

Ritual Cleansings: Authoritarian Rhetoric, Paternalism, and Illicit Persuasion in J.D. Salinger's *Franny and Zooey*

Dominic Robin, Saint Louis University

“With this war-time soap I can wash my hands as often as I like without fear of cracked skin. I do wash my hands very frequently, on account of the dog. But with the old peace-time soap, I became very sore. Why is that?”

—Adolf Hitler, *Hitler's Table Talk, 1941-1944*¹

Abstract:

Although critics debate the quality of J.D. Salinger's *Franny and Zooey*, most agree on its aim: Despite the verbal abuse that Zooey has doled out, readers are meant to accept the authenticity of Zooey's closing oration and be left, like Franny, “smiling at the ceiling.” Invoking the works of Robert Paxton and Theodor Adorno, I challenge this reading, drawing particular attention to Zooey's use of authoritarian rhetorical tactics. Not only do these techniques continue post-“transformation,” Zooey, in fact, amplifies their use in the text's final section, leaning into the same themes of ideological purity, in-group elitism, and ends-justified paternalism present throughout. Read through the lens of authoritarian manipulation, the novel's conclusion is transformed from an authentic moment of self-reflection to something more sinister, namely, the culmination of rhetorical manipulation into the only successful conclusion authoritarian figures seek, the restriction of dissent and instantiation of authority over others.

NESTLED UNOBTUSIVELY WITHIN the latter half of J.D. Salinger's two-part novella *Franny and Zooey* is an inconspicuous aside that I will reference from this point forward as the Lost Puppy scene. In the scene, Zooey pauses his verbal diatribe against his sister, one that has left her “sobbing” on the couch, and allows his attention to be drawn to what the narrator describes as “a little scene that was being acted out sublimely, unhampered by writers and directors and producers, five stories below the window and across the street.”² The scene is of a young girl hiding behind a maple tree as her dachshund frantically searches for her. In what is perhaps as much a form of projection as it is reality, Zooey notes that “[t]he anguish of separation was scarcely bearable for [the dachshund],”

and when he finally finds the girl “it wasn’t a second too soon.”³ This sequence captures Zooey so intensely that he momentarily contemplates raising the window and leaning out so that he can watch longer. It also inspires the following statement:

“God damn it [. . .] there are nice things in the world—and I mean nice things. We’re all such morons to get so sidetracked. Always, always, always referring every goddam thing that happens right back to our lousy little egos.”⁴

Zooey’s realization proves short-lived. Immediately following his articulation, Franny blows her nose “with guileless abandon”⁵ and Zooey, forgetting immediately his subsequent moralization, snaps at her angrily. His attention, like that of the puppy, is quickly diverted toward the nearest stimulant. Moments later, Franny is crying once again.

Through this vignette, Salinger gestures towards an oft-overlooked aspect of Zooey’s character, a strong (and, I will argue, insidious) impulse towards paternalism, one that manifests both in relation to others—as embodied by his will to dominate the people he comes into contact with—and toward himself—as signified by the sense of loss he feels at the death of his oldest brother and spiritual guide, Seymour.⁶ The Lost Puppy scene so enraptured Zooey because he sees in both the puppy and the young girl images of himself, a dual desire to control and to be controlled—to surrender himself completely to the certainty of a higher power and to reenact the image of that higher power in relation to others, that is, to assert authority and to manifest control.

It is precisely this authoritarian impulse that critics of *Franny and Zooey* have overlooked. Pointing to Zooey’s ostensible “breakthrough” in the novel’s closing section,⁷ critics have, almost without variance, sided with the novel’s anti-hero, reading the “Fat Lady” scene as evidence of veritable moral and spiritual breakthrough, an authentic realization by Zooey that he must reform his behavior to better respect the inherent lived dignity of those around him. Jerome L. Mazzaro, for example, terms the final scene the moment when Franny is “restored to her childhood knowledge,” rejecting the “meaningless value systems” espoused by so many adults in Salinger’s fiction.⁸ Kenneth Hamilton posits an explicitly religious reading of the text, claiming that through the ending Zooey “works out in detail the transition from a Holden-like revulsion from phonies to a vision of Christ made flesh,”⁹ a reading that Gerald Rosen parallels through his proposition that the conclusion represents Zooey’s spiritual crossover into a spirit of Zen enlightenment.¹⁰

Contemporary critics agree. Andrey Astvatsaturov, for example, positions an enlightened Zooey as catalyst for Franny's growth from spiritual immaturity into an authentic understanding of Christian spirituality, what Astvatsaturov describes as the "hesychast ideal." By "unmasking Franny's lie," Astvatsaturov argues, "Zooey accurately discovers her wrong intention, her initial unpreparedness for the spiritual path, her lack of proper humility."¹¹ Similarly, Andrew J. Madigan argues that Zooey enables Franny to expand her view of education, to "detach from the inequities and vanities of the intellectual world without categorically forsaking it."¹² Thus, Madigan anticipates Janet Malcolm's reading of the novel's conclusion as indicative of Salinger's thesis that "only [the young] can save each other." Just as "Phoebe saves Holden" in *The Catcher in the Rye*, Malcolm argues, so too "Zooey saves Franny."¹³ Note that in each of these readings, Zooey's "conversion" is taken at face value. Additionally, each scholar's visions shift (like that of Salinger) from Zooey to Franny, positioning Zooey as the enlightened teacher and Franny as humble pupil. Within these readings, Zooey *leads* Franny into a correct understanding of a thing—of Zen Buddhism, Christian humility, the proper role of education, of a childlike vision of knowledge unattainable by adults. This despite the fact that Zooey has, throughout the novel, failed repeatedly to demonstrate the requisite virtues he ostensibly teaches. Given these readings, it is little wonder that Joan Didion referred to the novel as "finally spurious," a "self-help copy [. . .] for the middle class."¹⁴ Although critics and scholars posit varying opinions on the quality of Salinger's final work, most agree on the aim of the novel. Despite the considerable amount of verbal abuse that Zooey has doled out throughout the entirety of the novel's second section, readers are meant to embrace the authenticity of the novel's final scene and be left, like Franny, "smiling at the ceiling."¹⁵

In this paper, I challenge these readings by mapping the presence of Zooey's authoritarian tendencies throughout the text, including (and especially) in the novel's final sequence. Rather than framing the novel's conclusion as Zooey's triumphant ushering of Franny into a state of proper knowledge, I posit something more sinister, the successful deployment of authoritarian rhetorical manipulation. Franny, in this reading, is a victim, not the benefactor, of Zooey's persuasive prowess. To structure this argument, I pull heavily from Frankfurt philosopher Theodor Adorno's analysis of authoritarian rhetoric, a subject that he addresses in *The Authoritarian Personality* but more succinctly extrapolates in his 1951 essay "Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda." I also draw from political scientist Robert Paxton, who formulates one the de-

finitive portraits of fascist rhetorical technique in the scholarly literature. The character that emerges from this rhetorical analysis, I argue, is one of the more disquieting portrayals of authoritarian rhetorical persuasion in American literature.

