



Walt Whitman: A Current Bibliography, Winter/ Spring 2017

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WALT WHITMAN: A CURRENT BIBLIOGRAPHY



- Barnat, Dara. "The Age I am to Myself"; "What Spanish Moss Knows." *Poet Lore* 111 (Fall/Winter 2016). [Two poems from Barnat's forthcoming collection of 52 poems, *Be Unafraid to Walk in the Light of Nothing*, in which each poem responds to a section of "Song of Myself."]
- Barnat, Dara. *In the Absence*. Cincinnati, OH: Turning Point, 2016. [Poems, including "Walt Whitman" (34), beginning "Walt Whitman walks with me / down the street, opens / doors for me, whispers. . . ."]
- Bennett, Jane. "Whitman's Sympathies." *Political Research Quarterly* 69 (2016), 607-620. [Examines "Whitman's five shapes of Sympathy (as painful contagion, body-part, impartial acceptance, erotic attraction, and gravitational pull)," arguing that these shapes preserve "a non-modern sense of Sympathy as a natural or vital force operating below, through, and beyond human bodies or experience"; concludes by examining "the real political work" this kind of sympathy could do, especially "through the *repeated practice* of doting," creating "a world populated by porous and infectious bodies traversed by wayward proto-affections, rather than by self-possessed selves bearing moral sentiments": in this way, "we might say that in doting Whitman offers a strategy of 'slow sensing,' which can join forces with the 'slow' movements concerning food and finance."]
- Binder, Jeffrey M. "'The General Practice of the Nation': Walt Whitman, Language, and Computerized Search in the Nineteenth-Century Archive." *American Literature* 88 (September 2016), 447-475. [Investigates the role of computer "word-search" in recent literary criticism and considers "how scholars might more thoughtfully navigate the contested terrain of language in the nineteenth-century United States while exploring the digital archive"; warns how basic word-search research may miss "long-term changes in the social connotations of words that might not be immediately apparent to scholars," and uses as his main example Whitman's works from the 1850s, "not just because of his embrace of slang and other vocabularies that were unusual in poetry, but also because his prose writings on language deal with questions that are closely related to those that word search raises"; demonstrates that "attending to the large-scale linguistic change that can be observed in Google Books—especially historical shifts in the extent to which certain words are marked as technical, foreign, or novel—can pro-

vide a new perspective on Whitman's philological ideas, as well as shed light on some subtle aspects of the language of *Leaves of Grass*," especially on his use of innovative words that have since caught on and are now used commonly, thus masking our sense of their originality in Whitman's work.]

Bronson-Bartlett, Blake. "Whitman and Mathematics: An Introduction." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 34 (Fall 2016), 103-119. [Introduces this special issue of the *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* on "Whitman and Mathematics," guest-edited by Bronson-Bartlett, and offers an overview of the essays and notes appearing in the issue; reviews previous work on Whitman and mathematics (including that by Muriel Rukeyser and Kathryn Davies Lindsay); and examines concepts like "cultural mathematics" and "axiomatic set theory" to explore how "Whitman's writings support new explorations between numbers and letters."]

Buinicki, Martin. Review of Douglas A. Noverr and Jason Stacy, eds., *Walt Whitman's Selected Journalism*. *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 34 (Fall 2016), 210-213.

Buinicki, Martin. "Walt Whitman." In Coleman Hutchison, ed., *History of American Civil War Literature* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 181-194. [Discusses the impact of the Civil War on Whitman's life and career; shows how in 1863 "the poet set about remaking himself as a resident of Washington, DC"; examines "the complicated interplay between the poet's private and public writing about the war and the way that his hospital experiences shaped his subsequent poetry and prose"; and demonstrates how his "writing was forever transformed by the Civil War."]

Champagne, John. "'Il mito americano' and Masculinities of the Fascist Era." *Modern Language Review* 111 (October 2016), 988-1003. [Discusses "the contradictions of Fascist masculinity" in Italy, and examines "the reception of Walt Whitman in Fascist Italy via the Whitman ["Calamus"] songs of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Cesare Pavese's essay on Whitman, and Mario Praz's entry on Whitman in the 1937 *Enciclopedia Treccani*, and argues that "Whitman's sensibility could . . . be read as consonant with Fascist calls for a new Italian male characterized by his virility and allegedly modelled after Mussolini himself."]

