

Tribhuvan University

Quest for Spiritual Fulfillment in *Franny and Zooey* of J.D. Salinger

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "Quest for Spiritual Fulfillment in *Franny and Zooey* of J.D. Salinger" submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus; Tribhuvan University by Yuba Raj Kafle has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Chapter One

Dissatisfaction amidst Material Prosperity

Culture and tradition have had tremendous influence over people since the dawn of language. People are strongly influenced by their culture's history and present state and the changes it undergoes during their life. The literature, music, and art of a period of times embody the values, traditions, and changes in the culture of the time and place it was produced. No one can be impassive to the culture they were raised and live under. A great paradigm for the effect of culture on people can be seen in mid-1900s America. The country was emerging from the military and economic pressure of World War II. Many minority and female activists began to rise and seek freedoms for their groups. Teenagers and young adults grew tired of being obsequious and began a movement against tradition and conformity and sought independence, creating a subculture of their own. With the large scale emergence of the mass media, special interest groups and grandiose out of proportion news events became a part of American culture of the time, and some people shied away from these changes.

During the 1940s through the 1960s, the social and political face of the world was changing and America was no exception. In the 1930s and 1940s, open racism against Jews was omnipresent, World War II wrought chaos worldwide, and the abomination that was the Soviet communist bloc caused many to question political ideologies. In the 1950s, the United States had change of its own, with women, young adults, and minority groups advancing socially. Salinger was affected by several of these happenings.

American culture was undergoing widespread changes during that time as well. American teenagers began to see themselves more as individuals and less as children. As

time passed, many began to conform less and less to tradition, taking on unorthodox practices and new hobbies. Most people in the work force, men and women alike, worked typical nine-to-five jobs. The older generation still attempted to maintain the image that children were always subservient to their elders. Television was becoming another form of family-accessible media. Research that compared the lives of children and young adults before and after the introduction of T.V found a significant and fairly dramatic increase in both physical and verbal aggression and a rise in violent crime and suicide rates.

The minority civil rights and feminist movements were coming to their peak at this time, and it was “a challenge to all of the United States to transform the Negro from a traditional servant into a citizen with equal rights and opportunities before the law” (Hamilton, 86-87). Nonconformity movements, or the practice of deviating from the societal standard, went along with these other changes. Up through the early 1900s, children were encouraged to be prim and proper and to obey tradition and standards. Then, in the 1940s, as McCarthy wrote,

about half our generation that tried to change all that a nonconformity movement. Suddenly, everyone wanted to be original and artsy. Everyone wanted to listen to a punk band and everyone wanted to show that they could stand out from the crowd, getting away from corporate America's plastic-fantastic conformity regime (Honest to God, 49).

The United States in the 1950 was a heavily conformist society. This was manifested everywhere from television to the Church. All were the vehicles to conformity. Facilitated by government policies and advancement in transportation,

technology and communication, America's growing population moved in the post war era. The movement was from North to South and West and from cities to suburbs. Perhaps the most significant development in communications was the growth of television; by the mid 1950s it had already become near indispensable advertising, entertainment, information and political medium.

American prosperity and the middle class along with the world shrinking effects of television and the automobile helped to make America a more homogeneous society. To a certain extent this was reflected in religion, as churches in the 1950s tended to become more secular and tolerant in their outlooks. But at the same time, it is important to remember the pivotal role the Churches played in the civil rights movement and in the rise of fundamentalism and conservatism in the 1970s and 1980s.

The concerns of the postwar era and critics of its conformity can be found in the literature of the period. American culture was not without its discontents. Americans faced two dilemmas: progress was often self-defeating and modern society, in placing a premium on co-operation, undermined the individual's sense of importance. Meanwhile many groups agitated for their rights in society. According to Lois Tyson, in *Critical Theory of Today* says, "Frustrated by the slowness of integration, some blacks turned to separatism and confrontation in their fight for civil rights" (296-97). Others, ranging from Hispanics, Native Americans and other ethnic groups to women and sexual minorities were inspired by the black struggle to assert their own rights. The era particularly the 1960s also saws widespread student unrest over the war in Vietnam, university policies and government failures in civil rights and economy. Some young people turned their backs on conventional culture and formed a counter culture. Many Americans also

questioned traditional sexual mores, leading to a sexual revolution. At the same time, driven by a perceived Soviet superiority in technology, American schools underwent yet another reform in which progressive theories were replaced with an emphasis on traditional subjects. The 1950s is today nostalgically remembered as a decade of American innocence; a time when though family values were strong conformity was questioned and challenged.

American leaders wanted to maintain the democratic structure they had defended at tremendous cost and share the benefits of prosperity as widely as possible. For them, this was the American century. For 20 years most of the Americans remained sure of this confident approach. They accepted the need for a strong stance against the Soviet Union in the cold war that unfolded after 1945. They endorsed the growth of government authority and accepted the outlines of the welfare state, first formulated during the New Deal. They enjoyed the post war prosperity that created new levels of affluence in the United States.

But gradually conscious Americans began to question the dominant assumptions about American life. Challenges on a variety of fronts shattered the consensus. In the 1950s African Americans launched a crusade, joined later by other minority groups and women, for a larger share of the American dream. In the 1960s, politically active students protested the nation's role abroad, particularly in the corrosive war in Vietnam, and a youth counter culture challenged the status quo of American values. Americans from many walks of life sought to establish a new equilibrium in the country. Excessive conformity and its impact on usual patterns of life could easily be observed in then

society of America. A study prepared by the United States Department of State highlights in "Post War America" a similar fact:

During the 1950s, a sense of uniformity pervaded American society.

Conformity was common, as young and old alike followed group norms rather than striking out on their own. Though men and women had been forced into new employment patterns during Second World War, once the war was over, traditional roles were reaffirmed. Men were expected to be the bread winners; women even when they worked, assumed their proper place was at home (296-97).

Television was gaining tremendous popularity at that time. Even the chances of being elected a president would become higher by the performance in the live television shows. Television contributed to the homogenizing trend by providing young and old with a shared experience reflecting accepted social patterns. It dominated American culture during the 1950s, presenting a cookie-cutter, stereotyped image of happy, prosperous American family. It brought a message of conformity and consumerism to the Americans. Television united the family as well as shattered them. No longer did they meet and talk, they watched television. On the other hand, television gave them common interest, binding them together. As they were using technology and consuming material things they had heavy interest on more things which they could not get in real life, especially it was the tension of American middle class people.

From this point of view, the problems of American society in the 1950s were not those of the quest for social justice that characterized the early 1900s or the revolt against convention that marked the 1920s or the battle against poverty and unemployment that

dominated the 1930s. They revolted against what appeared to be the increasing material use and prosperity in American social life. The people who suffered most due to this material use and prosperity were the middle- class people. Since they could neither live according to the upper class nor come down to the standard of the lower class, as a result American people were largely dissatisfied in terms of the use of material commodity as well as their prosperity which they had.

J. D. Salinger's *Franny and Zooey* (1961) deals with the story of Glass family's dissatisfaction on material prosperity and the contemporary conformism are the major causes in becoming their family disintegrated. Due to the failure in getting the prosperity they try to turn themselves towards spirituality and thought that is the way to become happy.

Franny, the younger sister of Zooey, has come home unexpectedly from college after suffering a nervous breakdown, and, as a result of her interchanges with Zooey. She is in love with Lane Coutel who always dominates her in terms of wisdom, morality and psychology. Lane even compels her to have snails and frog's legs despite of her interest. Franny has been disturbed many times by conformists like her boy friend and college lecturers because they always try to take advantage of her beauty and innocence character to fulfill their crooked desires. One day Lane takes her to the Sicklar's, restaurant a preferred restaurant of the college intellectuals, Franny and Lane drink martinis. Lane dominates the conversation, boasting his recent 'A' paper that criticized French writher Gustav Flaubert. There he regards her no more then material things and incessantly tries to destroy her reputation.

Zooey is most natural performer. He is a remarkably handsome television actor who resents the medium he works in, and has an equally bitter outlook towards most people. He has an eloquent tongue and the shrewdest wit of any of the Glass children, which he often uses for hostile purposes, particularly against his mother, Bessie. Seymour eldest brother of Glass children commits suicide because all the outsiders were phonies and they always tried him to become so. Even he had married a phony, whom he worshiped for her simplicity and her terrible honesty but he could not conceive from her as he thought. Buddy is the second eldest brother of the Glass children and narrator of the story is too much selfish because being an educated member of the family and well employed, he left his tensed family, whereas they were in need of support and the good guardian. More than this, he told Zooey to install phone to make Bessie happy. From above overall incidents we can say that they have been using material things but they are not yet satisfied and there is unhealthy family relationship and more gap of integration due to the material prosperity. They have unhealthy relationship in their family but they especially elder brothers are reluctant to teach literary knowledge before religious doctrines. From that we can guess they might have also frustrated from the literary knowledge and had failure. As the elder brothers Zooey also continues that tradition and told Franny to take the way of spirituality.

To get spiritual fulfillment, Buddy and Seymour are reluctant to educate Zooey in the ways of knowledge until his mind has reached the Zen state of no knowledge that is, pure consciousness and communion with God. Therefore, they educated Farany and Zooey first in the teachings of religious men before literary men. Because of the spiritual lack Glass family has lost relation among their own family members. They represent the

real contemporary American people who were strongly attached with materialistic norms and values and wanted to reach spirituality through the way of materialism that would be never fulfilled. This novel can be viewed as Salinger's fusion of Judeo Christian religion and eastern religion, and both Franny and Zooey to great lengths to show the similarities between the different doctrines, especially in regards to incessant praying.

Franny and Zooey find fault with almost everybody and everything, usually because people are guilty of big egos. The irony, and the conflict that leads to their misery, is that they are victims of ego as well. It's their battles against their own egos that drive the novel.

Chapter Two

Middle Class Values and Emerging Bourgeois Culture

In the United States, culture is largely geared towards the production of a middle-class reality. By reality, it does not mean the actual conditions in which people live. Rather, it refers instead the ways in which the economic conditions that shape people's lives are made to appear in popular culture as trans-historical, without reason, and thus natural, inevitable, and beyond social transformation. The image of the middle class that one finds repeated endlessly in films, television shows, novels, and music until it becomes the sign of the real is premised on the idea that the middle-class represents a post-capitalist space in-between the class antagonisms of owners and workers. That is to say, the in-between-ness of the middle-class life style the ability of working families to afford commodities previously accessible only to the wealthy, from homes and cars to DVD players and I-Pods is taken as proof that as technological advances increase the productivity of labor, "there is a lessening of class polarization and class contradictions" (Ford, 11). The function of middle-class culture is, in other words, ideological. Its purpose is to make the exploitation of wage-labor under capitalism appear to be a fair and free exchange. In this sense, the ideology of the middle-class represents the consumerist framework of the so-called American way of life democracy as shopping.

