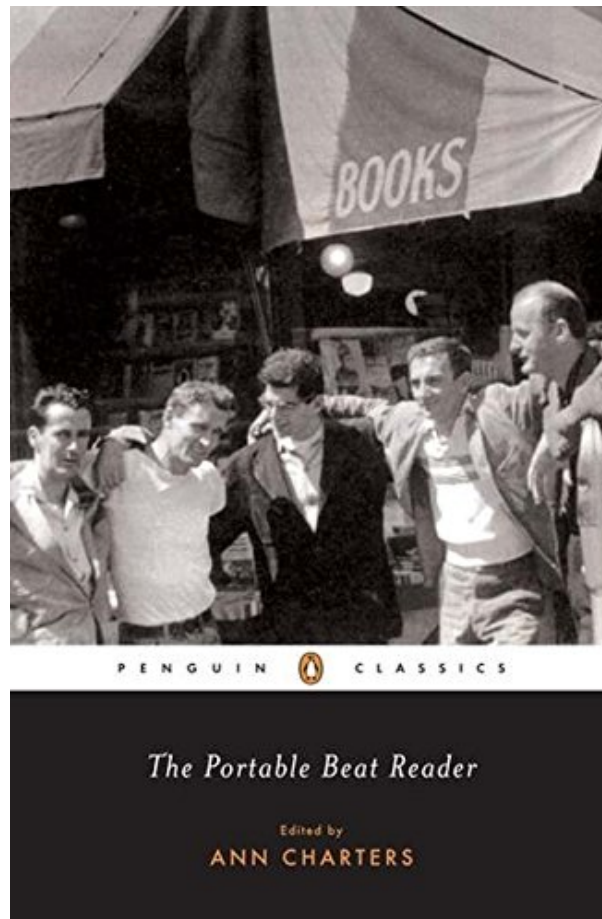



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The Portable Beat Reader

Edited by
ANN CHARTERS

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Beginning in the late 1940's, American literature discovered a four-letter word, and the word was "beat." Beat as in poverty and beatitude, ecstasy and exile. Beat was Jack Kerouac touring the American road in prose as fast and reckless as a V-8 Chevy. It was the junk-sick surrealism of William Burroughs; the wild, Whitmanesque poetry of Allen Ginsberg; and the lumberjack Zen of Gary Snyder.

The Portable Beat Reader collects the most significant writing of these and fellow members (and spiritual descendants) of the Beat Generation, including Neal Cassady, Gregory Corso, Diane di Prima, Bob Dylan, Leroi Jones, and Michael McClure. In poetry, fiction, essays, song lyrics, letters, and memoirs, it captures the triumphant rudeness, energy, and exhilaration of a movement that swept through American letters with hurricane force.

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- William Gargan, Brooklyn Coll. Lib., CUNY

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Good Start for the "Beat"en Path

By A.Trendl HungarianBookstore.com

Nice sampler... all the writers you should expect are in here.

A feature I enjoyed particularly was the intro section. Read "about the writer" before the piece. Since I had not heard of so many of these writers, I found it intriguing to see how many were part of the same group of friends. The Beats largely were connected with each other's lives and fed off each other's style and work.

Buy this book, then go get the full works of these individual writers. For an anthology of Beat writers, you will find no better book.

I fully recommend this book.

Anthony Trendl

anthonytrendl.com

13 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

A Great Guide If You Don't Know What You Like

By Autumn May

This book features some excellent beat writers and includes informative blurbs on their history and style. Each artist has a little chunk of their writing for you to sample, and the material is everything from stories to letters to classically bad prose.

What impressed me were the essays by each other, on the actual generation hype.

"Young people seemed more intense, clutching, and I couldn't help feeling they took themselves too seriously... 'good, clean fun' appeared to be a thing of the past. Or perhaps the aura of suspicion and

defensiveness was merely a reflection of my own fears..." --Carylon Cassady
It's a great book for deciding which authors you want to read more of.

12 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

Introducing The Beats

By Marc Shaw

After riding the whirlwind of *On The Road* and *Howl*, many readers will acquire an appetite for Beat literature that will lead them to this book. Ann Charters serves up some of the best pieces of Beat Literature in this anthology. However, some inclusions, such as excerpts from *On The Road*, could be considered sacrilege, as the texts were never meant to be cut up, and suffer as a result. The Bob Dylan lyrics included by Charters indicate that she was no Dylan scholar, as other tracks would have been more suitable. However, with inclusions such as Neal Cassady's letters, William S. Burroughs adventure narratives, and the lesser known Beat poetry, this anthology is indispensable.

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