

est accomplishments largely because of their exquisite balance of the various modes of visual (and visionary) experience.

The best of Whitman's poems, Dougherty notes, are rooted in the life of the city, the life the poet knew best from personal experience. "It was within the schema of the city," says Dougherty, "that Whitman might have most successfully fulfilled his ambition to be the public poet, drawing for his fellow citizens a path between their souls and the 'dumb real objects' of America" (197). As an urban poet, Whitman had his greatest impact upon future generations of writers and visual artists, forecasting the appeal of photographic technology that, like his poems, claims to exclude nothing within the scope of the eye or lens, to foreground the objects and the people that conventional vision shuns. The play of surface and depth, perspective and immersion, and the corresponding play of detachment and commitment in public life, become key topics in the work of visual artists like Jacob Riis, John Sloan, Alfred Stieglitz, and Berenice Abbott as well as writers like T. S. Eliot, William Carlos Williams, Saul Bellow, and Denise Levertov—all of whom Dougherty covers in the several chapters of survey that conclude his book. With these chapters, Dougherty adds new dimensions to our understanding of Whitman as having transformed his Romantic heritage to adjust himself and his readers to the world of the modern with its mass societies and urban spectacles.

Walt Whitman and the Citizen's Eye thus handles three closely related themes: the interplay of subjectivity and objectivity (or sympathy and prudence) in the development of citizen psychology and socialization, the role of visualization in a poetry oriented to public life, and the effect of urbanization on modern art and consciousness (also the topic of his fine 1980 book *The Fivesquare City: The City in the Religious Imagination*). Dougherty takes some trouble to tighten the relation among these themes, indicating, for example, that the sense of a gap between subject and object is largely an effect of emphasizing visual perception over other modes of empirical knowledge. Despite his efforts, though, the themes tend to drift apart at times and make the book appear a bit loose and eclectic in its argument. Nevertheless, we should grant this measure of eclecticism to the author, for it keeps him from forcing a thesis upon his readers or upon the poems and pictures he interprets. As it stands, this readable book succeeds quite well in advancing our understanding of Whitman's place in cultural history and should also increase the appreciation we feel for Whitman's struggle with himself and his sorting of cultural resources in the service of a truly public and democratic art.

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JOEL MYERSON. *Walt Whitman: A Descriptive Bibliography*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993. xxiv + 1,097 pp. \$250.00.

In "Whitman: Bibliography as Biography," delivered at the Whitman Centennial Conference at the University of Iowa (and now printed in *Walt Whitman: The Centennial Essays* [1994], ed. Ed Folsom), Joel Myerson defined descriptive bibliographies as "much more than listings of titles with selected full-scale physical descriptions of major works." They are, he said, reflecting most

accurately on the merits of his recently completed Whitman bibliography, "literary biographies, showing the development of authors' careers—the number and variety of their works, the textual changes they made, their reception in other countries as indicated by non-native editions of their works, the popularity of individual works as shown by their being collected in anthologies and by their separate reprintings, the way in which they were viewed by contemporaries as reflected in the magazines in which they were published, the popularity of their works as measured by their sales, and the income they derived from these sales and how that affected their career choices." Myerson's assertion is especially true for the poet who sat "in the early candle-light of old age" gossiping with his book as the two sojourners cast "backward glances over our travel'd road," and for the poet who at the close of the 1860 edition announced in "So Long!" "This is no book, / Who touches this, touches a man." *Leaves of Grass*, which inaugurated the second half of the poet's seventy-two years of life, can be seen retrospectively as his alter-ego, the part that dared where the conservative part delayed. It was the difference, for example, between the anti-slavery advocate in Section 10 of "Song of Myself" who harbors a runaway slave and the pro-Wilmot Proviso editor of the Brooklyn *Eagle* and *Freeman* who, though he disapproves of slavery, sees it more importantly as a threat to free enterprise among white Americans in the new territories of the 1850s. Throughout its successive editions, *Leaves of Grass* combined Walter and Walt Whitman, hustled the first off to a celebration of the sensual, while it pulled the second back from the relativism that Whitman's book has inspired in the century he addressed so logocentrically in "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry."

Whitman, of course, would be immensely pleased to see this expert account of his literary peregrination: the meticulous and technical descriptions of his separate publications and how his poems have been collected between 1855 and 1992, the illustrations of the various title pages, and so on. On the other hand, he would object—alas, in vain—to two or three aspects of this primary bibliography, mainly because it tracks down the "furtive" poet a little too successfully. Whitman would not have liked to see *Franklin Evans, or The Inebriate* (1842) listed as his first "separate publication." In old age he was embarrassed at having written the pamphlet, even though at the time of authorship he viewed the temperance movement as essential to democracy—because American labor could never achieve dignity and economic success (as he suggested in one of his Brooklyn *Eagle* editorials) as long as its forces were less than sober on the job. He tried to hide the fact of *Franklin Evans* from Horace Traubel and his other literary executors because, for one thing, he was enjoying occasional champagne treats on Mickle Street. Yet under a pseudonym, he even printed an abridged version of the temperance tract in the *Eagle* of November 16-30, 1846, though this item is not among those listed under "Separate Publication of Individual Poems and Prose Works" (Section "H" in Myerson's bibliography).

