Article

A Sort of Rebel: The Unheroic Hero Inalan Sillitoe's debut Novel

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Abstract

This Paper is focused on Alan Sillitoe's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1958). An attempt is made here to explore the psyche of the hero of the novel.During the course of the novel we find that Arthur Seaton remains obsessed with wine (ale) and women and, he adopts non conformity as a form of protest. As a working-class hero, Arthur Seaton identifies himself with the working class so completely that he always views himself in opposition to the upper classes. His alienation with the establishment - the church, the state, the society - is complete. He never stands in a queue and considers himself a natural outsider with regard to the social hierarchy. He doesn't believe in God, distrusts the government, dislikes the army even when he serves it and hates the entire social structure as an instrument of oppression. He cannot bring himself to forget the hurt that he suffered as a member of the working-class at the hands of one and all. This obsession with some real or imagined grievance warps his sensibility and fills him with a bitter resentment against all those who are rich and comfortable in a wrongly organized society. His sentimental resentment against the privileged and his cynical disregard for normal decency brings to mind the indiscriminate anger of Jimmy Porter in John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*. Arthur, like Jimmy, has nothing much to look forward to. The past being equally rotten like Jimmy's, Arthur can only look back in anger. And yet, Arthur's anger is not muddled like Jimmy's. In a deliberate coup, like Joe Lampton in *Room At the Top*, he grabs every opportunity for personal gratification. As a member of the deprived class, he feels perfectly justified in living by the pleasure - principle in life. The compulsive pursuit of food, drink and sex becomes not only a mode of escape from suffering, but is raised to the highest value in life.

Keywords: Angry Youngman, Anti Hero, Obesession, Working Class, The Welfare State.

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The 1950s was a remarkable era of first novels. During this period there ushered in a new generation of writers called 'Angry Young Men'. These writers constitute an interesting chapter in the history of the English Novel. Their sheer mass appeal among contemporary readers compels attention. Their heroes or antiheroes became hugely popular, particularly among the young generation, for they captured the mood of the moment and gave expression to their hopes and frustrations. These writers not only expressed the hypocrisies of upper class ethos and life styles, but also portrayed, through their working class or lower middle class protagonists, the deep despair and dejection of those not privileged by birth and traditional social power. The phrase 'Angry Young Men' came into first use as the title of a book written by a religious philosopher, Leslie Allen Paul. The term was first brought to public by BBC and gained currency with Osborne's play, *Look Back in anger* (1956). The 'Angries' mainly include - John Wain, Kingsley Amis, John Osborne, John Braine, Colin Wilson, Alan Sillitoe, David Storey and William Cooper. All these writers have working class or lower middle class origins and are products of the war years. They have enough experiences of the changing world and changing values of contemporary Britain. All these writers, save John Osborne, are novelists.

It is stated that no writer is an autonomous unit. Every writer is open to all sorts of influences. His literary sensibility is a frame work of the ideas and tastes he imbibes from his surroundings. So in order to understand the author chosen for this study, clearly, it will be helpful to know the sociopolitical setting of England of 1950s. History highlights that World War II marked a watershed in British social set up. It most affected the grand old class design. Obvious class distinctions were set aside in the face of a common crisis. In the 1945 general elections, Labour Government was voted to power. It framed many policies, especially to benefit the lower strata of society. 'The Welfare State' was established and people from lower middle class or working class were benefited a lot. However, soon it was believed that it couldn't do enough to make the people happy. After the 1950s general election, the Labour Government was returned to power but with a much reduced majority. By 1951, the Labour Government had been replaced by a conservative one. It was the party of capitalists. For the next decade British policies were characterized by a remarkable consensus between both main parties. The society was organized on the principles of welfare-capitalism. The conservatives regained power for the next two consecutive sessions. It was believed that the problems of mass employment, sharp class antagonism and widespread poverty of the interwar years had at last been overcome. For some it was undoubtedly the case. The economy was growing again. This helped the middle class and sections of skilled manual working class in the more affluent regions of the country to improve their standards of living. They bought consumer goods which their parents could never have dreamt of owning. In the space of a few years, ownership of TV sets,

