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Salem Press Announces a New Addition to the *Critical Insights* Series *Critical Insights: On the Road*

Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* is one of the most famous works produced by a so-called "beat" writer—one of a group of nonconformists who shocked many of their contemporaries not only because of the works they produced but also because of the lives they lived. Initially attacked for its celebration of seemingly free-spirited attitudes and behavior, *On the Road* has lately been increasingly criticized for its allegedly outdated views, especially involving women. This volume examines, among many other topics, why *On the Road* remained popular for decades after it was published, and why it has been the target of strong criticism, and how that criticism has changed, over the years.

This volume, like all others in the *Critical Insights* series, is divided into several sections. It begins with an introductory "About This Volume" essay, followed by another work titled "Jack Kerouac, *On the Road*, and the Myth of the West," by Matt Theado. This is followed by a Biography of Jack Kerouac written by volume editor Robert C. Evans.

A collection of four critical contexts essays are intended to treat the novel

- 1) From a historical vantage point
- 2) In terms of its critical reception
- 3) Using a specific critical lens
- 4) And by comparing and contrasting it with another important work.

This section opens with an essay by editor Robert C. Evans titled, "Juvenile Delinquency in / and Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*," followed by a piece by Joyce Ahn, "Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*: A Survey of Recent Criticism," This essay discusses how both scholars and critics approach Kerouac's novel using many different perspectives and interpretive lenses such as race, class, gender theories, and more to reveal new meanings of the novel. The following two articles are both written by Robert C. Evans. The first, "Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* and Fears of Drug Addiction in the 1950s," explores initial reviews of *On the Road* and the worry of its cultural impact with the alleged glorification of drugs (and alcohol) that would only exacerbate the perceived epidemic in the United States in the 1950s. In the final essay, "Beats or 'Brats'? Kerouac's *On the Road* and Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*," Evans compares the two novels while drawing comparisons to several important lessons each work highlights when it comes to discussing the Great Depression, the road, and the American Dream.

Following these four Critical Context essays is the **Critical Readings** section of this book, which contains the following essays:

- Early Reviews of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* as Literature and Cultural Document, by Robert C. Evans
- The Artistry of Kerouac's *On the Road*: A Close Reading of a Sample Paragraph, by Lindsay Sears
- Youth, Irresponsibility, the Good Life and Other Philosophical Aspects of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, by Franco Manni
- Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*: Key Ideas in a Key Historical Moment, by Franco Manni
- Road Work Ahead, Alternate Route Advised: Jack Kerouac and *On the Road*'s Circuitous Connection to Naturalism, by Michael J. Martin
- "Joyous alleys full of promise": Literary Memory, Artistic Ideals, and American Manliness in Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, by Jesse Gipko
- On the Road with William Saroyan, by David Stephen Calonne
- On the Road with the Merry Pranksters: Neal Cassady's Influence on the Psychedelic Revolution, by S.G. Ellerhoff
- Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*: Some Important Critical Perspectives, by Eric J. Sterling
- The 2012 Film of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*: A Survey of Reviews, by Jordan Bailey
- Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*: Conclusion of the Novel and Film, by Jordan Bailey
- Appendix: Jack Kerouac's Hometown: Photos from the Years of His Youth

Each essay in *Critical Insights: On the Road* includes a list of **Works Cited** and detailed endnotes. In the final section, **Resources**, easy-to-follow lists are provided to help guide the reader through important dates and moments in the author's life, beginning with a **Chronology of Jack Kerouac's Life**. This is followed by a list of **Works by Jack Kerouac** and a **Bibliography**. Finally, this section closes with an **About the Editor** section, **Contributors**, and a detailed **Index**.

The *Critical Insights* Series distills the best of both classic and current literary criticism of the world's most studied literature. Edited and written by some of academia's most distinguished literary scholars, *Critical Insights: On the Road* provides authoritative, in-depth scholarship that students and researchers will rely on for years. This volume is destined to become a valuable purchase for all.

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