However, in context of increasing economic insecurity for large sectors of the working class, whose declining wages and disappearing pensions mean that they must now go into debt to maintain their middle-class lives, the image of the middle-class as having escaped the contradictions of capitalism is in sharp contradiction with the actual conditions working people in the United States are confronting:

The hourly wages of average workers are 11 percent lower than they were back in 1973, adjusted for inflation, despite rising worker productivity.

CEO pay, by contrast, has skyrocketed—up a median 30 percent in 2004 alone in The Corporate Library survey of 2000 large companies. Median household income has fallen an unprecedented five years in a row. It would be even lower, if not for increased household work hours.

Americans work over 200 hours more a year on average than workers in other rich industrialized nations. We are breaking records we don't want to break. Record numbers of Americans have no health insurance. The share of national income going to wages and salaries is the lowest since 1929.

Middle-class households are a medical crisis, outsourced job or busted pension away from bankruptcy (Brook 27).

And, as a recent article in *Fortune* notes, education, which is always represented as the key to middle-class living, particularly in the age of I-Pod Capitalism, means much less than it did even six years ago. In the period from 2000-2004, "The real actual earnings of college graduates declined 5.2 percent and College graduates look more out source-able by the day" (Colvin 57). In other words, images of the middle-class as in-between space are losing purchase in a society increasingly polarized between owners and workers.

In response to the current economic climate, when rising housing, education, and healthcare costs mean taking on high levels of debt and making what were previously seen as un-middle-class choices between eating, paying your energy bills, and buying medication for your children, it has become necessary for ruling class ideologues to

redefine what constitutes a middle-class life. For example, conservative columnist David Brooks has begun worrying out loud about the downward effect corporate globalization is having on the status of the middle-class. In a recent column, 'Of Love and Money', he argues that the consumer lifestyles which have long been the predominant image of the success of the middle class are becoming a poor measure of the health of the economy because of the rising debt loads most working families are now carrying. Instead, he writes that unlike years past, it is no longer possible to ignore the fact that "the gap between rich and poor is widening and that the decline of the middle-class means there is a basic tear in the way the market economy is evolving" (Brook 47). While Brooks mildly concludes that rising bankruptcy rates, lack of affordable healthcare, and stagnant employment levels mean only that people at the middle and the bottom of the income scale aren't seeing the gains you'd expect from an expanding global economy, his solution, nonetheless, is a return to lost middle class values. He writes, "If we want young people to develop the social and self-regulating skills they need to thrive, we need to establish stable long-term relationships between love-hungry children and love-providing adults" (Scruton, 27). In other words, being a member of the middle-class has become less about the appearances of conspicuous consumption and more about having the right values.

Values have become a popular way of relocating the middle-class because it dematerializes the cause of the crisis of middle-class reality in capitalism. As the current crisis shows, there is no in-between space in capitalism, a binary system divided between the few who own and control the means of production and the majority who must sell their labor-power for a wage in order to survive. Terry Eagleton wrote in *Literary*

Theory: An Introduction "The dissident offspring of the upper middle class throws in his lot with the militant proletariat, largely because they serve as a metaphor for his own quite differently motivated revolt. The alliance is thus inherently unstable, and likely to crumble under political pressure" (77).

In other words, as technological advances have enabled capital to outsource the jobs which once provided the incomes that for a brief period sustained the middle-class lifestyle to depressed areas of cheaper labor-power; it becomes clear that the middle-class is not a real position in the division of labor. Rather, it is an ideological displacement of the actual class divisions between owners and workers. The turn to values is an attempt to maintain the image of the middle-class as the space of post-class in-between-ness at a time when belief in the in-between has become a form of hip, post-political cynicism advanced by cultural theorists such as Slavoj Žižek in his book, *The Parallax View* says

Representing the antithesis of the soulless culture that is said to define both corporate America and the working class, the middle-class becomes the space of the soul. It is the in-between space, in short, in which capitalism remains friendly and ethical in an increasingly unfriendly and unethical world (81).

The rough category middle class can be broken down into three groups: lower middle class, with incomes from \$6,000 to \$11,000; middle middle class, \$12,000 to \$20,000; and upper middle class, \$20,000 to \$35,000. There are marked cultural differences between the lower middle class and the rest of the middle class. In the lower middle class we encounter people who have struggled all their lives for what relatively little they have. With a few exceptions, such as teachers, they have never gone beyond

high school. They have been committed to the values of success, getting ahead, security, having their own home, auto, color TV, and friends. Their lives have been 90 per cent unfulfilled dreams. To escape their frustration they grasp at a last hope that their children will get that college education and realize those unfulfilled dreams.

They are a fearful people, who feel threatened from all sides: the nightmare of pending retirement and old age with a Social Security decimated by inflation; the shadow of unemployment from a slumping economy, with blacks, already fearsome because the cultures conflict, threatening job competition; the high cost of long-term illness; and finally with mortgages outstanding, they dread the possibility of property devaluation from non-whites moving into their neighborhood. They are beset by taxes on incomes, food, real estate, and automobiles, at all levels city, state, and national. Seduced by their values into installment buying, they find themselves barely able to meet long-term payments, let alone the current cost of living.

Victimized by TV commercials with their fraudulent claims for food and medical products, they watch the news between the commercial with Senate committee hearings showing that the purchase of these products is largely a waste of their hard-earned money. Repeated financial crises result from accidents that they thought they were insured against only to experience the fine-print evasions of one of our most shocking confidence rackets of today, the insurance racket. Their pleasures are simple: gardening a tiny back yard behind a small house, bungalow, or ticky-tacky, in a monotonous subdivision on the fringe of suburbs; going on a Sunday drive out to the country, having a once-a-week dinner out at some place like a Howard Johnson's. Many of the so-called hard hats, police, fire, sanitation workers, schoolteachers, and much of civil service,

mechanics, electricians, janitors, and semiskilled workers are in this class. They look at the unemployed poor as parasitical dependents, recipients of a vast variety of massive public programs all paid for by them, the public. They see the poor going to colleges with the waiving of admission requirements and given special financial aid. In many cases the lower middle class were denied the opportunity of college by these very circumstances. Their bitterness is compounded by their also paying taxes for these colleges, for increased public services, fire, police, public health, and welfare. They hear the poor demanding welfare as rights. To them this is insult on top of injury.

Seeking some meaning in life, they turn to an extreme chauvinism and become defenders of the American faith. Now they even develop rationalizations for a life of futility and frustration. It's the Red menace. Now they are not only the most vociferous in their espousal of law and order but ripe victims for such as demagogic George Wallace, the John Birch Society, and the Red-menace perennials.

Insecure in this fast-changing world, they cling to illusory fixed points—which are very real to them. Even conversation is charted toward fixing your position in the world: I don't want to argue with you, just tell me what our flag means to you? or What do you think of those college punks who never worked a day in their lives? They use revealing adjectives such as outside agitators or troublemakers and other. When did you last beat your wife?

On the other side they see the middle middle class and the upper middle class assuming a liberal, democratic, holier-than-thou position, and attacking the bigotry of the employed poor. They see that through all kinds of tax-evasion devices the middle middle and upper middle can elude their share of the tax burdens so that most of it comes back as

they see it upon them, the lower middle class. They see a United States Senate in which approximately one-third are millionaires and the rest with rare exception very wealthy. The bill requiring full public disclosure of senators' financial interests and prophetically titled Senate Bill 1993 which is probably the year it will finally be passed is in committee, they see, and then they say to themselves, the government represents the upper class but not us.

Many of the lower middle class are members of labor unions, churches, bowling clubs, fraternal, service, and nationality organizations. They are organizations and people that must be worked with as one would work with any other part of our population with respect, understanding, and sympathy. To reject them is to lose them by default. They will not shrivel and disappear. You can't switch channels and get rid of them. This is what you have been doing in your radicalized dream world but they are here and will be. If we don't win them Wallace or Spiro T. Nixon will. Never doubt it that the voice may be Agnew's but the words, the vindictive smearing, is Nixon's. There never was a vice-president who didn't either faithfully serve as his superior's faithful sounding board or else be silent. Remember that even if you cannot win over the lower middle-class, at least parts of them must be persuaded to where there is at least communication, then to a series of partial agreements and a willingness to abstain from hard opposition as changes take place. They have their role to play in the essential prelude of reformation, in their acceptance that the ways of the past with its promises for the future no longer work and we must move ahead where we move to may not be definite or certain, but move we must.

People must be reformed so they cannot be deformed into dependency and driven through desperation to dictatorship and the death of freedom. The silent majority, now, are hurt, bitter, suspicious, feeling rejected and at bay. This sick condition in many ways is as explosive as the current race crisis. Their fears and frustrations at their helplessness are mounting to a point of a political paranoia which can demonize people to turn to the law of survival in the narrowest sense. These emotions can go either to the far right of totalitarianism or forward to Act II of the American Revolution.

As the declining status of middle class workers in the United States demonstrates, however, their means of survival under capitalism rests solely on their ability to sell their labor power. For example, even the complex computer skills that once required years of study and often resulted in a high-paying job, a nice home, and other aspects that are said to make up the social status of middle-class life have been made simple by more recent technological developments and no longer command the kinds of high wages they once did. Instead, while developments in production create the potential for meeting the needs of all, under the capitalist system the impetus of using new technology solely for the accumulation of profit by the ruling class contradicts this possibility and, in the book *Against Interpretation*, it is highlighted "dispels all fixity and security in the situation of the laborer constantly threatens, by taking away the instruments of labor, to snatch from his hands his means of subsistence and in the devastation caused by a social anarchy turns every economic progress into a social calamity" (Sontag, 59). Despite its anxieties about corporate globalization, by locating the solution of capitalist exploitation in finding the right values, which is simply another word for consumption, *Pattern Recognition* naturalizes the exploitation of wage-labor and works to obscure the fact that the only way

the middle-class workers can escape the current economic crisis is socialism. This is what makes the novel and its consumerist logic such an appealing middle-class narrative.

In *Franny and Zooey*, Glass family is an excellent example of middle class people and they have been performing the very values. Middle class people like Franny and Zooey are always ridiculous among other people because on one hand Franny is being lured by Lane Coutel and professors and she is becoming puppet to them and on the another hand Zooey is in tension to keep his sister Franny out from the cheating of people like lane. In this novel, major characters have jobs such as radio quiz, television show, teaching in the collage and participating in the Second World War. It also shows that all the Glass families are dependent and doing their service to continue their regular life. They are hanging in the society being involved in the job and being cheated by others because they do not know what job will be good for their own lives in the future. They are in dilemma and disillusioned by the society in the novel.