refrigerators and cars became the norm rather than the exception. There was a constant rise in real average incomes. This is not to deny the existence of inequality, or the persistence of class struggle in the post war era. What the change in perception instigated is a popular demand for a wider share in the new prosperity that emerged in 1950s, after the years of austerity. The youngsters, especially from the working class, tried hard to attain the material possessions they were devoid of for so many years. And they, indeed, succeeded in their aims. They seemed to enjoy more time and money than they had in previous generations. However, they lacked direction or moral purpose. It was the time of Teds, the Mods, the Rockers, the Skinheads and the Punks.

Alan Sillitoe (4 March 1928 - 25 April 2010) was educated in local schools to age 14. He served as a radio-operator in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1949. He married the poet Ruth Fairlight in 1959. He had two children. He worked at various odd jobs in Nottingham from 1942 to 1946. He was a writer from 1948 onwards. He received Authors Club Prize and Hawthornden Prize 1960. His novels include *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1958), *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* (1959), *The Ragman's Daughter* (1966), *A Tree On Fire* (1967), *The Flame of Life* (1974) and *A Man of the Tince* (2004). *Three Plays* (1978) is his main collection of plays. He has also written poems including, *Without Bell or Bread* (1957) and *Storm: New Poems* (1974). Critical Studies on him include *Sillitoe* edited by Michael Marland (1970) and *Studies of Modern Prose Writers* edited by D. Anderson (1975).

Anarchy, Socialism and Sex are allied and recurrent themes in much of Sillitoe's work. Nottingham becomes the setting for his rebellious working class characters. Arthur Seaton, the young anarchic hero of *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, Michael Culler, the bastard hero of *A Start in Life*, and Smith, the long distance runner prefer deliberately to lose society's race to security, recognition, and respectability. Alan Sillitoe is more class oriented than Braine. *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* is a chronicle of a short period in the life of Arthur Seaton, a young man from working class who works as a lathe operator in a bicycle factory. His whole world is seen in 'them' and 'us'. He sees nothing in his past but the dole of the 1930s that made his parents and his community miserable. He revolts against the system and becomes a non-conformist. He is an anti hero who still hangs on to "older instinctive working class anarchism and a gut resentment against all authority" (Bradbury, 325). During the course of the novel we find that he remains obsessed with wine (ale) and women and, he adopts non conformity as a form of protest. "He means to have his fun, take his pleasures and cheat the world before it cheats him," observes Malcolm Bradbury (Bradbury, 325). Smith, the hero of *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* also sees the whole struggle between himself and society as a

"we - them" engagement. He deliberately loses the race, he is trained for by the institution, in order to embarrass the governor, and the "pig faced" ladies and gentlemen on the reviewing stand. The more orderly ideal of socialism is at least the apparent theme of such novels as *Travels in Nihilon* (1971) and *The Flame of Life* (1974). The paradox of order and anarchy remains largely unresolved in Sillitoe's work.

Saturday Night and Sunday Morning begins with a "dead drunk" Arthur falling from the "top most stair to the bottom" (Saturday Night and Sunday Morning, 9) in White Horse Club. He has taken seven gins and eleven pints and also wants more. It is Saturday Night - "the best and bingiest glad time of the week" (9). Arthur has fixed the nights for enjoying wine (ale) and sex in full. Today, it is the benefit night of the club. Arthur, though not a member of the club, is enjoying the share of his workmate, Jack. It is not only drink which he enjoys from Jack's share but also sex, as; he usually sleeps with his wife Brenda, in his absence. While he falls from the stairs, the rolling motion appears "so restful and soporific." Infact, having arrived at the bottom of the stairs, he keeps his eyes closed and goes to sleep (11). It is a pleasant and far away feeling and he wants to stay in exactly the same position for "the rest of his life" (11).

