**HOWL [edited] (1955) United States History**

**Allan Ginsberg The Beat Generation**

For Carl Solomon

I

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by

madness, starving hysterical naked,

dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn

looking for an angry fix,

angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly

connection to the starry dynamo in the machin-

ery of night,

yacketayakking screaming vomiting whispering facts

and memories and anecdotes and eyeball kicks

and shocks of hospitals and jails and wars,

whole intellects disgorged in total recall for seven days

and nights with brilliant eyes, meat for the

Synagogue cast on the pavement,

who wandered around and around at midnight in the

railroad yard wondering where to go, and went,

leaving no broken hearts,

who reappeared on the West Coast investigating the

F.B.I. in beards and shorts with big pacifist

eyes sexy in their dark skin passing out incom-

prehensible leaflets,

who distributed Supercommunist pamphlets in Union

Square weeping and undressing while the sirens

of Los Alamos wailed them down, and wailed

down Wall, and the Staten Island ferry also

wailed,

who were burned alive in their innocent flannel suits

on Madison Avenue amid blasts of leaden verse

& the tanked-up clatter of the iron regiments

of fashion & the nitroglycerine shrieks of the

fairies of advertising & the mustard gas of sinis-

ter intelligent editors, or were run down by the

drunken taxicabs of Absolute Reality,

who drove crosscountry seventytwo hours to find out

if I had a vision or you had a vision or he had

a vision to find out Eternity,

ah, Carl, while you are not safe I am not safe, and

now you're really in the total animal soup of

time

the madman bum and angel beat in Time, unknown,

yet putting down here what might be left to say

in time come after death,

and rose reincarnate in the ghostly clothes of jazz in

the goldhorn shadow of the band and blew the

suffering of America's naked mind for love into

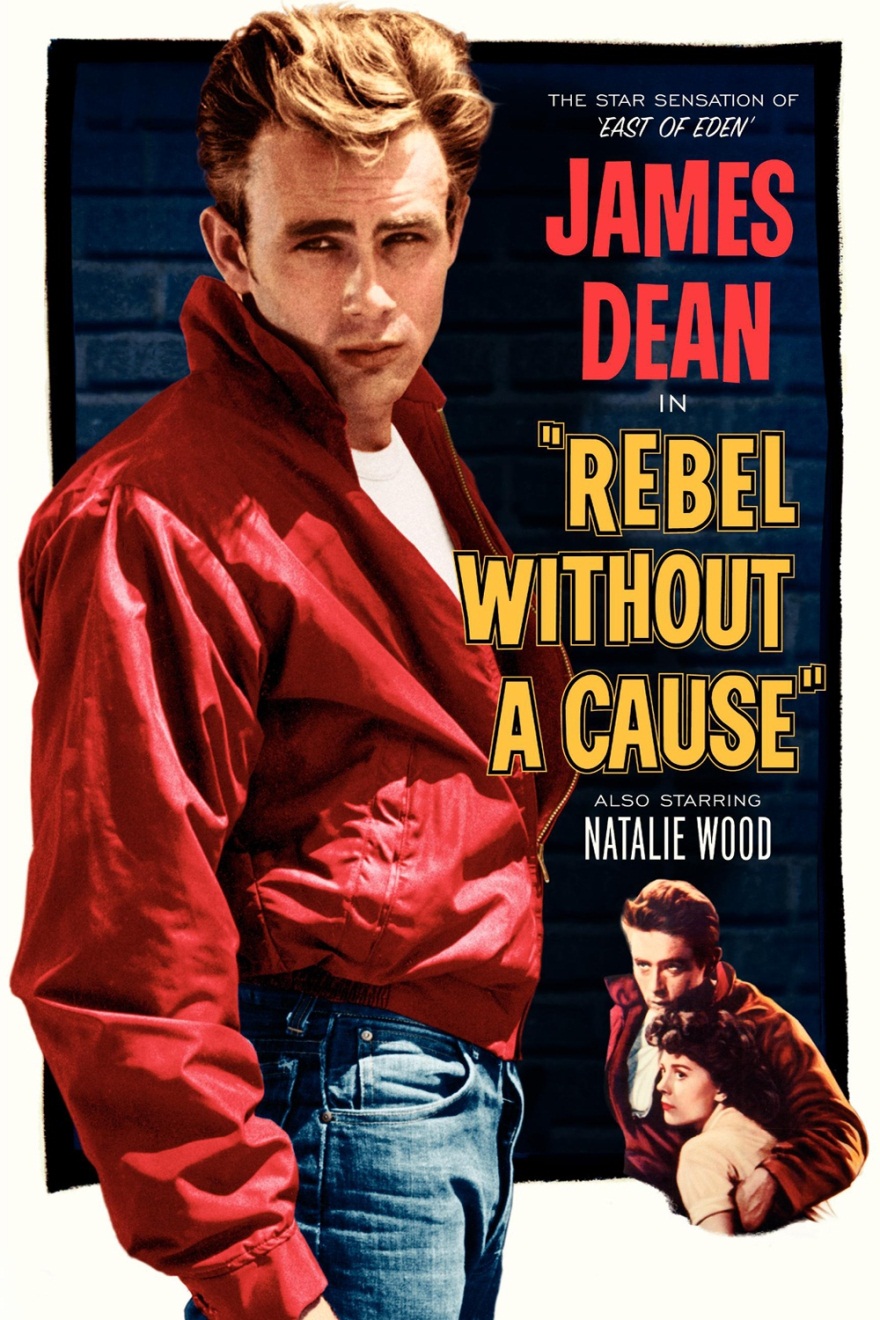
an eli eli lamma lamma sabacthani saxophone