Salinger launches an all-out critique against American bourgeois middle and upper-class culture. The 1950s are noted for being a time of great conformity, and Franny is upset over everyone's desire to be alike. She also points out that those who rebel are just as conformist. Lane, especially, is the poster boy of bourgeois conformity; he believes he is different from everyone else, but he dearly craves acceptance. Salinger exposes a few symptoms and causes of the obsession with conformity. The cult of celebrity is a major feature in the lives of the Glass children, especially Franny and Zooey, who are still performers. While nearly everyone strives to be a celebrity, or stand out, celebrity only deforms the Glasses. The public reveres them as prodigies or loathes them as smart-alecks, but either way, they are not normal - they are freaks, as Zooey says.

What the culture of celebrity produces artistically, however, is conformist entertainment. Zoey mercilessly criticizes television, and those who work in it, for turning all stories into pat, sentimental fairy tales that please the masses. Finally, Salinger derides psychoanalysis, which started to gain mainstream popularity after WW II, as a misguided exercise of normalization, a tool to make everyone the same

In the novel, we see that elder brothers Seymour and Buddy are seemed reluctant to teach their younger brother and sister literary knowledge before religious doctrines. This also proves that this Glass family is hanging on the middle class mind and values where they do not know what to do and suggest to their younger children. Franny and Zoey in the novel are talking about religious doctrines to get the religious wisdom whereas the society is stepping towards tremendously material things and prosperity. Football game in Yale and restaurant of collage intellectuals are one aspect of the novel and religious discussions especially how to get the godly wisdom either applying bible, Zen Buddhism or Hindu doctrines. This is also confusion of Franny and Zoey in terms of knowledge and their actual behavior seemed in the novel. This values are not only their own but that are the outcome of the contemporary American society's values. These things have been seen in the novel and realities have been acted by the major characters Franny, Zoey, Buddy, and Seymour and mother Besse. They are doing the things as per the rules and regulation of their society and their knowledge got from the same.

Franny and Zoey, major character Zoey cheats his sister Franny pretending of being his own brother Buddy and tries to make clear about the godly wisdom. Zoey is telling Franny his so called way to get the real god and wisdom and she is convinced by him. In case if she would have known the things told on telephone is pretentious saying

of Zoey she would not be satisfied with the way to get real wisdom and meet the god she is in search of.

Bourgeois Society is the social formation in which the commodity relation the relation of buying and selling has spread into every corner of life. The family and the state still exist, but the family is successively broken down and atomised, more and more resembling a relationship of commercial contract, rather than one genuinely expressing kinship and the care of one generation for the other; the state retains its essential instruments of violence, but more and more comes under the sway of commercial interests, reduced to acting as a buyer and seller of services on behalf of the community.

The ruling class in bourgeois society is the bourgeoisie, who own the means of production as Private Property, despite the fact that the productive forces have become entirely socialised and operate on the scale of the world market. The producing class in bourgeois society is the proletariat, a class of people who have nothing to sell but their capacity to work; since all the means of production belong to the bourgeoisie, workers have no choice but to offer their labour power for sale to the bourgeoisie.

This system of buying and selling labour power is called wage labour and is characteristic of bourgeois society, though it has been around since the peasant revolt of 1381. The classic form of wage labour is payment for work by the hour or week. Nowadays many workers work on the basis of contracts and piece-work but these forms only disguise the underlying relationship, which remains that of wage-labour. Money and all forms of credit reach their highest development in bourgeois society. As a result, life in bourgeois society happens to people in much the same way as the weather happens to people, with money flowing around apparently according to its own laws. To put this

another way, in bourgeois society there is a fetishism of commodities; just as tribal peoples believed that their lives were being determined by trees and animals and natural forces possessing human powers, in bourgeois society, people's lives are driven by money and other commodities, whose value is determined by extramundane forces; instead of ethics and morality being governed by traditional systems of belief and imagined spiritual forces, there is just the ethic of cash-payment.

In the early Middle Ages, as cities were emerging, artisans and tradesmen began to emerge as both a physical and economic force. They formed guilds, associations and companies to conduct business and promote their own interests. These people were the original bourgeoisie. In the late Middle Ages, they were the highest guildsmen and artisans, as evidenced in their ability to pay the fines for breaking sumptuary laws, and by paying to be called citizens of the city in which they lived or the ability to be called Bourgeoisie. In fact the King of France granted nobility to all of the Bourgeoisie of Paris in the late fourteenth century. They eventually allied with the kings in uprooting the feudal system.

After the middle ages and going into the renaissance they were gradually becoming the ruling class in industrialised nation-states. In the 17th and 18th century, they generally supported the American revolution and French revolution in overthrowing the laws and privileges of the absolutist feudal order, clearing the way for the rapid expansion of commerce and the establishment of a capitalist society.

Concepts such as personal liberties, religious and civil rights, and free trade all derive from bourgeois philosophies. But the bourgeoisie was never without its critics; it was first accused of narrow-mindedness, materialism, hypocrisy, and lack of culture,

among other things, by persons such as the playwright Molière and the novelist Flaubert, who denounced its supposed banality and mercenary aspirations. The earliest recorded pejorative uses of the term bourgeois are associated with aristocratic contempt for the lifestyle of the bourgeoisie. Successful embourgeoisement typically meant being able to retire and live on invested income.

With the expansion of commerce, trade, and the market economy, the bourgeoisie grew in size, influence, and power. In all industrialized countries, the aristocracy either faded away slowly or found itself overthrown by a bourgeois revolution. Thus, the bourgeoisie rose to the top of the social hierarchy.

In Franny and Zooey critique of bourgeois culture and conformity have played influential role. So Salinger launches an all-out critique against American bourgeois middle and upper-class culture. The 1950s are noted for being a time of great conformity, and Franny is upset over everyone's desire to be alike. She also points out that those who rebel are just as conformist. Lane Coutel, especially, is the poster boy of bourgeois who dearly craves acceptance. Lane paints him as an egotistical, pretentious, image-conscious student destined to be one of the section man Franny describes. He is intellectual elite of the late 1950s and early 60s, smoking cigarettes while wearing his Burberry coat and cashmere muffler. His modesty is always false; no doubt he believes he completely understands Rilke, and he relishes talking in supposedly humble tones about Flaubert paper. And while Lane physically stands apart from the other boys at train station, attempting to assert his individuality. He is the greatest conformist of them all, doing everything which he belongs. He feigns lack of an expression when the train arrives, when Franny leaves his dishonest way. This is evident in her desire for a world of

beauty and love, one which the section men and famous poets at her college cannot understand. She is, it seems so far, literally sickened by her destructively analytical surroundings.

Salinger exposes a few symptoms and causes of the obsession with conformity. The cult of celebrity is a major feature in the lives of the Glass children, especially, Franny and Zooey, who are still performers. While nearly everyone strives to be a celebrity, or stand out, celebrity only deforms the Glasses. The public reveres them as prodigies or loathes them as smartalecks, but either way, they are not normal - they are freaks as Zooey says. What the culture of celebrity produces artistically, however, is bourgeois entertainment. Zooey mercilessly criticizes television, and those who work in it, for turning all stories into pat, sentimental fairy tales that please the masses.

Finally, Salinger derides psychoanalysis, which started to gain mainstream popularity after Second World War, as a misguided exercise of normalization, a tool to make everyone the same.

Chapter Three

Affluence and Spiritualism

3.1 Affair among Franny, Lane Cautell and Glass Family

Affluence is the state of having a lot of money and a good standard of living. Nearest things of affluence is materialism or material prosperity. The belief that money, possession and physical comforts are more important than spiritual values is called materialism. The modern society is greedy towards materialism rather than the spirituality. The people who are after affluence are always after success especially financially because they believe future prosperity depends on economic growth.

Spiritualism is the beliefs that people who have died can send messages to living people, usually through a person who has special power. While discussing about spiritualism if spirit and spiritual are brought it never becomes clear. Firstly, spirit is the part of a person that includes his/her mind, feelings and rather than the body. It is believed that the power of the human spirit always helps us to overcome the difficulties. Secondly, spiritual is connected with the human spirit rather than the body or physical things. The place where you are happiest, especially a country where you feel you belong more than in your own country because you share the ideas and attitudes of the people who live there, we may call it spiritual home. In this Very novel all the family members are fed up of the material prosperity and as a final solution they have united their attention towards spiritual fulfillment that is discussed in this chapter briefly.

J. D. Salinger's *Franny and Zooey* deals with the story of Glass family's dissatisfaction on material prosperity and the contemporary conformism are the major causes in becoming their family disintegrated.

The major themes surrounding Franny and Zooey accord with Salinger's life. He had delved deeper into studies of Buddhism and other Eastern religions, and their central concepts, which peek up in his earlier work, take center stage here. *Franny and Zooey* may be viewed as Salinger's fusion of Judeo Christian religion and Eastern religion, and both Franny and Zooey go to great lengths to show the similarities between the different doctrines, especially in regards to incessant praying.

Franny is one of the two main characters of the novel, though she is a far more sympathetic figure than her brother, Zooey. She is a 20-year-old college student, a former participant on the radio show *It's a Wise Child* with her six older siblings, a gifted and beautiful actress, and dates Lane Coutell. She seems to miss the influence of Seymour, her eldest, dead brother, the most acutely of all the siblings. Her spiritual breakdown over the world's and her own egotism, and her subsequent use of the incessant Jesus Prayer to save herself, form the spine of the novel. In the very beginning of the novel there is Franny sends letter to make Lane Coutell happy.

... I've been reading her like mad, and no vulgar remarks, please. I may even do my term thing on her if I decide to go out for honors and if I can get the moron they assigned me as an advisor to let me. "Delicate Adonis is dying, Cytherea, what shall we do? Beat your breasts, maidens, and rend your tunics." Isn't that marvelous? She keeps doing that, too. Do you love me? You didn't say once in your horrible letter. . . . Not that you aren't strong but you know what I mean. It's getting so noisy in here I can hardly hear myself think . . . I'll probably be hopelessly self conscious.

Incidentally I'll kill you if there's a receiving line at this thing. Till
Saturday, my flower. (5)

Franny writes that she is reading and loving the Greek poet Sappho, and makes several more declarations of love to him. In a postscript, she says her father's growth is benign, and that Lane need not worry about what happened over a recent Friday night - she doesn't think her parents even heard them come in. She concludes by admitting she feels unintelligent when she writes to him, and asks if they can have a nice weekend without his analyzing everything and her. Franny's loving, spontaneous letter to him, and we can imagine the excessively formal, cold letters he writes. It's obvious to the reader that Franny, with her insight and empathy, is far more intelligent than Lane will ever be, though he would never admit this. He assumes that she does not know the word testicular is a perfect example of this. She was wearing a sheared-raccoon coat, and Lane, walking toward her quickly but with a slow face, reasoned to himself, with suppressed excitement, that he was the only one on the platform who really knew Franny's coat (7).