Arthur Seaton's motto in life is: "be drunk and be happy." Keeps his "crafty arms around female waists" (9). While reading the novel we find that he has a fierce longing for drink and sex. And when he indulges in these activities there is no limit. He is well known for his drinking habits - Doreen, his girl friend says at a point, "you drink too much" (207). Brenda's friend points to his drinking capacity saying, "I'll bet you can't drink like young Arthur Seaton there. He's only twenty one and 'e can take it in like a fish. I don't know where 'e puts it all. It just goes in and in and you wonder when 'is guts are goin'ter go bust all over the room but 'e duzn't even get fatter!" (10). He himself admits that he is nothing but a "six foot pit prop that wants a pint of ale" (138). For that pint of ale he often visits "White Horse" (9) "Peach Tree" (97), "Slab square" (146), and "town centre" (80). Sometimes he washes his worry away in the "pale ale of the midlands" (71). He loses himself in "a waterfall of ale and laughter" (146). At one point he is seen drinking "eight bottles" (104), whereas, at another, he takes "seven gins and eleven pints" (9). His drinking sprees are not limited to Saturday nights only. Whenever he finds an occasion he goes straight for it. While in the army he goes out every night to have a "drink" (139). He drinks, with Ada's son Bert at Christmas and with his brother Fred, on receiving a warning for his womanizing habits. Moreover he needs "'summat to drink'" (105) before a "fight" (105) and "double whisky" (175) after it. "The cataloguing of Seaton's picaresque adventures forms the spine of the novel, as he goes with great vitality from drink to female cushioned bed, and then returns to drink" (Karl, 1972. 281).

With a drink Arthur Seaton needs plenty of women to have sex with. That is why he remains obsessed with women, particularly married ones, in the story. Married women are "certainly the best" (44) as they are "the sort of women that are worth their weight in Gold" (45). It is good "to live all the time with a woman… and sleep in bed with her" (129), according to him. Therefore he pursues women throughout the novel. And interestingly, he has the talent to judge, whether a woman is accessible for sex or not. Arthur Seaton believes that a "man getsa lot of pleasure anyway from being nice to a woman" (44). He is quite "lucky" (35) in this field. At a point, "he is conducting affairs with two married women (the sisters Brenda and Winnie) whilst also counting the girl he is to marry" (Head 55). Like his drinking habits, he is also famous for "carrying' on with' married women" (103) in the story. Brenda, wife of Jack and a mother of two kids, is his favorite. He is habitual of "floating endlessly down into the warm bed beside Brenda's soft body" (19) on Saturday nights when her husband is out at "Long Eton for the races" (17). He feels delighted when Jack shifts to nights for work for the simple reason that he'll have a chance to "get there every night" (37). Soon he becomes the man of the house. He wins the love and affection of Jack's kids and spends his hours happily there. In the morning he leaves the house through the "front door" (22) while Jack enters from the "back door" (23). It is interesting to note that his sexual episodes are not confined to Brenda's house but spread beyond that. Whenever Brenda visits the club (three times a week) he usually takes her to the nearby "footpaths and woods up Strelly"(38). He can "hardly wait" (38) when she is with him. Throughout the winters they "play merry hell in all the beds and nooks…. Bloomers flying. and legs waving in Strelly woods" (38). One day Brenda faces the "same old story" (68),she becomes pregnant. It stops Arthur's fun for some time. However, the problem is solved with the advice of Aunt Ada, a mother of fourteen. Brenda undergoes gin - induced abortion, and Arthur engages himself with her younger married sister. Winnie is a small woman of twenty five with black hair and large breasts. He easily flirts with the "deserted woman" (97) who had been parted too long from her husband Bill, a sergeant in the army. The evening ends "so well" (97) again.

