



Masculine Landscapes: Walt Whitman and the Homoerotic Text

Byrne Fone

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Scrutinizing the weave and texture of Walt Whitman's earliest poetry and fiction, the notebooks of 1855–56, the first edition (1855) of *Leaves of Grass*, and the *Calamus* poems, Byrne R. S. Fone demonstrates that from the beginning and throughout, Whitman's homoerotic muse, his "Fierce Wrestler," dictated the shape, tone, and message of the poetry.

Fone shows how Whitman's presumed homosexuality is reflected in the work. He identifies the definitive signs, symbols, metaphors, and structures unique to homosexual texts as he examines the ways in which the social, emotional, spiritual, aesthetic, and sexual facts of homosexuality shape and define such texts. Further, he places Whitman in the context of nineteenth-century literary/social homosexual life as well as in the context of homosexual fantasy as expressed in certain nineteenth-century texts.

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