Our introduction to Lane immediately paints him as an egotistical, pretentious, image-conscious student destined to be one of the section men Franny describes. He is a poster boy for the bourgeois intellectual elite of the late 1950s and early 60s, smoking cigarettes while wearing his Burberry coat and cashmere muffler. His egotism is his main characteristic; he is interested only in things which pertain directly to him. For example, he doesn't give a damn about the lipstick stain on Sorenson's coat lapel, but he takes special pride in the fact that he was the only one on the platform who really knew Franny's coat, and that he had once kissed her lapel. His modesty is always false; no doubt he believes he completely understands Rilke, and he relishes talking in supposedly

humble tones about his Flaubert paper. And while Lane physically stands apart from the other boys at the train station, attempting to assert his individuality, he is the greatest conformist of them all, doing everything he can to look like he belongs note his pleasure in being seen with Franny, an unimpeachably right-looking girl, in the restaurant.

Lane, Franny's boyfriend, is the typically pompous collegiate intellectual. He needs to have the right girl on his arm and he wants her to read his prize paper on Flaubert. He is conceited enough to offhandedly mention that the paper got an 'A' on it in letters about six feet high. To prove Lane a good writer, he mentions people's name who want to publish his paper. "This guy Brughman thinks I ought to publish the goddam paper somewhere" (13-14). Then, to complete the dramatization of Lane's huge ego, Salinger adds that after praising himself Lane had suddenly become exhausted by a world greedy for the fruit of his intellect. This kind of jesting and love-hate relationship with his audience could further account for the novel's initial success and continuing place in an academia that tries not to take itself too seriously. Lane is skeptical, and asks if Franny really believes in it. She ignores the question and says she simply finds it a fascinating coincidence that all these religions preach repetition of a mantra. Lane asks what the result is of the prayer, and Franny says one gets to see God.

Franny expands her attack against conformity in this section, against the predictable Wally Campbells of the world. We have already seen her categorize the girls on the train according to their colleges, and Lane has established himself as the worst kind of conformist - the one who believes he stands apart while simultaneously craving identification with the group. The 1950s are historically marked as an era of great conformity, and Franny is a sensitive postwar child attuned to the destruction of

individuality. She is even wise enough to understand that those who rebel against the status quo - the bohemians, as she calls them - are conformist in their own way, a common enough idea now that was more original in the pre-Viet Nam age of Beatniks. Another prong of her attack against conformity is her hatred of name-dropping. This foreshadows Franny's turbulent relationship with fame, a theme that will assume greater importance later in the book.

The Glass surname has a number of meanings. Glass is invisible, and though the Glass children store away many secrets; Buddy, especially, seems to know more about Seymour's suicide than he lets on, they also lack privacy. Bessie is constantly bargains in on Zoey, and Buddy has gone so far as to not install a phone in his house. Glass is also reflective; self-aware prodigies, they are all victims of their own egos and narcissism, especially Franny and Zoey, who are physically beautiful to boot. Finally, glasses are receptacles that hold liquid. In a practical sense, the Glass children hold and store everything that comes their way, soaking it all in. Glasses also hold water, and water is an important association with Zoey, who bathes, shaves, sweats, used to have fish, and even steps on a newspaper picture of a fish. In a possible mythological reference, Salinger may be portraying Zoey as the Fisher King, the savior who would deliver humanity from a dry, barren death.

As a final piece of symbolism, Zoey's associations with water increase in this final section. We have seen him in the bath and shaving, and now he sweats profusely. He even steps on the newspaper picture of baseball player Stan Musial holding up a fresh-caught fish, and we know he has affection for his fish, which he feels the others have let die. This image is not incidental. Salinger was influenced by T.S. Eliot's 1922

poem, *The Wasteland*, in which the poet sees the modern cultural landscape as dry and barren. Eliot, borrowing from mythology, awaits the arrival of the Fisher King, who will save humanity from this dry death. Zooey's wetness may show that he is the Fisher King for Franny. He is also the Fisher King for the Fat Lady, who sits on her porch in the extreme heat, batting away flies and listening to the radio. Perhaps this, then, is the final meaning for the Glass family they hold water for the drought victims of the world.

Salinger's attention to the aforementioned minor habits and small details, however, makes Franny and Zooey rise beyond the complexity of most plays. Lane's status as a member of the American bourgeoisie, the upwardly mobile middle- to upper-class, reveals itself further in his choices of frog's legs and snails. Franny's order, on the other hand, represents her desire for more innocent fare. The milk is an obvious symbol of childhood, while the chicken sandwich is an unpretentious selection. Her inability to eat the chicken also shows her kindness toward the meek. In Salinger's short story, *Just Before the War With the Eskimos*, the main character can't bear to throw away the dead Easter chick she finds in her garbage. Perhaps we are meant to read a similar meaning into Franny's not touching her sandwich, and to her reluctance to part with her swizzle stick, a corny gift, helpless in its own way, which had good intentions. The bartender wipes a sherry glass dry as Franny faints, and the milk also comes in a glass. Although Salinger has yet to mention it, Franny's last name is Glass, and glass is an important motif through the book. In this instance, glass is a receptacle. But whereas Franny holds information, ideas, and beauty, the sherry glass holds a type of upper-class liquor. Unfortunately for her absorbing mind, she must take the bad with the good in her

bourgeois environment, the sherry with the milk, Lane's Flaubert paper with the pilgrim's prayer.

The second story, Zooey, is far more ambitious. It is Mr. Salinger's conceit that the story is written by Buddy Glass, who calls it a sort of home movie. Here we find Franny insomniac on a couch in the Glass apartment, refusing Bessie's broth, and obviously well into a nervous breakdown. Meanwhile, in the bathroom, Zooey is reclining in a hot tub and re-reading an ancient letter from Buddy. Bessie enters, Zooey draws the shower curtain, and there ensues a long and marvelous conversation, the gist of which is that Bessie is very worried about Franny and wants somebody to do something, and that Zooey is suffering from a more generalized angst, which is of course the privilege of youth. We also learn the contents of Bessie's kimono and of the medicine cabinet, and not so incidentally how attractive and attracted mother and son are.

Thence to the living room where, after much talk about phonies, St. Francis, and Jesus and a full description of the Glass decoration Zooey, lying on the floor, tells Franny, still recumbent on the couch, in effect, to get up. Failing to arouse Franny to more than tears, Zooey repairs himself to Seymour and Buddy's old room, where a telephone is necromantically kept in Seymour's name. He reads from an anthology of philosophical sayings Seymour and Buddy had copied out for the instruction of their younger brothers and sisters. Then, all sweaty, but armed with a cigar and a handkerchief on his head, Zooey picks up Seymour's receiver, dials the Glass family number, and asks for Franny.

[. . .] There was a peculiar silence at the other end of the phone. And a peculiar reaction to it from Franny. She was disturbed by it. She sat down

again on the edge of her father's bed. "I'm not going to hang up on you or anything," she said. "But I'm--I don't know--I'm tired, Zooey. I'm just exhausted, frankly." She listened. But there was no response. She crossed her legs. "You can go on like this all day, but I can't," she said. "All I am is on the receiving end. It isn't terribly pleasant, you know. You think everybody's made of iron or something." She listened. She started to speak up again but stopped when she heard the sound of a voice being cleared.

(194)

When Franny comes to the phone, Zooey pretends he is Buddy. Franny eventually sees through the trick, but she feels something important is about to happen. Zooey then tells her, in effect, that she isn't the only one who has problems and to get with it which proves to be the most instantly successful therapy on record. All her tension suddenly lifted, Franny goes to sleep.

It is a measure of the power of these stories that we do not go to sleep. Indeed, one is left startlingly awake; even the lists of things in pockets and medicine cabinets have not lulled. Salinger's remarkable ear for dialogue and his even more remarkable ability to transmit a sense of presence have often been noted: the stories seem, urgently, to be happening right now and almost inside of us. Critics have also pointed out some of the deficiencies of Franny and Zooey the self-effacing and embarrassing coyness, the name-dropping, the adoration of certain characters and detestation of others, even the crust it supposedly took to publish such a slender volume.

There was a silence. Both saw it through without any seeming impatience or awkwardness. Franny still appeared to have some considerable pain on

one side of her face, and continued to keep her hand on it, but her expression was markedly uncomplaining. The voice at the other end came through again. "I remember about the fifth time I ever went on 'Wise Child.' I subbed for Walt a few times when he was in a cast--remember when he was in that cast? Anyway, I started bitching one night before the broadcast. (199-200)

The point of the Jesus Prayer, that all humans deserve love and respect if only for their very humanity, is embodied in the persona of the Fat Lady, Seymour's name for the uneducated, unattractive fans of *It's a Wise Child*. Ultimately, we can see the Fat Lady symbolized as Bessie - Zooey even calls her fat several times - who is far below her children in terms of intelligence, but still deserves their respect and love. Respect was Franny's original deficit she told Lane she was sick of liking people and wished to God I could meet somebody I could respect. By literally doing this - praying to Jesus - she learns respect for those she has already met. We may assume that Zooey, who has a far more hostile relationship with Bessie, will come to this conclusion, as well. So, she is silent because to love humanity is the motto of Jesus Prayer.

3.2 Quest for Spiritual Fulfillment in *Franny and Zooey*

Spirituality, in a narrow sense, concerns itself with matters of the spirit. Spiritual matters are those involving humankind's ultimate nature, not only as material biological organisms which is beyond both time and the material world. As such the spiritual is traditionally contrasted with the material, the temporal and the worldly. A perceived sense of connection forms a central defining characteristic of spirituality connection to a metaphysical reality greater than oneself, which include an emotional experience of

religious awe and reverence, or such states as satori or Nirvana. Equally importantly, spirituality relates to matters of sanity and of psychological health. Spirituality is the personal, subjective dimension of religion, particularly that which pertains to liberation or salvation. Spirituality may involve perceiving or wishing to perceive life as more important higher, more complex or more integrated with one's world view; as contrasted with the merely sensual.

Many spiritual traditions, accordingly, share a common spiritual theme: the path, work, practice, or tradition of perceiving and internalizing one's true nature and relationship to the rest of existence God, creation the universe, or life, and of becoming free of the lesser egoic self or ego in favor of being more fully one's true Self. From these ideas we can correlate spirituality with this novel because all the characters are in quest for spirituality or religion. They believe this is only the way to live life happily and trying their best to achieve it despite of unfavorable surroundings.

