WALT WHITMAN: A CURRENT BIBLIOGRAPHY


Bart, Barbara, ed. Starting from Paumanok . . . 17 (Fall 2004). [Newsletter of Walt Whitman Birthplace Association, with items on association events.]


Fortenberry, Thomas. “Saxony Speaks with a Spirit (inspired by W.W.’s 1881 letter).” Mickle Street Review no. 16 (2004), http://www.micklestreet.rutgers.edu. [Poem based on Whitman’s December 20, 1881, letter to Dr. John Fitzgerald Lee about a proposed translation of Leaves of Grass into Russian.]


George, Philip Brandt. “Elegy for a Fallen Leader.” American History 38 (December 2003), 53. [Reprints “O Captain! My Captain!” with an introductory note associating the assassination of Lincoln with that of Kennedy.]

Gibian, Peter. “Conversations with Whitman.” Mickle Street Review no. 16 (2004), http://www.micklestreet.rutgers.edu. [Suggests Horace Traubel’s With Walt Whitman in Camden is a record of a “talk circle” much like those other “interactive dialogues” that Whitman took part in his whole life, from Pfaff’s saloon to Civil War hospitals to Anne Gilchrist’s parlor; goes on to suggest how Whitman’s poems “are often crucially shaped by these experiences of talk, and grounded in his idiosyncratic notions of the dynamics of spoken conversation,” emphasizing how Whitman and his poetry must be understood in the historical context of salons, saloons, drawing rooms, and other sites of spirited talk during this “age of conversation.”]


Haddox, Thomas F. “Whitman’s End of History: ‘As I sat Alone by Blue Ontario’s Shore,’ *Democratic Vistas,* and the Postbellum Politics of Nostalgia.” *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 22 (Summer 2004), 1-22. [Examines the 1867 poem “As I sat Alone by Blue Ontario’s Shore” and compares it to its antebellum version (“Poem of Many In One”) and to *Democratic Vistas,* interrogating Whitman’s “refusal to engage with the complexities of the present moment” as, with “Hegelian logic,” he “proposes the end of history in the rise of the United States,” conflating poet, people, and nation in a kind of transcendence of history, a transcendence that is troubled (but not defeated) by the Civil War and the social unrest of the Reconstruction period: “both his antebellum and postbellum poetry in fact show a frustration with politics that flows directly from his desire to identify himself with the nation, to unite his poetic will with an American democratic essence.”]

Handley, George B. “On Reading South in the New World: Whitman, Martí, Glissant, and the Hegelian Dialectic.” *Mississippi Quarterly* 56 (Fall 2003), 521-544. [Investigates José Martí’s readings and rewritings of Whitman and argues that “in the proto-modernist era of the late nineteenth century, the idea of a hemispheric New World exceptionalism was particularly appealing to Whitman and Martí because it offered a North/South axis that promised liberation from Old World tyranny”; this “creole vision of North/South exceptionalism” emphasized “commonalities in the Americas” unlike the more dominant notion of the “westward movement of empire.”]


Kerley, Barbara. *Walt Whitman: Words for America.* Scholastic Press, 2004. [Juvenile nonfiction about Whitman’s life, focusing on his service as a nurse during the Civil War; illustrated by Brian Selznick.]


“erotic” responses to opera, finding opera “to be the medium in which Whitman’s sexuality achieves its greatest clarity and intensity”; explicates opera passages in “Song of Myself,” “A Singer in Prison,” and “Proud Music of the Storm.”

Lafreniere, Steve. “My Bohemia.” New York Times Magazine (October 3, 2004), 70-75. [About artist Elizabeth Peyton, with reproductions of some of her portraits, including a pencil drawing of Whitman called “Walt” (74), about which Peyton says, “I’d been thinking about Whitman being a free spirit in a very conservative time. . . . How subversive that was.”]


Loving, Jerome. “‘Going to Bed’: A Recovered Whitman Article from the Brooklyn Daily Eagle.” Walt Whitman Quarterly Review 22 (Summer 2004), 28-30. [Reprints and analyzes a recently rediscovered 1847 newspaper article by Whitman about sleep, and associates the article with “Song of Myself” and “The Sleepers.”]


Martin, Doug. A Study of Walt Whitman’s Mimetic Prosody: Free-Bound and Full Circle. Lewiston, ME: Edwin Mellen, 2004. [Examines the ways that Leaves of Grass “combines both free verse and traditional prosody in mimetic ways,” examining the conventional early poems and then looking at the “forward prosody” of the first edition of Leaves; the “sex prosody” of “Children of Adam,” “Calamus,” and other “works on copulation”; the “poetic noise of war” in Drum-Taps; Whitman’s “walking and sea-drifting rhythm”; and the “conventional metrics” of his later poetry.]

Masel, Carolyn. “Horace Traubel and J. W. Wallace: Beyond Absence.” Mickle Street Review no. 16 (2004), http://www.micklestreet.rutgers.edu. [Examines the correspondence (from the 1890s to 1919) between Horace Traubel and J. W. Wallace, the leader of the Bolton, England, Whitmanites, and traces their agreements and disagreements over personal matters and over how to read Whitman and how to organize Whitman-related activities; argues that “their political, sexual and religious views converged without ever quite meeting.”]


