

次の英文は歴史家 Cody Delistraty による記事 'The Coming-of-Age Con' (2017年) に基づいている。これを読んで以下の設問に答えなさい。

(I) 下線部(1)を日本語に訳しなさい。

(II) 下線部(2) 'posits' の主語としてもっとも適切な語句を下から選び、記号で答えなさい。

- (A) This comforting notion
- (B) coming of age
- (C) current thinking
- (D) a singular identity

(III) 下線部(3)が示す内容を40字以内の日本語で説明しなさい。

(IV) 下線部(4)を日本語に訳しなさい。

(V) (5) に入るもっとも適切な語を下から選び、記号で答えなさい。

- (a) capitalism
- (b) catharsis
- (c) fluidity
- (d) precision

(VI) 下線部(6)について、筆者はなぜ 'folly' ととらえているのか、この段落全体の内容を踏まえて100字以上120字以内の日本語で説明しなさい。

(VII) 下線部(7)を日本語に訳しなさい。

(VIII) 次の日本語を英語に訳しなさい。

ソーシャル・メディアの情報は本質的に信頼できないので、鵜呑みにしてはならない。

Near the end of J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), the novel's hero Holden Caulfield buys his sister Phoebe a ticket to the carousel in the park and watches her ride it. It begins to rain, and Holden — having spent most of the book in some form of anxiety, disgust or depression — now nearly cries with joy. 'I was damn near bawling, I felt so damn happy, if you want to know the truth. I don't know why. It was just that she looked so damn nice, the way she kept going around and around, in her blue coat and all.'

Holden watches his sister reach out for a ring from her bobbing horse, and he has a profound revelation: life is about maintaining some form of optimism and innocence — of continuing to try, even in the midst of an impossible world. Later, Holden says he gets 'sick', but now he is mostly sanguine: he plans to go to a new school in the autumn and is looking forward to it. Holden has had an emotional experience and, as a result, has found himself. This, in turn, will allow him to enter society, which marks his growing up.

The term *Bildungsroman* was coined by Karl Morgenstern in the 1820s to denote 'the hero's *Bildung* (formation) as it begins and proceeds to a certain level of perfection'. The term grew in popularity when in 1870 Wilhelm Dilthey wrote that the quintessential *Bildungsroman* was Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1796), in which the protagonist has the double task of self-integration and integration into society. According to Dilthey, the *Bildungsroman* is concerned mainly with leading the protagonist (and the reader) into his productive societal place. ⁽¹⁾ It is largely from this tradition that most contemporary coming-of-age culture, Salinger included, springs.

Take, for instance, the fact that the final fight scene in most superhero stories occurs only after the hero has learned his social lesson — what love is, how to work together, or who he's 'meant to be'. Romantic stories climax with the ultimate, run-to-the-airport revelation. The family-versus-work story has the protagonist making a final decision to be with his loved ones, but only after almost losing everything. Besides, for their dramatic benefit, the pointedness and singular rush of these scenes stems from the characters' desire to finally gain control of their self: to 'grow up' with one action or ultimate understanding.

Finding one's true place in the world is a massive trope, not just in film

and theatre, but also in literature, education and motivational seminars — any place where young people are involved. In all these cases, the search for the 'self' is dubious because it assumes that there is an enduring 'self' that lurks within and that can somehow be found. But, in fact, the only 'self' we can be sure of is one that changes every second: our decisions and circumstances take us in an infinite number of directions, moment by moment. And even if we think we have 'found ourselves', this is no panacea for the rest of our lives. The idea of there being a single 'self', hidden in a place that only maturity and adulthood can illuminate and which, like archaeologists, we might dig and dust away the detritus to find, is to believe that there is some inner essence locked within us — and that unearthing it could be a key to working out how to live the rest of our lives. This comforting notion of coming of age, of unlocking a true 'self' endures, even though it is out of step with current thinking in psychology, which denies a singular identity, and instead ⁽²⁾ posits the idea of staged development, or an eternally malleable sense of self that shifts as we grow older, and with the uniqueness of our personal experience.

As the 19th-century philosopher William James put it: 'Properly speaking, a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognise him and carry an image of him in their mind.' In his poem 'We Are Many' (1967), Pablo Neruda expressed a similar sentiment:

When everything seems to be set
to show me off as a man of intelligence,
the fool I keep concealed on my person
takes over my talk and occupies my mouth.

Modern psychology backs up such notions of a fluctuating, erratic self. For the past few decades, the study of personality came in two basic modes. One argued that personality is formed and fixed in early childhood. ('Personality Set For Life By First Grade' was a newspaper headline in 2010.) You couldn't do anything about who you were: you could only figure yourself out, and then try to fit in. The other mode argued the opposite case: one's personality is inherently unstable, so unstable, in fact, that it can never be 'found' or even understood.

Most recently, research studies suggest a blending of ⁽³⁾ these views. An individual does not have a given 'self' but is instead comprised of many

'selves' that shift slowly and in relation to social circumstance. Brian Little, a personality psychologist at the University of Cambridge, has distinguished between 'biogenic' personality traits — genetically programmed, and, therefore, fixed traits — and 'sociogenic traits' — traits based on the reaction to one's social environment, which are constantly in flux. An analysis of 207 studies, published in January 2017 in *Psychological Bulletin*, supports Little's claim that we have both fixed traits and shifting ones.