Whitman would not have been any happier to see the pirated edition of John Camden Hotten's English publication of *Leaves of Grass* listed as the sixth edition of *Leaves of Grass*. Until now, it has been regarded as an "issue" within the 1872 printing of the fifth (1871) edition, but Myerson notes that Hotten disguised his "edition" as an "issue" because current English censorship laws made it more difficult for him to publish *Leaves of Grass* instead of merely

distributing it. It is technically a new edition because of “different textual readings, line breaks, copyright date (‘1871’), and ornaments between the poems . . . that distinguish it from the American edition.” Nevertheless, it seems a shame that we now have to give this piece of piracy the elevated designation of “edition,” thereby renumbering the definitive, 1881-1882 edition as the seventh. (I will continue to call the 1881-1882 Osgood edition the sixth—the sixth *American* edition, of course.) If Richard Worthington had only been so smart, he too could have received credit for publishing an “edition” of the third (1860) edition, which he pirated so successfully through the 1880s (see Myerson, p. 38).

A third area of the *Bibliography* which might not please Whitman but will certainly please Whitman scholars is Section “E” (“First-Appearance Contributions to Magazines and Newspapers”). Here, in the second-longest section of Myerson’s text, we have a fairly comprehensive bibliography of the elusive “journalism.” That subject, of course, remains uncollected—the phantom volume(s) in the New York University Press’s multi-volume edition of *The Collected Writings of Walt Whitman*. I say “fairly comprehensive” because there is no way anyone could construct an exhaustive bibliography without actually compiling an edition of Whitman’s journalistic publications, an area crucial to both bibliography and biography. Myerson states in his introduction that attributions of the poet’s journalism are “based primarily” on William White’s *Walt Whitman’s Journalism* (1969), a bound printing of “Walt Whitman’s Journalism: A Bibliography,” *Walt Whitman Review*, 14 (September, 1968), 67-141. He did not check the actual publications themselves in the newspapers and magazines. Nor has Myerson reexamined the pieces that have been established over the years in various volumes gathering selections of Whitman’s journalism. If the editor, for example, had visited the Free Library in Paterson, New Jersey, where the only remaining “hard copy” of the New York *Aurora* is known to exist, and had he seen the newspaper’s format, he might very well have questioned many of the attributions in *Walt Whitman of the New York Aurora* (1950), especially the anti-Irish and anti-Catholic screeds against Bishop Hughes, which editors Joseph Jay Rubin and Charles H. Brown apologetically assign to the young Whitman by saying that “if his editorial conduct and language cannot be admired or defended, it can be explained.” In fact, it cannot—either politically or stylistically—in light of the future poet’s defense of the Irish during his *Eagle* days and his life-long tendency to forgive and forget (except when it came to his brother-in-law, Charlie Heyde).

Also listed in this section of the bibliography are many articles in the New Orleans *Crescent* during Whitman’s New Orleans period in the spring of 1848. An argument can be made, I think, against Holloway’s attribution of the “Sketches of the Sidewalks and Levees” pieces to Whitman in *The Uncollected Poetry and Prose* (1921). Dispensing with the “Sidewalks and Levees” sketches would also eliminate “Miss Dusky Grisette”—as well as the speculation it has spawned about Whitman’s affair with a Creole woman. Myerson also excludes the main editorials from the *Crescent* during Whitman’s three-month tenure with the newspaper. As Whitman himself is on record as stating (*Uncollected Poetry and Prose*, 2:78), he served only as an exchange editor who clipped pieces from other newspapers before the era of the wire services, not as the

“chief editor” of the *Crescent*; therefore, we have no justification for attributing to him, for example, the main editorials with regard to the European revolutions of 1848—as Joseph Rubin does without argument in *The Historic Whitman* (1974) and as Larry J. Reynolds does in his *European Revolutions and the American Literary Renaissance* (1987). For each entry, Myerson gives not only the original citation but the place of all reprintings (one oversight I note, however, concerns items E8 through E10 [the first three installments of the “Sun-Down Papers” in the Hempstead *Inquirer* in the winter of 1840]: they are reprinted by William White and Herbert Bergman in the *American Book Collector*, 20 [January, 1970], 17-20).

Despite its limitations, this section of the bibliography is good to have. It is the most comprehensive checklist we have and will inspire further investigation of the place of journalism in the Whitman canon. In fact, the entire volume may someday lead some brave editorial soul to consider doing a new “Reader’s Edition” of *Leaves of Grass*—something already suggested by the publication of the *Textual Variorum of the Printed Poems* in 1980. The most important section of Myerson’s descriptive bibliography, of course, is the first, where we learn enough technical details about each edition of *Leaves of Grass* to become a collector of first editions. (If you can afford the price of this bibliography, you may be able to afford to purchase at least one of the later original editions of *Leaves of Grass*.) The bibliography gives future biographers a convenient guide to information buried in collections or in obscure appendices to hard-to-find secondary books on Whitman—including exactly how many copies of a particular edition were printed and how much money Whitman made. Myerson announces at the outset of his book that *Walt Whitman: A Descriptive Bibliography* is “my last bibliography.” That’s too bad for the rest of us, but we now have Whitman to add to his other superb bibliographies—of Emerson, Dickinson, and Fuller. With all the recent emphasis on “material culture” in literary criticism, this kind of bibliography ought to be more popular than it is. Yet I suppose one has to believe in literature, or the miracle of the imagination, to appreciate the “text.” Joel Myerson has rendered those who do hold such a belief a great service with this, allegedly his last bibliography.

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JAY PARINI, ED., AND BRETT C. MILLIER, ASSOC. ED., *The Columbia History of American Poetry*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993. xxxi + 894 pp. \$59.95.

Containing thirty-two essays—the work of thirty authors—*The Columbia History of American Poetry* is an impressive, wide-ranging, and ambitious survey of this nation’s poetry, from Anne Bradstreet and Edward Taylor (as would be expected) and Early African American poetry (as perhaps might *not* be expected) to such current presences as Merrill, Ashbery, Levine, Charles Wright, and Native American poets. The volume intends to be inclusive: major figures are given their due, and others are presented in ways that demonstrate the attraction and the excellence of their achievements. This *Columbia History* gives