



Walt Whitman: A Current Bibliography

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ISSN 0737-0679 (Print)

ISSN 2153-3695 (Online)

Recommended Citation

Folsom, Ed. "Walt Whitman: A Current Bibliography." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 38 (2020), 64-70. <https://doi.org/10.13008/0737-0679.2388>

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WALT WHITMAN: A CURRENT BIBLIOGRAPHY



- Achorn, Edward. *Every Drop of Blood: The Momentous Second Inauguration of Abraham Lincoln*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2020. [Chapter 4, “The Real Precious and Royal Ones” (58-79), focuses on Whitman and his Civil War hospital work to relieve the suffering of sick and wounded soldiers; Whitman is referenced throughout the book, especially in “Epilogue: The Stuff to Carry Them Through” (273-296), which briefly discusses Whitman’s memories of the U.S. Patent Office Building, his writing of “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d,” and his 1887 Lincoln lecture in New York City.]
- Barry, Tim Francis. “Book Review: Long Live 19th-Century Literature!” *The Arts Fuse* (April 30, 2020), artsfuse.com. [Reviews Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass*.]
- Bradfield, Scott. “In ‘What Is the Grass,’ Mark Doty looks at Walt Whitman through an autobiographical lens.” *Washington Post* (April 28, 2020), washingtonpost.com. [Review of Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass*.]
- Bronson-Bartlett, Blake. “Writing with Pencils in the Antebellum United States: Language, Instrument, Gesture.” *American Literature* 92 (June 2020), 199-227. [Argues that the pencil, as a new writing tool “increasingly available in the United States during the antebellum decades,” afforded writers like John Washington, Margaret Fuller, and Whitman “the ability to write quickly, continuously, and on the move”; goes on to examine the manuscripts of these writers to demonstrate “how the pencil facilitated such exploration by configuring language, instrument, and corporeal gesture in ways that suited the modernizing nation” and “that collaborated with the writers’ bodies in such a way that it became instrumental to their experimentations with and formations of American selves”; one section, “Whitman’s Writing in Transit: The ‘I,’ Singular and Plural” (212-217), analyzes Whitman’s notebook in which his “Sun-Down Poem” (later “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry”) takes shape, finding that Whitman’s “I” emerges only after he has captured in pencil the elements of the environment around him, “as if the pencil’s anticipatory thrust was able to capture them before the writer became conscious of them, or at least self-conscious about perceiving them,” rendering “the ‘I’ as the consequence of a writing process that begins without the ‘I’ and that adds it in order to give some form of organization to the process”: “the assertiveness, presence, and humanity of the ‘I’ relies on its dissolution and reappearance,” standing “not for a universal subject but for a universal gesture of difference and distinction, written in transit while awash in dispersed and raw sensual information.”]
- Brown, Jacob. “A arte como refúgio: intertextualidade, espaço e (imagi)nação em ‘Aqueles dois,’ de Caio Fernando Abreu” [“Art as Refuge: Intertextuality, Space and (Imagi) nation in ‘Aqueles dois,’ by Caio Fernando Abreu”]. *Estudos de Literatura Brasileira Contemporânea* no. 60 (May-August 2020), e6010, scielo.br. [Part of the article investi-

gates the way that references to Whitman’s poetry in Brazilian author Caio Fernando Abreu’s 1982 short story “Aqueles dois” [“Those Two”] “intensify the story’s homoerotic overtones” and offer a “refuge” to the protagonists—a place of art where they can “escape the repression of Brazilian society”; in Portuguese.]

Bryant, Marsha. “Homebound on Whitman’s Open Road.” *Massachusetts Review* (April 20, 2020), massreview.org. [Reviews the fourth of Bell’s brewery’s *Leaves of Grass* series of beers, brewed in honor of the Whitman Bicentennial; this one is a “winter warmer ale” named “Song of the Open Road”; offers commentary on the poem “Song of the Open Road.”]

