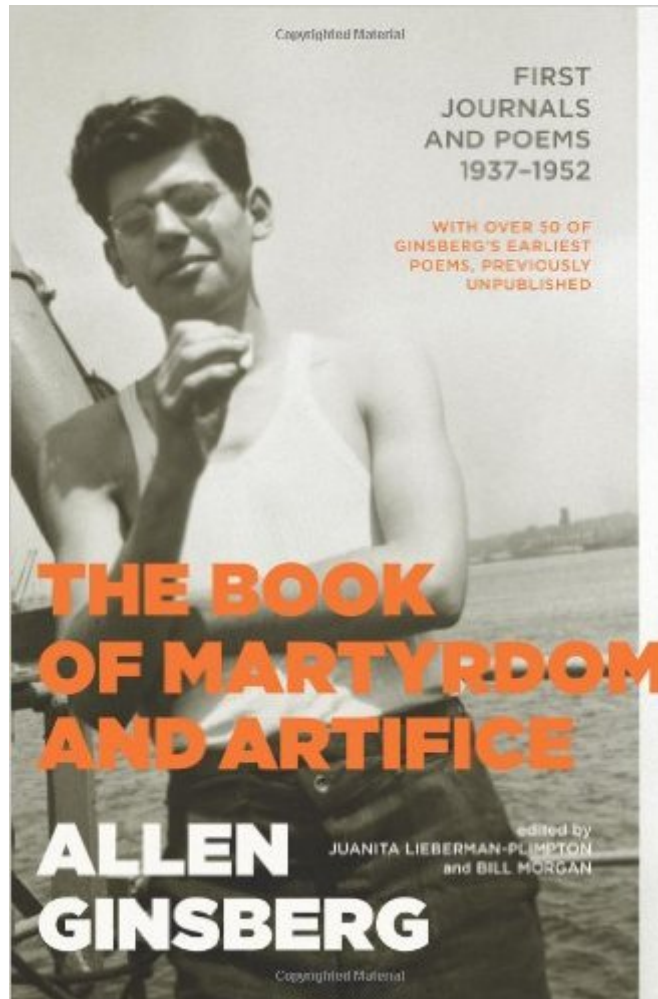


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# The Book Of Martyrdom And Artifice: First Journals And Poems 1937-1952



## Synopsis

Allen Ginsberg (1926-1997) kept journals his entire life, beginning at the age of eleven. These first journals detail the inner thoughts of the awkward boy from Paterson, New Jersey, who would become the major poet and spokesperson of the literary phenomenon called the Beat Generation. *The Book of Martyrdom and Artifice* covers the most important and formative years of Ginsberg's storied life. It was during these years that he met Jack Kerouac and William S. Burroughs, both of whom would become lifelong friends and significant literary figures. Ginsberg's journals--so candid he insisted they be published only after his death--also document his relationships with such notable figures of Beat lore as Carl Solomon, Lucien Carr, and Herbert Huncke. Conversations with Kerouac, his beloved muse Neal Cassady, and others have been transcribed from Ginsberg's memory, and information will be found here relating to the famous murder of David Kammerer by Carr--a startlingly violent chapter in Beat prehistory--which has been credited in New York magazine as "giving birth to the Beat Generation." It was also during this period that he began to recognize his homosexuality, and to think of himself as a poet. Illustrated with photos from Ginsberg's private archive and enhanced by an appendix of over 100 of Ginsberg's earliest poems, *The Book of Martyrdom and Artifice* is a major literary event.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I wish I could have written like that when I was 11. I wish I could write like that now. Fascinating on many levels, from the literary to the prurient. My copy is bound starting with the last page of the

index, page five hundred and something, going backward. I tried to find some clue if that was the way it was intended, or if my copy is a rare (e-bay worthy) fluke. So far, I have found no answer within the book itself, although I am not by any means finished. Does anyone know? Is that the zen like pranksterish way its supposed to be, or did someone at DaCapo screw up?NOTE: After much painstaking research, I have been able to discover that MY copy of the book was bound on the wrong side, and that ALL the OTHERS are bound the right way. So I'm going to shrink wrap it and sell it on e-bay in 50 years for millions of yuan.

A very interesting insight to the mind of the young, blossoming poet. After reading this book I feel I have a significantly deeper understanding of Ginsberg's poetry and the context surrounding the Beat Generation. From a very early age Allen had an eloquent and informed way of writing and possessed a certain vanity that only seemed to strengthen with age. While aspects of the reading got a bit tedious for me, such as his dwelling in obsessive heartache over a seemingly apathetic Neil Cassidy, I felt this was one of the most interesting journals of a writer I've yet to read. Some finer details I enjoyed were his monthly lists of books he'd read or music he'd bought, his written accounts of his dreams (some of which became poems) and the addition of relevant letters he'd sent and received from his friends or parents. I definitely recommend this book to any fan of Ginsberg's poetry or influence, or any a Beat Generation fan in general.

Ginsberg was perhaps the defining person of the Beat Generation. Technically I suppose that to be a true member of the beat generation club you had to be a personal friend of Ginsberg (although he never claimed to be the leader). It's also possible that being friends of some other members of the cordon of friends around him might count as well. Or, who knows, perhaps it could be anyone who shares the philosophy. Anyway, this book might be called the early years of a Beat Generation Poet. It consists of journal entries from his early years, along with about 100 poems, some 65 of which have never been published. The entries are varied in subject, they reflect his thinking at the time. They are also a look inside a persons head that we don't often get to see. They describe the time he spent in psychiatric hospitals, his earliest homosexual feelings, the mental illness of his mother, and the early seeking of a religious home. This is not a biography, it is the writings of the man himself, intended for publication only after his death.

The Book of Martyrdom and Artifice: First Journals and Poems 1937-1952 is edited by Bill Morgan and Juanita Lieberman-Plimpton and offers a rare view of the poet during his formative years rather

than the more commonly covered later life works. As such, this will serve as a fitting and important introduction for both college-level and casual Ginsberg enthusiasts, surveying the contents of candid journals allowed to see publication only after his death, and including conversations with Jack Kerouac and other notable contemporaries. In packing in elements of his personal life and family relationships, succeeds in displaying many hitherto-unrevealed aspects of Ginsberg's life and personality - essential keys for a thorough, in-depth understanding of his writings. Diane C.

DonovanCalifornia Bookwatch

I've been reading Ginsberg's books for decades and I must say that he did a pretty good job in this one. thanks!

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