



Adapting the Beat Poets: Burroughs, Ginsberg, and Kerouac on Screen (Film and History)

Michael J. Prince

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In the post-World War II era, authors of the beat generation produced some of the most enduring literature of the day. More than six decades since, work of the Beat Poets conjures images of unconventionality, defiance, and a changing consciousness that permeated the 1950s and 60s. In recent years, the key texts of Beat authors such as Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs, and Jack Kerouac have been appropriated for a new generation in feature-length films, graphic novels, and other media.

In *Adapting the Beat Poets: Burroughs, Ginsberg, and Kerouac on Screen*, Michael J. Prince examines how works by these authors have been translated to film. Looking primarily at three key works—Burroughs’ *Naked Lunch*, Ginsberg’s *Howl*, and Kerouac’s *On the Road*—Prince considers how Beat literature has been significantly altered by the unintended intrusion of irony or other inflections. Prince also explores how these screen adaptations offer evidence of a growing cultural thirst for authenticity, even as mediated in postmodern works. Additional works discussed in this volume include *The Subterraneans*, *Towers Open Fire*, *The Junky’s Christmas*, and *Big Sur*.

By examining the screen versions of the Beat triumvirate’s creations, this volume questions the ways in which their original works serve as artistic anchors and whether these films honor the authentic intent of the authors. *Adapting the Beat Poets* is a valuable resource for anyone studying the beat generation, including scholars of literature, film, and American history.

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