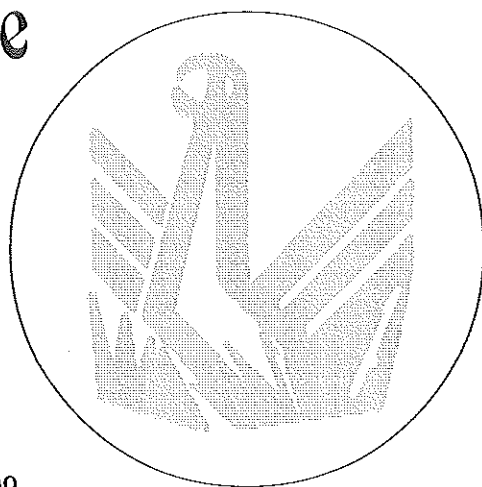


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# The D.H. Lawrence Society Of North America Newsletter

Vol. 29 Summer 1999

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## Secretary's Report on the Lawrence Society in San Francisco

by Elizabeth Fox

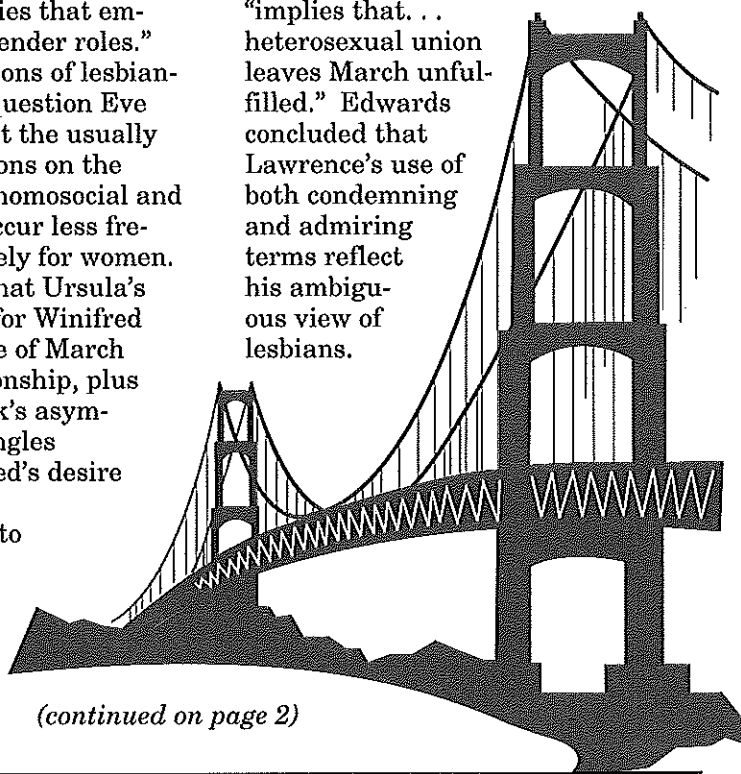
Three Lawrence Society events occurred in the first two days of the 1998 MLA Convention. Program Chair Jack Stewart presided over the first of these, the panel titled "Subverting the Norms." As in recent practice, the panel included four papers.

Justin D. Edwards (University of Montreal) delivered a paper titled, "At the End of The Rainbow: Shifting Lesbian Identities in D.H. Lawrence's Fiction." Edwards suggested that the novel was Lawrence's response to anxieties stirred by the articulation of women's independent sexuality, especially in same-sex relationships. In place of the tradition of Romantic female friendship, Lawrence employs a model of relationship between a teacher, Winifred, and a student, Ursula, that echoes Edward Carpenter's placement of women within a pederastic or, in his terms, "homogenic alliance." In contrast, *The Fox* presents the relationship between two women in terms of gendered categories, assigning March a masculine role and Banford, a traditionally feminine one.

Both Ursula and March choose heterosexual bonds, but for different reasons: Ursula repudiates lesbianism for its sense of "deadness," while March's rejection of Banford results from the gender confusion of their roles. Edwards viewed the narrative condemnation of March's masculinity as a possible "questioning of lesbian identities that embrace heterosexual gender roles." The two representations of lesbianism led Edwards to question Eve Sedgwick's claim that the usually homophobic disruptions on the continuum between homosocial and homosexual desire occur less frequently and completely for women.

