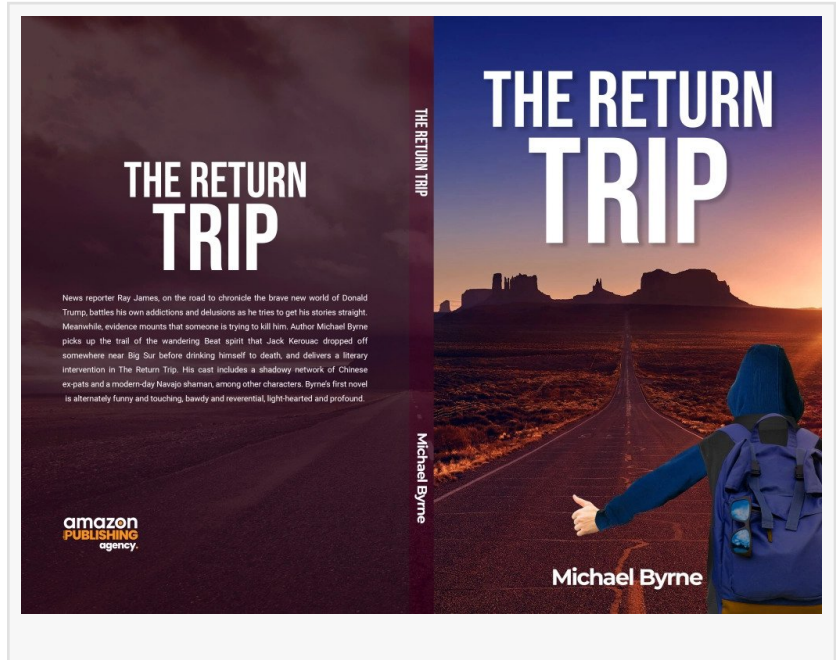


Modern-Day Odyssey Puts Recovering Beat Spirit on the Road to Uncover the Cause and Effect of Donald Trump

In 'The Return Trip,' author Michael Byrne imagines a rescue mission for a literary icon, a lonely stoned writer on the road

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Invoking the spirit of Jack Kerouac and his half-lit forays across America, explaining the unexplainable, author Michael Byrne tells the story of a reporter on the road to uncover the brave new world of Donald Trump while dealing with his own increasingly worrisome problems. In *The Return Trip*, Byrne draws from his experience as a Chinese linguist and student of Taoist internal martial arts to connect the first seven months of the Trump administration to a new take on Kerouac's *Dharma Bums*.



In imagining a writer in search of America today, Byrne has mounted a rescue mission of sorts, picking up the trail of the wandering Beat spirit that Kerouac dropped off somewhere near Big Sur before drinking himself to death, and creating a modern-day odyssey for a wandering road warrior. The writer's mission is complicated by his addictions and hedonism, and mounting evidence that someone is trying to kill him. Under the influence of more than a few intoxicants, he leads readers on a wild six-month trip through the modern American West.

Byrne's research for this novel included following programs to overcome addiction to drugs, particularly alcohol. "I've sought advice from doctors, psychologists and qigong health gurus, all of which benefited me immensely," he said. The idea for *The Return Trip* emerged during his November 2016 trip across seven states to visit Tai-Chi and qigong masters he'd met online, and whose lessons, conversations, and motivations informed the development of the story and certain characters. He chronicled his journey in *The New Dharma Bums*, one of several blogs and social media platforms he inhabits. The blogs and additional information can be found on the

author's website, <https://the-return-trip.com/>.

About the Author

Byrne has been writing professionally since high school, recruited by his hometown newspaper in Henderson, Ky., to cover news and sports. After serving as a Chinese and Vietnamese linguist for the U.S. Air Force, and earning a MA in Journalism at Indiana University, he worked at newspapers in Hollywood, Fla., and Norfolk, Va., before moving to Washington, D.C., serving first as the managing editor of Air Force Times, and then as editor of the AFL-CIO News. He worked for two decades on campaign communications as an executive with PR firms in Washington, an advocate for unions and progressive political groups.

Now Byrne has tapped into his journalism roots to create a credible tale that hangs on global events and the drama of personal struggle against addiction. The Return Trip was conceived as both a rollicking adventure story and a self-help guide for making healthy choices, he said. "This is a story for our times."

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