

# The beat generation

[History](#)



The beat generation The beat generation The beat generation was a group of new cultural and literary movement in America who emerged after the World War II. They became more prominent in the 1950's with their new cultural phenomenon. The beat generation was a product of questioning the materialism and the reappraisal of the conventional structures of the society that was evident after the World War II. They railed against the stifling prudery of their parents' generation.

The adjective 'beat'

The term 'beat' refer to the new culture that came with the beat generation characterized by rejection of received standards, innovation style, experimentation with drugs, alternative sexualities, interest in eastern religion, and rejection of materialism and claims of national consciousness. Kerouac, one of the 'beat' writers allows that it was it was street hustler Harbert Huncke who originally used the phrase 'beat' in an earlier discussion with him. 'beat' could colloquially mean 'beaten down' with the African-American community of the period and had developed from the image 'beat to his socks'. One of the beat writers however altered the image and the meaning to include the connotations upbeat, beatific and a musical association of being 'on the beat'.

The image of The Beat Generation

John Clellon Holmes writes the article 'This is the Beat Generation' in New York Times Magazine in November 16, 1952 which gives several sentiments about the generation culture. The first concern is an eighteen-year old California girl who had been picked up for smoking marijuana and wanted to talk about it. In view of her contention, one of every five people you meet from the beat generation is a user of marijuana and people should leave <https://assignbuster.com/the-beat-generation/>

them alone to do their own things.

The writer is also concerned with a girl sentiment in a court courthouse for stealing a car and says that she believed small business to be dead and it intended to become a comfortable cog in the in the largest corporation it could find. The same generation is caught in the uncovering of the first non-virgin club in Illinois. The writer brings out the image of a group that drinks themselves to relaxation and as a way to solve their problems.

Their sexuality morals are in question when the author points out that secretary of the beat generation are confused if to sleep with their boyfriends anytime, anywhere or to wait. They drink around and drive off to Detroit on a whim.

The author sees the origin of the word 'beat' as obscure. To him it implies the feeling of having been used while still raw. He interprets it like some sort of naked mind and soul and a feeling of being reduced to bedrock of consciousness. This the writer sees from the confessions being made by the innocent faces. These young people see themselves broke and people who are victims of the materialism in the society.

According to the author, the members have instinctive individuality, needing no bohemianism or imposed eccentricity to express it. They were brought up during the collective bad circumstances of a dreary depression, weaned during the collective uprooting of a global war and they distrust collectivity. They still have the world in their dreams and are dominated by the childhood fantasies; these justify their actions and behaviors. They lusted for freedom during childhood and when they finally during their late youth age they use it to do all sort of imaginable promiscuity, narcotics, black-markets and everything they are able to.

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## Conclusion

The author brings out the picture of the generation of wild boys and girls who lost their future. They had lust for freedom and when they finally got it they break from the society culture to their own new generation culture. Their culture is constantly at conflict with the society values that the older people are at shock with the horror and bewilderment demands of this generation. This generation did not however live longer after 1960 and it was replaced by new generations.

## References

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