

daily nebraskan entertainment

Biography illuminates life of author Jack Kerouac

Kerouac, by Ann Charters

If you're searching for a possible paper in English literature, then Jack Kerouac is your man.

For those who are interested in the author's life and its effect on his writings, you can be comforted to know that at least five of his novels dealt with experiences in his early years. Or if an Oedipus complex is your thing, you might be interested to know that after three shallow marriages, Kerouac said he wanted to marry someone like his mother.

Ann Charters, in her book *Kerouac*, lets you wonder about these and other possibilities.

Charters begins with Kerouac's birth in 1922 in Lowell, Mass. She details his childhood, the death of his brother, Gerald, and Kerouac's athletic ambitions that led to a scholarship and short football career at Columbia University.

bruce nelson funny papers

Kerouac got more than a broken leg in football from Columbia. Before dropping out in his sophomore year, he absorbed an intense desire to write. It had to wait, however, for World War II and a brief stint with the Merchant Marine, who described Kerouac in his discharge as indifferent.

Kerouac then left for New York to write about his life and there met Allen Ginsberg and William S. Burroughs. Both inspired Kerouac's

artistic desires. Kerouac spent the rest of his life drinking, traveling and then writing about it, until alcohol killed him on Oct. 21, 1969.

For many, Kerouac's novel *On the Road* was the beginning of the "beat generation". The drugs, the Zen Buddhism and the bumming around the country that are now everyday things were in part spawned by the writings of Kerouac and his cohorts.

Charters, who knew Kerouac, is sympathetic, perhaps too sympathetic. Kerouac's life is pictured as worse than any of the characters he created and is almost a classic story of an artist destroyed by his own success.

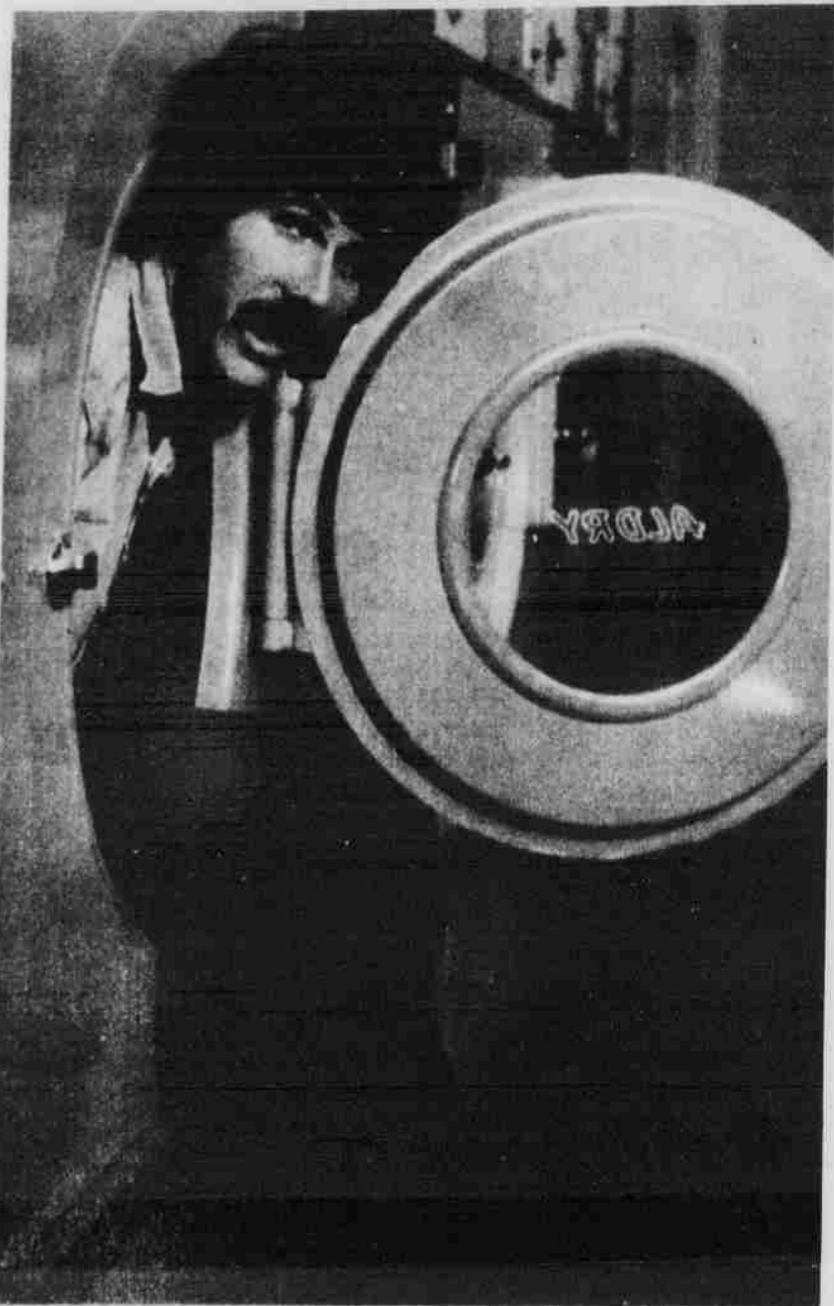
The book is demythifying, but Charters is still too adoring. She rarely says a negative thing about Kerouac's books. You also get the impression that Charters thinks everything in Kerouac's life was equally important because she gives everything equal time.