Moores, D. J. “Wedded in Natural Matrimony: Cosmic Love in Wordsworth and Whitman.” Renascence 56 (Spring 2004), 161-179. [Argues that “one of the most profound connections” between Whitman and William Wordsworth “is their privileging of love, which informs their orientation toward God and spirit, nature and the cosmos, knowledge and the imagination, self-fulfillment and psychological health”; and claims that “Wordsworth and Whitman are the only two Romantics who value love above all else; love eclipses reason, progress, equality, knowledge, and even democracy in their verse.”]
Nicholson, Karen, ed. "Conversations" (Fall/Winter 2004). [Newsletter of the Walt Whitman Association, Camden, New Jersey, with news of association membership and events; this issue contains the Walt Whitman Association 2004 High School Poetry Contest winners, including Kim Kelley’s “I hear America weeping” (3) and Molly Nusbaum’s “Her Tune Has Changed” (3), both playing off Whitman’s “I Hear America Singing.”]

Orr, Gregory. Poetry as Survival. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2002. [Chapter 12, “Whitman and the Habit of Dazzle” (159-170), searches for the origin of Whitman’s remarkable poetic vision that wishes to include and celebrate us all, with all our flaws and failures,” and, while admitting that “Whitman himself is surprisingly reticent about the details of his life,” concludes that “quite simply, Whitman was gay” and “that to be gay in an intolerant, heterosexual world is to be an outsider,” leading to “Whitman’s transformative genius: to be one of the ultimate outsiders in his actual life and yet to create a persona in his poetic life, a ‘Walt Whitman’ who is the ultimate insider.”]

Plumly, Stanley. Argument and Song: Sources and Silences in Poetry. New York: Handsel Books, 2003. [“The Abrupt Edge” (1-19) offers a reading of the last sections of “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d,” suggesting that “Whitman has imagined the unimaginable because he has prepared for and listened to the spirit in the wood, the hermit thrush—solitary and secret except at the articulate edge.”]


Richards, Page. “Whitman’s Frames.” Dalhousie Review 83 (Autumn 2003), 355-368. [Examines the style of Whitman’s various prefaces, focusing mainly on the 1855 Preface and arguing that a key feature is the comic element resulting from a tension between different historically-mediated voices,” framed in such a way so as to exploit rhetorical confusion” and create a “humour that is dead serious.”]


Robertson, Michael. “The Gospel According to Horace: Horace Traubel and the Walt Whitman Fellowship.” Mickle Street Review no. 16 (2004), http://www.micklestreet.rutgers.edu. [Examines the Traubel-Whitman relationship, proposing that Traubel was Whitman’s “chosen disciple” in the “religious circle” that formed about the poet; traces Traubel’s efforts to organize a Whitman “religious movement” in the years following the poet’s death and
discusses how he attempted to meld Whitmanism with socialism, Ethical Culture, theosophy, spiritualism, suffragism, and other reform movements.]


Saitoh, Alan Botsford. “Libertad’s Difficult Terms.” Mickle Street Review no. 16 (2004), http://www.micklestreet.rutgers.edu. [Poem, beginning “Emulous of your enterprise, Walt, / En masse we are, taking your chuff.”]


Stewart, Susan. Poetry and the Fate of the Senses. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001. [Chapter 7, “Lyric Counter Epic,” has a section on Whitman’s Drum-Taps (300-302), explicating “Come Up from the Fields, Father,” and examining “how fratricide blocks the enthusiasm of epic” and how Whitman uses the “gesture of individuation” in “a deliberate effort to recognize the face of the other within a context of unlimited human will—that context of organized human violence on a level of abstraction where the tragedy of the individual is discounted.”]


Ueshima, Kenkichi. “Hoittoman to Bureiku” [“Whitman and Blake”]. Eigo Seinen [The Rising Generation] 150 (May 2004), 95. [Compares the use of anastrophe in Section 24 of “Song of Myself” and in William Blake’s “Infant Joy”; in Japanese.]

Whitman Thinking: Transcription, Reprise, and Temptations Resisted” (37-63), examines Whitman’s “characteristic processes of thinking by considering his recourse to a single structural genre—that of the reprise,” and goes on to read “three characteristic, but also significantly different, poems of reprise—’Sparkles from the Wheel,’ ‘A Noiseless Patient Spider,’ and ‘Come Up from the Fields Father,’” looking in each for “the kind of poetic thinking that the construction of reprise . . . has required.”]

Vendler, Helen. Poets Thinking: Pope, Whitman, Dickinson, Yeats. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004. [Chapter on Whitman argues that Whitman is more conscious of poetic design than is usually assumed and examines his perspectival shifts, his uses of reprises and other forms of repetition that show him to be a poet “for whom thinking must be followed by rethinking.”]

Walter, Katherine L., and Kenneth M. Price. “An Online Guide to Walt Whitman’s Dispersed Manuscripts.” Library Hi Tech 22 (2004), 277-282. [Describes a project funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and housed at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, to develop an online “unified finding aid to Walt Whitman manuscript collections held in many different institutions,” with the goal of “virtually reintegrating dispersed collections of Whitman manuscript materials using the standard for archival description, EAD.”]

Whitaker, Rick. The First Time I Met Frank O’Hara: Reading Gay American Writers. New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 2003. [The first section, “The Nineteenth Century,” contains several meditations on Whitman (36-45), associating Whitman’s visits to hospitals with the author’s own “days and nights . . . spent watching friends and lovers die” of AIDS; goes on to examine Whitman’s sexuality, concluding that “guessing about homosexual behavior in the nineteenth century is a mostly unprofitable business,” but asserting nonetheless that we can be certain that Whitman “was attracted—in every way—to the young soldiers he met during the Civil War.”]


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“Walt Whitman: A Current Bibliography,” covering work on Whitman from 1975 to the present, is available in a fully searchable format online at the Walt Whitman Quarterly Review website (www.uiowa.edu/~wwqr) and at the Walt Whitman Archive (www.whitmanarchive.org).