The Fall of America: Poems of These States 1965-1971

Before the world knew Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Cassady, this “brilliant and important” novel chronicled the author’s early years among the Beats (Los Angeles Free Press).

Published five years before On the Road, this candid and perceptive roman à clef chronicles the adventures of Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and Neal Cassady before they became literary icons. In dive bars and all-night diners, cabs racing across Manhattan and squalid apartments sticky with “tea” smoke, these would-be artists pursue the ecstatic experiences that shape their work and sustain their restless desire to live beyond the limits of convention. At the heart of Go is Paul Hobbles, the alter ego of John Clellon Holmes and Kerouac. Guests who share the same common interests as his friends, Paul frequently participates in their reckless, self-indulgent behavior. Yet his innate solemnness makes him an outsider, as does his commitment to his marriage. As Paul seeks to strike the right balance between experimentation and orthodoxy, freedom and obligation, he casts a discerning eye on his peers. The result is a thrilling and indispensible portrait of the Beat movement before it took America by storm.

The Beat Generation in San Francisco

Follows the counterculture escapades of members of the Beat generation as they seek pleasure and meaning while traveling coast to coast.

You’ll Be Okay

The ultimate literary guide to San Francisco, packed with fabulous photos and scintillating anecdotes.

Jack Kerouac’s On the Road

Excerpts and passages from the personal diaries of the great Beat writer chronicle a pivotal era in Kerouac’s life, describing the creation of his first novel, The Town and City; his special friendships with Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs, and Neal Cassady; and his own take on the events described in On the Road. Reprint.

Howl

The second and final volume of letters from the Kerouac collection documents his romances, travels, writing, and emotional struggles, as well as his relationships with Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Malcolm Cowley, and others. Reprint.

Howl on Trial

Kerouac’s most important poem, Mexico City Blues, incorporates all the elements of his theory of spontaneous composition. Memories, fantasies, dreams, and surrealistic free association are all lyrically combined in the loose format of the blues to create a original and moving epic. "I want to be considered a jazz poet blowing a long blues in an afternoon from scope to Sunday. I take 242 choruses; my ideas vary and sometimes roll from chorus to chorus or from halfway through a chorus to halfway into the next." “A spontaneous bop prosody and original classic literature.” - Allen Ginsberg; "Kerouac calls himself a jazz poet. There is no doubt about his great sensitivity to language. His sentences frequently move into tempestuous sweeps and whorls and sometimes they have something of the rich music of Gerard Manley Hopkins of Dylan Thomas" - The New York Herald Tribune

Heaven & Other Poems

From a master of contemporary fiction, a tale of bohemian youth on the make in Mexico City Two young poets, Jan and Remo, find themselves adrift in Mexico City. Obsessed with poetry, and, above all, with science fiction, they are eager to forge a life in the literary world—or sacrifice themselves to it. Roberto Bolano’s The Spirit of Science Fiction is a story of youth. An apologist for revolution, notoriety, and sexual adventure, as they work to construct a reality out of the fragments of their dreams. But as close as these two friends are, the city tugs them in opposite directions. Jan withdraws from the world, shutting himself in their shared rooftop apartment where he feverishly composes fan letters to the stars of science fiction and dreams of communists and Nazis. Meanwhile, Remo runs headfirst into the future, spending his days and nights with a circle of wild young writers, seeking pleasure in the city’s cabarets and cafes, and murky bathhouses. This kaleidoscopic work of strange and tender beauty is a fitting introduction for readers uninitiated into the thrills of Roberto Bolano’s fiction, and an indispensable addition to an ecstatic and transgressive body of work.

This Is the Beat Generation

"Each book by Jack Kerouac is unique, a telepathic diamond. With prose set in the middle of his mind, he reveals consciousness itself in all its syntactic elaboration, detailing the luminous emptiness of his own paraocic confusion. Such rich natural writing is nonpareil in later half XX century, a synthesis of Proust, Celine, Thomas Wolfe, Hemingway, Genet, Thelonious Monk, Basho, Charlie Parker, and Kerouac’s own athletic sacred insight. "This entire short novel Tristessa’s-a narrative meditation studying a hen, a rooster, a cat, a chihuahua dog, family meat, and a ravishing, ravished junky lady, first in their crowded bedroom, then out to drunken streets, taco stands, & pads at dawn in Mexico City slums.” — Allen Ginsberg

