from my father’s flesh when he was my age.

“You could have,” she insisted.

“Not you.” She stood between us and her own people, protecting, interweaving.

“Would you have destroyed yourself?”

(...)

“You will live now.”

“Yes.” *Take care of her*, my mother used to say. Yes.

“I’m healthy and young,” she said.

“I won’t leave you as Lomas was left- alone, N’Tlic. I’ll take care of you.”
(Butler 29)

Basing on all the information above my conviction is that “Bloodchild” portrays an example of decisive initiation. Marcus points out “the full initiations usually grow out of strong desires for self-discovery rather than accidents” (227) and the protagonist, Gan, sets out willingly. Rituals are the strongest indicatives of decisive initiations and this story harbors a ritualistic element in it, which is the practice of removing of grubs from the human body. Although the experience has been tough for Gan he does not have that much difficulty adjusting to his new knowledge. His sensitivity to what is going on during the birth, his willingness for being initiated and agency that he gains as an ultimate result of all and the realization of his love to T’Gatoi together with his confession indicate clearly that his discovery will have permanent effect.

3. CONCLUSION

In this paper I have been concerned with classifying *The Catcher in the Rye* and “Bloodchild” into two different types of initiation stories. I have, at the outset, defined the concept of initiation in literary theory and showed its types basing on the study of Marcus. I have claimed while *The Catcher in the Rye* portrays an uncompleted initiation story “Bloodchild” represents a decisive initiation story.

I have shown the process Holden, the protagonist of *The Catcher in the Rye*, has gone through as a child. I have pointed out many initiatory events for Holden such as his encounter with the writing of “Fuck you” on the school wall of Phoebe, his meeting a prostitute and his learning that his former teacher is a homosexual. I have underlined that these events are not welcomed by Holden at all. He has come to realize that it is impossible to remain innocent and demolishing anything evil, which shows he has gained some insight into the nature of life. However, it is not possible to see him as a person who has fully changed and has embraced his new knowledge. His being in a mental institution and signaling that he will remain sick strengthens this idea. That is why I have classified it as an uncompleted initiation.

As similar to Holden, Gan, the protagonist of “Bloodchild”, has been shown as an innocent child at the beginning of the story. I have pointed out that Gan has been aware of that the Tlic are more powerful than the human and his witnessing a “blood ritual” makes him more skeptical about whether the Tlic are interested in the human only because of their personal gains. I have shown that Gan goes through one initiatory experience. He cannot take it easy. However, I have emphasized that he has wanted to take that journey himself as opposed to Holden and he obtains dominance over what has caused him to suffer by his questions. I have indicated that the existence of a ‘ritual’, his gaining agency, achieving self-discovery, facing his love which has been long held in and finally the achievement of a communion between Gan and T’Gatoi are powerful indicative for decisive initiation. Therefore, I have claimed that this short story represents an example of decisive initiation.

Overall, I have focused on these two works to show the aspects of initiation. However my main objective has been to demonstrate which kind of initiations they can be marked. And I have concluded with the conviction that the *Catcher in the Rye* establishes a kind of uncompleted initiation while “Bloodchild” represents a full initiation.

Works Cited:

- Butler, Octavia E. “Bloodchild.” *Bloodchild and Other Stories*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 1996. 3- 31. Print.
- Salinger, J.D. *The Catcher in the Rye*. Germany: Phillip Reclam jun. GmbH & Co. KG, Stuttgart, 2011. Print.
- Baumbach, Jonathan. “The Saint As a Young Man: A Reappraisal of *The Catcher in the Rye*.” *Critical Essays on Salinger’s The Catcher in the Rye*. Ed. Joel Salzberg. Boston, Massachusetts: Hall, 1990. 55-85. Print.
- Bryan, James. “The Psychological Structure of *The Catcher in the Rye*.” *Critical Essays on Salinger’s The Catcher in the Rye*. Ed. Joel Salzberg. Boston, Massachusetts: Hall, 1990. 101- 16. Print.
- Edwards, Duane. “Don’t Ever Tell Anybody Anything.” *EHL* 44.3 (Autumn, 1977): 554-65. *JSTOR*. Web. 21. Feb. 2012.
- Evertson, Matt. “Love, Loss, and Growing Up in J.D Salinger and Cormac McCarthy.” *The Catcher in the Rye New Essays*. Ed. J.P. Steed. New York: Lang, 2002. Print.
- Graham, Sarah. *Salinger’s Catcher in the Rye*. London: Continuum, 2007. Print.
- Helford, Elyce Rae. “Would You Really Rather Die than Bear My Young?: The Construction of Gender, Race, Species in Octavia E. Butler’s “Bloodchild.”” *African American Review* (Summer, 1994): 259-71. *JSTOR*. Web. 11. Feb. 2012
- Laser, Martin, and Norman Fruman, eds. *Studies in J.D. Salinger: Reviews, Essays, and Critiques of The Catcher in the Rye and Other Fiction*. New York: Odyssey Press, 1963. Print.
- Marcus, Mordecai. “What is an Initiation Story?” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 19.2 (Winter, 1960): 221-28. *JSTOR*. Web. 10. Feb. 2012
- Miller, James E. Jr. “Catcher in and Out of History.” *Critical Essays on Salinger’s The Catcher in the Rye*. Ed. Joel Salzberg. Boston, Massachusetts: Hall, 1990. 140- 43. Print.
- Rosen, Gerald. “A Retrospective Look at *The Catcher in the Rye*.” *Critical Essays on Salinger’s The Catcher in the Rye*. Ed. Joel Salzberg. Boston, Massachusetts: Hall, 1990. 158- 71. Print.
- Ohmann, Carol, and Richard Ohmann. “Reviewers, Critics, and The Catcher in the Rye.” *Critical Essays on Salinger’s The Catcher in the Rye*. Ed. Joel Salzberg. Boston, Massachusetts: Hall, 1990. 119- 39. Print.