

The Scarlet Professor: Newton Arvin: A Literary Life Shattered by Scandal

Barry Werth



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The Scarlet Professor: Newton Arvin: A Literary Life Shattered by Scandal Barry Werth During his thirty-seven years at Smith College, Newton Arvin published groundbreaking studies of Hawthorne, Whitman, Melville, and Longfellow that stand today as models of scholarship and psychological acuity. He cultivated friendships with the likes of Edmund Wilson and Lillian Hellman and became mentor to Truman Capote. A social radical and closeted homosexual, the circumspect Arvin nevertheless survived McCarthyism. But in September 1960 his apartment was raided, and his cache of beefcake erotica was confiscated, plunging him into confusion and despair and provoking his panicked betrayal of several friends.

An utterly absorbing chronicle, **The Scarlet Professor** deftly captures the essence of a conflicted man and offers a provocative and unsettling look at American moral fanaticism.

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