Edwards argued that Ursula's isolation of her love for Winifred and the male rupture of March and Banford's relationship, plus a version of Sedgwick's asymmetrical gender triangles (mediation of Winifred's desire for Ursula through Winifred's marriage to Ursula's uncle), contradict Sedgwick's assertions. Wondering whether the rupture of the

women's relationship constitutes an expression of Lawrence's own homophobia or a representation of an ideological shift about women's sexuality, Edwards noted the ambiguous conclusion of *The Fox*: although a male visitor ruptures the homosocial bond between the women, the narrator "implies that. . . heterosexual union leaves March unfulfilled." Edwards concluded that Lawrence's use of both condemning and admiring terms reflect his ambiguous view of lesbians.



(continued on page 2)

Marya McFadden (University of Southern California) began her paper, "Sadomasochism and the Theatre of Gender and Sexual Identity in *Women in Love*" by commenting that the novel's title reflects a deliberate effort to position women as erotic objects and to repress love between men. The novel breaks with the tradition of pastoral romance that it employs through acts of violence associated with gender and sexuality.

McFadden cited Leo Bersani's comment that the aggression that drives domination resembles the oceanic feeling of oneness in obliterating boundaries and hence also produces erotic pleasure. Citing Marianna de Koven's discussion of modernism's use of water imagery to reflect ambivalence toward erosion of social hierarchies, McFadden suggested that representation of erotic aggression at the same time unsettle and maintain psychic and social binaries.

The sadomasochism of Gerald and Gudrun's relationship parallels Deleuze's description of the male masochist's pre-Oedipal alliance with the mother, disavowal of the father, and need to suffer pain for possession of the father's phallic sexuality. (Gerald's explicit link to Cain, whom Deleuze cites as an archetypal male masochist, supports this reading.) Gerald's attraction to Gudrun constitutes a loss of masculine prerogative that drives him to attempt domination in order to retrieve status.

Gerald's attraction to Rupert also threatens his identity, mainly because their psychic denial of it produces violence revealed by the language of their dangerous desire and acts of erotic aggression. Gerald's attempt to dominate reassures him about his masculine and heterosexual identity. The destruction surrounding him and other characters critiques the violence inherent in constructing identity in terms of rigid and hierarchical binaries. The novel reveals the violent costs of a social order based on domination by linking homoerotic anxiety and masochistic desire with the threat to masculine privilege that drives his misogyny.

William M. Harrison (SUNY—Geneseo) spoke on "Thinking Like a Chicken—Or a Porcupine: Lawrence, Feminism, and Animal Rights" to explore how Lawrence and feminist thought subvert androcentric thinking to revise the understanding of the relationship between the human and animal world. Citing Lawrence's sympathy with Susan the cow in "Love Was Once a Little Boy," Harrison noted that deeper empathy exists between farm and domestic animals and humans than wilder animals although the former seem less courageous, agile, and noble than more savage species. Through what Lawrence calls her "cowy mystery," Susan allows him a transformative connection with an ideal and real nature.

In *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine*, the protagonist beats the creature for which the collection is named when shooting fails to kill it, contradicting feminist and animal rights resistance to cruelty to animals as well as a Romantic view of at least some fauna. In the essay "Aristocracy," porcupines represent what is repugnant in nature and democratic man's squalid, sluggish greedy, parasitic force. In the poem "Bibbles," the speaker's intimacy with a young dog requires her submission. Instead of focusing on real animals, women, and lives, as do radical philosophies, Lawrence uses allegorical symbols and creates ideological tension with pro-animal rights feminism.

In "Reflections" and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, Lawrence praises feline vitality and vision—the poem's "Miss Timsy," like the cat Mino in *Women in Love*, may be savage but not repugnant, as the porcupine is. "Reflections" expresses Lawrence's belief that higher creatures obtain vitality by absorbing it from lower ones—a chipmunk for Timsy, a cow for Lawrence. He also emphasizes the relationship of being that destroys neither Susan the cow or himself. This flow of being brings Lawrence's ideas in closest connection with feminist animal rights ideas.