Monday morning comes with a different shade Jack, annoyed and uneasy, warns him to be on his guard for the next couple of days as two big swaddies are after him. Arthur makes a quick judgment to understand the whole issue. It makes him worried but not worried enough to stop his affair with the sisters. He is helpless as his obsession never allows him to know the difference between "right and wrong" (134). He is again seen - "buying drinks for two such gorgeous and tractable women" (144). Later, he escorts Winnie, thereby "promising… the odour of a woman's body and, bed room to crown the …day" (153). His sex-life continues happily with his "weeks and weekends" divided between Brenda and

Winnie. The "pleasure and danger" of having two married women for sex, become, "too sweet to resist" (156).

At this juncture of the story there happens a change in Arthur Seaton's attitude. His mind gets occupied with "darkest thoughts" (156) for the first time. Owing to the possibility of "a clash with the swaddies"(156) women like Brenda and Winnie start appearing "whores" (145) to him. He curses them "in foul" (145) and starts dreaming of living "all the time with a woman… and sleep in bed with her that belonged to both of you, that no one could turn you out of it if they caught you there" (129). It is by chance that, one day, he singles out a young girl, with "no rings on her fingers" (147), from a group of persons sitting in a pub. The girl's hair is pattered attractively into an oval shape at the back of her head and a diamond piece of brown silk scarf comes down from her coat collar. She has worn only lipstick and she looks pale enough to be having her periods. She with a slim but good figure looks "nice and friendly" (148) - good reason for him to do what he can. He, a worker in the bike trade easily mixes with her, a worker in the hairnet factory;with the help of his "big lies" (187). He also succeeds in fixing a date with her on the coming night.

It is clear that Arthur is only interested in sex. He is even ready to break his resolution and marry Doreen for attaining a permanent source of sex. However he carries on with the sisters, till she becomes accessible. As promised, he takes Winnie and Brenda to the 'Goose Fair' on Saturday and, Doreen, "two days earlier" (159). There he takes care of the women well. While standing at the caterpillar he kisses, "first Brenda and then Winnie" (160), when the hoods cover them in darkness. The women are seen, "laughing loudly and blushing from Arthur's passionate caresses" (160).However, the honeymoon soon ends as they face the swaddies "swelling with rage" (165),after a while. The things settle without causing much damage as Arthur is quick enough to kick Bill first and dive into the crowd. Arthur couldn't save himself for long. He encounters the swaddies again on Friday, while returning from the White Horse. The war begins at last and he is defeated with a severe beating. His rage, however, helps him to stand and go for a "double whisky" (176). At the club he meets Doreen and falls "dead faint" (176). According to the plot of the novel it covers full one year since from his "dead drunk" (9) state to the present "dead faint" (176) state. Since then he has "juggled Brenda, Winnie and Doreen crazily, like a man on the stage, throwing himself up into the air as well as each time and always landing safely in one soft bed or another" (170). He knows it is "a dangerous life" (170) but he can't get rid of his obsession.

When part two of the novel begins we see Arthur Seaton lying on the sick bed like a "dead dog" (179). He has to stay home for a fortnight after the severe beating given by the swaddies. Life becomes unsafe but he has pledged "not to weaken" (100). Therefore he

starts the good life again - "plenty of work and plenty of booze and a piece of skirt every month till you're ninety" (183). He knows that Brenda and Winnie are out of his reach, but he also knows that there is always "more than one pebble on the beach and more than one field in which clove" grow (183). Doreen is there to be called in the "blankets" (185).Arthur Seaton goes to the factory again, on Monday. He returns home with thirty pound notes on Friday evening. Enough money to, celebrate Christmas and be "ready to tackle all obstacles, to break any man or woman, that came for him, to turn on the whole world if it bothered him too much, and blow it to pieces" (201). He becomes Doreen's young man, thereby accepting "some of the sweet and agreeable things of life" (204). On Sunday they walk towards the country, as wished by Doreen. There, in a pub, he befriends Bill by offering him a drink and declaring that he is "getting married next week" (209). "Good Luck", wishes the swaddie (209). Then they happily go to Doreen's home. After the supper, when her parents bid them farewell, they enjoy sex filled with love by breaking through "to the opened funows of earth" (215). At last Arthur Seaton succeeds in achieving the thing, he needed the most.