Cadell, Jillian Spivey. “Five Books from the 19th Century That Will Help You Understand Modern America Better.” *The Conversation* (May 14, 2020), theconversation.com. [Names *Leaves of Grass*—along with Harriet Jacobs’ *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women*, Charles Chesnut’s *The Conjure Woman*, and Herman Melville’s *Benito Cereno*—as works that “embody both the beauty of 19th-century American literature as well as its ability to change hearts and minds.”]

Cain, Hamilton. “Review: An American Poet Analyzes a Forefather in ‘What Is the Grass.’” *San Francisco Chronicle* (April 13, 2020), sfchronicle.com. [Review of Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass*.]

Chakraborty, Abhrajyoti. “*What Is the Grass* by Mark Doty Review—Walt Whitman and Me.” *Guardian* (June 3, 2020). [Review of Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass*.]

Davich, Adrienne. “On Light and Heat: A Review of *What Is the Grass: Walt Whitman in My Life*.” *The Adroit Journal* (April 21, 2020), theadroitjournal.org. [Review of Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass*.]

Dylan, Bob. *Rough and Rowdy Ways*. New York: Columbia Records, 2020. [CD, containing the song “I Contain Multitudes,” each verse ending with Whitman’s line from “Song of Myself.”]

Ellis, Cristin. *Antebellum Posthuman: Race and Materiality in the Mid-Nineteenth Century*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018. [Chapter 3, “Whitman’s Cosmic Body: Bioelectricity and the Problem of Human Meaning” (96-134), examines how Whitman “appropriate[s] the materialist ontology, but not the racist politics, of antebellum racial science, producing an antislavery materialism that rebuts biological racism in its own empirical terms”; analyzes “Whitman’s fascination with the theory of electrical embodiment that he encountered in the mid-nineteenth-century Spiritualist press” to show “how the bioelectrical subject inspired [him] to reinvent the lyric subject . . . in the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*,” and argues that “the permeability of the nervous body led Whitman to conceive of poetry as an embodied medium—a site for the communication not of meanings but of physical contact, a means of orchestrating the bioelectrical inscription of the reader”; concludes that “Whitman’s bioelectrical ontology” is “materialist and yet anti-essentialist—his permeable and networked subjects escape the biological determinism that characterizes so much antebellum racial science.”]

- Ferri, Jessica. "Review: Queer authors reinvent the artist biography as revisionist memoir." *Los Angeles Times* (April 10, 2020), latimes.com. [Includes a review of Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass.*]
- Folsom, Ed. "Walt Whitman: A Current Bibliography." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 37 (Winter/Spring 2020), 255-269.
- Gambone, Phil. "Living Whitman." *Gay & Lesbian Review* (May-June 2020), glreview.org. [Review of Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass.*]
- García Sánchez, Sergio. "Graphic Review: *Leaves of Grass.*" *New York Times Book Review* (May 3, 2020), 23. [Cartoon illustration of Whitman with flowing beard, in which are embedded lines from "Song of Myself" beginning "I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journeywork of the stars."]
- McNally, Dan. "Eulogy for Walt Whitman on America's Birthday." *PolitiZoom* (July 4, 2020), politizoom.com. [Poem, ending "Who seeks to kill the dream I won and promised to bequeath my young? / Can I Ever be America Again?"]
- Mong, Derek. "'Song of the Open Road,' the Beer." *Kenyon Review* (May 4, 2020), kenyonreview.org. [Review of Bell's Brewery's fourth offering in a series of seven Walt Whitman beers brewed in honor of the Whitman Bicentennial; this review deals with the "winter warmer" beer named "Song of the Open Road"; offers commentary on the poem as well as the beer.]
- Peeples, Scott. "Bob Dylan Contains Multitudes: Walt Whitman as Dylan's Muse on 'Murder Most Foul.'" *Salon* (May 16, 2020), salon.com. [Examines Whitman as an influence on Bob Dylan's two recently released songs—"Murder Most Foul" and "I Contain Multitudes"—and sees "Dylan's pose as a 21st-century Whitman" as "something of a new development," as "the Old Dylan decided it was time to become the New Whitman."]
- Pizarro Roberts, Sergio. "El grado cero de la muerte en las poéticas de Walt Whitman y Pablo Neruda" ["Death Degree Zero in the Poetics of Walt Whitman and Pablo Neruda"]. *Revista Chilena de Literatura* no. 101 (May 2020), 443-464. [Puts Whitman's and Neruda's poetry in dialogue around the subject of death, arguing that "in both cases their works contain a heterodox eschatological poetics, . . . but they differ in the theistic idealism that is perceived in Whitman's poetic itinerary" in contrast to "Neruda's atheist materialism"; in Spanish.]
- Pollak, Vivian R. Review of Jim Perlman, Ed Folsom, and Dan Campion, eds., *Walt Whitman: The Measure of His Song* (200th Birthday Edition). *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 37 (Winter/Spring 2020), 248-254.
- Rebrovick, Tripp. "A Queer Politics of Touching: Walt Whitman's Theory of Comrades." *Law, Culture, and the Humanities* 16 (June 2020), 313-331. [Develops the concept of "political and legal regimes of touching" as a means of reading the "Calamus" poems, arguing that Whitman's notion of comradeship—"a distinct kind of friendship char-

