

Survey of American History

According to the article “Beat Generation,” the writer defines the term “Beat” as an expression of coming to the end of one’s self due to unending negative experiences (Holmes 2). Since childhood, the generation was surrounded with various events that eventually resulted in a factor of general distrust. The events that surrounded them included the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States of America which brought along the dread of communism. As they grew up particularly in their adolescence, they experienced an environment characterized by war bonds. The presence of troops and swing shifts including the unexpected mass deaths of their beloved. This situation caused the people to feel trapped; life became uncertain, unstable and full of violence. Due to these experiences, the generation lacked faith in the safety and security of rebuilding their community. As such, they believed that anything they will attempt to build would be destroyed at any time. As they desired for freedom, their lives were characterized by activities such as sexual promiscuity, dealings in the black market and narcotics.

The postwar generations had directly acquired the consequences reaped by the preceding generation. To them, life was without meaning and as a result they sought their identity in activities such as drinking while involving themselves in promiscuity and drugs as curious adventures. They were disillusioned with life and took realities in life for granted.

In relation to other people, the author portrays the “Beat generation” as viewed

in concern and shock by the older generation. The analysts study their behavior as a source of panic and horror. The professional look at the generation as troubled by uncontrollable forces, the historian observes a factor of disorganization both in religion and politics. The factor of faith is highly regarded in the “Beat generation” and the hunger to believe is a factor that brings about an obsessive issue. The generation is motivated by the war of ideas which in an actual sense when critically examined; it is a war between one individual and another (Holmes 3-5). In their view, the generation seeks for a platform that is stable and one they can operate on, and it is not necessarily morally approved but socially reasonable.

The life of Jack Kerouac portrayed the “Beat generation” in that he was inclined to a system that did not follow the straight process of acquiring a job as a source of living. At first, his inspiration was to be a writer, and when the parents faced financial difficulties, he focused on struggling to achieve his education (Holmes 2-7). Further, he could not fit in the military and settled to being a Merchant Marine. His father’s loss of financial stability led to his dissolution, and he went into drinking to minimize his frustration which is the same thing his father did. Frustration and bitterness limited the ability for him to realize his dreams. He was exhausted and gave up hope and the consequent activities eventually led to his death.

Allen Ginsberg was born from a background of communists and socialist. He embodied the beat generation by being involved with a bad company that exposed him to drugs, sex and crime. Living a bizarre lifestyle, he latter sought his identity in spirituality. As defined by the historians, the generation is unable to maintain a proper

political relationship. As such, when he gained political fame he was not able to maintain a good relationship with the political figures in various countries (Holmes 14-15).

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Work Cited

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