



In Memoriam: Milton Hindus

ISSN 0737-0679 (Print)
ISSN 2153-3695 (Online)

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Recommended Citation

"In Memoriam: Milton Hindus." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 16 (Summer 1998), 53-53.

Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.13008/2153-3695.1604>

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IN MEMORIAM: MILTON HINDUS

Milton Hindus, whose essays appeared in the *Walt Whitman Review* and *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* from the 1960s through the 1980s, died on May 28, 1998. He was 81. The Edytha Macy Gross Professor of Humanities Emeritus at Brandeis University, Hindus was one of the thirteen original faculty members at Brandeis. He was a wide-ranging scholar whose critical, biographical, and textual works covered writers as diverse as Marcel Proust and F. Scott Fitzgerald, Louis-Ferdinand Céline and Charles Reznikoff. His book of poems, *A Broken Music Box*, appeared in 1980, and his *Essays Personal and Impersonal* appeared in 1988. A champion of Jewish writers, he published *The Old East Side*, an anthology of New York Jewish writing, in 1969. An active scholar to the end of his life—he died just after leaving the Goldfarb Library on Brandeis's campus in Waltham, Massachusetts—he published an edition of Reznikoff's selected letters just last year and was finishing work on the complete letters.

Milton Hindus's most important contributions to Whitman scholarship were two books he edited. The first, *Leaves of Grass One Hundred Years After* (Stanford University Press, 1955), brought together responses to and analyses of Whitman by an impressive group of writers including William Carlos Williams and Kenneth Burke. The second book, *Walt Whitman: The Critical Heritage* (Barnes and Noble, 1971), gathered for the first time many of the early reviews of Whitman's work and documented his complex reception from the appearance of *Leaves of Grass* in 1855 on through the first two decades following the poet's death. Hindus was always fascinated by the evolving response of readers and writers to Whitman's work. As he wrote in the introduction to *Leaves of Grass One Hundred Years After*: "Whitman is nothing if not the precursor of things to come. . . . When the true classic comes to justify him, it may be possible for some critic of the future to say of Whitman what Quintilian once said of Ennius: 'Let us revere him as we revere the sacred groves, hallowed by antiquity, whose massive and venerable oak trees are not so remarkable for beauty as for the religious awe which they inspire.'"