

# Author Takes to Road With Restless Youth

Reviewed by W. G. Rogers  
Associated Press Art Critic  
**ON THE ROAD.** By Jack Kerouac. (Viking Press. \$3.95. 310 pp.)

The Sal Paradise who tells this story—not to be differentiated in any profound way, I suspect, from author Kerouac—is living in New Jersey when the urge comes to travel. His friend Dean is in Denver so he must see Dean, Denver and “San Fran,” mountains, rivers, streets, but above all, the road. “The road is life,” he says.

When Sal, like everyone in this novel, has an urge, he wastes no time satisfying it. He gets all across the States a couple of times and into Mexico, too, thumbing rides, sponging, begging, talking his way into meals, drinks, and room and bed.

“The only people for me are the mad ones,” he says. They “dig” everything. They “dig” Denver, the Negro singer, the way a man drives, windows, the radio announcer, the crippled kid, the road and the country.

There are curious little familiar touches in these feverishly written pages: The young people suggest Henry Miller, as when they complain about American sexual inhibitions, though to be sure their own behavior is not inhibited; and they remind you again of someone out of Celine or Algren.

Yet they are Kerouac's people, for as much as each one is a fellow or each one a girl, each one is also a restlessness, a frenzy and an itch. They are our jitters and our fidgets, and this is the hectic story of the ultimate nomadism, meaningless, empty, incurable, and in its subversive way attractive. Kerouac expertly catches them all on the wing—where else

could they ever be found?—In a novel with a new, strange, peppery flavor.

## Novel of Family Life in and Around Boston

**REMEMBER ME TO GOD.** By Myron S. Kaufmann. (J. B. Lippincott Co. \$4.95. 639 pp.)

Adam and Bessie Amsterdam and their children, Richard, Harvard freshman, and his younger sister Dorothy, fill the many pages of this impressive first novel about a Jewish family in and around Boston in the opening years of the last war.

Adam is a special justice, to which he rose from butcher by hard study at night school. He is undistinguished, with only and elementary education, a man of great honesty and integrity. Bessie is conservative, with typical superficial suburban ambitions, and devout. Dorothy stutters, and has trouble finding a boy friend.

Richard is the central problem. A sensitive kid, possessing the drive we pretend to admire, he thinks about his problems: His Jewishness, his determination to succeed on Lampton and get into the Hasty Pudding Club, his longing for a girl, with his affection now centered on Jeanie, of his own faith, and now on Wimpy.

Richard is a creep, you are apt to suspect at first: you blush when he is brazen and forward, hate to believe success is won so unscrupulously, and don't understand how a boy so easily hurt himself can hurt others so easily.

There are stirring scenes — Dorothy with a Marine she picked up innocently, Adam chasing his stubborn son up the stairs of the dormitory. There is a mass of the most convincing detail, almost Dickensian in its abundance, caught by a tireless observer.

The bumbling Richard who frankly acknowledges his own worst faults, the lovable Dorothy, the staunch father, the callow mixture of college boys and girls—these are the first fine, happy offerings of an astute and talented interpreter of American life.



JACK KEROUAC