Bessie asks Zooley if he's talked with Franny yet. He says he hasn't today, as he spoke to her for two hours last night, and tells her to leave. Bessie complains for a while about Buddy's not having a phone, and Zooley keeps insulting her and refuting her arguments. She spots the manuscript and says its title, *The Heart Is an Autumn Wanderer*, is unusual. Zooley derides her for this. She says Zooley never thinks anything is beautiful, an accusation to which Zooley takes mock offense, saying he finds everything, even 'Peter Pan,' beautiful. Bessie says she's frustrated and doesn't know what to do with Franny, and that their father never likes to admit anything is wrong. She thinks he still expects to hear the children on the radio. She says that last night, while Franny was crying and mumbling heaven knows what to her, Les wondered if she would like a tangerine. She laments

having no one in the family to help her. She complains about Franny's not eating anything nourishing. Zooney mocks her diagnosis, equating Franny's improper diet with Christ's. Zooney tells her again to leave, and Bessie says the painters have finished in Franny's room and will want to go into the living room soon, where Franny is sleeping. Bessie's aristocratic slender fingers and attractive dancer's legs and feet are described. She leaves, saying she'll be back soon.

A few minutes later, Zooney, wearing pants, shaves at the bathroom mirror. Bessie returns. She brings up the idea of having Waker the living twin talk to Franny, though Franny has refused to talk to anyone. Zooney shoots down this idea, as Waker is a Catholic priest and Franny's problem is nonsectarian. He insults Bessie again, and she defends her intelligence and says she knows more than they think - for instance, that Franny's green book is the root of her problem. She says Lane has called several times, worried about Franny. Zooney says Lane is fake. Bessie criticizes Zooney for making people he doesn't like or love, really nervous. She says Lane thinks the book, which she got out of her school library, is religiously fanatical. Zooney corrects her book, called *The Pilgrim Continues His Way*, and is the sequel to the *The Way of the Pilgrim*, and Franny has taken both books out of Seymour and Buddy's old room. Bessie says she doesn't like to go into Seymour's room. She says Zooney is mean, and starts comparing him to Buddy. Zooney gets furious, saying he's sick of hearing Buddy's and Seymour's names, and accuses Buddy of trying to copy Seymour. He calls himself and Franny freaks, and blames his oldest brothers for making them that way. He says that he cannot eat a meal without first saying the four great vows under his breath, and bets that Franny is the same. He explains that the vows are a Buddhist prayer that Buddy and Seymour drilled into them.

After Bessie nags him about getting married and getting a haircut, Zooey warns her against getting a psychoanalyst for Franny by reminding her of what psychoanalysis did to Seymour. Then he recants, admitting he thought there might be a psychoanalyst who could do her some good, though it would have to be one who had the grace of God in him. He explains to Bessie what the pilgrim books are about, describing the sequel as a dialogue on the reasons behind the Jesus Prayer. He connects the effects of the Jesus Prayer with what Eastern religions term the mystical opening of the third eye. He insults Bessie's religious ignorance. She watches Zooey shave and compliments his broad and lovely back, as she was afraid his weight lifting would ruin it. He snaps and tells her not to admire his back. He tells her to leave, as he has to get ready to meet LeSage, his employer in television. She wonders what good it does her children, who were once so joyful, to be so smart if they're not happy.

Salinger foreshadows the spiritual conflict between Franny and Zooey when we discover Franny has been using the incessant Jesus Prayer Bessie says Franny has been mumbling heaven knows what to herself. Zooey makes a mock association between Franny and Christ, on the grounds of their diets, but it is clear that Christ will play an important role later when Zooey eventually talks to her. It makes sense, then, that he rereads Buddy's letter, one which touches upon many religious issues - it is as if, with the letter, he is studying for the exam of helping out Franny. The elder Glasses have a habit of teaching their younger siblings the ways of spirituality, almost as if they were monks at a monastery. They contempt the traditional bourgeois method of seeking out a psychoanalyst. However, Zooey makes the point that a psychoanalyst with some religious inspiration might be able to help. Since Seymour, the wisest and most spiritual, is dead -

and his name sounds like see more, as if he were a seer, a prophet Buddy is the Glasses' remaining spiritual leader. His name, too, resounds: he is their Buddha. But now it is Zooney's turn to help Franny and, maybe, help him.

Bessie's invasion of Zooney's privacy symbolizes the name Glass in yet another way. While their lives are transparently glass like in some ways, with no boundaries between them, they also desire their privacy. Buddy has gone so far as to not install a phone in his secluded house, and the children keep much from each other, and especially from the ignorant Bessie. The lack of privacy in the Glass apartment makes for some odd scenes, notably Bessie's sitting in the bathroom while Zooney bathes. Some critics see the scene as a perversion of the mother child relationship; Bessie is virtually giving her 25 year old son a bath, and even gives him new toothpaste. While some may view Bessie's appreciation of Zooney's back as a symptom of her reverse Oedipal complex, there may be another reason to showcase Zooney's back. His frame is described as slight, but his back has been broadened through weight lifting. In much of Salinger's fiction, his favored characters have narrow shoulder blades that are frequently described as wings, and the association is of angels. In addition, Salinger is heavily influenced by the German poet Rilke - who, remember, was referenced at the start of Franny who wrote frequently about angels. Zooney, then, is a sort of fallen angel; as he works out and broadens his back, ostensibly for his superficial acting career, he loses his wings.

Franny sleeps on the couch in the well-worn living room, which is far too cluttered for the painters to begin their work. Les, their father and, alongside Bessie, a former vaudevillian, has decorated the walls with mementos of the family's entertainment past. Zooney sits on the coffee table opposite the couch as he smokes a cigar and rouses

Franny. She tells him about a nightmare in which people kept making her dive for a can of coffee. One of her professors, an egotist whom she dislikes, was there, she says. Bloomberg, the family cat, crawls out of the blanket and up to Franny, who kisses him. Zooey looks at an old photo of his parents, in costume, on the cover of sheet music for a song. Franny asks if his script came last night, as LeSage said it would. Zooey says it did, and that later at night his writer friend Dick Hess called him asking to meet up for a drink. At the bar, Hess lectured him about how his whole family was crazy, and finally handed him a new television script. Franny asks him about the script from LeSage, and Zooey ridicules it for its psychoanalytic jargon. He also insults Hess's script for being sentimental and pat. Franny reads *The Way of the Pilgrim*, a religious text describing the act of praying incessantly. Because of Franny's intense desire for enlightenment, she follows the book's instructions and prays constantly. Intellectually,

Franny sees this intense desire for personal satisfaction to be in conflict with her morals. She says, "just because I'm choosey about what I want in this case, enlightenment, or peace, instead of money or prestige or fame or any of those things - doesn't mean I'm not as egotistical and self-seeking as everybody else" (Salinger 148). As a result, Franny has a mental breakdown. Her need for religious answers informs how she reads the text. At the opening of the second chapter of *Franny and Zooey*, we find Zooey in the bathtub, reading a letter from his brother Buddy the morning after Franny's breakdown. It was a "long, typewritten, four-year old letter that had obviously been taken out of its envelope and unfolded and refolded and was actually torn in several places" (Salinger 56). Zooey has obviously read and reread this letter a number of times since he received it because each time we reread we bring different experiences to our

interpretation of the text. In the letter to Zooey, Buddy attempts to explain the reasons he and Seymour, the oldest Glass brother, chose to educate Franny and Zooey the way they did. Buddy in his letter to Zooey writes,

Dr. Suzuki says somewhere that to be in a state of pure consciousness - satori - is to be with God before he said, 'Let there be light. Seymour and I thought it might be a good thing to hold back this light from you and Franny the arts, sciences, classics, languages - till you were both able at least to conceive of a state of being where the mind knows the source of all light (Salinger 65).

Franny's breakdown adds a new dimension to the meaning that Zooey has created from earlier readings of this letter, therefore enabling a new interpretation of the events and characters of the letter. While one can only speculate what meaning Zooey placed on the letter before and after the breakdown, what is significant is the act of Zooey's reading, showing that his initial speculations generated a frame of reference within which to interpret what comes next, but what came next retrospectively transforms his original understanding.

Zooey catches Franny silently reciting the Jesus Prayer. He tells her he may be going to France in the summer to make a movie based on a novel Zooey likes. He says he has no business acting in Europe, though, and goes on a lecture about how he undermines people's morale. Franny says she did the same thing to Lane the other day by criticizing him constantly. Zooey tells her she should focus her attacks on herself, not on other people and things he has the same problem, he says, such as when he condemns television. He says all the Glass children have never left *It's a Wise Child* and cannot

have normal conversations he references his conversation with Hess, in which Zooley insulted him and his work. Zooley says he's disappointed in Hess, whose first script for LeSage was good. He feels bad, though, about spreading gloom wherever he goes. Franny describes her own recent battle with gloom spreading. She says she diverted herself for a while with other activities, but one morning she started up again, and scrawled writings from Epictetus a Greek philosopher on a blackboard one morning she erased it before it was discovered and picked on everybody all day. She says she was horrified by the idea that knowledge is just another material treasure to acquire, and one which doesn't always lead to wisdom. Zooley suggests she is using the Jesus Prayer acquisitively, as a material treasure. Franny angrily says she's already thought of that, and feels even worse knowing it is true and that she is as egotistical and self serving as everybody else. Zooley asks if she would like him to try and get Buddy on the phone for her. She says she wants to talk to Seymour.

Zooley goes over to the window and watches a young girl reunite with her dog. He says there are nice things in the world, and finds it stupid that humans don't notice them but instead always think of their own terrible little egos. He tells Franny something Buddy once told him, and then relates the humorous and short religious philosophies of Walt and Boo Boo, both of which delight Franny. Zooley asks if he can make a speech to her and, after much delaying, finally does. He says he is not interested in taking the Jesus Prayer from her, and that what she is doing is terrible for their parents. He disapproves of her lecture against her college professors, even if they deserve it in some respects. He also thinks she does not understand Jesus, and is confusing him with other religions. He recalls a time when she was 10 and told Zooley she didn't like Jesus anymore because he

threw around tables and idols in a synagogue, and because he believed humans were more valuable than chickens. He calls her current thinking, praying, and breakdown tenth rate. She starts crying. He accuses her of only wanting certain people, such as her professors, to eliminate their egos. He says he doesn't understand how she can pray to Jesus, whom she doesn't even understand. He praises Jesus' supreme intelligence, especially for knowing that there is no separation between man and God. He concludes by stating that the Jesus Prayer is intended to endow the person who says it with Christ-consciousness. Slick with sweat, and with Franny crying, he apologizes to her, then leaves the living room.