Cohen, Matt, and Aaron Dinin. "Keeping Tally with Meaning: Reading Numerals in Walt Whitman's Manuscripts." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 34 (Fall 2016), 120-145. [Examines various arithmetical calculations on Whitman's

manuscript pages and suggests how “a mathematical sideways glance helps make visible a step in the process of poetic creation and the interdependence of Whitman’s mathematical skill and his poetic acts of imagination”; examines “tallying” as “Whitman’s pervasive mathematical metaphor for the poet’s task”; looks at how Whitman’s manuscript calculations at times serve as “mathematical modeling of the physical text”; and explores “Whitman’s basic mathematics education,” in which his “mathematical knowledge was generated within a pragmatic, democratic model.”]

Colangelo, Jeremy. “For the Progress of ‘Faustus and Helen’: Crane, Whitman, and the Metropolitan Progress Poem.” *Canadian Review of American Studies* 42 (Summer 2016), 182-201. [Sets out to “jump-start a scholarly discussion of the progress poem, a sorely-neglected literary form that has flourished in Anglo-American literature for almost as long as that literature has existed” and focuses the discussion on Whitman’s progress poems (“Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” and “Passage to India”) as well as Hart Crane’s “For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen” and *The Bridge*; argues that the progress poem has close relationships to the American jeremiad, both genres “founded on temporality”; discusses how Whitman synthesizes “the jeremiad with the progress poem . . . to help articulate the place that the advancement of technology and the industrialized city have in his overall poetic vision” and how “Crane’s poetry fits into the pattern that Whitman set.”]

Coles, Romand. “Walt Whitman, Jane Bennett, and the Paradox of Antagonistic Sympathy.” *Political Research Quarterly* 69 (2016), 621-625. [Engages critic Jane Bennett’s writings on Whitman’s “ecology of sympathies,” and argues that we often find “antagonistic articulations deeply intertwined with Whitman’s most sympathetic expressions”; proposes that “we use the paradoxical—even oxymoronic sounding—trope *antagonistic sympathy* to evoke this immanent relationship between affiliative and antagonistic flows, energies, and conditions for ethical and political cultivation”; and concludes that “antagonistic sympathy . . . is indispensable for radical democratic and ecological transformation in a time of rapidly intensifying planetary ecological catastrophe,” because “discourses of receptive sympathy can, in absence of antagonistic energies, . . . devitalize political vision and powers as well.”]

Davis, Theo. *Ornamental Aesthetics: The Poetry of Attending in Thoreau, Dickinson, and Whitman*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. [Argues that “Thoreau, Dickinson, and Whitman’s ornamental aesthetics belongs to a formally and philosophically distinct tradition of ornamentation in which

it is a means of marking out persons, objects, and the world—or reality itself—for attention and praise”; Chapter 3, “Whitman and the Distinction of Ornament” (141-193), argues that “Whitman’s poetry is essentially ornamental,” with ornamentation in Whitman turning on “his sense of poetry as a bestowed object, his commitment to the excessively drawn-out line and the swollen poem, and his gestures of draping and weighing upon,” out of which “he develops a poetry that lays praise and even a candid brilliance across the world”; argues that Whitman’s “poetry abjures representation for a practice of ornamental bestowing of praise,” resulting in the “politics” of his work being concerned with “proper behavior, or the appropriate and decorous,” as he “uses the associations of ornamentation with brilliant outshining and aristocratic elevation to bring a sense of torqued contention into his work, and to highlight the forceful made-ness of the world.”]

Dyer, Daniel Thomas. “America of the Heart: Whitman and Rumi.” *Patheos* (December 27, 2016), patheos.com. [Asks, “in the aftermath of the presidential election,” what Whitman has to “say to us at a time when inspiration is so sorely needed,” and suggests we best understand his message by recognizing “his affinity with mystical Islam” and particularly with the thirteenth-century Persian poet Rumi, who “expresses the same expansive dismissal of rigid dogmatism” that Whitman does, and who rejects “sexual and racial inequality.”]

Engels, Ryland. “Jan Smuts and Walt Whitman: Strange Bedfellows.” *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies* 17 (2016), 339-356. [Examines Jan Smuts’s 1895 book, *Walt Whitman: A Study in the Evolution of Personality*, in which Smuts “develops a new conception of human personality” that he applies to Whitman’s life and work; argues that “the views expressed in this early text remained fundamental to [Smuts’s] political ideology for the rest of his life,” since his “powerful yet ambiguous response to Whitman’s poetry reflects his lifelong vacillation between humanist and imperialist values.”]

Feder, Rachel. “Practicing Infinity.” *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 34 (Fall 2016), 195-200. [Reads “Song of Myself” against the backdrop of John Locke’s concepts of “infinity” and their impact on British Romantics like Wordsworth.]