American Screams

"A fascinating literary and historical document, the most insightful look at the Beat Generation.” — Dan Wakefield, author of New York in the Fifties and Going All the Way First published in 1978, Jack’s Book gives us an intimate look into the life and times of the “King of the Beats.” Through the words of the close friends, lovers, artists, and drinking buddies who survived him, writers Barry Gifford and Lawrence Lee recount Jack Kerouac’s story, from his childhood in Lowell, Massachusetts, to his tragic end in Florida at the age of forty-seven. Including anecdotes from an eclectic list of well-known figures such as Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs, and Gore Vidal, as well as Kerouac’s ordinary acquaintances, this groundbreaking oral biography—the first of its kind—presents us with a remarkably insightful portrait of an American legend and the spirit of a generation.
The Town and the City

In New York in 1944, Campbell finds the leading members of what was to become the Beat Generation in the shadows of madness and criminality. Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and William Burroughs had each seen the insides of a mental hospital and a prison by the age of 30. This book charts the transformation of these experiences into literature, and a literary movement that spread across the globe. 35 photos.

Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg

A collection of poems by beat generation author Jack Kerouac, written between 1954 and 1965 about Mexico, Tangier, Berkeley, the Bowery, God, drugs, and other topics.

The Typewriter Is Holy

A unique history of the Beats, in the words of the movement’s most central member, Allen Ginsberg, based on a seminal series of his lectures. In 1977, twenty years after the publication of his landmark poem ‘Howl’ and Jack Kerouac’s On the Road, Allen Ginsberg decided it was time to teach a course on the literary history of the Beat Generation. Through this course, Ginsberg saw an opportunity to present a complete history of Beat Literature and also to record and preserve his own personal stories and memories, ones that might have otherwise been lost to history. The result was a deeply intimate, candid and illuminating set of lectures, which form the basis of this book. Compiled and edited by renowned Beat scholar Bill Morgan, and with an introduction by Anne Waldman, The Best Minds Of My Generation presents the lectures in edited form, revealing the Beats as Ginsberg knew them: friends, confidantes, literary mentors, and fellow revolutionaries. In The Best Minds Of My Generation, Ginsberg gives us the convoluted origin story of the modern Beat movement. He recounts anecdotes of meeting Kerouac, Burroughs, and other figures for the first time, elucidates the importance of music, and particularly jazz, rhythms, to Beat writing, discusses their many influences - literary, pharmaceutical and spiritual - and paints a portrait of a group who were leading a literary revolution.

Big Sur

The National Book Critics Circle Award-winning author of Minor Characters presents a profile of the iconic artist’s early years that offers insight into his efforts to bridge his dual cultural heritage while exploring how his French Canadian background enriched his prose, discussing the breakthroughs that inspired such works as On the Road and Visions of Cody.

Beat Generation

2014 ACKER AWARD WINNER Anyone who cares to understand the literary and cultural ferment of America in the later twentieth century must be familiar with the writings and lives of those scruffy bohemians known as the Beat Generation. In this highly entertaining work, Bill Morgan, the country’s leading authority on the movement and a man who personally knew most of the Beats, narrates the history of these writers as primarily a social group of friends, tracing their origins together during the World War II years to the full blossoming of their notoriety in the late 1950s to their profound influence on the social upheaval of the 1960s. Indeed, it is impossible to comprehend the sixties without first grasping the importance of the social ripples set in motion by the Beats a decade earlier. Although their prose and poetry varied in style and for the most part did not represent a genuine literary movement, the Beats, through their words and nonconformist lives, collectively posed a challenge to the status and complacent America of the postwar years. They believed in free expression, opposing all censorship; they dabbled in free love; they practiced Eastern philosophy, leading to an embrace in America of alternative forms of spirituality; sooner than others, they watched with dismay the increasingly heavy hand of military and corporate culture in our national life; they embraced the aspirations, as well as the lingos, of urbanized black Americans. They believed in the liberating influence of hallucinogenic drugs. In short, the Beats were thoroughly American in their love of individual freedom. Perhaps it should come as no surprise that J. Edgar Hoover described them in 1960 as one of the three greatest threats to American security (after communism and intellectual “eggheads”). The story that Bill Morgan tells has less to do with sociology than with social minding. He traces the closely knit friendships of the Beat luminaries Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, William S. Burroughs, and the small army of other names. Although Kerouac, author of the much loved novel On the Road, was the most famous of the Beat writers, it was Ginsberg, Morgan contends, who resided at the center of the group and for more than two decades provided it with cohesion and a sense of direction. The Beats were not saints. They were sexually irresponsible, undependable in marriage (the movement could in fact fairly be described as misogynistic); they did too many drugs and consumed too much booze; the very quality that characterized their lives and writings—a fervent belief in spontaneous discovery—destroyed some friendships. Indeed, Morgan’s story begins with a murder in New York’s Riverside Park in 1944. Bill Morgan has provided a sweeping, indispensable story about these discontented free spirits. We watch their peripatetic lives, their sexual misadventures, their ambivalent response to fame. We are reminded above all that while their personal lives may have not have been holy, their typewriters and their lastiing words very much were.