The beginning of the scene is an extended parody of psychoanalysis. Franny the patient lies on couch, Zooey the Freudian smokes a cigar, and she immediately tells him about a nightmare. We probably could read into the dream somewhat Franny is drowning, she feels everyone is against her, and even, one might argue, the Medaglia D'Oro Golden Medal coffee can is a topsy turvy reference to the golden ring on the carousel at the end of Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* - or, more likely, not. Any interpretation of her dream has to fall under psychoanalytic clichés, ones which generalize the nature of dreams at the expense of individuality. In this sense, psychoanalysis is another product of an age of conformity as it tries to normalize everyone. It follows that Bessie, who longs for her children to be normal, is such a believer in psychoanalysis, while Zooey, who calls himself and Franny freaks, knows that psychoanalysis will be a waste of time for her. Another way of stating Salinger's case against psychoanalysis is that it is a methodology only of knowledge of accumulating

scientific insights into humanity rather than a spiritually wise practice. There is dissatisfaction among the Glass family in terms of material treasure and religion.

He turned around, looking both tense and agitated, and pulled out the straight chair at his mother's writing table and sat down. ... An object his mother used as a paperweight stood beside the inkwell: a small glass sphere, on a black plastic pedestal, containing a snowman wearing a stovepipe hat. Zooey picked it up, gave it a shake, and sat apparently watching the snowflakes swirl. ... As a matter of simple logic, there's no difference at all, that I can see, between the man who's greedy for material treasure--or even intellectual treasure--and the man who's greedy for spiritual treasure(141-48).

Indeed, Franny unleashes her full critique against knowledge as a material treasure in this section. Zooey, too, is well aware of the divide between material knowledge and spiritual wisdom. He works in the entertainment industry, where spiritual wisdom is in short supply but material knowledge is abundant. Le Sage, for instance, may know what television scripts work, but he is far from spiritually wise, just as Dick Hess knows how to write an absorbing melodrama but has no true wisdom to offer. In fact, Le Sage's name is a great irony; it includes the word sage, or wise. But Franny's greater problem is that she has been using the Jesus Prayer for her own spiritual gain in her rage against egotism and selfishness, she, too, is full of ego. But Zooey's discussion of the Jesus Prayer makes an important point. In fusing oneself with Christ through the Jesus Prayer, the person who prays no longer has any ego. Instead, he has endowed himself

with Christ-Consciousness, and shares his ego with Christ and, presumably, all of humanity.

Zoey argues that Franny wants only to be comforted by Christ, taken in his arms. Before this, Franny says she wants to speak to the dead Seymour. It becomes clearer that he was not only their most wise sibling, but was a Christ figure for them. Now that he is dead, not by crucifixion, but suicide, he has left the rest of the children unanchored and full of questions. Zoey may offer some sound advice, but he is far too unkind and even egotistical to reach out to Franny meaningfully.

Similarly, Buddy's introduction of this no knowledge quest the description of which is undoubtedly for the benefit of the novel's reader more than for Zoey foreshadows its eventual significance to Franny. Previously, she had bemoaned the section men who only contributed to the destruction of beauty. Zen Buddhism, Salinger implies, cannot possibly do this, as it works from a clean slate no knowledge. From this empty state, it can only create and add beauty to the world. It should appeal to Franny for another reason beyond solving the problem of destruction. Satori's state of pure consciousness and communion with God also sounds much like the incessant praying Franny so admires, in which the supplicant achieves a detached state of consciousness and, as Franny has explained, sees God. The concept of no knowledge adds another symbolic layer to the Glass surname that of glass's transparency, its invisible presence. The glass meaning receptacle for liquid which is made of glass, then, holds nothing but, for Zen, this nothingness is also everything.

Finally, we now better understand why Franny was so reluctant to eat her chicken sandwich on her date with Lane. She wants to believe, unlike Jesus did, that chickens are

just as valuable as humans are. The fact that Bessie has been force feeding Franny, chicken soup to nourish her back to health, shows how destined for failure the mission was. The concept of universal love is a simple one, yet almost impossible to pull off, but it seems as if Franny, and maybe Zooey, are ready to embrace it. Zooey not only teaches Franny these ideas, but one gets the sense that he is re-learning them himself to lose his own ego, inspired by his older, wiser brothers. Zooey lets go of his own ego in his phone call. At first, when he pretends he is Buddy, he actually increases his ego he asks many questions about Zooey, and ends up merely imitating Buddy's voice and mannerisms, not his wisdom. But when Zooey lets down the frontage, he uses Buddy's advice from his letter to Zooey. He urges Franny to act, as that is her God given gift, much as Buddy urged him to do. He also takes some wisdom from the board in Seymour and Buddy's room, specifically from the first quote of the 'Bhagavad Gita', which states that work done with anxiety about results is far inferior to work done without such anxiety. Zooey tells Franny that the artist can aim for perfection only on his own terms, and that she must not worry about her reception or the other actors around her. It seems Zooey is most moved by Seymour's diary entry he reads. The birthday performances his family gives him that Seymour describes are performances totally without ego, only with the desire to please their beloved brother/son. Zooey recognizes that this is the only reason one may worry about one's performance in service of a loving, ultimately selfless act.

Since Zooey's phone conversation takes place in Seymour and Buddy's old room, their presence affects him in more ways than the diary entry or board of quotes. The last word of dialogue in the novel is buddy, a tag Zooey throws around liberally, usually in an aggressive or comically hostile tone. But here it is affectionate and loving, and reminds

us that he has finally channeled the kindness of his brother Buddy and their missing buddy, Seymour. These incidences also bring her to spiritual breakdown and add more egos.

The service is good, and there's plenty of hot and cold running ghosts. What could be more convenient? You can say your prayer here and roll Jesus and St. Francis and Seymour and Heidi's grandfather all in one. Zooey's voice stopped, very briefly. Can't you see that? Can't you see how unclearly, how sloppily, you're looking at things? My God, there's absolutely nothing tenth-rate about you, and yet you're up to your neck at this minute in tenth-rate thinking. Not only is the way you're going at your prayer tenth-rate religion but, whether you know it or not, you're having a tenth-rate nervous breakdown. I've seen a couple of real breakdowns, and the people who had them didn't bother to pick and choose the place they. (166)

The climax of *Franny and Zooey* brings the separate themes of spirituality, ego, and criticism of bourgeois values together. Zooey's basic prescription is this: one must detach one's petty, selfish ego and instead love and respect all humanity the Fat Lady despite their flaws, simply because they are human and deserve respect. This is why Buddy, in his introduction, called the story a love story rather than a mystical story.

Zooey says the Fat Lady is Christ Himself, which implies that she deserves as much as respect as Christ does, even if she seems like everything Zooey and Franny distance them from uneducated, unattractive, a fan of lowbrow entertainment. But there is a Fat Lady nearer to them that Zooey doesn't mention. Though Franny pictures the Fat

Lady as having ugly legs, Bessie, owner of slim legs, is the true Fat Lady. Zooey even calls her Fatty in this section, and other times refer to her as fat. Bessie is the ordinary Franny and Zooey have trouble respecting. But if they can learn to respect and love her, they will have attained what Zooey called Christ consciousness, because Christ is present in everyone. In other words, when they love and respect Bessie, who has Christ within her, they will unite the Christ within them with the Christ within her. And this united Christ consciousness is what Franny has been searching for all along. Unlike the pilgrim, who had to travel the world to spread the word about the Jesus Prayer, Franny now knows a way to attain detachment and achieve Christ consciousness. She can do this simply by loving, even from her bed at home. She can defeat her personal ego and embrace the universal ego. She claimed at the beginning of Franny that she was sick of liking people, and wanted to meet someone she could respect. To quote her precisely, "I wish to God I could meet somebody I could respect" (54). Only by taking this desire literally praying to the Son of God can she achieve it.

We are reminded of the Jesus Prayer once more when Franny listens briefly to the dial tone after Zooey hangs up. The dial tone, like the Jesus Prayer, is an incessant sound. But she does not rely on it to give her salvation she takes its wisdom and knows when to stop listening to it. She does not need to hoard spiritual wisdom like a material treasure, as she previously felt she was doing, but uses it only as much as she needs to. No wonder, then, that the novel ends as she smiles at the ceiling at heaven.

3.3 Egotism and authority in *Franny and Zooey*

Buddy Glass, narrator of Zooey, admits that his writing suffers from being too clever, and at times his ornate writing style is difficult to swallow. Compounding his

problems with ego are J.D. Salinger's himself, as there are numerous similarities between Buddy and Salinger: both are students of Zen, both have been writing stories since they were 15, both live in remote rustic cabins. However, Buddy says that Zooey is a collaborative effort; he has culled his narrative from the separate stories of Franny, Zooey, and Bessie. In this sense, the egotism of Zooey is diffused; there is no single author, but five including Salinger. In the same layer, Zooey's advice to Franny at the end of the novel is also a product of diffused ego. He gives her the advice while in Seymour and Buddy's old room, inspired by his brothers and their quotes of wise men on the wall. He loses his own ego so present in his face-to-face talk with Franny and shares it with others, just as Salinger shares it with Buddy and the Glass Children. Even there is egotism between Franny and Lane when they date.

[. . .]She picked up her handbag from the floor, opened it, and took out the small pea-green clothbound book. She put it on her lap--on her knees, rather--and looked down at it, gazed down at it, as if that were the best of all places for a small pea-green clothbound book to be. After a moment, she picked up the book, raised it chest-high, and pressed it to her--firmly, and quite briefly. . . . She looked quite stunning as she walked across the dining room to the table, not at all unlike a girl on the qui vive appropriate to a big college weekend. As she came briskly, smiling, to her chair, Lane slowly got up, a napkin in his left hand. (20-23)

In the empty restroom, Franny, perspiring and very pale, enters the furthest stall and locks it. She sits down in a cramped position, cries for five minutes, and then stops suddenly. She takes out her green book, puts it on her lap, presses it to her chest, then

returns it to her bag. She freshens her appearance and walks out of the bathroom looking stunning. She apologizes to Lane for her delay. He asks if she is all right; she replies that she is now. She says she's not hungry and wants only a chicken sandwich and a glass of milk, which annoys Lane. He orders frog's legs and snails, and then tells her about the plans to go to the game in his friend Wally Campbell's car. She says she doesn't know who he is, which bothers him as she's met him several times. She apologizes for not being able to remember, especially when they look like everybody else, and talk and dress like everybody else. She immediately regrets her criticism, though she continues describing how predictable the Wally Campbell of the world can be, such as the way they name drop. She says that those who go bohemian also conform, just in a different way.

Franny wonders if she's going crazy, and Lane tells her that she looks very pale. Their food arrives. Lane tells her he's been worried about her the last few weeks, but she tells him to eat his snails. He tells her to eat, but when she looks at her sandwich she becomes disgusted. Lane asks her how her play is, but she says she quit it and the theatre department. She says acting made her feel like an egomaniac, and that she was embarrassed to be in some of the plays. They argue about the leading man she played against in *Playboy of the Western World* in summer stock; she thinks he was too lyrical. Lane believes if the critics thought he was good, then he was. She says she's sick of ego. Lane asks if she's afraid of competing. She says she's not, but she's afraid she will compete, which is why she quit theatre. The waiter brings Lane's frog's legs and salad, and asks if Franny wants to send back her untouched sandwich, an offer she declines. She sweats more, and Lane asks if she wants to use his handkerchief. She roots through her handbag, bringing out items, to find a tissue.