Zooey's authoritarian flair is made yet more arresting by its subtlety. The victims of Zooey's hypnotic spell include not just Franny but readers as well, both lay and professional. The breadth of the scholarship that takes the novel's conclusion at face value attests to the text's subtle persuasiveness. It is this gentle persuasiveness that renders the text valuable to contemporary readers. Although *Franny and Zooey* was a bestseller and cult classic in its time, the novel has waned both in the popular and the critical imagination. An authoritarian reading highlights the value of renewed attention. Zooey is dangerous because he is, in fact, deeply persuasive. So, too, modern iterations of authoritarianism are dangerous because authoritarians are, themselves, deeply persuasive. As authoritarian regimes continue to gain global prominence, the ability to identify and reject authoritarian rhetoric has become increasingly important. An authoritarian reading of *Franny and Zooey*, attuned specifically to the focused application of authoritarian rhetorical tactics on vulnerable individuals, provides literary studies a valuable tool for study and, ultimately, for dissent.

I organize my argument in two parts. In part I, I analyze the sections preceding the novel's conclusion scene, casting particular attention to the authoritarian rhetorical techniques Zooey employs throughout. I then turn my attention to the infamous "Fat Lady" scene, the story's closing sequence. If the novel's conclusion does represent a veritable change, this change should be reflected rhetorically as well as verbally. What matters ultimately is not simply *what* Zooey argues but *how* he makes his argument. Not only does no such change occur, but, in fact, Zooey escalates the more manipulative and authoritarian elements of his persuasive techniques in the novel's concluding section. As such, readers should read Zooey's closing monologue not as an authentic moment of self-reflection but as a continuation, the culmination of a variety of authoritarian rhetorical techniques into the only "successful" conclusion authoritarian figures seek, namely the restriction of dissent and the instantiation of authority over others. Zooey, thus, becomes a narratologically rendered representation of the authoritarian personality, a person who uses rhetorical manipulation to assert authority and secure power over others.

PURITY AND DISGUST

Embedded deep within Zooey's ethos are the dual ideas of purity and disgust, two categories that have strong empirical ties to rightwing authoritarianism.¹⁶ These propensities have clearly manifested in several prominent authoritarian figures. Adolf Hitler biographer Ian Kershaw terms Hitler's hygienic tendencies "little short of a cleanliness fetishism"¹⁷ and notes that Hitler's writings in *Mein Kampf* "betray a morbid fear of uncleanness, dirt, and disease."¹⁸ Mixed in with these strong indicators of disgust, Hitler ties in a preponderance of aesthetically conscious language. For example, Hitler praises Germans who are "blessed with a feeling for *beauty* instead of commercial instincts"¹⁹ and claims that the existence of Jews is "an incarnate denial of the *beauty* of God's image in His creation."²⁰ In an oft-cited passage from the work, Hitler explicitly links his understanding of purity with disgust, claiming that the "supreme purpose of the ethnical State is to guard and preserve those racial elements which, through their work in the cultural field, create that *beauty* and *dignity* which are characteristic of a higher mankind."²¹ Cleanliness, according to Hitlerian logic, is important because it represents a physical manifestation of inner purity, a commitment to internally defined ideals that are then encoded under the terms beauty and dignity. Disgust functions as the operational heuristic by which these twin affects are triggered. Once an object (or a people group) has been successfully labeled an object of disgust, the authoritarian drive for cleanliness provides ground for expunction, an act that can (and often does) lead to violence.

Given these deep connections, it seems germane to begin this conversation in the bathroom. Indeed, occupying nearly a third of the novel, Zooey's lengthy bathroom sequence at the beginning of the novel's second section is impossible to ignore. Critic Mary McCarthy terms the bathroom "the holy-of-holies of family life, the seat of privacy, the center of the cult of self-worship."²² Here, readers first meet Zooey as he reads a letter from his brother, argues with his mother, and, later, engages in his lengthy post-bath cleansing routine. During this cleansing ritual—during which Zooey "looked directly into his own eyes, as though his eyes were neutral territory, a no man's land in a private war against narcissism he had been fighting since he was seven or eight years old"²³—Zooey shaves his face two separate times, conspicuously disposing of a day-old razor because he suspects, seemingly without reason, that someone else may have used it.²⁴ He then proceeds to comb²⁵ and then recomb²⁶ his hair before turning to clean his "already perfectly clean" fingernails with a

nail file.²⁷ The bathroom is, as McCarthy claims, the “erotic center of the narcissus ego,”²⁸ the stage setting where Zooey ritualistically enacts his purity routines, attempting, in the process, to project order and control upon the world.

Zooey’s preoccupation with personal hygiene jumps from action to rhetoric, a jump that is accomplished largely through his associative and personal attacks on those who do not live up to his sterilized expectation. He is, in other words, concerned not just with physical cleansing but with metaphysical cleansing. By foisting his philosophical and artistic sensibilities onto the world, he hopes to purify it. As is common in authoritarian rhetoric, these attacks prove strikingly inconsistent. For example, Zooey refers to Franny’s boyfriend Lane Coutell as “a charm boy and a fake.”²⁹ When challenged to explain his reasoning for this assessment, Zooey replies simply: “Because he is, that’s all.”³⁰ In doing so, Zooey enacts a central element of Adorno’s critique of fascist propaganda. “Fascist propaganda material in this country is little concerned with concrete and tangible political issues,” Adorno argues, adding that “The over-whelming majority of all agitators’ statements are directed *ad hominem* [. . .] based on psychological calculations rather than on the intention to gain followers through the rational statement of rational aims.”³¹ These *ad hominem* attacks are then coded in hygienic language, designed to trigger in listeners their internal disgust mechanism. Once this mechanism is triggered, one need not rationally defend one’s conclusions. Coutell is “a charm boy and a fake” because “he is, that’s all.” A systematic defense is rendered unnecessary. Zooey repeats this abusive tendency with nearly every character he comes into contact with throughout the novel, calling his mother “out of date,”³² “stupid,”³³ and referring to her as “a fat old druid”³⁴; criticizing harshly his script writing friend Hess until Hess is left “sitting there wishing he was dead”³⁵; and, among other things, accusing his sister of faking her nervous breakdown for attention.³⁶ Of note, Zooey’s outbursts often come after he has been challenged. They serve as ways for Zooey to maintain his authority, to silence opposition so that he can control conversation.