Arthur's unorthodox behaviour is quite obvious. "I don't believe in God" (28); "I've never been in a church in my life" (147); "I ain't even been christened" (147); "I've never queued in my life" (207); "I hate the army and I allus have done" (134); "I wain't get married" (147) boasts Arthur Seaton at various occasions in the novel. There is perhaps no doubt that he is a "rebel" (202) who is obsessed with the idea of non conformity. Through out the novel he remains anti-establishment and his anger keeps him tied to drink and sex. The injustice done to his community has perhaps hurt him a lot. It is known to us that he belongs to a working class community. (His grandfather was a blacksmith and his father works like him in the factory). He is therefore well aware of the attitudes of the people of the upper class who dominate the system and are responsible for the discriminations they have been facing for so many years. The enmity has been "passed on for some generations from father to son" (42). Besides that he knows about the "miserying"(26) life of his community before and during war when "they had a struggle to keep alive" (130), "nothing to eat" (131), "with no money" (26). His cousins are "tall grinning army deserters caught time and again by Red caps or Police, but always escaping, on the run, in hiding, living with whores, thieving for food and money because they had neither ration books nor employment cards" (130). It was a "shaky game"(130), believes Arthur. They had to break into the (130)) shops for rations and if caught were to spend a few years of their life in jails. So his whole community has always been against the authority. It has become the issue of "them" (131) and 'us' (202). Everyone has decided not to fight for "them bastards" (130) during a war. "The return of Ada's three sons after their short terms of army service at the beginning of the war had been witnessed and remembered by him: the burning of uniforms and equipment

in the bed room grate, smoke coming from chimney-pots not normally used" (131).

Arthur Seaton remembers the injustice done to his community clearly.After joining the factory, he has been facing similar discriminations practiced by the authority on them. The capitalists have full control over the labourin his factory. They don't even allow the workers to work more and earn more. Everyone in the factory knows that Robboe, the foreman is "enemy's scout" (61), who always keep standing on their heads for a check. If anyone is found producing more parts, his price is lowered. Robboe, advises Arthur at a point, saying: "I'll be in trouble… for letting you earn so much. They'll be lowering your price if your're not careful" (61). Owing to his experiences Arthur Seaton still hangs on to older instinctive working class anarchism and a gut resentment of all authority. So his class consciousness forces him to dwell on the thought that the system leads everyone to death with its petty designs:

> Factory and labour exchanges and insurance offices keep us alive and kicking-sotheysay- but they'rebooby - traps and will suck you under like sinking sands if you aren't careful. Factories sweat you to death, labour exchanges talk you to death, insurance and income tax offices milk money from your wage packets and rob you to death. And if you are still left with a tiny bit of life in your guts after all this boggering about, the army calls you up and you get shot to death. And if you are clever enough to stay out of the army you get bombed to death (202).

Arthur's blistering resentment against the system makes him anti-establishment. Knowing that it's a hard life and there "aren't much" (202) to do with the system, he immerses himself in ale and sex. However he takes to non-conformity as a form of protest against the "bastard government" (202). There are thousands of "laws to be ignored and therefore broken" (203), thinks Arthur Seaton. He boldly asserts: "I'll never allow anybody grind me down because I'm worth as much as any other man in the world" (40). It is "best to be a rebel so as to show them it don't pay to try to do you down" (202). He makes his own rules and regulations. He knows he's "born lucky" (161) and "too bloody clever" (153) to deal with the "labour bleeders" (36), and, if needed he has also got "bags of strength" (50) to deliver. He has an "aptitude for weighing up people" (43). He doesn't asses men on their knowledge or achievement, but by a blind and passionate method that weighs their more basic worth. His "emotional gauge" (42) always accurate when set by him, proves a reliable guide to help him judge people as "friends" or "not friends". Though not much interested, he works on his capstan lathe to, support his family on one hand and for the "thinking" (202) he does while sitting over it. It is his "everlasting pal" (202): "Violent dialogues flayed themselves to death in his mind as he went on serving a life's penance at the lathe" (203). The money earned in this way also helps him enjoy the pleasures of

