

1997

An Elegy for Allen Ginsberg

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Recommended Citation

Bossen, Colin (1997) "An Elegy for Allen Ginsberg," *Exile*: Vol. 44 : No. 1 , Article 11.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile/vol44/iss1/11>

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An Elegy for Allen Ginsberg

The day after you died,
I sat in the sun under a big tree,
smoked just a little marijuana,
and read as many of your poems as I could,
in the two hours between classes.

Where are you now, Allen Ginsberg?
Cosmic messenger, unknown mentor,
secret idol of a million kids,
obvious hero of this poem,
where are you?

Is your rebirth going well?
Are you being treated kindly for a lifetime of
flower power, LSD, civil rights, anal sex, Chicago conventions,
Jack Kerouac, the beat generation,
howls, painters' ears and poetry? And Poetry!

What fine verses you wove!
Give head to golden haired post adolescents and
write about it.
The CIA shipping dope from Thailand?
Write about it.

Still, where are you?
In bookshelves scattered across the world?
In the body of a baby dolphin?
In this poem?
In my head?

Allen Ginsberg, you were Rock 'n Rolls poet,
you toured with Dylan,
you sang with the Clash,
belted choruses while Joe Strummer banged his guitar.
You were the sixties poet, the seventies poet, the eighties poet, the nineties poet, you
were my father's poet, you were my poet and now you are
dead, God's poet, Buddha's poet.

Once,
I breathed air that you breathed,
1993, Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor,
while you "Howl"ed and banged your accordion
and taught things
and looked sad and happy
and peaceful and angry because
you were sad, happy, peaceful, angry.

You said "don't smoke the official dope"
and "Bill Burroughs he's 80,
stills smokes opium every day" and
that you missed your dead father.
You were honest.

Allen, I am afraid of this future without you,
I am scared of technology,
the government, the world.
Somehow you always comforted me
and you are dead

You the crazy old man,
forever talking about Walt Whitman,
are now with Walt Whitman.

—Colin Bossen '98