

Walt Whitman

Collier, Michael. "On Whitman's "To a Locomotive in Winter". " The Virginia Quarterly Review 81.2 (2005): 202-205. Humanities Module. ProQuest. 11 Jul. 2007
<<http://ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=814749561&Fmt=4&clientId=9874&RQT=309&VName=PQD>>.

In his essay, "On Whitman's 'To a Locomotive in Winter'," Michael Collier reiterates as to what Edward Whitley was saying that Whitman is a poetic figure of American nationalism. But his main point stands at that Whitman attempted to "personify and humanize" a mechanical entity with an "inclusive, obsessive, and modern sensibility."

Throughout his short, yet interesting essay, Collier touches on a essay by Hart Crane about the machine age and how Whitman's poem talked about the machine age too, but in a more symbolic and image filled way. Crane also goes to state that he found someone in Whitman who "was able to coordinate forces in America which seem most intractable and fuses them into a vision which takes on added significance as time goes on."

To end his essay, Collier lists a bunch of adjective filled machines that Whitman used in his piece to prove the point of Whitman's talent to grab entities such as machines and add life to them. The strongest sentence written in this essay occurs at the end when Collier states, "the emblematic nature of these objects demands that we regard them in

the present.” This quote meaning that because of Whitman’s contributions in this poem, as well as his other classic prose, Whitman “enlarged his diction” in symbolic writing “and almost single-handedly created the reservoir that all American poets have drawn on since.”

Cox, Michael W. "Whitman's THE SLEEPERS. " The Explicator 63.2 (2005): 78-82.

Research Library Core. ProQuest. 11 Jul. 2007.

<http://ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=786056321&Fmt=3&clientId=9874&RQT=309&VName=PQD>>.

In Michael Cox’s interesting essay about Whitman’s poem, “The Sleepers,” Cox talks about how Whitman tries to compare sleep and death through images that only Whitman could think up of by examining all eight sections.

Throughout the entire essay, Cox tries to ignore any sort of critical analysis, and yet basis his examination on the piece as a journey from falling asleep, to dreaming, to dying. In section one, he talks about he is entering his dream, only to then go into the second section about meeting others in his dream like state. Then, in the third section, Whitman takes an odd turn and ends up “inhabiting the consciousness of one of his dreamers.” This then leads to the fourth section where Whitman first experiences a near death experience. He ends up talking about how he is swimming in a sea naked, and Cox speaks of how this is when Whitman realizes that he will not survive the dream because of the use of struggling words and description.

The fourth section then goes into more turmoil when there is a storm at sea, challenging Whitman to use his dream-like state to try and save himself and his soul from nature, something that Whitman is famous for writing about. The fifth section, Cox writes that Whitman, in third person point of view, observes General Washington's "defeat at Brooklyn." After this strange turn of events and location, the next two sections talk about the confusion between dream and death, only to end in the eighth section when he sees his mother, a sign of peace and hostility.

Cox, although very good in explaining what Whitman was writing about, puts too much trust in Whitman, not so much reflecting or critically reviewing what the words say, but rather than repeating and throwing own words into it to make it his own. Overall, this allows Cox to prove his thesis, but comes out as being too abstract about a very interesting and infamous poem by one of America's greatest writers.

Morton, Heather. "Democracy, Self-Reviews and the 1855 Leaves of Grass. " The

Virginia Quarterly Review 81.2 (2005): 229-243. Humanities

Module. ProQuest. 11 Jul. 2007

<<http://ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=814749491&Fmt=3&clientId=9874&RQT=309&VName=PQD>>

Heather Morton decided to write about "Leaves of Grass" by Walt Whitman to explain why Whitman chose to write poetry instead of other forms of media, try and to show that Whitman had a very strong ego of himself, yet was humble at the same time.

The key part of her article surrounds around the infamous prose in “Leaves of Grass,” when Whitman wrote, “I celebrate myself, And what I assume you shall assume, For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.” After she cites this part of Whitman’s classic, she then goes to town on him from a literal meaning rather than a symbolic meaning, which is what poetry often strives readers to do. She talks about him being “invasive, bossy, commanding and insistent” and also talks about how he tiptoes on the line of “harassment.” But then when she writes about how critics often questioned why he did poetry and not anything else, she then goes on his side and defends Whitman, comparing him to how Shakespeare did mostly poetry, and states that he “wrote essays, articles, and novels as easily (and before) he wrote poetry.” However, after reading more, it is learned that Whitman did not need such defense.