Saturday nights. However he remains conscious of not earning more than "fourteen pounds" (32) a week as, anything bigger is "against his principles" (32).He never votes for the "big fat tory bastards in the parliament" (35). He joins the army but is not dedicated to his profession: "I hate the army and allus have done, I don't even like to talk about it, infact" (134). The authority should not "rely on" him (132). "Them at the top" (132) must know that nobody from his class is going to fight for them. If a war starts, he has decided to prove himself a "bad soldier" (131). Actually his war is not against the enemy country but against the authority, the "bloody fools… The bastards that put the gun in to his hands" (139). And he thinks of making a dynamite to "blow their four eyed clocks to bits" (202). He decides that while shooting, his targets would be, "the snot gobbling gett that teks … income tax, the swivel eyed swine - that collects… rent," and the other "big headed bastards of the system(132).

"Cunning" (131) becomes his best tool as it is the only "tolerable rule that would serve as a weapon" (203) against the bastards. "Lie until you're blue in the face" (77), becomes his motto. So he moves on in the story, "striving to kick down his enemies crawling like ants over the capital letter G of government - but also accepting some of the sweet and agreeable things of life… but in a harder way - before the government destroyed him, or the good things turned sour on him" (204). He becomes "a billy-goat trying to screw the world" as he thinks, the world is also trying "to do the same" to him (203). Besides drink and sex, Arthur Seaton is also fond of "noise" (108). It synthesizes all the "anarchism within him" (108) and proves more suitable to "accompany the end of the world" (108). "Once in the shop he allows himself to be swallowed by its "diverse noises" (30). Despite the overpowering noise of groaning belts and pulley wheels slackened he fancies "he could hear traffic passing by on Eddison Road and loaded trucks struggling out of the nearby marshelling yard" (60). While in the Army, firing gave "him satisfaction to destroy" (138). When it is not his turn at the sand bags he loves to "stand and listen to the total bursting of bullets from the dozen guns firing, hearing the lifting and falling of sound, the absolutely untamable rhythms that ripped the air open with untrammelled joy" (138-139). Seaton perhaps needs noise to counter the inner disturbances present in his mind. It helps him tide over the violent fantasies occupying his mind repeatedly. At a point in the novel when violent thoughts related to woman occupy his mind, his bones start "aching for the noise of public house, wanting to lose himself in a waterfall of ale and laughter" (146). Sometimes he himself create noises by indulging in various sorts of laughs a ("terrible laugh" (163) and "horse laugh"(59), to comfort his mind.

It is evident that Arthur Seaton remains obsessed with one thing or the other in the novel. E. Mary and David Pierce (1979) believe that he is, in a sense, ill equipped for anything but

"noise, drinking and sex" (Mary and David Pierce, 1979, 136). With his free-wheeling life style he could not do anything constructive for his class or even for his own self. There isn't any doubt that he does, indeed, express his anger many a time in the novel and, it doesn't remain confined to his violent fantasies, however, he always sheds his anger against the common people, who have nothing to do with the great old class designs. His, shooting Mrs Bull with an air-rifle for spreading the news of his carrying on with married women (121); his fighting with the young boys using, right centre and left (107); and his bout with swaddies (174), has nothing to highlight anything constructive he does to set the system right. Arthur himself realizes that the "law and order against which he had been fighting all his life in such thoughtless and unorganized way that he could not but lose" (180). It is perhaps his creator, Alan Sillito (1958) who wants to show that nothing can be done with the society by indulging in "madness"(139) and leading the life of a beatnik. That is why he persuades Arthur Seaton to accept marriage at the end of the novel; thereby making him accepts the worldly things, to give an optimistic ending to the novel.

