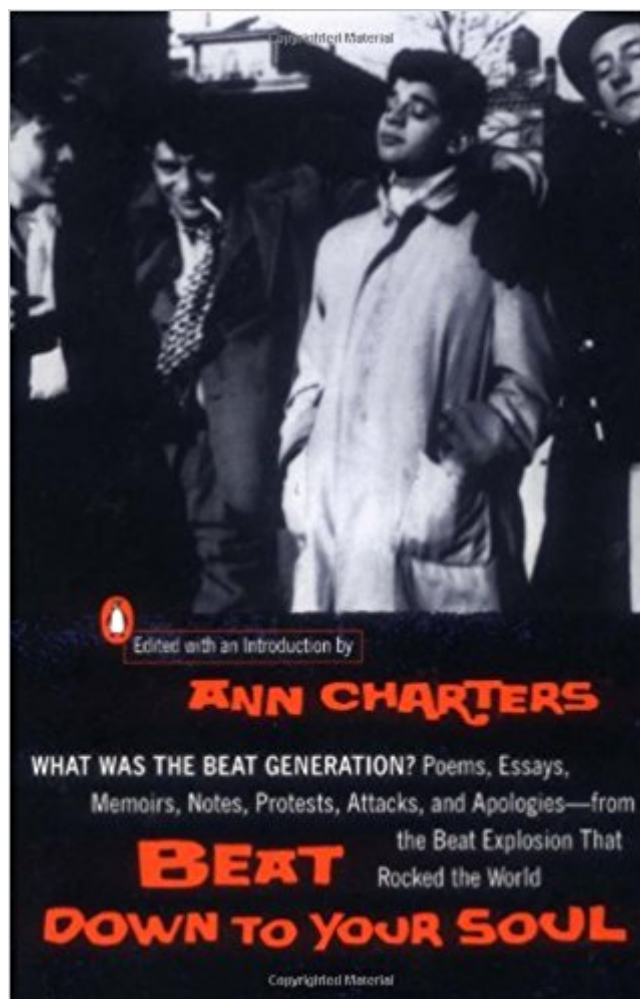


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Beat Down To Your Soul: What Was The Beat Generation?



Synopsis

In this wide-ranging anthology, Beat scholar Ann Charters brings together more than seventy-five essays, reviews, memoirs, poems, and sketches that evoke the credos and the controversies surrounding the Beat generation writers of the 1950s. Charters includes discussions of all the major Beat figures-Jack Kerouac, William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Neal Cassady, Diane di Prima, Gary Snyder, and many more-from commentaries by the Beats themselves as well as by such writers as Henry Miller, William Carlos Williams, Mary McCarthy, Joyce Carol Oates, Tom Wolfe, Grace Paley, and Henry Louis Gates, Jr.. Charters also explores the humorous side of the Beat generation, its place in post-war American culture, and the contribution of the important women authors who also wrote Beat.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've always admired Charters work concerning the Beats . It's scholarly and entertaining at the same time. Back in the sixties, if you asked an English professor why Beats weren't covered in the textbook ,you'd probably get a sideways look of disdain. If I were teaching a course on American Lit today, this would be mandatory. Some of the source material has been more or less unobtainable which makes this a true goldmine. It always seems like the Beat movement as a literary topic has been pretty much exhausted, but Ms. Charters has proven that not to be true.

This anthology has some interesting material, particularly the excerpts from the "beats" themselves

and the panel discussion of "beat women" at the end. But it leaves out some of the most interesting beats (Philip Whalen, Lew Welch, Kirby Doyle, Lenore Kandel, Richard Brautigan, Albert Saijo etc.) while larding the fat volume with writers who just boringly interpreted or reviewed the beats (Joyce Carol Oates, Alfred Kazin, Mary McCarthy etc.), who were irrelevant to the beats (Anatole Broyard, Jack Spicer, John Updike etc.), or who secretly disliked or openly hated the beats (Norman Podhoretz, William Carlos Williams, Diana Trilling, Kenneth Rexroth etc.) Not really much soul in that. What's the point of making academic hay out of the most anti-academic writers of the 20th century? Well of course the point is--making academic hay, in this case by an author who doesn't seem to care much for the beats herself. Like what F. Scott Fitzgerald said about his Princeton poetry professors who really hated poetry.

Realistic analysis of the Beat Generation. Studying this subject for a college course and found the book helpful. Thanks for asking

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