

All quiet and joyeux noel essay



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The novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* and the movie *Joyous Noel* present two different aspects of WWI; one that shows the ugly side of war and another that displays love and brotherhood. A big theme that is displayed throughout WWI is that war dehumanizes people.

The term dehumanize is just what it sounds like: it causes people to act less like humans. Throughout *All Quiet on the Western Front*, the author, Erich Remarque, makes reference to the soldiers at war losing all sense of humanity. This is proven when the main character Paul, a nineteen year old soldier, is sent to war and turns into a "human animal." (*All Quiet*).

Another example of the dehumanization of the soldiers is when Paul returns home on leave, and finds himself unable to connect with his family.

Furthermore, Paul's death in the final paragraph of the book illustrates to the reader how inhumane war is, and how inhumane the soldiers at war have become. In *Joyous Noel*, although the soldiers were killing each other, they decided to have a ceasefire so they can celebrate Christmas.

The soldiers from all sides (German, British, French) joined together on Christmas Eve and celebrated Christmas together. They traded items they got from home, showed pictures of their family, and talked about their family. Even after the truce, they allowed each side to bury the dead soldiers and they played a friendly game of soccer (or football). One thing that *All Quiet* and *Joyous Noel* have in common is their disrespect and disdain towards figures of authority.

In *All Quiet*, there are two figures of authority: the Kaiser and the Homeless. The soldiers do not respect them because they abuse their power over

them. Keynoter was a teacher who filled his students' heads with passionate rants about duty and glory. Homeless is their drill sergeant (he was a postman before the war), who expresses his abuse of power emotionally. Paul mocks Keynoter for being a man who was "little" a ND had a face resembling a "shrew mouse" (All Q). When Homeless orders Taken to Stand, Taken moons him in response. In Joyous Noel, the soldiers share the disrespect towards the IR authoritative figures. On the British side, a highly ranked soldier was brought through their trench.

When he was yelling at one of the soldiers, one soldier shot a fire into the air to scare the higher ranked officer. Also, when the truce had ended, when the high ranked officer ordered the men to shoot the man running across Monomania's, they did not follow and shot fires into the air. Another similarity is the brotherhood that the soldiers share with each other. In All Quiet, Kate and Paul show their bond when they cook the goose that they killed.

"We sit opposite one another, Kate and I, two soldiers in shabby coats, cooking a goose in the middle of the night. We don't talk much, but believe we have a more complete communion with one another than even over have" (All Q). And in Joyous Noel, when a French soldier died so he can receive information for the French commander about his child. The biggest similarity for both All Q and Joyous Noel is the conditions of the trenches. Both were described as instant awry, horrifying, infested with rodents and cockroaches, and just plain unpleasant. In conclusion, All Quiet on the Western Front and Joyous Noel share many similarities, even though they represent two different aspects of war.

They show that one of the biggest wars in the world can have a good and bad side.