The Selected Letters of Allen Ginsberg and Gary Snyder, 1956-1991

Jack Kerouac. Allen Ginsberg. William S. Burroughs, LeRoi Jones. Theirs are the names primarily associated with the Beat Generation. But what about Joyce Johnson (nee Glassman), Edie Parker, Elise Cowen, Diane Di Prima, and dozens of others? These female friends and lovers of the famous iconoclasts are now beginning to be recognized for their own roles in forging the Beat movement and for their daring attempts to live as freely as did the men in their circle a decade before Women’s Liberation. Twenty-one-year-old Joyce Johnson, an aspiring novelist and a secretary at a New York literary agency, fell in love with Jack Kerouac on a blind date arranged by Allen Ginsberg nine months before the publication of On the Road made Kerouac an instant celebrity. While Kerouac traveled to Tangiers, San Francisco, and Mexico City, Johnson roamed the streets of the East Village, where she found herself in the midst of the cultural revolution the Beats had created. Minor Characters portrays the turbulent years of her relationship with Kerouac with extraordinary wit and love and a cool, critical eye, introducing the reader to a lesser known but purely original American voice: her own.

Naked Lunch

The first selection of letters between the two leading figures of the Beat movement Writers and cultural icons Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg are the most celebrated names of the Beat Generation, linked together not only by their shared artistic sensibility but also by a deep abiding friendship, one that colored their lives and greatly influenced their writing. Editors Bill Morgan and David Stanford shed new light on this intimate and influential friendship in this fascinating exchange of letters between Kerouac and Ginsberg. Written over a period of thirty years, the nearly 2,000 pages of Kerouac’s and Ginsberg’s 260 letters have never before been published. Commencing in 1944 while Ginsberg was a student at Columbia University and continuing until shortly before Kerouac’s death in 1969, the two hundred letters included in this book provide astonishing insight into their lives and their writing. While not always in agreement, Ginsberg and Kerouac inspired each other spiritually and creatively, and their letters become a vital workshop for their art. Vivid, engaging, and enthralling, Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg: The Letters provides an unparalleled portrait of the two men who led the cultural and artistic movement that defined their generation.

And the Hippos Were Boiled in Their Tanks

Retiring to a seaside cabin near San Francisco, Jack Duluoz looks for tranquility, but finds only horror and despair.

When I Was Cool

A selection of Jack Kerouac’s poems, plus his statements on poetics and letters to an editor.

Windblown World

Date of publication taken from Amazon.com.

Minor Characters

Selected Letters, 1957-1969

Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg

Written by the woman who loved them all—as wife of Cassady, lover of Kerouac, and friend of Ginsberg—this riveting and intimate memoir spans one of the most vital eras in twentieth-century literature and culture, including the explosive successes of Kerouac’s On the Road and Ginsberg’s Howl, the flowering of the Beat movement, and the social revolution of the 1960s. Carolyn Cassady reveals a side of Neal Cassady rarely seen—that of husband and father, a man who craved respectability, yet could not resist the thrills of a wilder and ultimately more destructive lifestyle.

On the Road

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The Spirit of Science Fiction

A portrait of the influential Beat generation poet draws on interviews with friends as well as his journals and correspondence to discuss such topics as his political views, practice of Tibetan Buddhism, and capacity for self-expression.

