

## **Letter from Mike Brown**

### **Letters to Editor**

**Sydney Morning Herald April 8, 1964**

The “Battle of Clacton”

Disrespect for Mass-produced

Sir –

Your London correspondent (“Herald”, April 2) says there is a vast difference between the shrieking of “Beatlemaniacs” and the violence of the Easter “battle of Clacton” in which teenagers wrecked a British seaside resort.

Perhaps so – and yet they are only degrees of the same phenomenon – an upsurge of rebellious high spirits in reaction to urban and suburban boredom. No doubt social workers will investigate the problem and produce some time-honoured remedies – more youth clubs, more psychoanalysis for problem children. And year by year youth will grow more destructive as industrial society spirals dynamically towards its unattainable ideal of perfect peace, order and prosperity.

In basic moral or aesthetic terms no one seriously asserts that mass-produced goods, whether they be cars, plateglass windows or juke-boxes, are objects which should inspire respect; and yet when a teenage mob shows them the disrespect for which they are due there is a universal gasp of horror and many furrowed brows as the nation’s best brains puzzle over what’s wrong with today’s youth.

It was reported that amusement machines were thrown into the sea – was ever justice more poetic?

The twentieth century’s rampant materialism is fine – let’s all enjoy it for what little it’s worth – but let’s also realise that this way of life is in itself a form of mass delinquency. And let’s not be so obtuse as to look for abnormality in young people if at times they show an inclination to give our synthetic paradise a thorough wrecking.

M.C. Brown

Paddington