Jean Pickering and Suzanne Kehde (California State University,

Fresno) presented "Recycling the Empire: the Leadership Novels" in a dialogue. The two traced the preoccupation with authority in *Aaron's Rod*, *Kangaroo*, and *The Plumed Serpent* to "a national male identity fostered by the construction of Britain as an imperial and hierarchical power." In these three novels, Lawrence attempts to contain, if not resolve, the conflicting class and gender relations of the period between the wars. These speakers suggested that the narrators show nostalgia for the unified glory of the hero of the realist novel. Lawrence relies on authoritarianism under the imperial and class structure as the basis for new identities and a new society. In fact, each novel figures the willing submission of inferior (reader) to superior (writer), making the novels metaphors of the power relations he advocates: in *Aaron's Rod*, a statue of David has just overcome Goliath and the Philistines; in *Kangaroo*, Lawrence serves as puppet master for a shadow puppet, failing to provide the illusion of autonomous characters. Lawrence tries to compensate for uncertainties about humanity's place, political and personal relations, and individual identity, but his narratorial interventions fail to negotiate the conflict between individual freedom and a need for submission of inferiors to superiors.

In *The Plumed Serpent*, Kate Lewis provides a point of view but not the voice of the narrative passages. Instead, the narrator shifts to accounts of other minds, such as Kate's American companion in the first chapter. Pickering and Kehde presented the novel as Lawrence's attempt to work out Britain's domestic problems by shifting their location. A move of colonial appropriation, using Mexico simplified the envisioning of a new life in a nostalgic past, not least because knowledge and experience of the country restricted him less. While Pickering said she felt like Lawrence in not separating nostalgia from concepts of gender and nation, she doubted the validity of Lawrence's division of them into

two orders of experience: feeling versus thinking. Instead, both speakers viewed nostalgia, gender and nationalism as processes contingent on historical factors and structured by contexts of expression. While criticizing the novels for their authorial prescription of readers' response, Pickering and Kehde valued them for raising questions about ideology and the historicity of ideas.

In the second event, fifteen people attended the Business Meeting of the D.H. Lawrence Society of North America. President Lawrence Gamache led the meeting and encouraged nominations to next President Earl Ingersoll of possible recipients of future awards after Earl reported on the successful Taos Conference.

Paucity of applicants prevented the designation in 1998 of a winner for the Biennial Award to a Newly Published Scholar; last year's applicants will be considered for the next award. The submission

deadline is November 1, 2000; submissions (to Earl Ingersoll) are encouraged. Membership Secretary/Treasurer Betsy Sargent was unable to attend but the budget appears stably in the black. After Jack Stewart led discussion of several topics, the meeting voted for "Lawrence and the Millennium: the Prophetic Vision" as the next panel topic. A motion was passed to empower the President to pursue all reasonable efforts with requests for funding to save the Kiowa Ranch in New Mexico, continuing the work at the Taos conference last July. Earl mentioned our good fortune in having Chuck Rossman as current editor and our concerns about the continued editorship of the D.H. Lawrence Review. Larry Gamache urged the Board to follow the rules for conference planning strictly to avoid confusion about upcoming International Conferences.

The Executive Board members voted in were Jack Stewart as President Elect, Carol Siegel as

Program Chair, Elizabeth Fox as Recording Secretary, and Louis Grieff as Membership Secretary/Treasurer. We expressed appreciation of Eleanor Green's continued editorship of the Newsletter. Jill Frank, Carl Behn, Bruce Clark, Virginia Hyde, and Rebecca Carpenter were voted as members of the Executive Committee after passage of a motion to include five members. With a round of applause, attendees thanked Larry for ably fulfilling his presidential responsibilities.

The final but less formal meeting of Lawrentians took place at Firenze by Night, an Italian restaurant at the edge of North Beach. The restaurant accommodated late arrivals and wine flowed freely. Not for the first time, questions arose about the best strategy for paying for shared wine. Some diners advocated competitive consumption in order to guarantee fair division of costs; others want to pay only for the glasses they consume. What would Lawrence say (and do)?

## People in the News

**Paul Eggert** is the director of the Australian Scholarly Editions Centre at the School of English of the Australian Defence Force Academy, the only center of its kind in the country. Its main projects are the Academy Editions of Australian Literature, the Colonial Texts Series, and the Joint Bibliographies series (with the National Library of Australia). For more information, see <http://idun.itsc.adfa.edu.au/ASEC>. Paul will be on leave during 1999 to write a monograph on editorial theory, work on the textual editing of Conrad's *Under Western Eyes* for Cambridge UP, and start on an Academy Edition of Rolf Boldrewood's *Robbery Under Arms*, which he is co-editing with Elizabeth Webby.