acterized by physical intimacy”—demonstrates that “touching is a political act” and that the “anachronistic” labeling of Whitman as “homosexual” needs to be revised to view his comradeship as “a model of queerness that can challenge the recent anti-social turn in queer theory”; examines the idea of comradeship in *Democratic Vistas*, where it “relates to politics but is not itself political,” unlike in “Calamus,” where “comrades create their own political institutions, even though those institutions lack anything resembling legislation, voting, or representation,” but where comradeship nonetheless “establishes a new social formation, and the source of its cohesion lies in intimate, physical touch rather than personality and character.”]

Reynolds, Daniel. *Advocate* (July 3, 2020), advocate.com. [Reviews Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass*, and conducts an interview with Doty and poet Jericho Brown about Whitman’s sexuality and ways that it formed *Leaves of Grass*.]

Rodricks, Dan. “Looking to Lilacs and Walt Whitman to Guide Us through the Pandemic.” *Baltimore Sun* (May 7, 2020), baltimoresun.com. [Offers commentary on how reading Whitman’s “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d” can be “a spiritual guide through the present crisis” of the pandemic, since, in another spring filled with death, “we are each on a journey, as Whitman was, from inconsolable sorrow . . . to some kind of solace.”]

Rogovoy, Seth. “Bob Dylan channels Walt Whitman and Anne Frank in his new song of himself.” *Forward* (April 17, 2020), forward.com. [Notes Whitman’s strong influence in Bob Dylan’s newly released song, “I Contain Multitudes,” suggesting that “Dylan might be laying out here a song cycle that attempts, in his own, Dylanesque way, a similar sort of broad, all-encompassing cultural philosophy that Whitman did in ‘Leaves.’”]

Ryan, Barbara Therese. “Salut Au Monde: Aquapelagic Instruction in the *Red Funnel Magazine*.” *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* 14 no. 1 (2020), 269-283. [Examines essays by New Zealand writer Annie Eliza Trimble (1863-1911), second wife of William H. Trimble (who compiled the first concordance of *Leaves of Grass*); the essays appeared in a monthly magazine published by the New Zealand-based Union Steam Ship Company from 1905 to 1909 and reveal in oblique but striking ways her “Whitman fandom.”]

Sampson, Fiona. “Walt Whitman’s Poetry Can Change Your Life.” *Spectator* (May 9, 2020), spectator.co.uk. [Review of Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass*.]

Saunders, Tristram Fane. “*What Is the Grass* by Mark Doty Review: a winningly eccentric love-letter to Walt Whitman.” *The Telegraph* (April 18, 2020), telegraph.co.uk. [Review of Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass*.]

Schöberlein, Stefan, and Stephanie M. Blalock. “‘A Story of New York at the Present Time’: The Historico-Literary Contexts of *Jack Engle*.” *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 37 (Winter/Spring 2020), 145-184. [Argues that Whitman’s *Life and Adventures of Jack Engle*, published serially in March and April of 1852, was in fact in large part composed of pieces Whitman wrote from 1842 to 1846—a “repurposing” of “a plethora of his

writings into a somewhat coherent whole—from brief moments of his journalism . . . to recycled characters and plot points from various pieces of his short fiction and aborted novellas, to autobiographical sketches”; examines in detail elements of the novel’s plot and characters that date the local references to the 1840s and demonstrates that, despite its 1852 publication date, “*Jack Engle* is deeply rooted in Whitman’s authorial practices between 1842 and 1846, underscoring both the richness of his prose fiction in these years as well as the relative dearth of known narratives in the years to follow.”]