Zooey justifies his behavior by describing himself with patrician language. He is, in his estimation, the tortured artist on a quest for “beauty,” a mission he describes as his “Achilles’ heel.”³⁷ Zooey makes this point explicitly in an argument with his mother: “to me everything is beautiful. Show me a pink sunset and I’m limp, by God. Anything. ‘Peter Pan.’ Even before the curtain goes up at ‘Peter Pan,’ I’m a goddam puddle of tears.”³⁸ Importantly, Zooey’s exclamation on his sensitivity to beauty is offered as a justification for his criticism of the title of a script that he

has been reading in the bathtub. His love for beauty, he argues, justifies his opprobrium. He is the enlightened underdog, the “lone wolf” fighting a righteous battle against the decay of art and culture.³⁹ As such, the unkindness he shows ought to be excused; his ends (the defense of beauty through art) justify his means (hyperbolic and vicious language).

This rhetorical act mimics another common element of authoritarianism, a propensity toward rhetoric built around “in-group; out-group” dynamics. Adorno ties this act explicitly to the idea of purity, arguing that authoritarians frequently engage in this type of rhetoric because it “suggests continuously and sometimes in rather devious ways, that the follower, simply through belonging to the in-group, is better, higher and *purier* than those who are excluded.”⁴⁰ Read through this lens, Zooey’s deployment of purity language serves as a way for him to separate the world into readily distinguishable categories. At the top are those whose aesthetic qualities rise to a certain standard; at the bottom exist the “morons” who make up the majority, occupied definitively by those who fail to meet Zooey’s artistic qualification. Zooey, as ideological leader and critical referee, possesses a particular quality of enlightenment, one that Franny can join if she chooses to mimic Zooey’s in-group sensibilities.

By portraying himself simultaneously as a member of this performing class and its critical arbiter, Zooey performs a subtle but important act: he positions himself as both a part and aloof from privileged in-group. Adorno terms this act the “great little man,” noting that the authoritarian figure must walk a fine line, portraying himself simultaneously as Freud’s “superman” (the unattainable ideal of masculinity characterized by supreme self-confidence and narcissism) and as the “everyman” (just another one of the people).⁴¹ The authoritarian personality must exist both within and without the general in-group. Zooey reflects this image closely, utilizing his verbal prowess to establish himself as participant and spectator. He is both artist and a critic. Thus, we can read Zooey’s invitation for Franny to adopt his vision of the world not as an invitation to equality but rather as a call for subjugation, a faux offer of equality that, in truth, serves to cement more fully within the family Zooey’s status as moral doctrinaire and intellectual figurehead. To be pure, Franny must be sterilized, and to be sterilized, she must accept Zooey’s refined vision of beauty and art. In such a way, Franny can fully escape the milieu, firmly establishing herself as a sanitized member of Zooey’s inner cast.

CONTRADICTION, INCONSISTENCY, AND THE CULT OF PERSONALITY

To preserve this precarious tension, Adorno notes, authoritarian figures employ a variety of rhetorical tricks, many of them self-conflicting and internally contradictory. In his attempt to map the stages of fascist ascent, scholar Robert Paxton takes particular care to note these inconsistencies. Central to fascist ideology, Paxton writes, is the doctrine's "ambiguous relationship between doctrine and action."⁴² For this reason, Paxton notes, it is often difficult to reduce authoritarianism to a consistent set of ideological principles. Adorno observes a similar tendency, noting that Fascist propaganda material often eschews tangible political material, instead molding reality to fit the leader's specific ideological agenda.⁴³ To gain power, Paxton writes, fascists often say what is socially expedient. Ideological commitments are, fundamentally, a means to an end, a tendency that lends an enigmatic air to fascist ideology.

This ambiguity, Paxton notes, explains why it can be so difficult to map the ideological ties between disparate fascist leaders. Initially, little seems to link the ideological agendas of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. Their words and claims differ in a variety of key areas, including social change, the specific "in-group; out-group," and the value of private industry. Their true connection, Paxton argues, is not ideological at all but rather a shared set of foundational principles, including: 1) The primacy of the sub-group to which they subscribe; 2) The conclusion that this group has been victimized; and 3) The belief that this sub-group must be protected at all costs, including, if necessary, through violence. Blended with this lack of truth is often a narcissistic cult of personality, one that not only believes in the supremacy of the leader's moral undertaking but also believes that the leader has the ethical allowance (even obligation) to exploit the masses to achieve his aim.⁴⁴ Journalist Konrad Heiden records precisely this of Adolf Hitler, noting that Hitler possessed so completely enrapturing a sense of self-importance that "a measure of authenticity flowed over the audience [as he spoke] even when he was telling obvious lies."⁴⁵

Zooey projects precisely such an ethos, both through his individualist narcissism and his willingness to bend reality to fit his own self-serving agenda. For example, before Zooey offers his defense on the moral value of the "Fat Lady," a similar articulation takes place in the aforementioned Lost Puppy scene. Recall that in the scene Zooey pauses his verbal diatribe against his sister (one that has left her "sobbing" on the couch) to note the passing of a young girl and her puppy. The scene, we are led to believe, inspires the exclamation in which Zooey decries humankind's

tendency to “always refer[] every goddam thing [. . .] right back to our lousy little egos.”⁴⁶ As noted, this moral aside fails to take root, and moments later Zooey’s attention is returned to his sister and his verbal attacks are redoubled.

Admittedly, there are diverse ways to read this section. The first—and more charitable—posits that Zooey so lacks self-awareness that he is incapable of registering the incompatibility of his words and his actions. To Zooey, kindness and consideration are abstract concepts, ideas that can be engaged on an intellectual level but fail to reach the domain of action. This disconnection effectively resolves the disunion between Zooey’s actions and his words. Zooey is inconsistent because he does not realize he is being inconsistent. A second, more cynical reading of the passage theorizes that Zooey is fully aware of the insincerity of his actions yet chooses to engage in them anyway. Such a reader might note that Zooey seems from the start fully geared for conflict, poised not, as he claims, to help Franny overcome her anxiety but rather to wage psychological battle against her. Interpreted thus, Zooey’s moral outbursts serve as a means by which Zooey affirms his moral reliability, calculated pauses used to reestablish his ethos as familial seer.

