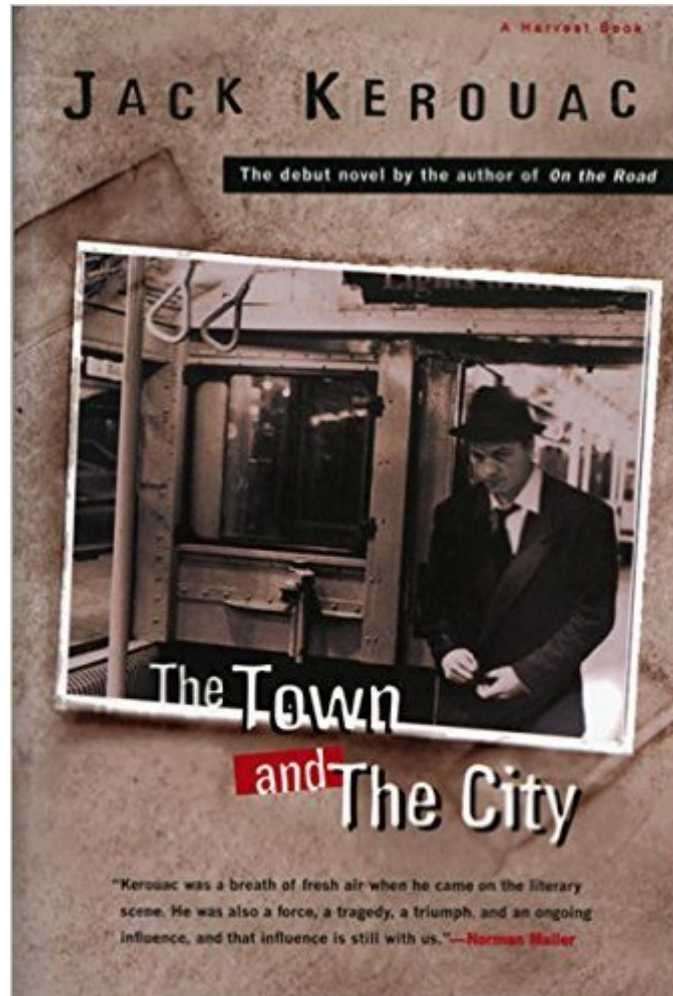


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The Town And The City



Synopsis

In this compelling first novel, Kerouac draws on his New England mill-town boyhood to create the world of George and Marguerite Martin and their eight children, each endowed with an energy and a vision of life.

Book Information

Series: Harvest Book

Paperback: 512 pages

Publisher: Mariner Books; 9/21/70 edition (October 21, 1970)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0156907909

ISBN-13: 978-0156907903

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 1.2 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (33 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #403,405 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Movements & Periods > Beat Generation](#) #13658 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Contemporary](#)

Customer Reviews

Yes, this is Kerouac's first published novel. Yes, it is fundamentally autobiographical. Yes, it is stylistically derivative of Thomas Wolfe's epic novels. But there is more here for Kerouac devotees than these standard descriptions. First, when centered between the works written immediately before and after *The Town and the City* (specifically, the selections of short pieces recently published in *Atop an Underwood* and Kerouac's second published novel, *On the Road*) a clear picture of a writer's development emerges. *The Town and the City* has a sustained narrative that builds to a satisfying conclusion. This would change over time as Kerouac became more focused on episodic writing in his novels--for instance, lengthy descriptions of jazz club settings in *The Subterraneans*, or maybe the best example, the tape transcriptions of conversations with Neal Cassady in *Visions of Cody*--and found little need for pure resolution. The beginning of this shift is noticeable in *On the Road*, when the detailed re-creation of a car ride takes precedent over plot. This type of writing is not to be found in *The Town and the City*. Second, Kerouac's development as a human being presents itself as his themes are precipitated by the death of his father and the implicit responsibility for his family Kerouac (embodied in the character of Peter) would wrestle with

for the rest of his life. Third, Kerouac, almost shockingly, finds his literary voice in the final two-hundred pages of the novel.

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