**Carol Siegel** has finished her book manuscript *Millennial Sexstyles*, with a chapter on Lawrence and Deleuze.

**Antonella De Nicola**, director of the D. H. Lawrence Society of Italy, has spent a year at the Université Paris X, where she wrote a thesis on "D. H. Lawrence and the Mediterranean: Journey through the Seas of the Unconscious."

**Eleanor Green** is finishing up a sabbatical in Cambridge, MA., and her book on early American women college presidents should be complete by the end of the summer. She has accepted an appointment as Dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Maine, Presque Isle.

**Louis K. Greiff's** *D. H. Lawrence: Fifty Years on Film, 1949-1999* has been accepted for publication in fall 2000 by Southern Illinois UP.

**Langdon Elsbree** is in the early planning and research stages of an essay on Lawrence's uses of the dance in his poetry, especially the ritual elements in these images and scenes.

**Jack Stewart's** article "Lawrence's Peasant Portraits in Twilight in Italy," recently appeared in *Studies in the Humanities* 25 (1998): 24-37. He also presented a paper at the Twentieth Century Literature Conference in Louisville on "Visual Expression in Lawrence's Travel Writing."

# The D.H. Lawrence Heritage in Eastwood

Numerous Lawrence sites in the Eastwood area have now been identified, and a blue walking trail links twelve of these sites around the town. These include the Birthplace Museum on Victoria street and the Durban House Heritage Centre. The latter is housed in the Victorian building to which young Bert went to collect his father's wages. The Centre contains replicas of a Victorian school room and exhibits on the court case of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, conditions in the coal mines, and Victorian forms of entertainment. In addition to the birthplace, the tour locates three later homes of the Lawrences (Garden Road, Walker Street, and Lynncroft), although these are not open to the public.

The sites on the walking tour also include the Vince Cottage, home of Lawrence's Aunt Polly, the central

character in "Odour of Chrysanthemums." The Felley Mill Farm and Pond, setting for *The White Peacock*, also appear, although the farm is now largely demolished.

Greasley Church, which turns up in *The White Peacock* (Greymere Church) and *Sons and Lovers* (Minton Church) and the Old Ram Inn of *The White Peacock* are familiar landmarks. The ruins of the Beauvale Priory now constitute two sections of the wall of a farm. The Greasley Beauvale School, which Lawrence attended for five years, still stands, while the Old Ram Inn, a small white cottage, is located opposite a modern Ram Inn.

In the Eastwood cemetery are Lawrence's mother, father, and brother Ernest. Finally, Cossall Village (Cossehay in *The Rainbow*) remains very much as it did a hundred years ago, containing the home of Louie Burrows and the village church.

Collier's Wood, on the site of the former Moorgreen Colliery (Mintons in *Sons and Lovers*) has become an important part of the Eastwood Phoenix Project. The project is attempting to restore the wood and fields which existed before the mine was developed. The pit headstocks of the Brinsley Colliery, where Lawrence's father worked, have been returned to their original site. Moorgreen Reservoir, constructed at the end of the eighteenth century to supply water to the Nottingham canal, still exists; it was Nethermere in *The White Peacock* and Willey Water in *Women in Love*.

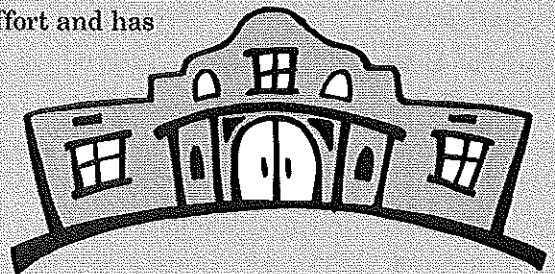
The Eastwood Library houses a special collection of Lawrentiana, including the Hopkin collection of letters and writing, a collection of reference books about Lawrence, the headstone from Lawrence's grave in Vence, and the original desk he used in his job in Nottingham.

## The Kiowa Ranch

Virginia Hyde of Washington State University and Tina Ferris of the Ranim Society are working with Victoria Kittredge and Annie Shank of the University of New Mexico Graduate and Professional Students Association (GPSA) and the present New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer, James Hewat, to prepare the nomination for the D. H. Lawrence Ranch near Taos to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This will give official recognition to the ranch as a historical landmark, thereby raising its status and opening up sources of restoration funding.

