

Teen Spirit: The Catcher in the Rye and Housekeeping

We will read two novels in which the narrators tell us about their teen years: J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951) and Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping* (1980). Although Salinger's most famous novel has come under renewed scrutiny recently, we will gauge for ourselves how Holden Caulfield's story holds up in 2024. Then we will travel from New York City to Fingerbone, Idaho for Robinson's award-winning tale narrated by Ruthie who, along with her sister Lucille, must negotiate their way through their teen years as orphans among their eccentric and complicated relatives. Ah, teenagers . . . we might learn something from you.

Reading Schedule

Feb 29: Introduction to J. D. Salinger and *The Catcher in the Rye*

Mar 7: *The Catcher in the Rye*, chapters 1-10

Mar 14: *The Catcher in the Rye*, chapters 11-18

Mar 21: *The Catcher in the Rye*, chapters 19-26

Mar 28: Introduction to Marilynne Robinson and *Housekeeping*

Apr 4: *Housekeeping*, chapters 1-6

Apr 11: *Housekeeping*, chapters 7-11

Apr 18: Salinger and Robinson in popular culture

NOTE ON TEXTS:

Any editions will do for this class.

I will be using the following texts:

Salinger, J.D. *The Catcher in the Rye*. NY: Back Bay, 2001.

ISBN: 0-316-76917-7

Robinson, Marilynne. *Housekeeping*. New York: Picador, 2020.

ISBN: 978-1-250-76976-3

I'll see you on Leap Day, 2024! Thanks! --Ann