World Beats

"What I'm discovering to become is now something beyond the novel and beyond the arbitrary confines of the story. . . . I'm making myself seek to find the wild form, that can grow with my wild heart . . . because now I know MY HEART DOES GROW." —Jack Kerouac, in a letter to John Clellon Holmes Written in 1951-52, Visions of Cody was an underground legend by the time it was finally published in 1972. Writing in a radical, experimental form ("the New Journalism fifteen years early," as Dennis McNally noted in Desperate Characters), Kerouac created the ultimate account of his voyages with Neal Cassady during the late forties, when he captured in different form In On The Road. Here are the members of the Beat Generation as they were in the years before any label had been affixed to them. Here is the postwar America that Kerouac knew so well and celebrated so magnificently. His ecstatic sense of superabundant reality is informed by the knowledge of mortality: "I'm writing this book because we're all going to die. . . . My heart broke in the general despair and opened up inward to the Lord, I made a supplication in this dream." "The most sincere and holy writing I know of our age." —Allen Ginsberg

Book of Sketches

The first collection of letters between the two leading figures of the Beat movement. Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg are the most celebrated names of the Beat Generation, linked not only to each other by their shared artistic sensibility but also by a deep and abiding friendship, one that colored their lives and greatly influenced their writing. Editors Bill Morgan and David Stanford shed new light on this intimate and influential friendship in this fascinating exchange of letters, two thirds of which have never been published before. Commencing in 1944 while Ginsberg was a student at Columbia University and continuing until shortly before Kerouac's death in 1969, the two hundred letters included in this book provide profound insight into their lives and their writing. While not always in agreement, Ginsberg and Kerouac inspired each other spiritually and creatively, and their letters became a vital workshop for their art.—From publisher description.

Beat Memories

Letters, press reports, excerpts from the original transcription and, of course, the first text publication, and other texts document the 1957 obscenity trial of San Francisco beat poet Allen Ginsberg and looks at censorship in the United States and the battle against it.

Wake Up

Collects vignettes written by Jack Kerouac's first wife remembering her marriage to the American novelist during the 1940s and their subsequent life-long friendship.

Jack's Book

In the summer of 1944, a shocking murder rocked the fledgling Beats. William S. Burroughs and Jack Kerouac, both still unknown, we inspired by the crime to collaborate on a novel, a hard-boiled tale of bohemian New York during World War II, full of drugs and art, obsession and brutality, with scenes and characters drawn from their own lives. Finally published after more than sixty years, this is a captivating read, and incomparable literary artifact, and a window into the lives and art of two of the twentieth century’s most influential writers.

Offbeat

First published in 1956, Allen Ginsberg's Howl is a prophetic masterpiece—an epic raging against dehumanizing society that overcame censorship trials and obscenity charges to become one of the most widely read poems of the century. This annotated version of Ginsberg's classic is the poet's own re-creation of the revolutionary work's composition process—as well as a treasure trove of anecdotes, an intimate look at the poet's writing techniques, and a veritable social history of the 1950s.

Anti-Humanism in the Counterculture

Bill Lee, an addict-hustler, travels to Mexico and then Tangier in order to find easy access to drugs, and ends up in the Interzone, a bizarre fantasy world

Off the Road

Though raised Catholic, in the early 1950s Jack Kerouac became fascinated with Buddhism, an interest that would have a profound impact on his ideas of spirituality and their expression in his writing from Mexico City Blues to The Dharma Bums. Published for the first time in book form, Wake Up is Kerouac’s retelling of the story of Prince Siddhartha Gautama, who as a young man abandoned his wealthy family and comfortable home for a lifelong search for Enlightenment. As a compendium of the teachings of the Buddha, Wake Up is a profound meditation on the nature of life, desire, wisdom, and suffering. Distilled from a wide variety of canonical scriptures, Wake Up serves as both a concise primer on the concepts of Buddhism and as an insightful and deeply personal document of Kerouac’s evolving beliefs. It is the work of a devoted spiritual follower of the Buddha who also happened to be one of the twentieth century’s most influential novelists. Wake Up: A Life of the Buddha will be essential reading for the legions of Jack Kerouac fans and for anyone who is curious about the spiritual principles of one of the world’s great religions.

Pomes All Sizes

Written as a cultural weapon and a call to arms, Howl touched a raw nerve in Cold War America and has been controversial from the day it was first read aloud nearly fifty years ago. This first full critical and historical study of Howl brilliantly elucidates the nexus of politics and literature in which it was written and gives striking new portraits of Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, and William Burroughs. Drawing from newly released psychiatric reports on Ginsberg, from interviews with his psychiatrist, Dr. Philip Hicks, and from the poet's journals, American Scream shows how Howl brought Ginsberg and the world out of the closet of a repressive society. It also gives the first full accounting of the literary figures—Elliot, Rimbaud, and Whitman—who influenced Howl, definitively placing it in the tradition of twentieth-century American poetry for the first time. As he follows the genesis and the evolution of Howl, Jonah Raskin constructs a vivid picture of a poet and an era. He illuminates the development of Beat poetry in New York and San Francisco in the 1950s—focusing on historic occasions such as the first reading of Howl at Six Gallery in San Francisco in 1955 and the obscenity trial over the poem's publication. He looks closely at Ginsberg's life, including his relationships with his parents, friends, and mentors, while he was writing the poem and uses this material to illuminate the themes of madness, nakedness, and secrecy that pervade Howl. A captivating look at the cultural climate of the Cold War and at a great American poet, American Scream finally tells the full story of Howl—a rousing manifesto for a generation and a classic of twentieth-century literature.