Lane spots her book and asks what it is. Franny nervously says she just brought it for the train ride, and puts it back. She puts away her other items, and talks about the gold-plated swizzle stick which she can't bear to throw away. Lane presses her to talk about the book. She reveals it's called *The Way of the Pilgrim*, that her religion professor mentioned it, and that she took it out of the library and keeps forgetting to return it. She summarizes the book, which an anonymous 33-year-old Russian peasant wrote in the 19th century. It starts with the peasant's wanting to know what the Bible's command to pray incessantly mean. He searches throughout Russia for the answer, and is directed to a religious text called the *Philokalia* which explains an advanced method of prayer. He perfects the method, then continues walking and spreading the word. Franny says that sums up the book, then describes a religious couple the pilgrim meets whom she loves.

Lane says he wants to show Franny his paper on Flaubert, then ignores her recommendation that he read the book. She describes the pilgrim's method of praying, which uses the Jesus Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me. The word mercy, she explains, is important since it has so many meanings. After repeating the prayer for a long time, it become self active and synchronizes with the person's heartbeat, becoming a truly incessant prayer, and mystically purifies the person's outlook. As Franny describes this, she becomes less and less aware of Lane's presence. She continues explaining the prayer; one does not need to have faith in the beginning, for the prayer takes care of itself through pure repetition. Likewise, Franny admires to the Buddha's wise and peace preaches. "As a matter of fact, that makes absolute sense," Franny said, "because in the Nembutsu sects of Buddhism, people keep saying 'Namu Amida Butsu' over and over again--which means 'Praises to the Buddha' or something like that-- and the same thing

happens. The exact same--" (38). She relates this feature to the Nembutsu sects of Buddhism and to other religions whose practitioners repeat their word for God. Lane is skeptical, and asks if Franny really believes in it. She ignores the question and says she simply finds it a fascinating coincidence that all these religions preach repetition of a mantra. Lane asks what the result is of the prayer, and Franny says one gets to see God. The waiter takes away Franny's sandwich. Lane orders coffee and critiques the prayer, and the religions which have incessant praying, for not taking psychology into account. He says he loves Franny, and she excuses herself to go to the bathroom. On the way there, she faints by the bar. She awakens five minutes later in the manager's office, dazed. Lane is concerned, and tells her not to worry about making the game when she asks about it. He tells her to rest at the guest house, and then says maybe he can find a back staircase to visit her. He asks her how long it's been, then realizes it was that Friday night last month. He tells her he'll have someone get her water, and he'll hail a cab. He leaves, and Franny's lips repetitively form soundless words.

While Lane does mention that Friday night as the last time they had sex which Franny referred to in her letter, such an explanation offers too clear cut and logical a reason for her fainting, and distracts from the real cause: Franny's spiritual crisis. And a crisis it is, for Franny has reached a breaking point with the egotistical world. It is clear why the pilgrim's prayer appeals to her. She detests egotism above all else, and the prayer is means of detaching oneself, of losing ego. By chanting the name of God, the petitioner focuses only on God, not only himself. Incessant praying, however, is not confined to one religion since, as Franny notes, making it, for her, a deeper form of spirituality. In particular, she comments that the Nembutsu sects of Buddhism also use incessant

praying. Salinger was a deep student of Buddhism, and strains of its central tenet detachment from personal concerns show up even in his earlier short stories. This kind of detachment which Franny herself seems to experience while describing the prayer, losing herself in mystical thought while looking past Lane and his mundane concerns with snail-eating is completely opposite from Lane's brand of detachment. He separates himself from the outside world and is interested only in his own affairs. Even his anxiety over Franny's health is short lived and soon turns into selfish plans for a sexual appointment at her guest house. The consequences of the pilgrim's prayer how it surpasses petty individual concerns will be developed later in the book.

But already we know she has retreated from small time fame as an actor, dropping out of her theatre department. She equates acting with ego, and she especially dislikes the actor in playboy for making his part so lyrical. The word is not incidental; it reminds us that the play was, first, a written work which the actor tried to make into a lyric, a song. In other words, not only did he dress up the play as a virtual song, but he assumed the voice of the play, taking its speech away from the playwright. Salinger has great contempt for acting and actors, as evidenced in *The Catcher in the Rye*, and it comes as no surprise for someone who so openly disdains phony acting in the social world. One of the great ironies of *Franny and Zooey*, then, is that it is written almost as a play. Franny and Lane's conversation is much like a two character dramatic scene, filled mostly with dialogue that distinguishes its speakers through their voices and minor habits. This is an important motif to follow, as Salinger admitting to writing plays when he was younger, and even entertained thoughts of becoming an actor.

He was the second youngest of what had originally been seven brothers and sisters--five boys and two girls--all of whom, at rather conveniently spaced intervals during childhood, had been heard regularly on a network radio program, a children's quiz show called "It's a Wise Child." An age difference of almost eighteen years . . . which lasted just over sixteen years-- from 1927 well into 1943, a span of years connecting the Charleston and B-17 Eras. (52-53)

A first person narrator announces that he will offer not a short story, but a prose home movie; even though the three featured players wish he would not distribute it. He briefly describes the varying objections of the leading lady Franny, the other female Bessie, and finally the leading man Zooey, who believes the story, is too mystical. The narrator says he has been producing his prose home movies since he was 15, and thinks that it is not mystical, but a love story. He explains that he learned of the story through discussion with the three characters, all family members. He concludes by revealing that their last name is Glass and that the story will start as the youngest Glass boy reads a letter from his eldest living brother, Buddy who is the narrator, and who promises to leave himself in the third person for the remainder of the story though it is still told in first-person narrative form.

Buddy narrates the story, which begins as 25 year old Zooey Glass rereads a four year old letter in the bathtub. He is given a length description. Physically, his body is slight and his face is surpassingly handsome, saved from being too handsome by a slightly projecting ear. Zooey has been a highly successful television actor for three years, but he began publicly performing at age 7 with his six siblings (not all of whom

appeared at the same time) on the long running children's radio quiz show, *It's a Wise Child*. Buddy interrupts with a footnote, in which he runs through what the other siblings besides Franny are up to: the eldest, Seymour, committed suicide in 1948 in Florida; the second oldest, Buddy, is a writer in residence at a girls' college in upstate New York, and lives alone in a small, Spartan house; Boo Boo is a mother; Walt, one of the twins, died in WWII; Waker, the other twin, is a Roman Catholic priest. All the children were stars on the show, and the public either despised or worshipped them. Most consider Seymour the best performer, while Zooney is second. Zooney had also been the most psychologically examined, presumably to discover the origins of his precocious wit. Buddy describes the letter to Zooney as hyperbolic in many areas, notably length, and that it is the kind of letter the recipient carries with him long after receiving it. He transcribes the letter.

In the letter, dated Mar. 18, 1951, Buddy tells Zooney he just finished reading a letter from their mother, Bessie, urging him to remove his phone in New York and install one in his house in the country. He likes the phone as it reminds him of Seymour. He tells Zooney to be kinder to Bessie, and admits that her letter really urged him to write Zooney and convince him to get a Ph.D. in Math before he dove into acting. Buddy mentions that he never got his B.A. degree because he was a snob in college, and because he knew he could never catch up to Seymour. He doesn't think Zooney needs a higher degree for job security, and even thinks he would have been a better adjusted actor had he and Seymour not thrown in their heavier literary loves into Zooney's recommend home reading when he was young. Buddy is anxious over the prospect of Zooney, a natural born actor, ending up in the hackneyed, superficial world of movies.

Buddy writes that it's three year to the day that Seymour killed himself. He also says that he gives a weekly lecture on Zen Buddhism to the faculty and undergraduates at his college. He says what provoked him to write Zooey more than his mother's entreaties were a haiku-style poem he found in Seymour's suicide hotel room. He says he and Seymour were reluctant to educate Zooey in the ways of knowledge until his mind had reached the Zen state of no knowledge that is, pure consciousness and communion with God, or satori. Therefore, they educated Franny and Zooey first in the teachings of religious men before literary men. Buddy says he knows Zooey resented their lectures and the metaphysical sittings in particular. He says that though he was worried for Franny and Zooey after Seymour's death, he could not come home for more than a year for fear of the questions they would ask him. This afternoon, he writes, he remembered Seymour once telling him that the purpose of religious study was to unlearn the differences between opposites such as boys and girls, day and night, etc. The memories made Buddy want to write a letter to Zooey with something happy and exciting in mind, but now it's lost, which is why he lectured him about acting. He urges Zooey to act, but to do so with all his might. He concludes by asking Zooey for forgiveness for what Seymour called Buddy's permanent affliction of cleverness.

Buddy's description of his story as a prose home movie is mostly accurate. While Zooey after this introductory section follows Franny as being a sort of two person play, with extended dialogue at the expense of interior description, it is decorated with Buddy's ornate prose. And since Buddy shares Franny's critique of acting as an art which inevitably falls short remember her lament that one has to be a genius to play the role of *Playboy of the Western World*, his linguistic artistry in describing the nuanced gestures

and habits of his siblings shows the deficits of movies which, as he claims, depict only superficial stereotypes.

Buddy's critique is predictable when we realize that Salinger, who despises most movies make no efforts to hide his real life similarities with Buddy. Salinger, like Buddy, began writing fiction when he was 15; he, too, sequestered himself in a rustic house, though he never taught at college; Salinger is a likewise devoted student of Zen Buddhism; and Salinger's natural prose style, as evidenced in other work, is much like that of Buddy. By virtually placing himself in his own novel through this alter ego, Salinger makes a supreme irony out of his critique of ego. The introduction hits the reader with ego Buddy's literal ego his first-person narrative, and Salinger's own. But ego in Zooey is a muddled affair. Buddy announces he will leave himself in the third person for the rest of the story, though he still recounts it in the first person. He also maintains that the story is picked from discussions with all three characters. In this sense, their collective ego transplants his, or is at least fused with his, and no single ego dominates. While Buddy may call the story a prose home movie, movies generally do favor stand out stars, as Buddy's repeated references to Franny as a leading lady and Zooey as a leading man suggest and as Franny's previous complaints about acting as an egotistical endeavor state bluntly. But the combination of different viewpoints, which prose fiction, even in a first person narrative, can pull off more gracefully than film, places it in a more democratic and ego less territory. Thus, the story has five authors who share credit: Franny, Bessie, Zooey, Buddy, and Salinger himself.