cry that shivered the cities down to the last radio

with the absolute heart of the poem of life butchered

out of their own bodies good to eat a thousand

years.

**John Clellon Holmes, “This is the Beat Generation,” *New York Times Magazine* (1952)** 

It was John Kerouac who said, "You know, this is really a *beat* generation." More than a mere weariness, it implies the feeling of having been used, of being raw. It involves a sort of nakedness of mind, and, ultimately, of soul; a feeling of being reduced to the bedrock of consciousness.

Brought up during the collective bad circumstances of a dreary depression, weaned during the collective uprooting of a global war, they distrust collectivity. But they have never been able to keep the world out of their dreams. Their adolescence was spent in a topsy-turvy world of war bonds, swing shifts, and troop movements. Their brothers, husbands, fathers or boy friends turned up dead one day at the other end of a telegram. The peace they inherited was only as secure as the next headline. It was a cold peace.

**Squaresville, U.S.A. vs. Beatsville, *Life* (September 21, 1959)**

Venice (California) throve with the rebellion of the beatnik, who ridicules U.S. society as “square” talks a strange language and loves to chant his poetry while jazz bands or bongo drums play accompaniments. As the beatniks continue to gain followers, the clash between the squares and the beats is taking place in many small ways over the U.S.

**Dr. Fredric Wertham, “What Parents Don’t Know About Comic Books,” *Ladies Home Journal* (1953)**

My investigations and those of my associates have led us, very unexpectedly at first, but conclusively as the studies went on, to the conclusion that crime comics are an important contributing factor to present-day juvenile delinquency. Not only are crime comics a contributing factor to many delinquent acts, but the type of juvenile delinquency of our time cannot be understood unless you know what has been put into the minds of these children.

Crime comics create a mental atmosphere of deceit, trickery, and cruelty. Many of the children I have studied have come to grief over it. How best to summarize the attitudes most widely played up in crime comics? One might list them in some such way as this: assertiveness, defiance, hostility, desire to destroy or hurt, search for risk and excitement, aggressiveness, destructiveness, sadism, suspiciousness, and adventurousness.