Textually, I find compelling evidence for either reading and do not land heavily on a single explanation. To me, establishing a pattern of inconsistent and opportunistic thinking (whether willful or not) is a sufficient fruitful link to make. In doing so, I reject the conclusion that a person’s ability to successfully recognize personal inconsistency necessarily excludes them from authoritarian tendencies. In fact, research suggests quite the opposite. In “Sacrificial U.S. War-Culture,” for example, Kelly Denton-Borhaug argues that certain authoritarian ideological models (rhetoric about war and sacrifice for example) actively work to obscure reality, a process which contributes to a framework that “diffuse[s] social awareness.”⁴⁷ Under this theory, certain authoritarian thought processes may in fact necessarily diverge into cognitive patterns of inconsistency. This process need not be conscious. Rather, participants within such a system have so fully embraced an ethos of selective rationalization that they become blind to the inconsistencies between language and actions. This theory complements Paxton’s understanding of fascism, which posits that the first principle of fascism is “The primacy of the group,” the motivating principle being “The beauty of violence and of will, when they are devoted to the group’s success in a Darwinian struggle.”⁴⁸ Within such a framework, the prevocational principle behind an action need not be intellectual consistency but rather ideological success, the definition of which is defined internally by in-group leadership. Thus,

Zooey's inconsistency need not be willful. Rather, it is the product of a thought structure that values success over consistency, results over truth.

Willful or not, this inconsistency reappears throughout the novel. This is particularly true of Zooey's manipulation of religious conversation to serve his own end, a practice that, Adorno notes, is common among authoritarian leaders.⁴⁹ For example, Zooey's criticism of Franny for her "incorrect" use of the Jesus Prayer proves remarkably inconsistent. His main concern, he claims, is that Franny is "praying to a Jesus that [she] doesn't understand." Zooey expounds on this statement in the following way:

"God almighty, Franny," he said. "If you're going to say the Jesus Prayer, at least say it to Jesus, and not to St. Francis and Seymour and Heidi's grandfather all wrapped up in one. Keep him in mind if you say it, and him only, and him as he was and not as you'd like him to have been. You don't face any facts. This same damned attitude of not facing facts is what got you into this messy state of mind in the first place, and it can't possibly get you out of it."⁵⁰

Franny's mistake, in other words, is that she has invented an imaginary version of Jesus rather than tying herself to a doctrinally specific version of the Messiah. She doesn't "face any facts." This criticism, however, directly contradicts the theological points Buddy expounds upon earlier in the text, ideas that Zooey not only fails to criticize but later seems to endorse in the "Fat Lady" scene. Indeed, Buddy's theological articulation expressly repudiates the very idea of orthodoxy, beginning not with a quest for knowledge but rather with a Zen-like pursuit of "no-knowledge," something like Dr. Suzuki's "state of pure consciousness" — to "be with God before he said, Let there be light." Before one can engage with "art, science, classics, languages," Buddy argues, one must engage with figures who concerned themselves with "the state of being."⁵¹

Of note, there is little that is doctrinally specific about this theory. As he makes his argument, Buddy mixes images of Jesus and Lao-tse, Sri Ramakrishna and Walt Whitman, tying each of these figures together through the metaphysical umbrella of Zen Buddhism. Equally important, nothing suggests that Zooey rejects this quasi-doctrinal vision of spirituality. In fact, Zooey's closing argument, that the "Fat Lady" is "Christ himself," depends entirely on a theologically ambiguous understanding of scripture, one that can square Biblical claims of Christ's singularity with Zooey's more pantheistic understanding of the deity. This under-

standing of spirituality is not only inconsistent with Zooey's critique of Franny's theology, but also fundamentally incompatible. In one section, it seems vitally important to Zooey that Franny understand that Jesus is not St. Francis or Walt Whitman. In the next, she must accept that, in fact, Christ is everyone. Which position Zooey believes is unimportant. More critical is the fact that in his criticism of Franny's use of the Jesus Prayer, Zooey embodies the authoritarian tendency to value power over ideological consistency. Zooey's primary concern is to score an intellectual point over his sister, a victory that helps him to further establish himself as the intellectual authority within the Glass household.

REPETITION, INFANTILISM, AND PATERNALISM

This desire for intellectual authority leads to one final connection with Adorno's critique of authoritarian rhetoric, namely the movement's correlation with the twin concepts of infantilism and paternalism. To make this point, Adorno links the rise of authoritarianism to the infantilizing nature of capitalism, a system that he argues stunts growth, robbing individuals of their "autonomy" and "spontaneity."⁵² Pulling from Freudian psychoanalysis, Adorno argues that disenfranchised people often see in authoritarian leaders a prosthetic means through which they can vicariously live their own frustrated ideals. Because these individuals cannot satisfy their own desires, their "narcissistic libido overflows on the object."⁵³ In this way, the authoritarian figure adopts a paternal role in the subject's unconscious, creating within subordinates a childlike feeling of security and inevitability.

My own reading of the Lost Puppy scene views the episode through precisely this lens. Zooey's attention is so fully engulfed by the scene with the girl and her puppy that occurs outside of his window because the event triggers a longing for the certainty of childhood, a surety that he lost with Seymour's death by suicide. To the dog, the mistress represents, both literally and figuratively, transcendence; as long as she is near, he is allowed to relinquish doubt, to abdicate "the colossal burden of a self-dominating, self-forming life, to relax one's grip on one's own center and yield passively to a superordinate power and authority."⁵⁴ The puppy, blissfully unaware that the figure it trusts is, herself, a child, is content to place perfect faith in its master, trusting fully in the power of the little girl to guide and to protect.

Zooey, deprived of his transcendent leader by the suicide of his brother, reflects a similar anguish. Although he does not physically appear in

"Zooey," Seymour Glass's presence, in the words of one critic, "haunts the family like a member of the undead."⁵⁵ Bastardized forms of his ideologies spill from Zooey continuously, and his religious influence so persists that, in Zooey's words, it is "impossible to even sit down to a goddam meal [. . .] without first saying the Four Great Vows under my breath."⁵⁶ Yet what makes Seymour such a compelling figure is that, while alive, he occupied a quasi-priest-like role as the spiritual leader. Even after death, his presence lingers. For the family, he was a spiritual entity, and thus, by putting his faith exclusively in Seymour, Zooey can extend his infancy, creating a space that was safe and familiar. Seymour's suicide, then, did far more than deprive the Glass family of a treasured family member: it destroyed the family's grounding conceptions of reality. It is this subtle but encompassing anxiety that persists throughout, coating the entirety of the novel in a layer of existential dread.