Folsom, Ed. “Counting from One to a Million: Whitman’s Engagement with Large Numbers.” *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 34 (Fall 2016), 146-168. [Examines how “Whitman expanded the realm of poetic diction” by “his absorption of the terms for large numbers that long had been familiar in the

realm of mathematics and more recently had been utilized in a widening array of sciences,” and discusses how students of Whitman’s time were educated in the names and nature of large numbers; goes on to track Whitman’s creation of “an endless universe of vast numbers” in *Leaves of Grass*, and how “large numbers allowed Whitman to articulate a very early version of what, in the second half of the twentieth century, came to be called ‘deep time’ and ‘deep space’”; analyzes how Whitman’s exhilaration with large numbers was muted by the Civil War, when we see him “struggling with the impossible arithmetic of the Civil War’s mass death”; offers a close reading of “The Million Dead, Too, Summ’d Up,” where Whitman “invents a syntax of mass death” and searches for the lost “one” in the generalized million; concludes by suggesting that, later in his career, “Whitman’s old comfort with large numbers fitfully returned, even in the context of death.”]

Folsom, Ed. “Walt Whitman: A Current Bibliography.” *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 34 (Fall 2016), 214-222.

Harris, Gareth. “Jenny Holzer Creates Walt Whitman Poetry Piece for New York Aids Memorial.” *The Art Newspaper* (December 9, 2016), theartnewspaper.com. [About artist Jenny Holzer’s New York City Aids memorial, opening in December 2016 in the West Village of New York City, with excerpts from “Song of Myself” engraved on the granite paving stones.]

Hoffert, Barbara. Review of J. Aaron Sanders, *Speakers of the Dead: A Walt Whitman Mystery*. *Library Journal* 141 (March 15, 2016), 71.

Kelly, Sean J. “Facing the Other: The Role of the ‘White-Faced’ Soldier in Walt Whitman’s ‘Reconciliation.’” *Explicator* 74 (2016), 192-195. [Uses the theories of Emmanuel Levinas to offer a close reading of Whitman’s “Reconciliation,” concluding that “the speaker’s kiss demonstrates, finally, that one effects reconciliation not by incorporating another into one’s own image, but by devoting oneself to the work of preserving the infinity of the Other.”]

Kronman, Anthony T. “Does America Have a Religion? For the Answer, Look to Walt Whitman.” *Los Angeles Times* (December 22, 2016), latimes.com. [Argues that America is “held together by a common spiritual ideal,” a “born-again paganism” based on “diversity” and articulated by Whitman in *Democratic Vistas*: “But the diversity that Whitman loved was not the group-based kind we think of today,” but rather “the endless diversity of individuals . . . the uniqueness of every individual he encountered,” so that the country’s purpose was “to establish a system of laws, which treat all of us alike, so that

we have the freedom and security to begin to explore the divine diversity that sets us apart, not group by group, but individual by individual.”]

Malcuit, William Q. “The Poetics of Political Failure: Eliot’s Antiliberalism in an American Context.” *Twentieth-Century Literature* 62 (March 2016), 75-95. [Argues that “Whitman’s influence on Eliot’s figurations of urban space was much more than an indirect one achieved secondhand through European poetry,” and was “instead a part of Eliot’s ‘birthright’ that powerfully shaped his urban imagination”; goes on to examine how “it is in Whitman’s poetry that we most clearly see the American liberal ideology that Eliot would so powerfully react against”; examines how Eliot rejects Whitman’s “public square optimism” and how “the city in ‘The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock’ is in many ways a dystopian inversion of Whitman’s ideal liberal city.”]

Mullins, Maire. “Prophetic Voice and Sacramental Insight in Walt Whitman’s ‘Messenger Leaves’ Poems.” *Renascence* 68 (Fall 2016), 246-265. [Examines the “often overlooked” cluster of poems called “Messenger Leaves” in the 1860 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, finding them “poems that provide warnings and admonition (the prophetic) and poems that offer consolation and healing (the sacramental)”; argues that, as part of his effort to combat “an impending sense of national dissolution,” Whitman “used biblical models to fashion himself as both prophet and minister and to appeal to the religious sensibilities of the American people,” thus underscoring the notion of the 1860 edition of *Leaves* as the “new bible.”]

Nikitina, Irina V. “Hermeneutic Aspect in Translation of Walt Whitman’s ‘Leaves of Grass’ into Russian: Biblical Parallelism and Coherent System of Thought.” *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences* 231 (2016), 203-207. [Suggests strategies for translating Whitman’s “formal contradictions” by looking to Biblical parallelism for guidance; examines as a case study one line from “Eidolons” (“Unfix’d yet fix’d”).]

