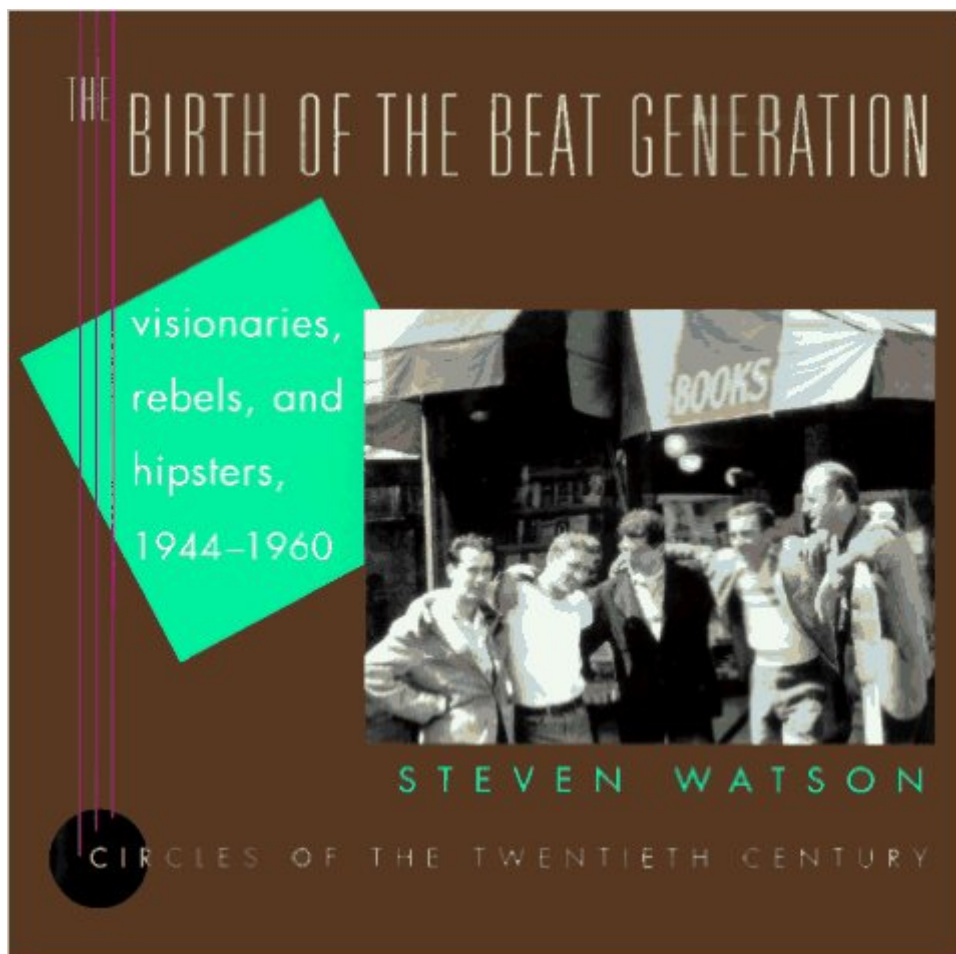


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# The Birth Of The Beat Generation: Visionaries, Rebels, And Hipsters, 1944-1960 (Circles Of The Twentieth Century)



## Synopsis

The second volume in the acclaimed series that brings to life the groups of avant-garde writers, artists, and patrons who were keystones of what has come to be called Modernism, this book sheds new light on the hard-living, maverick poets and novelists--William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, and others--who coalesced into the Beats. Illustrations.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In *The Birth of the Beat Generation*, Steven Watson takes the reader on a trip through the ups and downs of the main characters of the Beat movement of the 1950s. Beginning with a simple scene setting, he dives right into the childhood years of the major Beat icons. Afterwards, his narrative changes from person as subject to event as subject. Following the introductions of Burroughs, Kerouac, and Ginsberg, each new subsection is informally titled by events Watson considers to be important factors in the evolution of the Beats, i.e. "Getting Published I: The Town and the City," "Ginsberg Visits the Cassadys," and "The Renaissance in High Gear." It is interesting how these men, meeting each other early in their collegiate careers, always gravitated back to one another. There may have been miles, and sometimes even an ocean, separating them, but they were never truly apart for very long: trips across the country, to Mexico and South America, to Tangiers, to Paris; trips into unknown parts of their psyches; and, finally, trips back home. No matter how many trips they took, they always returned to each other. Watson shows how these friendships borne out of feelings of alienation and euphoria lasted for most of their lifetimes. The

book is divided into sections and subsections rather than traditional chapters. This structure can be distracting and unnecessary. It seems as though Watson is attempting to channel some type of Beat influence by avoiding a traditional structure. If this is the case, he is unsuccessful in âœBeatâ •-ifying his text. In addition, the book contains much substance about the Beat Generation, but has little new information for the reader. It also lacks analysis and interpretation.

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