

A history of 1950's in on the road by jack kerouac

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



History of the 1950's

On the Road

The novel *On the Road*, written by Jack Kerouac tells the tale of rebellion and thoughts, rather than an actual plot line. Audiences are captivated by the several controversial ideas located within this text's pages. Whether its discussing alcohol, drugs, or women, this novel did not hold back one bit. The Beat Movement was a leading component of this selection as well. This movement was a literary in nature and began in post-World War 2 era. The main ideas of interest within this movement were culture and politics and popularized quickly with several well-known writers joining. The author of *On the Road*, Jack Kerouac, is often affiliated with being the pioneer of this movement with the launch of this novel. There were several experiences that the middle-class characters participated in throughout the novel. Traveling, drinking, subjectify women and jazz were just a few. These activities were the most popular amongst the characters, and they spent much time executing these as well.

Women within this novel were not respected members of society. Rather, they were treated as side pieces and objectified heavily throughout the entire novel. Most female's characters within the text were seen as nothing more than objects used for sex, and then abandoned shortly after. We must also remember, that women in this time were domesticated and often stayed in homes. Many of the women were spoke about regarding how they physically looked, as if there was nothing more to them. For instance, in a woman would be deemed ' a beautiful black woman' or ' a gorgeous country girl'. Woman were gazed at heavily, and not treated as equal or even

human. Feminists, or even women in general would say that there is certainly not a positive outlook of women throughout this novel.

The character Marylou, for example, was most likely the character treated the worst. She was gazed upon, objectified, and thought to be a whore. Character treated her badly, and never thought of her to be pure or worthy anything. However, that did not stop their staring and thinking of her as anything more than a sexual object for their play. Women who were not domesticated were viewed very lowly, however appraisal was given to those who were. Being a woman in this novel meant either listen to the man's commands or be bullied and disrespected. It appeared as black and white as this.

Blacks did not obtain the allowance to participate in this movement. African American's are quite marginalized in these writings. During such times, racism was still happening. The author, however, never mentioned in the novel once that such issues should be changed. When these characters see Mexicans, they notice that this minority group is treated equally, no matter if they are poor and oppressed. The opposite of this was true about African Americans in the novel. They were very much oppressed.

However, African Americans were thought to be the creator of jazz, but whites took it over and changed the rules of it. Blacks identities in America were unfavorable, although slavery was combated many years ago, segregation, and racism had not. Every aspect of African American culture was struck from them, including jazz. Some may argue, however, in several aspects this is true. Blacks and women were treated unfairly throughout this

novel. White middle-class men were favored in nearly all aspects of like both during the time of this novel, as well as even in modern times as well.

The members of the beat movement traveled to find adventures and do drugs as well. They did so on their own accord, because excitement and feeling are what they deserved. They did not want to be cursed with the mundane lives that average people do, they wanted more. This group of men has a dream of jazz, they wanted to fulfill this dream, however, in my opinion, they went about it completely wrong. Drinking, doing drugs, and treating women bad is not the ideal way to live your dreams.

Although, some of these adventures and traveling are brought upon simply for fun and games. I feel that Dean's desire was out of circumstances. Sal, was most likely the most depressed character in the novel. He was very unhappy with his life initially, however, towards the end he gained happiness. I feel that he chose to travel and stuff to escape his inner demons and depression. Although, some instances of sadness still did occur during these travels, without them, I feel he never would have had his moment of bliss within the ending. Sal becomes quite intrigued by Dean, which also prompts this response in my opinion. The friendship flourishes, and Sal finds that life is worth living again.

These travels and trips, for the most part is done out of desire rather than circumstance. However, they all did have a reason for them, which was related to their movement. Although, many of these joys were pure pleasure, they did always have job related work to do as well. Without having such passion and friendship, I feel that this movement would not have been as

successful as it was. Each character needed something from the other, whether it was support or understandings.