Still, there is plenty of egos in the Zooey section, thanks largely to Buddy's insistent and scholarly prose style. Buddy says Boo Boo once called a short story of his

too clever, and the same attack could be levied against *Franny and Zooey* which, like *It's a Wise Child*, also splits its readers into the two camps of those who love and loathe the Glass children. Clearly, Salinger has nothing but affection for them; John Updike once remarked that Salinger loved his characters more than God does. Cleverness is not the true permanent affliction of the Glasses, however. What they have a more complicated relationship with is their abundance of knowledge; cleverness is the merely the by product of self aware wit matched and their encyclopedic minds. It is no small irony, then, that several of the Glasses, namely Seymour and Buddy, have studied Zen. As Buddy explains, Zen leads its student on a quest for no knowledge.

Yet glass also reflects, and now that we know the Glass children were and are celebrities especially Zooey, glass can also stand for the way the Glasses reflect the feelings of those who observed them. Some could not stand them; some adored them; and some studied them. Each group, however, somehow tried to see itself better through the Glasses, a function celebrities often fulfill consider how celebrities are powerful role models especially for younger children who have not yet created their own identities. Now we understand why Franny was previously so enraged over the practice of name dropping; her name has doubtless been name dropped throughout the years, and often in crying tones as Buddy mentions Zooey's name was in his college class, in regards to Zooey's meditational habits.

Finally, Buddy continues the novel's humorous critique of the flawed and surface techniques of psychoanalysis. In his recounting of Zooey's psychological testing as a child, it sounds like he toyed with the testers at his will. This set up recalls Salinger's

short story *Teddy*, in which the eponymous prodigy operates at a higher mental and spiritual level than his parents and the researchers who test him.

Zooley carefully returns Buddy's letter to its envelope. He picks up a manuscript from the bathmat and reads, while still in the bathtub, a lover's spat scene between Rick and Tina; Rick's part is underlined. Before Zooley can get too far, his mother, Bessie, interrupts and comes in. Irritated, Zooley closes the shower curtain. Bessie, a medium out woman in a hairnet whose age is indeterminate, and who always wears a multiple-pocketed Japanese kimono at home, nags Zooley for staying in the bath so long. We are told that the apartment is an old, fairly nice apartment on New York's fashionable Upper East Side. Bessie looks through the well stocked medicine cabinet, much to Zooley's frustration. She puts in a new bottle of toothpaste, which she says will protect Zooley's lovely teeth.

Zooley's conflict with Bessie is both telling and humorous. Her extended stay in the bathroom gives Zooley's razor sharp wit many opportunities to insult her, and exposes the most obvious difference between the two, their respective levels of intelligence. Bessie is decidedly ordinary, unlike her extraordinary children. However, she clearly has aspirations to be something more and, like her children, she also used to be an entertainer a vaudeville dancer. Perhaps this is why she wears the diva like kimono, as a costume to cover her medium heavy figure but leave her dancer's legs and aristocratic fingers exposed. But she ruins the effect, as her paraphernalia laden kimono the pockets are filled with tools makes her into a virtual handyman. The kimono, of course, also comes from Japan, which shows another gap between herself and her children; she is interested in Japan for its kimonos, while they appreciate it for its Buddhism.

Perhaps, too, Bessie's former profession as a vaudeville dancer is what makes Zooey so hostile toward her. Vaudeville is considered a low art form, and Zooey, too, is mired in a low art medium, television. Bessie and all her unschooled opinions, such as her assessment of the manuscript's beautiful title is a constant reminder for Zooey that he shares the same professional space. This is why he maintains, however ironically, that he can appreciate beauty in all forms. He wants to believe that he is above his status as a television actor. And while his gifted mind obviously can appreciate beauty in some ways, and is himself beautiful though he tries to hide from the fact, in another ironic turn he is also clearly the most destructive character we have seen, even more than Lane or Franny's description of the section men. He is ruthless in his attacks against Bessie, a woman who has lost two sons, has a somewhat incompetent husband, and should be viewed in a sympathetic light. Salinger foreshadows another conflict, in that just as Franny wants the world to be more creative and less destructive, her own brother lives destructively.

As stated above, Zooey tries to hide from his own beauty, even attempting not to look at his face while he shaves. But, like Franny, he is a born performer, destined to be stared at, and he must also wrestle with ego. While the teleplay he reads is over the top melodrama, Salinger reveals it as an exercise in ego in more subtle ways. While Buddy's letter, and his narrative description of Zooey, are self-conscious, full of disclaimers about its own cleverness, the teleplay is clever in more insidious ways. Buddy's self-conscious disclaimers attempt, at least, to deflate his own ego, to show that he understands his style can be grating and pretentious. In the teleplay, the characters' self-consciousness only serves to heighten their egos and, more importantly, that of the teleplay's author. The

character Tina says she feels like she's someone in a terribly sophisticated play; as Salinger so clearly shows, the melodramatic teleplay is anything but sophisticated. Moreover, Rick calls her on quoting a line from Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*. Unlike Buddy, who willingly allowed the voices of various family members Franny, Zooey, and Bessy to collaborate on the writing of Zooey, Tina and the hack author of the teleplay tries to appropriate Hemingway's voice for her own gains? Unable to come up with a real line for her sadness, she steals one from another author. Zooey clearly tries to distance himself from the teleplay's abundance of ego. He lavishes extreme care with Buddy's letter, even though he toys with it, balancing it on the tub and putting it in danger of falling in. His true feelings emerge when it nearly does fall in and he quickly puts it away. He treats the teleplay carelessly, however, sloshing water over the tub when picking it up, reading it on his wet knees, and leaving it on the bathmat and radiator.

Chapter Four

Conclusion: Spiritual Barrenness in *Franny and Zooey*

When a relationship is not working, it is usually because there are needs and expectations that are not being met. There might be so much anger or hatred that your only desire might be just to run away from it all. However, this is not a solution. It merely reflects your lack of understanding about where the real problem lies. The root of all needs and expectations is an unfulfilled spiritual desire. Satisfy your spiritual desires through the practice of meditation and you will be able to interact successfully with anyone. No longer needy, you will enter into relationships simply to share and enjoy. There will be no strings attached in the way you give of yourself; your love will be unconditional. We must learn to bring spirituality into our relationship. Others will learn by our example. It's a way of inspiring and uplifting each other. These spiritual things are lack in the very novel and they are living in illusion.

Salinger's *Franny and Zooey* explores not only mysticism and religion but also family, celebrity, education, and intellectualism. Of course, the religious themes are important: By the end of the *Zooey* section, Salinger seems to have arrived at a spiritual doctrine, to be followed by many of his characters.

There are several tussles between mother and daughter, Bassie says Franny to eat something because she is not interested because of her spiritual breakdown. The phone rings, and five minutes later Bessie comes out and says Buddy, who sounds like he has a cold, is on the phone and wants to speak to Franny. Franny uses the phone in her parents' bedroom. Buddy asks her how she is, and says he didn't listen to most of what Bessie told him, though he knows the basic facts. Franny says she's ready to murder Zooey, as he's

completely destructive. She says he's bitter about everything, and brings up his definition of himself and Franny as freaks. She also recalls his story from last night about having once had a glass of ginger ale in their kitchen with Jesus. Buddy says something with a grace that only Zooey would be able to pull off, and Franny realizes it's Zooey. She tells him if he has anything to say, he should say it, but she's tired.

Zooey says he wanted to tell her to continue with the Jesus Prayer, if that's what she wants. He apologizes for acting like a seer. He tells her that he and Buddy drove to see her perform in *Playboy of the Western World* last summer, without her knowledge. He says she was amazing, but that she unrealistically expected everyone else, including the ushers, to be geniuses. He tells her the only important thing in religious life is detachment. He tells her she should act, as she has been given the gift to do so, and that this is the only religious thing she can do. He tells her she can concern herself only with her own art, not with how others around her affect or appreciate it.

Love is also a crucial element in the family relationships in *Franny and Zooey*. In the Glass family, the children are much more gifted and intelligent than the parents. But the children keep reminding each other that their parents must be loved and respected for everything they are and everything they have given their children. Even beyond love, family itself is a crucial theme in these stories. Zooey tells Franny that they have become freaks because their brothers taught them too much too young. But what their brothers taught also helps Franny out of her spiritual crisis. Through Seymour's lessons and Zooey's impression of Buddy's voice, Zooey channels enough support to talk Franny out of her distress.

Engaging and taking help from an outsider may be a great step to take even for a

family undergoing severe problems. However, sometimes there is a need for a specialized person to understand the problems, analyze their root cause, and offer solutions, and help in joining the broken pieces of family life together. Problem of Glass family has not been solved because they do not have wisdom to settle it. So, Franny is being cheated by her boy friend Lane Coutell and even her own brothers.

More specifically, Franny and Zooey must decide whether or not to stay famous as actors or leave the pursuit of fame behind. Much of what sets off Franny's breakdown is her disenchantment with the experience she is having at college. She hates both herself and others for the egotistical behavior and phony conformity in which they all engage. This theme is central to many of Salinger's works but takes a redemptive twist in *Franny and Zooey*. The author seems to acknowledge that even such people, with their huge egos and weak individual wills, should be admired and respected for their humanity, if nothing else.

It is critical to understand that an author's environment, life, and culture are reflected in their works. It helps in the understanding of the story itself, but also the reflection of the author it conveys as well as any moral, message, or emotion attached to the words on the printed page. It is not only a projection but a projector itself, as the works of the author can indeed return the influence, and as in Salinger's case, drove him to new extremes in paranoia, seclusion, and eccentricity.

Thus, every person is living with human spirit and religion rather than material things. Material things give momentary satisfaction and more or less try to detach the human relation with his/her intimates. Everyone keeps relation with other to get something desired. A materialist, who doesn't have spirituality, can't establish a deep

relationship with others. Spirituality always runs a person on track and that goes long lasting with happiness and integrity. In this novel, to get spiritual fulfillment, Buddy and Seymour are reluctant to educate Zooey in the ways of knowledge until his mind has reached the Zen state of no knowledge that is, pure consciousness and communion with God. Therefore, they educated Farany and Zooey first in the teachings of religious men before literary men. Because of the spiritual lack Glass family has lost relation among their own family members. They represent the real contemporary American people who were strongly attached with materialistic norms and values and wanted to reach spirituality through the way of materialism that would be never fulfilled. This novel can be viewed as Salinger's fusion of Judeo Christian religion and eastern religion, and both Franny and Zooey to great lengths to show the similarities between the different doctrines, especially in regards to incessant praying. Eldest sibling of the Glass family Seymour commits suicide. The Glass family is disintegrated, detached and egotistical. Elder brothers are reluctant to teach literature before religious doctrine. Spiritualism is a way of living the life in order, which is not available in this very novel. Therefore, spiritual bareness leads the Glass family to commit suicide, disintegration, detachment and egotism.

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