Go

David Amram has been described as "the Renaissance man of American Music." His musical career has spanned participating with Jack Kerouac in the original jazz-poetry reading in 1957 in Greenwich Village to being honored as the first Composer-in-Residence for the New York Philharmonic and to playing in Farm Aid concerts. He's performed with an incredible variety of musical greats, such as Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, Willie Nelson, and Tito Puente, and he continues to compose and tour nationally. Now available in paperback, following the 50th anniversary of the publication of Kerouac's classic On The Road, Offbeat is the rollicking story of this legendary musician and underground legend by the time it was finally published in 1972. Writing in a radical, experimental form (“the New Journalism fifteen years early,” as Dennis McNally noted in Desperate Characters), Kerouac created the ultimate account of his voyages with Neal Cassady during the late forties, which he captured in different form In On The Road. Here are the members of the Beat Generation as they were in the years before any label had been affixed to them. Here is the postwar America that Kerouac knew so well and celebrated so magnificently. His ecstatic sense of superabundant reality is informed by the knowledge of mortality: "I'm writing this book because we're all going to die. . . . My heart broke in the general despair and opened up inward to the Lord, I made a supplication in this dream." "The most sincere and holy writing I know of our age." —Allen Ginsberg

The Best Minds of My Generation

This fascinating book explores Beat Generation writing from a transnational perspective, using the concept of worlding to place Beat literature in conversation with a far-reaching network of cultural and political formations. Countering the charge that the Beats abroad were at best naïve tourists seeking excitement for exoticism’s sake, World Beats finds that these writers propelled a highly politicized agenda that sought to use the tools of the earlier avant-garde to undermine Cold War and postcolonial ideologies and offer a new vision of engaged literature. With fresh interpretations of central Beat authors Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and William Burroughs - as well as usually marginalized writers like Philip Lamantia, Ted Joans, and Brion Gysin - World Beats moves beyond national, continental, or hemispheric frames to show that embedded within Beat writing is an essential universality that brought America to the world and the world to American literature. This book presents an original treatment that will attract a broad spectrum of scholars.
Visions of Cody

One of the central relationships in the Beat scene was the long-lasting friendship of Allen Ginsberg and Gary Snyder. Ginsberg introduced Snyder to the East Coast Beat writers, including Jack Kerouac, while Snyder himself became the model for the serious poet that Ginsberg so wanted to become. Snyder encouraged Ginsberg to explore the beauty of the West Coast and, even more lastingly, introduced Ginsberg to Buddhism, the subject of so many long letter exchanges between them. Beginning in 1956 and continuing through 1991, the two men exchanged more than 850 letters. Bill Morgan, Ginsberg’s biographer and an important editor of his papers, has selected the most significant correspondence from this long friendship. The letters themselves paint the biographical and poetic portraits of two of America’s most important—and most fascinating—poets. Robert Hass’ insightful introduction discusses the lives of these two major poets and their enriching and moving relationship.

The Voice is All

In 1952 and 1953 as he wandered around America, Jack Kerouac jotted down spontaneous prose poems, or “sketches” as he called them, on small notebooks that he kept in his shirt pockets. The poems recount his travels—New York, North Carolina, Lowell (Massachusetts, Kerouac’s birthplace), San Francisco, Denver, Kansas, Mexico—observations, and meditations on art and life. The poems are often strung together so that over the course of several of them, a little story—or travelogue—appears, complete in itself. Published for the first time, Book of Sketches offers a luminous, intimate, and transcendental glimpse of one of the most original voices of the twentieth century at a key time in his literary and spiritual development.

Tristessa

First student of the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics, Sam Kashner tells with humor and grace his life with the Beats. But the best story is Kashner himself—the coming-of-age of a young man in the chaotic world of the very idols he hoped to emulate. This P.S. edition features an extra 16 pages of insights into the book, including author interviews, recommended reading, and more.

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