Later on her essay, she goes on to cite Whitman defending himself as to why he wrote poetry and why you should not analyze it literally, because you will fail. He goes to say quite boldly, “The poet is a seer, he is individual, he is complete in himself, the others are as good as he, only he sees it and they do not.” But then she states his optimism for readers to try and understand it by stating that he invited readers to “participate in creating the meaning of his poetry, by choosing a poetic style that deliberately avoided the metrical fluency associated with the careful study of verse forms.”

To end her essay, she talks about how Whitman self reviewed himself to show he was humble and often wrote about nature and how his “vision is as impressive as his intimacy.” If anything, Morton’s essay showed her transformation from a Whitman reader, to a Whitman critic, to a Whitman lover.

Sickels, Robert C. "Whitman's Song Of Myself. " The Explicator 59.1 (2000): 19-21.

Research Library Core. ProQuest. 11 Jul. 2007

<<http://ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=70445358&Fmt=4&clientId=9874&RQT=309&VName=PQD>>.

“Song of Myself,” by Walt Whitman, is probably his most famous piece of poetry and when Robert Sickels decided to write an essay on it, he decided to write more about how Whitman wrote “Song of Myself,” as a nature writing and in the process explaining what nature writing was and still is today.

Sickels comes straight out of the gate and explains how nature writing “focuses on the often adversarial relationship between human beings and the nature world.” He then goes on to talk about how Whitman talked much about nature and humans in his piece and took Whitman’s point of view throughout the entire essay. “In Whitman’s eyes,” he states, “people create and invent things because it is our nature to do so.” However, besides explaining the nature and human aspect of the poem, Sickels’s most powerful point comes towards the end when he analyzes one of Whitman’s lines, “they will more than arrive there every one and still pass on.” He goes on to analyze the point that Whitman made that everyone dies and no one is superior to another. This is very powerful because although the poem is about himself as an entity as one, he still shows compassion towards other human beings and knows that, just like the American standpoint, we are all created equal.

Sickel ends his essay with his overall point that the poem was written mainly to state “humanity’s inextricable place in the regenerative natural world,” and after reading Whitman’s poem, you will be reborn to play a more important part in the world’s everlasting “drama.”

Whitley, Edward. "Whitman's Occasional Nationalism: "A Broadway Pageant" and the Space of Public Poetry. " Nineteenth - Century Literature 60.4 (2006): 451-480. Research Library Core. ProQuest. 11 Jul. 2007.
<<http://ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1090924071&Fmt=3&clientId=9874&RQT=309&VName=PQD>>

In his essay on Walt Whitman’s “A Broadway Pageant,” Edward Whitley explains with detail that Whitman’s “Pageant” praises the nationalism appeal that it raises because it was about how the Japanese visited New York City and Americans greeted them with the utmost respect, showing the world how classy the states really were. He also goes about talking about how “A Broadway Pageant” demonstrated how occasional poetry allowed Whitman “to articulate the local and global framework within which his otherwise nationalist poetics “operated.”

To help his readers know exactly what he was talking about, he explained and defined mostly everything that there was to question, allowing his point to be reached without confusion or doubts. He defined how an occasional poem was “bound to an event occurring in a specific place and time,” and explained in detail as to why the Japanese came over to talk trade with the U.S., and what it was like to be there amongst everybody in attendance.

The most interesting part of his article is when Whitley talks about when Whitman wrote the first section of "Pageant" placing himself amongst the crowd scene. He goes into detail using Whitman's eyes to help explain what Whitman was seeing and writing so the average poetry reader could understand and enjoy. Equally as interesting, he also goes into the history books to explain how Whitman's words have been used afterwards by presidents and speakers at historical events and speeches. This allows the reader to truly understand the significance of not only "Pageant," but Whitman as a historical American figure.

To end his article, Whitley compares "Pageant" with another one of Whitman's poems entitled, "Facing West from California Shores." He compares it because of how if you would be able to look west from California, you would see Japan, the nation that came to see the United States, which led to the writing of Whitman's "Pageant." By doing this, he allows the reader to truly see the connection between the U.S. and Japan on that fateful day, and that Whitman and his writings are deserving to be etched into the annals of American history.