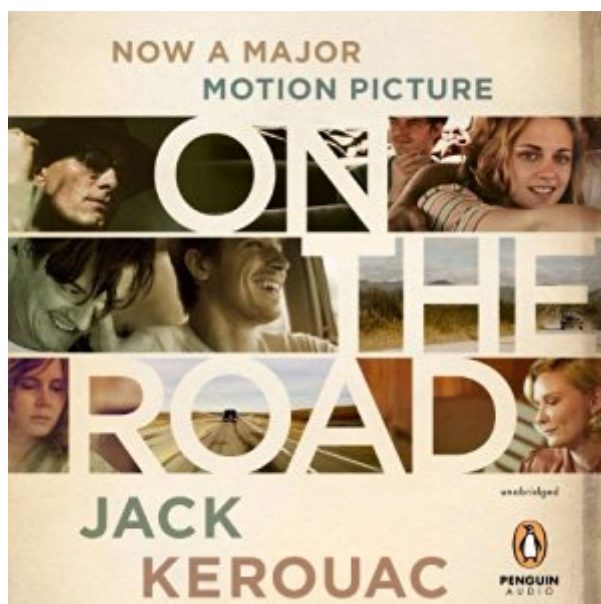


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On The Road: 50th Anniversary Edition



Synopsis

"On the Road" swings to the rhythms of 1950s underground America: jazz, sex, generosity, chill dawns and drugs. It chronicles Jack Kerouac's years travelling North America with his friend Neal Cassady. As "Sal Paradise" and "Dean Moriarty", they are the living epitome of the Beat Generation, roaming the country in a quest for self-knowledge and experience. Now recognized as a modern classic, the narrative races towards the sunset with unforgettable exuberance, poignancy and passion. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Version: Unabridged

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Customer Reviews

The 50th anniversary of the publication of Jack Kerouac's "On The Road" is commemorated by the release of three major volumes. They are a designated 50th Anniversary edition; "On The Road: The Original Scroll", the long-awaited controversial release of the uncensored 120-foot alleged "teletype roll" on which Kerouac blazingly blasted out his masterwork in just three weeks, six years before its publication; and a handsome Library of America edition, "Jack Kerouac: Road Novels 1957-1960", edited with textual notes by historian Douglas Brinkley, featuring Road and four other of his best known novels along with selections from his journals. (See separate review). Whether this literary blitz will lead to a grand revival of interest in Kerouac's work by both old and new generations has yet to be seen. But it secures his reputation as a major American writer because his voice resonates with the great poignant prose of Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, and John Steinbeck, celebrating the wonders and adventures of youthful travels on the open road. In the book's first major favorable review, Gilbert Millstein of The New York Times praised "On The Road"

as being to the Beat Generation what Hemingway's "The Sun Also Rises" was to its precedent bohemian Lost Generation. Millions of readers and generations of authors have been influenced by the "On The Road", typically discovered by readers in their adolescence. Almost everyone who has read the book remembers when and where they first encountered it, the way one indelibly recalls the loss of virginity. Praise for Kerouac's work is far from universal.

On the Road, Jack Kerouac's epic of road travel and search for meaning in the late 1940s, was written in three weeks time, typed on a long scroll, which was really several pieces of paper taped together. Kerouac's writing has a stream of conscious, spastic nature, although it went through many years of revisions before being published. The story fictionally recounts true events in the writer's life, particularly those with Neal Cassidy (Dean Moriarty in the book), whom Sal, the Kerouac character, seems to have had an infatuated crush on. From New York to California and Mexico Sal drives, or rather rides, and comes across various characters and cities. The novel helped to launch the Beat movement and has influenced countless writers, artists, and readers alike, and has been deemed one of the best novels of 20th-century American literature.

Significantly, it made America a literary subject. I wanted to like this book. I really, really did. I was prepared to be blown away and taken on a literary adventure of meaning and wonder, excitement and energy. I read, and waited, to no avail. I read some more, but it soon became apparent that this would not be the book for me. Despite this, I grudgingly soldiered on and completed it a few days later than I had anticipated to (I usually breeze through fiction without struggle), as I continuously put it back on my shelf only to talk myself into trying again. I'm glad I did, but found that the book's legend is far more interesting than the actual story. Split into four sections, each consecutive one involving a different road trip with more details and a shorter time-span, I found myself also becoming consecutively more involved as the book went on.

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