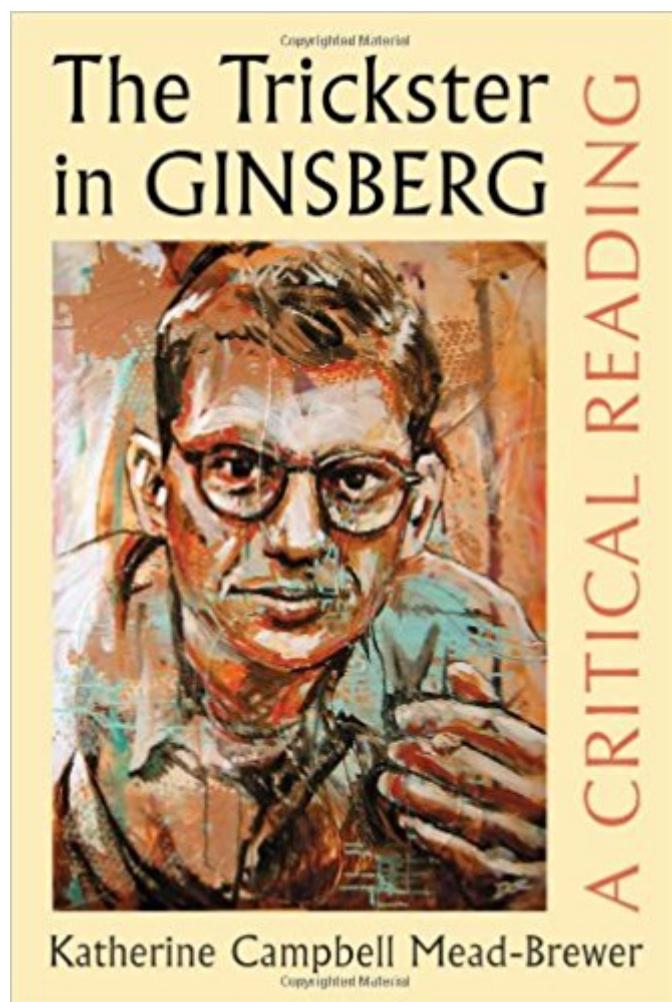


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The Trickster In Ginsberg: A Critical Reading



Synopsis

This scholarly close reading of Allen Ginsberg's "Howl" considers the iconic poem through a four-part trickster framework: appetite, boundlessness, transformative power and a proclivity for setting and falling victim to tricks and traps. The book pursues various different narratives of the trickster Coyote and the historical and biographical contexts of "Howl" from a truly interdisciplinary perspective. This study seeks to contribute to the current literature on the poetry of the Beats and of Allen Ginsberg, specifically his "Howl," and the ways it continues to expand in meaning, depth and significance today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you are interested in Ginsberg, Howl, or Native American mythology, The Trickster in Ginsberg is worth buying just for the bibliography. This book is an amazing survey of available research on all of these subjects. The End Notes and Bibliography are equal to about 25% of the page count. If you are seriously interested in literary criticism, start with the Introduction - it's incredibly dense and carefully lays out the techniques and assumptions used to analyze the subject. If you are just a Ginsberg or Howl fan, dive right into chapter 1. The book continues to offer a "close reading" of the common themes found in Howl and the Native American Trickster myth, but the author treats the subject with passion and takes on some of Ginsberg's wild and exuberant language. Howl was new to me and I read it because this book caught my attention. My life is bigger as a result. Chapter 2 begins a dive into the Trickster myth that continues throughout the book. The raw, elemental nature

of this mythology set me back at first, but the author leads you to see the fundamental universality of the themes while walking through dozens of stories. These stories were also new to me and, raised as I was on Greek mythology, I would have dismissed them without the author's lead. And nobody ever told me that the Roadrunner cartoon is rich with the symbolism of the Trickster who tries to trick and trap while ending up falling over the cliff one more time. This book does not intend to say that Howl is an intentional product of Native American thinking, if only you're smart enough to figure it out. Instead, the author points out (in the Epilogue), that more has been written about Ginsberg the life, than Ginsberg's poetry.

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