Adorno argues that individuals mask this anxiety by blanketing their anxiety under the repetition of key motifs and tropes. Speeches by fascist leaders, for example, often follow a "rigidly set pattern of clear-cut 'devices,'" speeches that often become "so monotonous that one meets with endless repetition as soon as one is acquainted with the very limited number of stock devices."⁵⁷ In *The Authoritarian Personality*, Adorno explicitly ties this fascination with repetition to adolescence, terming two common repetition patterns (stereotype and personalization) "repetitions of infantile patterns," attempts to subvert the unpleasant chaos of the world and return to the "omnipotence fantasies of earliest infancy."⁵⁸ These repetitions, Adorno argues, replace critical thinking with a series of "slogans," thereby granting participants their "infantile wish for endless, unaltered repetition."⁵⁹ Authoritarian propaganda, Adorno argues, works primarily because so many individuals are frustrated with and overwhelmed by the world; the repetitive nature of fascist propaganda allows participants to transfer their frustration and uncertainty onto an authority figure, a figure who replaces the chaos of existence with unique clairvoyance.

This tendency toward repetition, what Adorno terms "uninhibited but largely associative speech," are not just passing elements of the text, they are fundamental and defining aspects of Zooey's communication style. Indeed, upon publication, the repetitive nature of the text was an immediate point of contention among critics. In his 1961 *New York Times* review of the novel, for example, John Updike makes this point precisely, arguing that the novel is "just too long; there are too many cigarettes, too many goddams, too much verbal ado about not quite enough."⁶⁰ In doing so, Updike echoes Franny's own criticism of Zooey: "He has about forty

definitions for everything!” she notes, adding that “If I sound slightly unhinged, that’s the reason why.”⁶¹ What Updike misses, however, is that this tendency toward associative speech is more than just a rhetorical quirk, it is, Monika Gehlawat observes, a fundamental quality of the text and of Zooey’s communication style.⁶² Rejecting mature dialogue, Zooey retreats into the security provided by his stock phrases and criticisms, going so far as to cut characters off when they stray too far from the patterns and motifs he feels most comfortable addressing.

Further, when Zooey does allow other characters extended time to speak, he very rarely replies to the entirety of a given thought. More often, he latches onto the endmost articulation, replying exclusively to that idea and leaving the remainder unaddressed. For example, near the end of the novel, Franny, assuming that she is talking on the phone with Buddy, lambasts Zooey for a host of issues but most notably for his tendency to criticize others without realizing his own faults. Franny’s criticism is lengthy, specific, and passionate. However, she finishes with a brief aside about Zooey’s voracious smoking habit. Predictably, Zooey ignores the entirety of Franny’s critique, choosing instead to snap off a quick witticism about how cigars serve as Zooey’s “ballast,” the means by which he stays grounded.⁶³ Similarly, in an earlier scene, Mrs. Glass challenges Zooey’s critical tendencies, noting that he never thinks that anything is “unusual or beautiful.”⁶⁴ Zooey’s reply—that, to him, everything is “beautiful”—not only fails to engage in Mrs. Glass’ actual criticism (Mrs. Glass’ primary point is that Zooey’s overly critical spirit blinds him to the good things that surround him), it jettisons critical self-evaluation entirely, spinning the conversation instead into a quasi-accusational critique of Mrs. Glass’ (whom he refers to as “fatty”) “gall” in questioning his ability to appreciate beauty. This pattern is repeated consistently throughout the text, as Zooey persistently rejects focused dialogue in favor of disconnected, associations-led discourse. In doing so, he shrugs off the weight of responsible dialogue, adopting instead an ethos that approaches conversation opportunistically, that is, as space not to discuss ideas but rather to spar. This tendency, Adorno argues, betrays a deep insecurity on both leader and follower, an insecurity that hides behind digression and deflection.⁶⁵ Applied, Zooey’s inclination toward changing topics precipitously and without warning betrays doubt, an internal intimation that he may not, in fact, be the enlightened luminary he portrays himself to be.

Salinger’s intrusiveness, Updike argues, “robs the reader of the initiative upon which love must be given.”⁶⁶ Yet, as Adorno notes in *The Authoritarian Personality*, little space for non-self-seeking love exists

within the authoritarian ethos.⁶⁷ Rather, the authoritarian personality relies on the manipulative rhetorical skill of its central authority figure to tell constituents how to feel,⁶⁸ an act that, in the novel, is carried out both textually (narrator to reader) and intertextually (character to character). Given his foundational assumptions, Updike's criticisms are valid: *Franny and Zooey* is overly repetitive, heavy-handed, and full of bravado. What Updike misses, however, is that if Adorno is correct, many audiences are not only receptive to but actively in search of this lack of subtlety. The "mechanical rigidity" of authoritarian dialogue, Adorno writes, "are indispensable ingredients" of the authoritarian rhetorical ethos, serving as techniques by which the "agitator" casts a hypnotic veil over his listeners.⁶⁹ Seen thus, the text's repetitive qualities become more than just a rhetorical quirk—it is the rhetorical engine by which the narrative operates.

REEXAMINING THE "FAT LADY" SCENE

Throughout this article, I have argued that a variety of authoritarian rhetorical actions—a tendency toward in-group/out-group dichotomization, purity and disgust rhetoric, ideological inconsistency, associative language patterns, paternalistic logic—dominate Zooey's communication style. While making this argument, I have neglected to assign intentionality to the text's author, J.D. Salinger. Is Salinger intentionally creating an authoritarian character or does he do so accidentally? Is Salinger promoting authoritarian rhetoric by presenting Zooey sympathetically in the story conclusion or might Salinger be unconsciously dramatizing these authoritarian elements and the stakes they represent? My answer is unsatisfactory: Frankly, I do not know. The answer, one way or the other, however, is not imperative to the argument that I am making. If Zooey is authentically an authoritarian character, the nature by which this tendency is invented makes little difference. Indeed, Salinger may himself be convinced by Zooey. Zooey is, as we have already established, deeply persuasive; perhaps even his author has fallen under his rhetorical spell. More important than authorial intentionality, I argue, is the nature of the thing itself. Throughout the text, Zooey demonstrates a variety of rhetorical tactics common among authoritarian figures. Zooey may be (and, indeed, likely is) blind to those tendencies himself; similarly, Salinger may be (and likely is) blind to the authoritarian tendencies of the character he has created. That Zooey demonstrates authoritarian rhetorical tendencies, however, is a clear and apparent element of the text.

