



POSUDEK OPONENTA BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk a literatura (dvouoborové studium)**

Název práce: **Symbolism in *The Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger**

Autor/-ka práce: **Jana Šojdelová**

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Richard Stock, Ph.D.**

Oponent/-ka bakalářské práce: **PhDr. Mariana Machová, Ph.D.**

Stručná charakteristika práce

The thesis analyses the use of symbols in J. D. Salinger's novel *The Catcher in the Rye*. It starts with a close reading of the central image of "the catcher in the rye" itself and moves on to the discussion of the major symbols appearing in the novel (the ducks in Central Park, Holden's red hunting hat). The last part of the thesis focuses on the analysis of the four stages of the narrator's "emotional decline".

Celkové zhodnocení

Jana Šojdelová has written an attentive analysis of Salinger's novel, in which she has demonstrated her talent for close reading, a respect for the literary text and an ability to make use of a broad range of secondary sources. One of the many qualities of the thesis is Jana's wonderful attention to details, which leads to many valuable insights (to mention just one, I really enjoyed the comments on the "circular quality" of the childhood related symbols in the novel), and her ability to see the novel as a structured organic whole (which is, unfortunately, rather rare among BA students).

Jana does not limit her reading to the most obvious symbols, but makes the symbolic aspect the key to the reading of the novel. In her analysis of the symbols, she does not remain on the surface, but offers in-depth analyses (e.g. in her examination of the "main" symbol of "the catcher"). One of the few things I was not quite sure about was the passage on the symbolism of the setting: while the imaginary cabin in the woods does clearly have a symbolic quality, the symbolism of the two main settings of the novel – Pency Prep and New York City – would require some more explanation (the setting certainly has an important function and it does "contribute[] to [Holden's] everlasting feeling of loneliness and isolation", but I am not sure if its primary quality is symbolic).

The analysis of the main symbols leads to the reading of the novel focusing on the gradual decline of the narrator's mind, which Jana divides into four stages – another thing I felt would benefit of more clarification was the distinction between the first three stages: while clearly there is a progress in Holden's mental decline, to me the names of "separation", "alienation" and "isolation" seemed rather similar. Also, the interconnection of the two main parts of the thesis (the reading of the symbols and the examination of Holden's decline), however obvious from the text, could have been made more explicit. However, these are just suggestions, overall, the thesis is a pleasure to read and I don't hesitate to recommend it for defense as an excellent BA thesis.



Filozofická
fakulta
Faculty
of Philosophy

Jihočeská univerzita
v Českých Budějovicích
University of South Bohemia
in České Budějovice

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Podpis