Ferris was the initiator of the nomination procedure, in which the ranch was inspected by the then State Historic Preservation Officer, Mary Ann Ander, now retired, and passed for "historical integrity" last spring. Working with the Lawrence Listserves and by e-mail, Ferris organized the movement to seek the National Register designation and, along with Hyde, circulated petitions and National Register bulletins during the Taos Conference. This culminated in the unanimous vote of the D. H. Lawrence Society of North America to support the nomination.

The GPSA of the University of New Mexico heads the ranch effort and has been charged with the duty of presenting the University of New Mexico executive board with a prospectus that identifies outside funding sources for the ranch. Information is requested on such sources—foundations or other channels—and volunteers are needed to help locate them or assist in other ways with the prospectus. Please contact Victoria Kittredge: [gpsa@unm.edu](mailto:gpsa@unm.edu).





# Book Corner

The Cambridge UP edition of *The First Women in Love*, the first publication of the earliest complete version of Lawrence's novel, edited by John Worthen and Lindeth Vasey, has appeared.

Bucknell UP has put out Stephen P. Clifford's *Beyond the Heroic "I": Reading Lawrence, Hemingway, and "Masculinity"*.

William Boyen, who met Mabel Luhan, Frieda, and Dorothy Brett during his long stay in Taos after 1945, has composed a booklet entitled *Three Women*, published by the Harry Ransom Research Center.

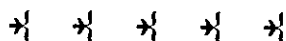
Stefania Michelucci has recently published, through Edizioni Dell'Orso in Alessandria, *L'orizzonte mobile. Spazio e luoghi nella narrativa di D. H. Lawrence (Mobile Horizons: Space and Places in D. H. Lawrence)*. The book looks at space and place relationships in Lawrence's fiction from an anthropological and interdisciplinary perspective.

Jack Stewart's *The Vital Art of D. H. Lawrence: Vision and Expression* will appear this spring. It is an interarts study with 23 illustrations.

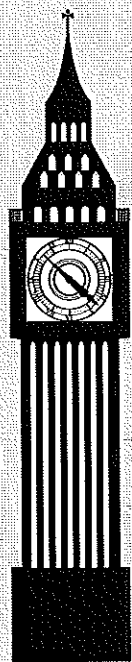
Helen Wussow's *The Nightmare of History: The Fictions of Virginia Woolf and D. H. Lawrence* (Lehigh UP) documents the influence of World War I on these two very different writers, arguing that Woolf and Lawrence shared many perspectives about the dislocations and horrors created by war, as well as potential, although probably unachievable, cultural resurrection.

An Italian version of the central part of *Twilight in Italy (Sul Lago di Garda)*, edited by Stefania Michelucci, contains pictures of the area taken about the time Lawrence was there. It is published by Newton Compton in Rome and financed by the local Comunità Montana of Gargnano, which is taking an increasing interest in Lawrence's relationship to the area. The book will be presented during the course of a day of Lawrentian studies at Gargnano on May 14.

Jhan Hochman's *Green Cultural Studies: Nature in Film, Novel, and Theory* (U of Idaho P) includes a discussion of the depiction of nature as setting, character, and motif in *Women in Love*.







## Lawrence in England

**T**he D. H. Lawrence Society has had a lively season of activities. Helen Baron, co-editor of the Cambridge *Sons and Lovers* edition lectured on the Paul Morel manuscript which she is editing. Christopher Joyce talked in November on "Lawrence and Florence and other Italian Places."

December's Christmas luncheon was held in the newly refurbished Durban House.

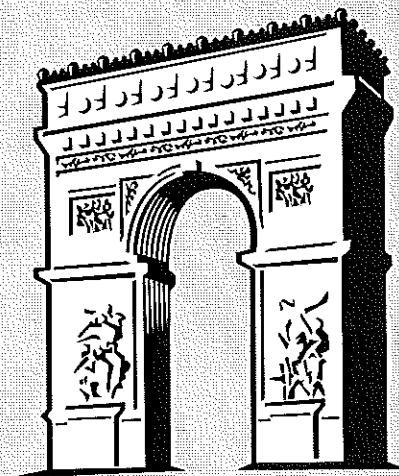
In January Christopher Pollnitz, who is editing the Cambridge poetry volume and was in England from Australia to study manuscripts, described for members some of the editorial problems he is facing in connection with *Pansies*.