While my move to connect Zooey's rhetoric to authoritarian rhetoric may be new, the notation that Zooey's communication throughout is rife with immaturity, inconsistency, and dishonesty is not. Where I most depart from traditional understandings of the text is that I reject readings that characterize the novel's ending as indicative of genuine reform. It is toward this ending that I now turn. As I have noted, readers often point to the novel's closing section to argue for change. This claim, I submit, can be tested by considering not just *what* Zooey says but *how* he says it. Zooey has shown himself capable of deep inconsistency and, perhaps, of willful dishonesty. If the novel's final scene does, in fact, represent an authentic breakthrough, readers should expect a rhetorical deviation, a move away from those manipulative authoritarian tactics present pre-transformation. Not only does no such deviation occur, precisely the opposite takes place. A close reading of the novel's concluding section attuned to authoritarian rhetorical techniques reveals a character that proclaims change verbally but negates that very change through the rhetorical techniques he utilizes to justify his transformation.

To understand the "Fat Lady" scene fully, one must begin by analyzing the scene that immediately precedes it. This preliminary scene begins with Zooey exiting the living room where he has been conversing with Franny so that he can enter the bedroom that his two eldest brothers previously shared. Once he has entered, Zooey pauses momentarily to examine the room, eventually finds his way to Buddy's private phone, and from there places a call to the home phone located only a few rooms away. He plans to pretend that he is Buddy so that, through subterfuge, he can persuade Franny to reform. Thus, notably, the "Fat Lady" scene begins with deception. This action highlights two facts that, while true of Zooey throughout the entirety of the novel, are particularly present in the novel's conclusion. First, in resorting to deception, Zooey once again demonstrates a commitment to persuasion above sincerity. Because his previous tactics have not accomplished their goal, he must adopt a new method. His objective, however, remains unchanged. Second, by resorting to subterfuge, Zooey exhibits a continued commitment to the paternalistic belief that Franny must be protected against herself. In doing so, he provides self-justification for persuasion at whatever cost. These two beliefs serve as the ideological backbone of the "Fat Lady" scene.

Franny does, in fact, receive the phone call and is momentarily convinced that she is speaking to her older brother, Buddy. Zooey, however, is unable to maintain his charade, inadvertently revealing his identity when he delivers a particularly Zooey-esque rejoinder that gives away his identity. This rejoinder occurs directly after Franny, thinking that she is talking

with Buddy, has finished criticizing Zooey for three specific qualities, his bitterness,⁷⁰ destructiveness,⁷¹ and ideological inconsistency.⁷² Unable to pass these criticisms without comment, Zooey responds sarcastically, giving himself away. Still, in the section that follows, Zooey demonstrates that he was, in fact, listening, utilizing Franny's criticisms to structure his claim to be a changed person. What reads as a chaotic, association-driven pontification is, in fact, a carefully crafted rejoined, constructed specifically to undercut the criticisms Franny levels against him.

Like Franny, Zooey structures his response in three parts. He begins by apologizing for his criticism of the Jesus Prayer, claiming that it is a "goddam nice prayer, and don't let anybody tell you anything different."⁷³ He then acknowledges his inconsistencies and destructive tendency, apologizing and claiming that he does not "know what the hell was going on in my mind."⁷⁴ Finally, he walks back his authority, noting that he has "no goddam authority to be speaking up like a *seer* the way I have been."⁷⁵ Zooey's apology takes Franny by surprise. In the silence that follows, Salinger is careful to note that Franny straightens her posture, physically re-engaging in a conversation that she has repeatedly threatened to leave.

Zooey follows these unexpected apologies with flattery, telling Franny of a time that he and Buddy had secretly driven to see a show she was playing in. In this show, Zooey notes, Franny was "good," so good that she "held that goddam mess up."⁷⁶ This revelation stuns Franny even further. Once again, Salinger takes care to note Franny's physical response, recording that Franny stands up, immediately sits back down, and then stumbles through a brief articulation of surprise. Her surprise is understandable. Up to this point, Zooey has demonstrated little capacity to substantively engage with ideas and even less desire to apologize for wrongdoing. In a few short paragraphs, Zooey systematically addresses each of Franny's criticisms, demonstrating that he has listened to and even potentially internalized her commentary. Taken at face value, this turn could be read as evidence of growth. In the sections that follow, however, Zooey either contradicts or explicitly walks back each of these claims all the while engaging in the same rhetorical tactics that he has employed throughout.

For example, even as he professes a commitment to a humbler take on his intelligence, Zooey engages in the same in-group/out-group language he has previously utilized. His praise of Franny represents an invitation for her to enter into the in-group dynamic—in the performance he watched, *she* was exceptional—but he still demonstrates contempt for those in the out-group, referring to the audience as "sunburned lobsters" and characterizing the play as a "goddam mess," a product of the fact

that the theater industry is full of “mercenaries and butchers.”⁷⁷ Even amid the “Fat Lady” scene, Zooey repeats his belief in the superiority of his artistic sensibilities, classifying the studio audience, the announcer, and the sponsors as “morons,” a characterization that Zooey’s imagined Seymour agrees with.⁷⁸ Even “morons” deserve the dignity of my shoe-polished genius, Zooey argues, echoing Adorno’s claim that the authoritarian figure often displays a “contempt for the masses,”⁷⁹ a categorization that he later expands to a broader “contempt for mankind.”⁸⁰ Zooey shines his shoes for the “Fat Lady” not because he respects the people he performs for but because, as the uniquely enlightened individual present, he possesses the moral obligation to perform well, to bless the rabble with the gift of his talent.

Zooey’s commitment to persuasion over consistency reappears as well. For example, immediately following his apology for continuously offering moral instruction (“We’ve had enough goddam seers in this family”),⁸¹ Zooey launches into a defense of his authority to offer precisely this kind of advice. When Franny was struggling emotionally, Zooey notes, she came home, a decision that entitles her to the “low-grade spiritual counsel we’re able to give you around here.”⁸² In doing so, he not only reintroduces his right to offer counsel but subtly shifts blame for his emotional destructiveness from himself to Franny. She is, he implies, the one who decided to return, and it was her decision to have her “goddam collapse” at home rather than elsewhere. Thus, no sooner has he decried his destructive nature and denounced his role as “family seer” than he subtly reinstates that option, an act that justifies his decision to launch into the final barrage of moral instruction that closes the story.