This lack of any overall theme or idea makes the book somewhat heavy. These shortcomings are small, however, and the biography is an excellent one.

If you've read some of Kerouac's books, you'll find his biography illuminating and if you haven't, you'll find it a good introduction to the man.

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If you didn't have the money to get it in hardback, *Johnny We Hardly Knew Ye*, by Kenneth O'Donnell and David Powers, will be out in the next few weeks in paperback. It's interesting and better than the usual Kennedy paraphernalia.



Michael Montgomery represents a growing class of independent filmmakers.

Taiwanese opera artists to perform

Three members of the National Chinese Opera Theatre (Taiwan)—a director, an actress and a tumbler—will be in the Union South Crib at 4 p.m. today.

Chinese opera includes a variety of non-singing acts, unlike Western opera. The 80-member opera company includes artists in many different areas, and is currently on tour throughout the United States to represent Nationalist China.

The entire company, featured in this week's *Time* magazine, will perform at the Omaha Civic Music Hall on Oct. 12.

Changing times fell Hollywood kingdom

The kingdom of Hollywood in the 1930s and 40s was a movie-making factory. Big studios like Warner Bros., Paramount and MGM were its sovereign states, and the stars and directors that were its royalty. They made three movies a year instead of one movie every three years, as is the case today.

It was a time when movies were deeply rooted in American culture and lives.

But television and the audience's changing interests spelled the kingdom's doom. Persons attended movies for the sake of going. Now the public has become more select in viewing and planning its movie-going.

The last 15 years in cinema history have been uncertain and changing.

Filmmakers are constantly searching for new attractions that will appeal to the public. Some have ventured in bold, new directions while others prefer to play it safe with standard, money making formulas.

Companies like American International, known for producing inexpensive films with violence and sex, try to reach one type of audience. But the American Film Theater, with its eight soon-to-be-released dramatic classics, is attempting something new to reach an entirely different audience.

Out of these changes has emerged an entity nearly unknown in Hollywood's heyday, the independent filmmaker. Independent film producers have reacted against the Hollywood image and in many ways has succeeded in demystifying it.

The goals and intentions of the independent cinema are still vague. It is associated with the avant-garde. Films such as *Easy Rider* or even *Billy Jack* are in spirit similar to avant-garde films.

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The idea for this article grew from an interview I had last week with Michael Montgomery, the producer/actor of *Just Be There*, a film now showing in Lincoln.

Montgomery is a Vietnam veteran with no previous experience or background in film. Yet several years ago, he started his own company, Montgomery Productions, and began work on *Just Be There*, his first film.

Working with an inexperienced cast and crew at feature filmmaking, *Just Be There* is nonetheless a respectable effort. A comparison of production costs between his movie and a Hollywood release should further emphasize the situation.

Montgomery said he feels the American public is in the mood not only for *Just Be There*, but also for his next film something he calls a country-western adventure comedy.

In the sphere of the independent filmmaker, Michael Montgomery appears to have more in common with Hollywood than Andy Warhol or Jonas Mekas. But it also appears that he and others like him have found a place in our movie world.

why does a man join Maryknoll?

There are probably as many answers as there are individual Maryknoll priests and Brothers. Some men are deeply moved when they hear of babies dying in their mother's arms because of hunger or disease. Others are distressed by the growing anti-god, and separation between the rich and the poor nations. More are concerned about the great injustices that have been reflected upon the earth by those who possess wealth

and power to an excessive degree. Others look to learn from peoples who have grown up with a different mentality than that which is theirs. All feel that the only solution to the crises that threaten to split men asunder is the love of God as shown in the life of His Son, Jesus Christ. This love of God urges men to go forward and be missionaries so men can love one another. What could be your reason for joining Maryknoll?

If you keep saying you want to do something with your life—here's your chance to prove it



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