Why, then, is the myth of 'growing up' so persistent? If the idea of a 'single self' is out of kilter with the way that psychology understands identity — as a succession of selves, or multiple selves co-existing in one individual at all times — what keeps it running?

It is comforting to buy into the idea that we can 'grow up' into society. It suggests that there's a place that we're headed towards, where we might finally belong. Although the *Bildungsroman*'s origins are of German construction, the coming-of-age tale has become a peculiarly American phenomenon, since self-understanding in the United States is largely predicated on a self-making mythos. Whereas, in Britain, one might be asked about one's parents, one's schooling or one's background, Americans seem less interested in a person's past and more interested in his or her future. More cynical observers have claimed, perhaps rightly, that this is because Americans don't have a clear history and culture; but the coming-of-age tale has also become important in the US because of a constant — maybe optimistic, maybe pig-headed — insistence that one can always remake oneself. The past is nothing; the future is everything.

From a more sociological perspective, the American self-creation myth is, inherently, a capitalist one. The French philosopher Michel Foucault theorised that meditating and journalling could help to bring a person inside herself by allowing her, at least temporarily, to escape the world and her relationship to it. But the sociologist Paul du Gay, writing on this subject in 1996, argued that few people treat the self as Foucault proposed. Most people, he said, craft outward-looking 'enterprising selves' by which they set out to acquire cultural capital in order to move upwards in the world, gain access to certain social circles, certain jobs, and so on. We decorate ourselves and cultivate interests that reflect our social aspirations. In this way, the self becomes the ultimate capitalist machine that willingly exploits itself.

Even the idea of changing one's surroundings so as to induce a Romantic, feeling-based turning point in a young person's life can itself be monetised. Rite of Passage Journeys, a Seattle-based private-adventure company, takes young people on guided hikes and camping explorations with the intention of helping them to find their true selves. Why should one have to go through a whole childhood of experiences and challenges in order to find oneself when a week at camp can help one find it immediately? ⁽⁴⁾ When viewed in this kind of cynical light, the notion of 'finding oneself' starts to look even less natural than before. To adjust our sights and view 'growing up' as a constant, essentially endless part of life is to fundamentally shift our understanding of our lives and ourselves. In *The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture* (1987), Franco Moretti points to notable differences between German and English coming-of-age novels, and those typically written in France. He suggests that German and English novels incline towards a 'classification principle', in which the narratives provide a clean ending and an emotional catharsis. The novel's protagonist returns to their society and, in doing so, validates that society as being the best possible option for them. Characters who reach out on their own, ignoring their society or their home, either tend to be punished or else find that there are no better alternatives.

The French, however, tilt towards a 'transformation principle' in their coming-of-age tales, Moretti says, by focusing on narratives that depict change for its own sake. On this model, narrative resolutions become unnecessary, and catharsis is viewed as ultimately meaningless. In Voltaire's *Candide* (1759), for instance, a quintessential 'French transformational novel', the messiness and horror experienced through the near-entirety of the novel fails to lead to Candide understanding how to embrace and integrate into society, still less to his learning how to combat this awfulness. He can only content himself to it.

This style of coming-of-age tale is finally rising, albeit slowly, in the US too. It's a shift perhaps most famously evidenced in Richard Linklater's film *Boyhood* (2014), which celebrates the (5) of real life by filming the same actors over more than a decade, and allows the boy of the title to morph physically and emotionally as he grows. *Boyhood* departs from the formula of having a single revelatory moment that usually stands for the

key climatic shift in linear American storytelling. Instead, the movie's rolling structure implies that there is no solution to the hardships of growing up, no solitary moment in which immaturity might be faced down by adulthood once and for all. There is only the passing of time, and the accumulation of experiences that can be retroactively tagged with meaning, or, perhaps, left alone.

Classically, most coming-of-age tales follow white, male protagonists because their integration into society is expected and largely unproblematic. Social integration for racial, sexual and gender minorities is a more difficult process, not least because minorities define themselves *against* the norm: they don't 'find themselves' and integrate into the social context in which they live. A traditional coming-of-age story featuring a queer, black girl will fail on its own terms; for how would her discovering her identity allow her to enter a society that marginalises identities like hers? This might seem obvious, but it very starkly underscores the ⁽⁶⁾ folly of insisting on seeing social integration as the young person's top priority.

Life is a wave of events. As such, you don't come of age; you just age. ⁽⁷⁾ Adulthood is only a matter of time, in which case, to come of age is merely to live long enough to do so.

Although it flies in the face of what our stories have taught us for generations, a new understanding of coming of age, in which there is no direct path to maturity, no single 'self' that might be discovered or created, has the potential to be incredibly freeing. If one wishes, one can stand in the rain, watching a carousel, finally feeling grown-up. But, just as legitimately, one can simply experience it and enjoy it, and not feel the pressure to make anything of it all.