Rheana Davenport

10th Literature and Composition: Lowery

“It might be us speaking instead of him!”: Individuality, Collaboration, and the Networked

Forces Contributing to “Whitman”

Price, Kenneth M.; and Cayer, Janel. “”It might be us speaking instead of him!”: Individuality, Collaboration, and the Networked Forces Contributing to “Whitman”.” *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 33 (2015), 114-124.

The authors’ purpose of this essay is to examine the importance not only of Walter Whitman’s works like *Leaves of Grass,* which sparked political, sexual, and philosophical inquiry in its readers and critics, but also the great mastermind he was at conducting a part to play in the production of the reviews of his own work. Walt Whitman helped write a basis for the public’s opinion of his work as well as the work itself. This article makes the point that the people of Whitman’s time viewed his work as controversial and immoral. Examples of these critics on Whitman’s work were mentioned in the article including Edmund Stedman’s essay: “Walt Whitman”. The reasons for Whitman helping to write his own reviews isn’t factually stated as much as assumed that Walt felt there was no critic more inclined to interpret his book than himself. Evidence provided in the document that proves Whitman’s ‘willingness to help’ is found in his notes for Baxter (employee of Boston’s *Sunday Herald*) with the quote: “don’t fail to copy this…”

Compared to the biography I’m reading, the article was hardly biased. The authors of this article provided substantial evidence for the reader to successfully form a fairly unswayed opinion of Whitman. The fact that this article doesn’t indulge in a certain negative or positive factor of Whitman’s habits may allow the reader to enjoy his work all the more.