

Summary

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The Beat Generation The word 'beat' generation in this context is used to mean an unrewarding generation of many young people who are continuously being lost in the world of drug use and abuse. As the author puts it, it implies someone who is used, who does weird things, one who does things as if they were not conscious. The members are characterized by impulsivity, having been brought up during a time of depression, they actually uphold individualism as opposed to collectivity. The girl mentioned in paragraph one is a marijuana user at eighteen years and does not hesitate talking about it with a reporter. Looking in her eyes you couldn't actually tell that she was a criminal as she wore an innocent, attentive face with soft eye and an intelligent mouth. When she is arraigned in court for stealing a car, she looks at the camera with curious laughter and no remorse or guilt (Zhang, 2006). They were brought up in time of war and lost their fathers, husbands and boyfriends in cold blood. They then experience cold peace at the end of it all where they are involved in criminal and immoral acts such as black markets, narcotics, sexual promiscuity and hucksterism.

The beat generation is compared to the other post war generation which dubbed itself the 'lost' generation. They laugh hysterically because nothing else meant anything to them, they seem to be lost in their own world. They migrated to Europe in the face of war, unsure of whether they were looking for the 'orgiastic future' or escaping from the 'puritanical' past. They were eventually caught in the face of romance and disillusionment until they became an illusion. This generation lacks the eloquent air of bereavement which was a characteristic of the lost generation's symbolic actions. The repeated inventory of shattered ideals and the continued laments about the moral currents which obsessed people of the lost generation do not

concern young people today. They were brought up in the ruins and no longer notice them and they drink to come down or to get high. Only the most bitter among them would call their reality a night mare and protest that they have indeed lost the future. The absence of personal and social values to them is not a revelation of shaking the ground beneath them but a problem demanding day to day solutions.

The aspect of how to live seems to them more crucial than why they live. The eager faced girl picked up in the face of doping describes the sense of community she has found in marijuana which she does not get in the society. The newspaper reader studying the eyes of young dope addicts can only find an outlet for his horror and bewilderment in demands that passers be given the electric chair. It is a generation with a greater facility for entertaining ideas than for believing in them. They are obsessive about faith and have a perfect craving to believe. They render to Caesar what is to Caesar and to God what is to him. They do not have a single philosophy for a single party because of the failure of most Orthodox moral and social concepts to reflect fully the life they have known (Zhang, 2007). Because of this, each person becomes a walking, self contained unit compelled to meet and endure the problem of being young in a helpless world.

Jack Kerouac uses the word 'beat generation' to mean the young Americans who came of age during the second World War but could not fit in as clean cut soldiers or young businessmen. They were beat because they believed in straight jobs and had to struggle to survive, living in dirty apartments, selling drugs or committing crimes for food and money. He also uses the word to mean 'holy', meaning the secret holiness of the down trodden. While 'Beat' meant Hobbes and exhausted proletariats, 'Hip' came from hipster meaning

a fancy dressing, drug and drunk sex fiend characters that hung around times square at night.

Works cited

Zhang, Yonghong. On The Beat Generation. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science. 3. 17(2013: 205-208.