Smith, Jeff. “Things Appearing, Every Day: Walt Whitman and the Ubiquity of News.” *ESQ* 66 no. 1 (2020), 1-45. [Examines Whitman’s novel *Jack Engle* as the “missing link” between Whitman the workaday journalist and Whitman the poet who created *Leaves of Grass*; identifies the novel’s focus as “a young writer training himself to see the world in ways newly relevant to newsmen and poets alike” and argues that “the era’s emerging new sense of information and facts can help us better understand Whitman’s poetic project, which saw him synthesize opposite kinds of texts—the most ephemeral and mass-produced with the most profound, enduring and ‘scriptural’—as he pursued a new national literature and even a new conception of the nation itself” and as he “co-invent[ed] the modern modes of perception and understanding that are still in play whenever we read a newspaper”; and argues that “Whitman, as a product and proprietor of newspapers, was primed to become the leading poet of a culture that was learning to absorb and value information in ways that were new and characteristic of the industrial age,” and that the new “American Bible” he hoped to create “would need the immediacy, vitality, and specific yet all-embracing factuality of news.”]

Stein, Allen. *Unsettled Subjects: New Poems on Classic American Literature*. Frankfurt, KY: Broadstone, 2020. [Contains two poems dealing with Whitman: “When I Heard the Learn’d Professor” (36-37) and “George Washington Whitman with Walt in Camden” (38-40).]

Terrill, Richard. *What Falls Away Is Always*. Duluth, MN: Holy Cow!, 2020. [Poems; “I Think I Could Turn and Live with Animals” (27) concludes “Life is good, I tell my little dog, / and I believe, in the moment, he hears and obeys, / so placid and self-contained / I look at him long and long.”]

Thomas, Brook. “*The Galaxy*, National Literature, and Reconstruction.” *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 75 (June 2020), 50-81. [Examines the journal *The Galaxy*, which published from 1866 to 1878, and analyzes “the *Galaxy*’s attempt to foster a national literature” in order to demonstrate how the journal “complicates today’s standard understanding of the period’s politics while providing insight into the role Reconstruction played in establishing a national literature”; examines contributions to the journal by Whitman and other writers, finding Whitman’s essays “Democracy” and “Personalism,” along with his poem “A Carol for Harvest, 1867,” central to the journal’s moderate political stance; concludes by finding that “Whitman embraced emancipation without fully supporting racial equality”: “He and the editors of the *Galaxy* placed priority on sectional reconciliation from the start. Championed through much of the twentieth century for his radical egalitarianism, when it came to Reconstruction politics, Whitman

was a model of moderation. Reading him and others in the context of the *Galaxy* gives us insight into how debates over Reconstruction gave rise to an American conception of democracy suited to an age of separate but equal.”]