There isn't any doubt that Arthur Seaton behaves as a sort of rebel in the novel. Sometimes feelings of hostility can compensate for feelings of inferiority since hating others seem hugely better than downing oneself. People in certain subcultures in a society tend to employ violence as a compensatory tool, to cover up their basic feelings of inadequacy and insecurity. Physically strong youngster like Arthur Seaton often savagely abuses those they find weaker or less capable. He starts affairs with two married sisters - Brenda and Winnie. Sometimes your traits, deeds and performances may indeed fall far below the level of desirability. For personal reasons or because you come from a certain lower socioeconomic class, you may have many cards stacked against you and may do decidedly worse than many other people. The inadequacy may lead you to anger and rebelliousness. People may either drink heavily to control or mask their anger, or they may only feel able to express themselves angrily when under the influence of liquor. So their open or masked hostility tends to drive them to drink. Arthur Seaton becomes a non conformist and immerses himself in pool of ale in this novel.

The enormous pain inflicted on Arthur during his early childhood and the indignities inflicted on him as a young man force him relive these early traumas and re-experience the pain of these unpleasant experiences. These continue to have adverse effects upon his personality and his present life. What happens in the past connects with his present difficulties. He understands these past experiences and give them extensive consideration. He carries on with his acquired anger creating beliefs by his own repetition of these ideas in his mind. Thus he continues to feel emotions such as anger and anxiety because he either consciously or unconsciously keeps reiterating his beliefs to himself. Thus his own constant repetition

of the doctrines acquired early in life sows the seeds of his later anger. His ongoing or sustained view of that original frustration rather than the frustrating conditions themselves keeps him perennially angry with the upper class people. Every time he faces the upper class people his original feeling of animosity reasserts itself. Harboring such feelings of anger and hostility for long assumes the form of an obsession. He truly believes that they were victimized, abused or exploited and gets filled up with petrified anger and becomes hostile to the upper class people.

As a working-class hero, Arthur Seaton identifies himself with the working class so completely that he always views himself in opposition to the upper classes. His alienation with the establishment - the church, the state, the society - is complete. He never stands in a queue and considers himself a natural outsider with regard to the social hierarchy. He doesn't believe in God, distrusts the government, dislikes the army even when he serves it and hates the entire social structure as an instrument of oppression. There is something misanthropic about his vituperative attack on "them" - the privileged people who are his natural adversaries. He cannot bring himself to forget the hurt that he suffered as a member of the working-class at the hands of one and all. This obsession with some real or imagined grievance warps his sensibility and fills him with a bitter resentment against all those who are rich and comfortable in a wrongly organized society. His sentimental resentment against the privileged and his cynical disregard for normal decency brings to mind the indiscriminate anger of Jimmy Porter in John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*. Arthur, like Jimmy, has nothing much to look forward to. The past being equally rotten like Jimmy's, Arthur can only look back in anger. And yet, Arthur's anger is not muddled like Jimmy's. In a deliberate coup, like Joe Lampton in *Room At the Top*, he grabs every opportunity for personal gratification. As a member of the deprived class, he feels perfectly justified in living by the pleasure - principle in life. The compulsive pursuit of food, drink and sex becomes not only a mode of escape from suffering, but is raised to the highest value in life. In the process, he becomes a cad like Joe Lampton (Room At The Top) or Charles (Hurry On Down). Arthur has no scruples in betraying his work-mate Jack and sleeping with his wife Brenda. He even seduces her married sister Winnie and eventually falls in love with a third woman, Doreen. Arthur's amorous escapades involve him in many drunken orgies and brawls. Such blatantly irresponsible and immoral attitudes naturally diminish his stature as rebels and underline the ambiguous nature of hisanomalous anger.

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