



**Title:** Leaves of Grass: The Complete 1855 and 1891-92 Editions

**Author:** Walt Whitman

**Publisher:** Library of America

**On sale date:** January 20, 2011

**ISBN:** 9781598530971

**Format:** Paperback

**Age Range\*:** 18 Up

## BOOK RESUME: LEAVES OF GRASS

### BOOK SYNOPSIS

In 1855, a small volume appeared, self-published by a failed Brooklyn journalist and carpenter: twelve untitled poems and a preface announcing the author's aims. A commercial failure, this book was the first stage of a massive, lifelong enterprise. Six editions and thirty-seven years later, Leaves of Grass had been recognized as one of the central masterworks of world poetry. This Library of America Paperback Classic includes two complete texts: the 1855 first edition and the magnificent culminating edition of 1891-1892.

### REVIEWS AND PRAISE

The critical and popular response to Leaves of Grass was overwhelmingly positive. One critic noted, in an 1855 review in Life Illustrated, "It is like no other book that ever was written, and therefore, the language usually employed in notices of new publications is unavailable in describing it." Unusually prescient, even now, Leaves of Grass has become an unavoidable influence on American poetry. [Academy of American Poets](#)

### MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Teaching Guide from the Academy of American Poets](#)
- [Article: Leaves of Grass; From the Collection: The Library](#)

### RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

- [National Coalition Against Censorship](#). Walt Whitman's classic Leaves of Grass faced challenges and fierce criticism almost immediately after being published in 1855. Its sexual references and homoeroticism were the main cause for concern among its opponents.

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