



In Memoriam: Douglas Arthur Noverr 1942-2020

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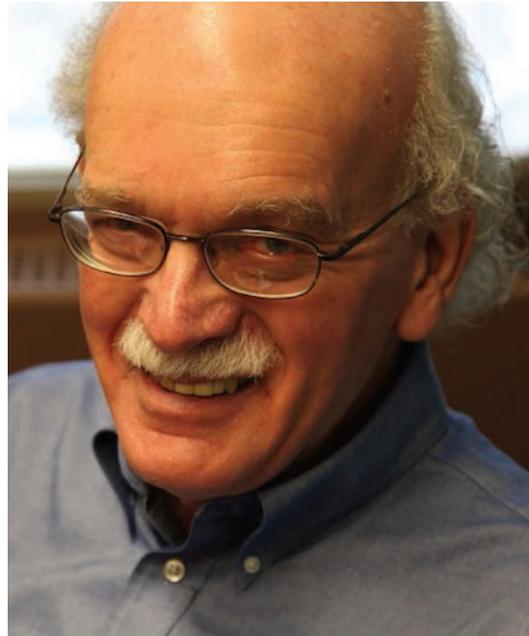
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IN MEMORIAM:

DOUGLAS ARTHUR NOVERR

1942-2020

For decades, Douglas Arthur Noverr was a quietly pivotal presence in Whitman studies. A longtime professor at Michigan State University and a friend to all who knew him, Noverr was instrumental in editing the first three volumes of Walt Whitman's complete journalism, along with a collection of the poet's selected journalism. An omnivorous reader and tireless scholar on wide-ranging topics, from sports history to popular culture to Whitman's newspaper career, Noverr died on Valentine's Day 2020, at the age of seventy-seven.



Noverr was a native Michigander, taking his BA and MA degrees from Central Michigan University and his PhD from Miami University of Ohio, where he wrote a dissertation on Thoreau as a critic of American society (1972). Arriving at MSU in 1970, Noverr would spend the entirety of his academic career—nearly 50 years—teaching there, where he held numerous administrative positions, including chairperson of the departments of American Thought and Literature, Spanish and Portuguese, and Romance and Classical Studies. Noverr also served as the Senior Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Letters at Central Michigan University and was instrumental in the development of the Popular Culture Association, serving as president of the organization as well as director of the association's endowment fund.

Noverr co-authored or co-edited numerous books, including *The Games They Played: Sports in American History, 1865-1980* (1983), and, most recently, *Michigan State University: The Rise of a Research University and the New Millennium, 1970-2005* (2015). Among Whitman scholars, Noverr is best known for his editions of Whitman's newspaper writings, most prominently Volumes I and II of Whitman's *Complete Journalism* (1998, 2003), co-edited with Herbert Bergman and Edward Recchia, which Jerome Loving called "without doubt

one of the most important editions in many years.” The first volume of the series received the MLA’s “Approved Edition” designation, and Christopher Beach celebrated its “extensive scholarly apparatus” and “substantial introduction.” Noverr also co-edited *Walt Whitman’s Selected Journalism* (2015) and saw volume III of Whitman’s *Complete Journalism* to the proof stage with Peter Lang Publishers.

As Noverr’s co-editors, we remember him as a dogged researcher, a careful collator of transcriptions, a near-eidetic recollector of abstruse Whitman publications, and a good friend. Every day, he embodied Whitman’s dictum that “Happiness not in another place, but this place . . . not for another hour, but this hour,” and he will be missed by Whitmanians for his work and his inexhaustible good cheer.

Jason Stacy and Zachary Turpin