- Tian, Junwu. “Metaphor of Child Journey and America Growth in Walt Whitman’s ‘There Was a Child Went Forth.’” *ANQ* 32 (October 2019), 240-243. [Offers a reading of “There Was a Child Went Forth” as a poem built on the “conceptual metaphors” of “life is a journey” and “a state is a person.”]
- Turpin, Zachary. “Searching for *Proud Antoinette*: Evidence and Prospects for Whitman’s Phantom Novel.” *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 37 (Winter/Spring 2020), 225-247. [Reprints and examines a set of late-1850s Whitman’s manuscripts that sketch out “a romantic murder mystery the poet tentatively titles *Proud Antoinette: A New York Romance of To-Day*”; points out that “the amount of manuscript text related to *Proud Antoinette* is more (by word count) than exists for *Life and Adventures of Jack Engle*” and suggests “the odds are reasonable” that *Proud Antoinette* did see publication in some newspaper or periodical, where it remains undiscovered; concludes that “it is a good time to be searching for *Proud Antoinette*.”]
- Waldman, Katy. “What We’re Reading This Summer.” *New Yorker* (June 7, 2020), newyorker.com. [Brief review of Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass*.]
- Whitman, Walt. *Cǎo yè jí: wò òr tè Huìtè mǎn shī quánjǐ* / *Leaves of Grass: The Complete Poems of Walt Whitman*. Translated by Zou Zhongzhi. Shanghai: Shanghai Translation Publishing House, 2015. [Chinese translation of *Leaves of Grass*.]
- Whitman, Walt. *Every Hour, Every Atom: A Collection of Walt Whitman’s Early Notebooks & Fragments*. Ed. Zachary Turpin and Matt Miller. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2020. [Collects transcriptions of Whitman’s early notebooks and fragments so that readers can see Whitman’s “construction of his very own genre in all its beautiful messiness”; with a foreword by Matt Miller (xiii-xix) and an introduction by Zachary Turpin (xxi-xxxiii).]
- Wilson, Joel Eric. “Whitman’s ‘The Million Dead, Too, Summ’d Up’ in an Age of Endless War.” *Explicator* 78 no. 1 (2020), 25-29. [Argues that Whitman’s “hyperbolic” reference to the number of deaths in the Civil War, and his use of the word “Unknown” to refer to unidentified remains of soldiers, should both be understood “in the light of PTSD,” with Whitman “integrating living survivors along with other human casualties of war.”]
- Winant, Johanna. “Walt Whitman’s Formalism.” *Poetics Today* 41 (March 2020), 59-81. [Argues that Whitman’s “enumerative catalogs” are “a poetic form that is also a logical form—enumerative induction,” and that his lists are “the most basic form of inductive reasoning” (“they list one item, then another, then another”) and have become influential on many contemporary poets; proposes that Whitman’s form cannot be understood apart from his poetic content, that his poems written in “free verse” also have form, and that form itself is “the logic by which poems interpret the world”; offers detailed examination of Whitman’s catalog in section 15 of “Song of Myself”]

as “a logical form” (“enumerative inductive reasoning”) in which “these particulars support a general law”—here “the implicit generalization supported by this list is what it means to be American,” a “kind of representative census of the country and evidence for Whitman’s democratic poetics,” out of which Whitman generates himself, “mak[es] himself into a projectable predicate accepted by a future reader, if he succeeds at making an enumerative catalog that predicts himself” and, ultimately, one that predicts his “future reader—us—as well.”]

Wojczuk, Tana. “Charlotte Cushman Broke Barriers on Her Way to Becoming the A-List Actress of the 1800s.” *Smithsonian Magazine* (June 30, 2020), smithsonianmag.com. [Records Whitman’s very positive reactions to the acting of Charlotte Cushman, who pioneered the concept of “method acting” by living in New York’s notorious Five Points and befriending prostitutes there to prepare for her role as the prostitute Nancy in a stage production of Charles Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*.]

Zukowski, Scott. “Walt Whitman, Trinity Church, and Antebellum Reprint Culture.” *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 37 (Winter/Spring 2020), 185-224. [Demonstrates that, “during the Antebellum Period, Trinity Churchyard held an important place in American cultural identity, evident in the plethora of newspaper texts from around the country associating it with a semi-mythologized narrative of national origin,” and, looking especially at Whitman’s journalism and his novel *Jack Engle*, argues that “Whitman tapped into the Trinity Churchyard trope as a tool for the exploration and articulation of a unified national identity and a literature for which Americans of the period were searching”; proposes that “urban graveyards” perform “important cultural functions” overlooked in scholarship that has instead focused on “the rural cemetery movement that began in the 1830s.”]

Unsigned. “Briefly Noted.” *New Yorker* 96 (May 4, 2020), 79. [Contains a brief review of Mark Doty, *What Is the Grass*.]

“Walt Whitman: A Current Bibliography,” now covering work on Whitman from 1838 to the present, is available in a fully searchable format online at the *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* website (ir.uiowa.edu/wwqr/) and at the *Walt Whitman Archive* (whitmanarchive.org).