



Hunter S. Thompson's personal copy of "The Dharma Bums"

Date

1958

Primary Maker

Jack Kerouac

Medium

Paper

Description

The Dharma Bums by Jack Kerouac, owned by Hunter S. Thompson. A first edition copy, with hardcover. The book features a black cover with a central image of a landscape. Throughout the book are Thompson's handwritten notes in various colors of pen, discussing Kerouac's writing style and interesting passages. According to

Thompson's widow, Anita Thompson, Hunter purchased this book soon after it was released in 1958. She stated that Thompson was impressed with Kerouac, and this book inspired much of his later Gonzo work. Hunter S. Thompson (1937-2005) was an American journalist and author known for creating the "Gonzo" journalism genre, where the lines between fiction and nonfiction are blurred and the writer is a participant and critical figure in the events being reported. Thompson began his journalism career at a young age and traveled throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, and South America working as a freelance journalist. Thompson's 1966 story about the Hells Angel motorcycle club, which he adapted into a 1967 novel *Hell's Angels: The Strange and Terrible Saga of the Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs*, was his first widely successful work and told of his time living amongst the group's chapters in San Francisco and Oakland, California. In 1971, Thompson wrote a serialized article for *Rolling Stone* on his experiences with Mexican-American activist and attorney Oscar Zeta Acosta while in Las Vegas, and was later published as the novel *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*. Continuing to hone his first-person Gonzo journalism style, Thompson wrote of himself (as Raoul Duke) and Dr. Gonzo (Acosta) searching for the American Dream in Las Vegas while exploring themes such as drug use and the 1960s counterculture movement. In 1972, he was hired by *Rolling Stone* to cover that year's presidential election, which led to the publishing of *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* first as a serialized set of *Rolling Stone* articles and later as a 1973 novel. Thompson's Gonzo persona became part of his real life personality, where he often credited his use of alcohol and illicit drugs as the key to his creativity. He earned a cult following later in life as his works were adapted into major motion pictures. The 1998 film adaptation of *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* starred Johnny Depp as Raoul Duke and Benicio del Toro as Dr. Gonzo, helping to further

Thompson's cultural mystique. Thompson lived out his later years at Owl Farm, his home outside of Aspen, Colorado. He published infrequently until 2000, when he wrote a weekly sports column for ESPN until his death. Thompson died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound at Owl Farm on February 20, 2005. Jack Kerouac (1922-1969), born Jean-Louis Lebris de K  rouac, was a novelist and poet who was a pioneer of the Beat movement in the mid-20th century. Kerouac's second book, *On the Road*, is credited as one of the seminal writings of the Beat and American Counterculture movements, and his influence was wide-ranging into the popular music of the 1960s and beyond. Kerouac was born on March 12, 1922, in Lowell, Massachusetts. He attended Columbia University in New York City, where he met several of his future Beat Generation collaborators, including Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs, and Neal Cassady. Kerouac wrote his first novel, *The Town and the City*, in 1950, which was met with limited critical reception. His second novel, *On the Road*, was written in 1951, but was not published until 1957. *On the Road* was hailed as a defining work in the counterculture movement that became known as the Beat Generation, owing to its spontaneous and stream of consciousness style that reflected jazz and bop music of the era. *On the Road* was a semi-autobiographical tale of Kerouac and his friends travels throughout the United States, which espoused independent thinking and lifestyles that went against the conventional thinking of the time. This novel, along with Ginsberg's *Howl* (1956) and Burroughs' *Naked Lunch* (1959), formed the basis for the Beat Generation. Kerouac's follow up novel, *The Dharma Bums* (1958), expanded upon his work in *On the Road*, and explored a Buddhist approach to Kerouac's lived experiences. *On the Road* and *The Dharma Bums* served as direct influences to the hippie and anti-establishment counterculture of the 1960s, where social and sexual freedom pushed up against traditional authority in similar ways to the earlier Beat Generation. Kerouac published 13 novels and numerous works of poetry throughout his lifetime, with several more novels and compiled works being released posthumously. Numerous artists credit Kerouac as an influence for their work, including Bob Dylan, The Beatles, the Grateful Dead, and the Doors. Kerouac died on October 21, 1969, aged 47.

Dimensions

Overall: 8 1/4 x 5 1/2 x 1 in. (21 x 14 x 2.5 cm)