Indeed, re-establishing himself as the family seer is precisely what Zooey accomplishes through his “Fat Lady” monologue. He begins, as he has so often, by criticizing Franny’s religious practices, noting that her obsession with the Jesus Prayer has caused her to miss “every single goddam religious action that’s going on around this house.”⁸³ He punctuates this exclamation with the auxiliary verb “ought,” a word that effectively reestablishes his statement into the prophetic territory he just decried.⁸⁴ This setup allows him to segue into his sermonic analysis of the “Fat Lady,” a woman who is everyone everywhere, “Christ himself.”⁸⁵ It is this realization, Zooey argues, that motivates him to perform well, but once again, his analogy takes on elements of cleanliness, purity, and disgust. Seymour’s admonition to “do it for the Fat Lady,” motivates Zooey to shine his shoes, to ensure that his exterior is polished and clean even if he is maintaining this clean exterior for the coarse populous. Placed within this particularized context, Zooey’s lengthy bathroom grooming

scene gains added significance. Far from instantiating a new thought, Zooey's comment on the importance of shining his shoes reflects a deeply rooted internal commitment to superficial cleanliness. This commitment to a meticulously groomed exterior, he imagines, separates him from and elevates him above the average humans who make up the general populace.⁸⁶

Thus, evident throughout Zooey's purported apotheosis are the same rhetorical gestures present throughout. Far from decrying his past behavior, Zooey utilizes his moral musings to justify his actions, couching his language behind a few brief, calculated apologies that are quickly discarded when they no longer serve his interests. Throughout the novel, he probes Franny's narrative structure, testing continuously for weaknesses and ideological cracks. He then adapts his message to his audience, offering just enough flattery and concession to keep Franny engaged but utilizing a variety of rhetorical tactics to move her closer to his own manufactured end. Read through this lens, the novella's conclusion, that of Franny lying face up "smiling at the ceiling" takes on a more certain sinister quality. Although Franny has resisted, Zooey has finally gained control of his sister, reestablishing himself as the central authority, the new spiritual leader of the Glass family.

CONCLUSION

Each of these rhetorical techniques is embodied by a character who is often dislikeable but not entirely so. Salinger utilizes the complexity of Zooey's character, haunted by the trauma of his brother's suicide, to prime his readers to accept the story's final scene, to choose to believe that dozens of pages of verbal abuse and manipulative rhetoric are effectively negated by a few paragraphs in which Zooey extols the veritable dignity of humankind. Under close scrutiny, this reading fails.

Recognizing this failure, however, holds import far beyond simply "correctly" reading a text. As authoritarian regimes continue to gain global prominence, the ability to adeptly identify and reject authoritarian rhetoric has become increasingly salient. As evidenced by the multitude of critics and readers who have accepted the novel's conclusion at face value, Zooey's rhetorical tactics are temptingly alluring. The fact that, reeling from the death of his oldest brother, Zooey is clearly a person in distress simply adds nuance to the authoritarian conversation, highlighting the fact, as Adorno notes, that anyone, presented with suitable circumstances, is capable of radicalization.⁸⁷ Additionally, the subtlety of

Zooey's closing misdirection effectively negates any attempts to straw-man authoritarianism. Authoritarian rhetoric can be subtle and persuasive. It must be treated accordingly.

Finally, approaching a study of authoritarianism within a specific narrative context forces readers to approach the topic humbly and with nuance. More importantly, it grounds theoretical dialogue about authoritarianism in an embodied sensibility. This grounding proves particularly important in light of recent research on the fallibility of some approaches to anti-authoritarian education. Research indicates that studying logical fallacies does little to inoculate individuals against themselves perpetrating those same logical fallacies.⁸⁸ Analogously, memorizing a list of authoritarian rhetorical techniques mostly fails to protect individuals from succumbing to authoritarian rhetoric. Narrative provides a means by which readers encounter characters who embody specific ideals, creating alternative sets of lives that can then be tried on. Within such a paradigm, a careful reading of Zooey's final conversation gains importance. At stake is not simply the interpretation of a text but the viability of what narrative theorist Jerome Bruner terms "canonical life narratives," figures by which and through which readers can direct future understandings of the world.⁸⁹ If one views Zooey as a tortured artist, a verbose but careless young man who has mostly good intentions, one might learn to overlook, defend, or even adopt segments of his communication style and philosophical approach. To engage with Zooey as not just an agitator but an authoritarian agitator negates this view on both intellectual and experiential grounds. The significance of such an act extends well beyond a study of art for its own sake. Rather, it seeks to embrace the difference between what narrative sociologist Arthur W. Frank terms thinking *about* stories and thinking *with* stories. "To think about a story," Frank notes, "is to reduce it to content and then analyze that content."⁹⁰ A better approach, he argues, is to learn to think *with* stories, to take a story and allow one's experiential collision with narrative to reshape how one not only views but also interacts with the world writ large.

Franny and Zooey is not just a story about authoritarian rhetoric: it is a map by which one encounters, experientially, authoritarian manipulation. Approaching the text thus imbues an already rich text with added significance, transforming reading from an act of consumption to an act of resistance. Perhaps it is true: art alone may not be sufficient to stem the tides of global authoritarianism. Still, it might not be a bad place to start.

NOTES

1. Adolf Hitler, *Hitler's Table Talk, 1941-1944: His Private Conversations*. Edited by H.R. Trevor-Roper. Translated by Norman Cameron and R.H. Stevens (New York: Enigma Books, 2000), 628.
2. J.D. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey* (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 1961), 150.
3. *Ibid.*, 151.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. I expand this reading in section three, titled "Repetition, Infantilism, and Paternalism." However, for clarity, I offer here the following definition from *The Oxford English Dictionary*, which defines paternalism as "The policy or practice of restricting the freedoms and responsibilities of subordinates or dependants in what is considered or claimed to be their best interests."
7. Subsequently, I will refer to this sequence as the Fat Lady scene
8. Jerome L. Mazzaro, "People in Glass Houses." *The North American Review* 249.1 (1964): 84–86.
9. Kenneth Hamilton, "One Way to Use the Bible: The Example of J. D. Salinger." *The Christian Scholar* 47, no. 3 (1964): 243–51.
10. Gerald Rosen, *Zen in the Art of J. D. Salinger* (Creative Arts Book Company, 1977).
11. Andrey Astvatsaturov, "Franny's Jesus Prayer: J.D. Salinger and Orthodox Christian Spirituality." *Religions* 12.8 (July 21, 2021), 7.
12. Andrew J. Madigan, "Countersystem Analysis and Social Criticism in the Works of Charles Bukowski, Jack Kerouac, and J.D. Salinger." Dissertation, 1996. 59.
13. Janet Malcolm, "Justice to J.D. Salinger." *The New York Review*, 21 June, 2001. <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2001/06/21/justice-jd-salinger/>.
14. Joan Didion, "Finally (Fashionably) Spurious." In *Salinger: A Critical and Personal Portrait*, edited by Henry Anatole Grunwald (New York, NY: Harper and Bros, 1962), 78–79.
15. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, 201.
16. See, for example Gordon Hodson and Kimberly Costello's "Interpersonal Disgust, Ideological Orientations, and Dehumanization as Predictors of Intergroup Attitudes." *Psychological Science* 18.8 (August 2007): 691–98; Natalie J. Shook et. al. "Dirty Politics': The Role of Disgust Sensitivity in Voting." *Translational Issues in Psychological Science* 3.3 (September 2017): 284–97; Yoel Inbar and David A. Pizarro's "Pathogens and Politics: Current Research and New Questions." *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 10.6 (June 2016): 365–74; Marcel H. Van Herpen's "Populism and the Role of Disgust." In *The End of Populism* (Manchester University Press, 2021), 48–58; or Michael Richardson's "The Disgust of Donald Trump." *Continuum* 31.6 (August 28, 2017): 747–56.
17. Ian Kershaw, *Hitler: A Biography* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2013), 34.
18. *Ibid.*, 38.
19. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*. Translated by James Murphy (Motilal Banarsidass Publishing House, 2014), 125.
20. *Ibid.*, 169.
21. *Ibid.*, 359.

