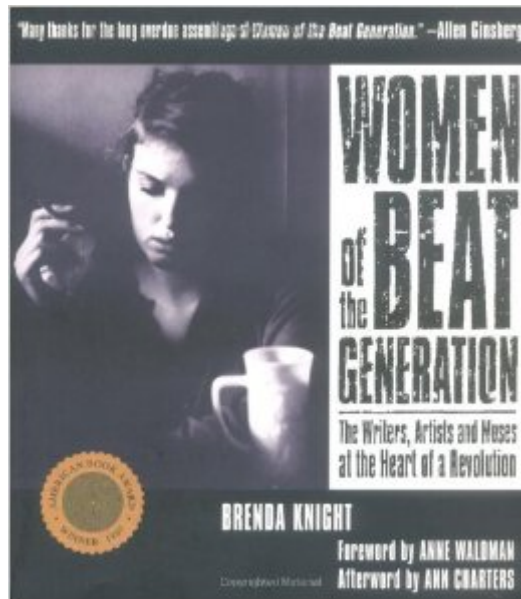


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Women Of The Beat Generation: The Writers, Artists And Muses At The Heart Of A Revolution



Synopsis

Winner of an American Book Award, this collection is an unprecedented exploration of the lives, writings, and astonishing stories of the long-overlooked women of the Beat Generation from the famous -- Carolyn Cassady & Jan Kerouac -- to the relatively undiscovered -- Mary Fabilli & Helen Adam. The art, prose, & poetry selected represent the full range & development of the work of 40 women, highlighting the lives & work of these famed iconoclasts.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For a group that is now remembered as a progressive voice in the ultra-conformist wilderness of the 1950s, the Beats were a surprisingly chauvinistic bunch of guys, all too ordinary for their time. That unfortunate fact helps explain the relative obscurity of most of the women who ran with, influenced and, in some cases, loved them. (You probably know that William S. Burroughs accidentally murdered his common-law wife while playing William Tell, but do you know her name?) This wonderful volume goes a long way towards correcting that oversight. Featuring previously unpublished letters, rare pictures and - best of all - a generous sampling of creative works, it's a near-perfect survey of the Beats' female contemporaries, lovers and even a few of their precursors. Although most of the women profiled here published at least one work in their own right at some point, many of those are not currently in print anywhere else. Additionally, some of the poems and stories here are previously unpublished, and in the case of many of the wives and lovers (referred to as "The Muses"), the works presented here are by far the most intimate look at their

lives published thus far. In short, there's something here for everyone: a good starting point for newcomers to the Beats as well as a good supplementary piece for even the most serious students of women's literature.

This a good addition to the true beat fan's bookshelf. The histories of the women who took part in the beat movement and the excellent photos are worth the price alone. But you may find yourself surprised by the quality of some of the work. I ended up reading "Door Wide Open" by Joyce Johnson after finishing this book and enjoyed it immensely. The section on Denise Levertov is great as well. The most enjoyable part of the book for me was the section on Elise Cowan. Cowan represents what Beat really is. She never produced a large, lasting amount of work, but she was a street soldier on the scene, down in the dirt, living the beat dream. Cowan was a lover to Allen Ginsberg, a friend to Joyce Johnson, a fling to Jack Kerouac, and a beautifully tragic figure of the time. If you want to dig deep in the beat and explore all of the characters, then invest in this book.

The Women of the Beat Generation gives a rare and clear window into the past of how these women helped shape a revolution that changed their present and influenced the future for decades to come. This book allows us to feel what it was like to be "out there" as round pegs barely fitting into square holes. With this book Brenda L Knight has thoughtfully brought to the fore, in one book, these known and little known women for the world to see.

Yes, there were women writing as well, and doing all the other cool stuff at the time. Many of them are still writing or continued to write long after their affair with the "beat" generation. This book is a great introduction to these writers. It's very informative, has just enough of the good gossip and lots of really great writing.

I took a class on Beat writers and not one of these women was even mentioned so I got this book and it has it all -the history, biographies, never-before-published poetry and establishes these women in all their importance. My favorite aspect is the rare archival photographs which add so much to the deep narrative. Kudos to author Brenda Knight for doing what nobody did before-share this hidden history of the Beat Generation.

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