

Barbara B. Sims: On "We Real Cool"

Until the last line, the element of bravado in the diction and rhythm has made the activities of the street people seem somehow defensible, if not downright desirable. A certain pride in being outside the conventions, institutions, and legal structures of the predominant society is conveyed. Escaping the drudgery and dullness of school and work has left the lives of these drop-outs open to many romantic possibilities.

However, the tone changes dramatically when the reader learns the street people "Die soon." At once their defiant and complacent attitudes seem quite pathetic, and the reader wonders whom the cool people are trying to kid about the desirability of their disordered lives.

Sims, Barbara B. "Brooks's 'We Real Cool.'" *Explicator* 34 (1976): 58.

Publication Status:

[Excerpted Criticism](#) [1]

Criticism Target:

[Gwendolyn Brooks](#) [2]

Author:

[Barbara B. Sims](#) [3]

Poem:

[We Real Cool](#) [4]

Tags:

[diction](#) [5]

[Rhythm](#) [6]

[pride](#) [7]

[pathetic](#) [8]

[falsehood](#) [9]

[Tone](#) [10]

Source URL: <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/criticism/barbara-b-sims-we-real-cool>

Links

[1] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/publication-status/excerpted-criticism>

[2] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/poet/gwendolyn-brooks>

[3] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/creator/barbara-b-sims>

[4] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/poem/we-real-cool>

[5] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/tags/diction>

[6] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/tags/rhythm>

[7] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/tags/pride>

[8] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/tags/pathetic>

[9] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/tags/falsehood>

[10] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/tags/tone>