

Lesson 5
Youth
青年

First listen and then answer the following question:
听录音, 然后回答以下问题。

How does the writer like to treat young people?

People are always talking about 'the problem of youth'. If there is one -- which I take leave to doubt -- then it is older people who create it, not the young themselves. Let us get down to fundamentals and agree that the young are after all human beings -- people just like their elders. There is only one difference between an old man and a young one: the young man has a glorious future before him and the old one has a splendid future behind him: and maybe that is where the rub is.

When I was a teenager, I felt that I was just young and uncertain -- that I was a new boy in a huge school, and I would have been very pleased to be regarded as something so interesting as a problem. For one thing, being a problem gives you a certain identity, and that is one of the things the young are busily engaged in seeking.

I find young people exciting. They have an air of freedom, and they not a dreary commitment to mean ambitions or love of comfort. They are not anxious social climbers, and they have no devotion to material things. All this seems to me to link them with life, and the origins of things. It's as if they were, in some sense, cosmic beings in violent and lovely contrast with us suburban creatures. All that is in my mind when I meet a young person. He may be conceited, ill-mannered, presumptuous or fatuous, but I do not turn for protection to dreary clichés about respect of elders -- as if mere age were a reason for respect. I accept that we are equals, and I will argue with him, as an equal, if I think he is wrong.

FIELDEN HUGHES from Out of the Air, The Listener

New words and expression 生词和短语

- leave
- n. 允许
- fundamentals
- n. 基本原则
- glorious
- adj. 光辉灿烂的
- splendid
- adj. 灿烂的
- rub
- n. 难题
- identity
- n. 身份
- dreary
- adj. 沉郁的
- commitment
- n. 信奉
- mean

adj. 吝啬, 小气
social climber
追求更高社会地位的, 向上爬的人
devotion
n. 热爱
cosmic
adj. 宇宙的
suburban
adj. 见识不广的, 偏狭的
conceited
adj. 自高自大的
presumptuous
adj. 自以为是的, 放肆的
fatuous
adj. 愚蠢的
cliche
n. 陈词滥调

参考译文

人们总是在谈论“青年问题”。如果这个问题存在的话——请允许我对此持怀疑态度——那么, 这个问题是由老年人而不是青年人造成的。让我们来认真研究一些基本事实: 承认青年人和他们的长辈一样也是人。老年人和青年人只有一个区别: 青年人有光辉灿烂的前景, 而老年人的辉煌已成为过去。问题的症结恐怕就在这里。

我十几岁时, 总感到自己年轻, 有些事拿不准——我是一所大学里的一名新生, 如果我当时真的被看成一个问题那样有趣, 我会感到很得意的。因为这至少使我得到了某种承认, 这正是年轻人所热衷追求的。

我觉得年轻人令人振奋, 无拘无束。他们既不追逐卑鄙的名利, 也不贪图生活的舒适。他们不热衷于向上爬, 也不一味追求物质享受。在我看来, 所有这些使他们与生命和万物之源联系在了一起。从某种意义上讲, 他们似乎是宇宙人, 同我们这些凡夫俗子形成了强烈而鲜明的对照。每逢我遇到年轻人, 脑子里就想到这些年轻人也许狂妄自负, 举止无理, 傲慢放肆, 愚昧无知, 但我不会用应当尊重长者这一套陈词滥调来为我自己辩护, 似乎年长就是受人尊敬的理由。我认为我和他们是平等的。如果我认为他们错了, 我就以平等的身份和他们争个明白。