



What's eating Enid?

While *Rebel Without a Cause* has a clear (and perhaps overstated) thesis about the causes of rebellion among L.A. teenagers (parents, lack of), *Ghost World* (L.A. 35 years later) leaves us with no such clarity. We get the sense that Enid has that Holden Caulfield-like cynicism that the world is just too stupid to bother taking seriously, and that the best response is simply to flick it off. These 3 questions, answered as essays, ought to help you formulate some ideas about the film:

1. In the first half of the film, we see the world as Enid sees it; the film practically encourages us to snicker along with her. Explain what Enid finds so stupid, pathetic, and beneath-contempt about the people around her, and illustrate this with at least **three very specific and well-described examples** from the film. (For example, you might consider the high school graduation speech that opens the film.)
2. Seymour is as pathetic a loser as they get, yet somehow... not. Explain (a) Enid's interest in Seymour and how he comes to be her hero; (b) what the two of them have in common as cynical observers of the world; and (c) how Seymour, as an adult loser, has a different perspective than Enid. Again, refer to specific scenes in the film that help you understand this.
3. But *Ghost World* does not let us rest in mockery of stupid people, because it turns out that Enid herself isn't all that happy. Jack Seale writes in his review: "As Enid's dream of happy isolation collapses, Zwigoff subtly brings out the deep melancholy that was always below the surface of the first reel's comedy." How does the film clue us in on Enid's inner unhappiness? Refer to at least **three specific scenes** to describe Enid's growing sense of isolation and despair.