Pasciolla, Francesca. *Walt Whitman in Fernando Pessoa*. London: Critical, Cultural and Communications Press, 2016. [Explores “the dynamics that connect” Whitman and Fernando Pessoa (1888-1935), and “focuses in particular on the role of the Portuguese Pessoa as reader of the North American writer, on the lessons he took from *Leaves of Grass*, and, finally, on the reworking that he performed on Whitman’s legacy”; examines Pessoa’s annotations and other markings in his personal copies of Whitman’s work.]

Phillips, Christopher N. *Epic in American Culture: Settlement to Reconstruction*.

Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012. [One section of Chapter 4 (“Transcendentalism and the ‘New’ Epic Traditions”), “Walt Whitman’s Epic Pursuits” (156-159), argues that “perhaps no other writer of his time wrestled so deeply with the fitness of epic for his time”: “Epic was by turns a champion to be defeated, a gateway to the new poetry, and a return to origins for Whitman”; in Chapter 6 (“Lydia Sigourney and the Indian Epic’s Work of Mourning”), Whitman’s “Yonnonidio” is discussed (187-190) in relation to the “Indian epic”: “The poem ‘Yonnonidio,’ with its inexorably expanding lament, was virtually the only published result of a plan that Whitman began formulating in the 1880s to research and write a poem about the entirety of Native American history and culture, a late iteration of his attempt to write the nation that he had announced in the preface to *As a Strong Bird on Pinions Free*.”]

Reed, Len. “Borrowed words, stolen meaning (Editorial sketchbook).” *The Oregonian* (January 5, 2017). [About a recent Volvo television advertisement in which passages from Whitman’s “Song of the Open Road” are read by actor Josh Brolin: “The ad is cunning, beautiful to watch and to hear, and creepy to the core.”]

Schöberlein, Stefan. “Incalculable, Unaccountable, Indivisible? Walt Whitman’s Lessons in Arithmetic.” *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 34 (Fall 2016), 169-194. [Examines how, “over the course of Whitman’s poetic life, arithmetic in *Leaves* did not remain a static symbol but changed alongside the poet’s project,” and traces “this development from early traces of mathematical thought in Whitman to its inception as a poetic-political program in the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass* and its subsequent reevaluation in the context of the Civil War”; explores Whitman’s “arithmetic of democracy” and the “underlying numerical logic behind the poet’s verse”; suggests associations between Whitman’s use of ellipses in the 1855 *Leaves* and the mathematical “ellipsis”; analyzes the effect of the Civil War on Whitman’s use of mathematics, since that war was “indeed a war of numbers and logistics”; showing how after the war Whitman tried to balance mathematics with “spiritual metaphors,” and offers a reading of “Eidólons” as a poem that instructs readers of the later editions of *Leaves* “how to process the poet’s arithmetic.”]

Turpin, Zachary. “Whitman in the Abstract.” *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 34 (Fall 2016), 201-209. [Suggests how, “in verse, Whitman quantifies ecstatically,” and explores “how large numbers” became for Whitman “something of a poetic fetish”; goes on to examine what “Whitman’s numbers tell us about the philosophy of his poetics” and probes the relation of mathematical

abstraction to Whitman's love of the material: "In a poetics of the material multitude, does multitudinousness itself merit materiality?"]

Watts, Jennifer, and James Glisson. *Real American Places: Edward Weston & Leaves of Grass*. San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, 2016. [Illustrated brochure to accompany the exhibition at The Huntington (October 2016-March 2017) of twenty-six Weston photographs taken for the 1942 Limited Edition Book Club *Leaves of Grass* along with a selection of Whitman items from the Huntington Collection; contains two essays: Jennifer Watts's "Real American Places" (3-8) traces Weston's cross-nation auto journey (in a car he named "Walt") with his wife, Charis Wilson, and illuminates the disagreement between Weston and George Macy, the publisher of the *Leaves of Grass* volume, about whether Weston's photos needed to illustrate specific lines of Whitman's poetry (Macy's desire) or simply "embody the vision of America that Whitman had" (Weston's desire); James Glisson's "Weston's Whitman" (9-14) argues that, while Weston generally had little real interest in Whitman's work, his photographs for the *Leaves of Grass* result from his "selective, eccentric" engagement with the poet through their mutual understanding of the relationship between "travel" and "art": "Weston picked up on the mobility and additive process that pervade Whitman's poetry and prose."]

Whitman, Walt. *Manly Health and Training: To Teach the Science of a Sound and Beautiful Body*. New York: Regan Arts, 2017. [Reprints Whitman's 1858 thirteen-installment series on male health, nutrition, and exercise that originally appeared in the *New York Atlas* under the pseudonym "Mose Velsor"; illustrated with contemporary artwork from nineteenth-century newspapers, magazines, and books; with an introduction (1-19) by Zachary Turpin; published in collaboration with the *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*.]

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