22. Mary McCarthy, "J.D. Salinger's Closed Circuit." *Harper's Magazine*, 1 Oct., 1962, <https://harpers.org/archive/1962/10/j-d-salingers-closed-circuit/>.
23. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, 91.
24. Ibid., 101.
25. Ibid., 92.
26. Ibid., 106.
27. Ibid., 115.
28. McCarthy, "J.D. Salinger's Closed Circuit."
29. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, 96.
30. Ibid., 97.
31. Theodor Adorno, "Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda." In *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, edited by J.M. Bernstein (London: Routledge, 1991), 118.
32. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, 96.
33. Ibid., 100.
34. Ibid., 111.
35. Ibid., 140.
36. Ibid., 194.
37. Ibid., 81.
38. Ibid., 81-82.
39. Here, I borrow language specifically from Adorno's analysis of fascist rhetorical manipulation in *The Psychological Technique of Martin Luther Thomas' Radio Addresses*. Positing Hitler as the pioneer of the "lone wolf" strategy, Adorno argues that authoritarian figures often establish their "otherness" by noting that their enemies control access to public dialogue, such as the press and the radio. In doing so, they establish themselves as outsiders fighting desperately against a system that is "rigged" against them.
40. Adorno, "Freudian Theory," 128 (emphasis added).
41. Ibid., 127.
42. Robert O. Paxton, "The Five Stages of Fascism." *The Journal of Modern History* 70, no. 1 (1998): 1-23.
43. Adorno, "Freudian Theory," 118.
44. Paxton, "The Five Stages of Fascism," 6-7.
45. Quoted in Bolker Ullrich's *Hitler: Ascent, 1889-1939*. Translated by Jefferson Chase (New York: Vintage Books, 2017), 100.
46. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, 151.
47. Kelly Denton-Borhaug, "Sacrificial U.S. War-Culture: Cognitive Dissonance and the Absence of Self-Awareness." *Journal of Religion and Violence* 5.1 (2017): 6.
48. Paxton, "The Five Stages," 6-7.
49. Theodor W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, and R. Nevitt Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York, NY: W W Norton & Co Ltd, 1969), 733.
50. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, 165.
51. Ibid., 65.
52. Adorno, "Freudian Theory," 134.
53. Ibid., 130.
54. Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death* (New York: Free Press, 1997), 116.
55. Malcolm, "Justice to J.D. Salinger."
56. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, 104.

57. Adorno, "Freudian Theory," 119.
58. Adorno, *The Authoritarian Personality*, 664.
59. Adorno, "Freudian Theory," 133.
60. John Updike, "Anxious Days for the Glass Family," *The New York Times*, 17 Sept., 1961, https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/98/09/13/specials/salinger-franny01.html?_r=1.
61. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, 190.
62. Monika Gehlawat, "Desperately Seeking Singularity in *Franny and Zooey*," *Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory* 22.1 (February 16, 2011): 59–77.
63. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, 191.
64. *Ibid.*, 81.
65. Adorno, "Freudian Theory," 137.
66. Updike, "Anxious Days for the Glass Family."
67. Adorno, *The Authoritarian Personality*, 426.
68. *Ibid.*, 658.
69. Adorno, "Freudian Theory," 118–119.
70. "He's so bitter about things. He's bitter about religion. He's bitter about television. He's bitter about you and Seymour—he keeps saying you both made freaks out of us. I don't know" (Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, 190).
71. "He's completely destructive. I've never met anyone so completely destructive in my life! It's just so unnecessary! One minute he launches this all-out attack on the Jesus Prayer—which I happen to be interested in—making you think you're some kind of neurotic nitwit for even being interested in it" (*Ibid.*).
72. "He's just so erratic. I mean he goes around and around in such horrible circles"; "He has about forty definitions for everything! If I sound slightly unhinged, that's the reason why. One minute—like last night—he says we're freaks because we were brought up to have only one set of standards. Ten minutes later he says he's a freak because he never wants to meet anybody for a drink. The only time—" (*Ibid.*).
73. *Ibid.*, 193.
74. *Ibid.*
75. *Ibid.*
76. *Ibid.*, 196.
77. *Ibid.*
78. *Ibid.*, 198.
79. Adorno, *The Authoritarian Personality*, 107, 118.
80. *Ibid.*, 239.
81. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, 193
82. *Ibid.*, 194.
83. *Ibid.*
84. "I'll tell you one thing, Franny. One thing I know. And don't get upset. It isn't anything bad. But if it's the religious life you want, you *ought* to know right now that you're missing out on every single goddam religious action that's going on around this house" (*Ibid.*, emphasis added)
85. *Ibid.*, 200.
86. *Ibid.*, 199. An interesting authoritarian antecedent to this action is former Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo who displayed a well-documented obsession with presenting as meticulously groomed. Now immortalized in Mario Vargas Llosa's fictional account in *La Fiesta del Chivo* (Alfaguara, 2000) of Trujillo's assassination, the dictator

was particularly concerned that he always appear in a meticulously manicured military uniform, complete with perfectly shined shoes.

87. Adorno, "Freudian Theory," 119.

88. David Hitchcock, "Do Fallacies Have a Place in the Teaching of Reasoning Skills or Critical Thinking?" in *Fallacies: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, ed. Robert C. Pinto and Hans V. Hansen (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 319–27.

89. Jerome Bruner, "Life as Narrative," *Social Research* 54.1 (1987), 15.

90. Arthur W. Frank, *The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness, and Ethics* (Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 23.