James Boulton, president of the Society, spoke at the Society's twenty-fifth anniversary luncheon at Durban house in March. Prior to that the Society had celebrated the ninetieth birthday of Peggy Needham, Lawrence's niece, and heard a lecture on Lawrence and folksong.

## Lawrence in France

**T**he Paris International D. H. Lawrence Conference, "D. H. Lawrence: After Strange Gods," will take place June 30-July 3. For information, contact Ginette Katz-Roy, 135 rue du Mont Cenis, 75018 Paris.

The nineteenth number of the *Etudes lawrenciennes*, "Lawrence and Language," will appear in early May. It contains articles by Michael Bell and Fiona Becket (the guest editors), Vance Crummett, Jeff Wallace, Stefana Roussanova, John Worthen, Michael Black, Ginette Katz-Roy, and George Hyde. Subscriptions are available through Publidix, 200 Avenue de la République, 92001 Nanterre Cédex, France, or through EBSCO, Subscription Services, Bill Later Department, Box 1943, Birmingham, AL 35201-1943.



# Lawrence in Italy

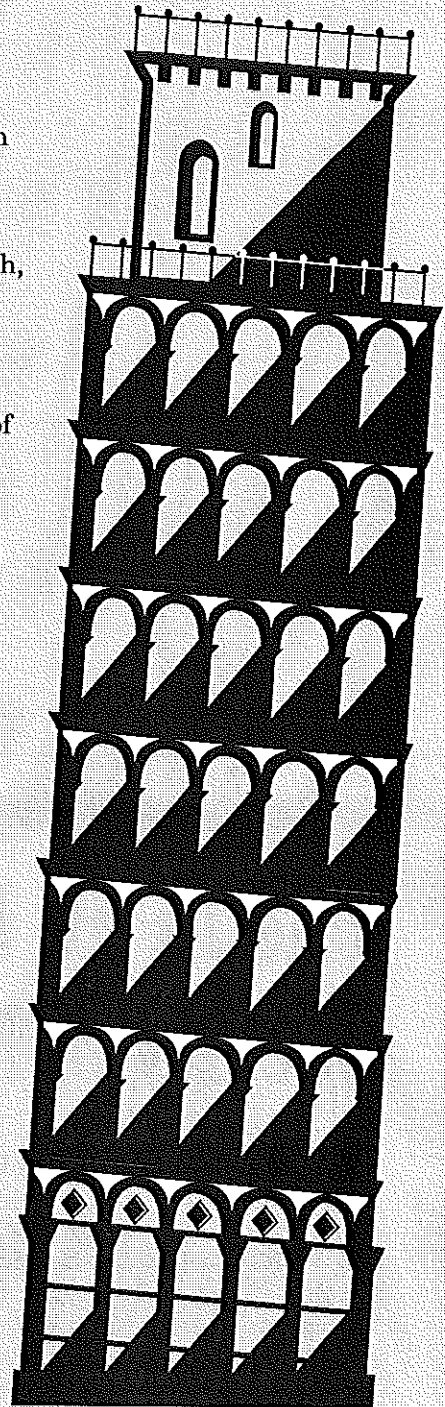
The D. H. Lawrence Society of Italy was officially launched in March 1997 with a reading of Lawrence's poems by Roy Boardman, Director of the St. Peter's English Language Center of Naples and Antonella De Nicola, Director of the Society. In June, Antonella spoke on Lawrence and the Ship of Death, and in October Vita Fortunati and Rina Nicolaj from Bologna talked on Lawrence between tradition and modernism. In November Annamaria Cartaldi Palombi from the University Federico II of Naples discussed Lawrence and Norman Douglas. In 1998, Michael Enos from Boston University talked on Lawrence and the spectacle of power. This spring Alison M. Lewis from the University of Philadelphia discusses the mystical influences of Italy on Lawrence.

In April 1998 the Society organized a two-day conference in Naples entitled "D. H. Lawrence between Art and Myth" with Ginette Roy, Jacqueline Gouriand, and Stephen Rowley as the main speakers. Despite bad weather, unusual for the area, the conference was quite successful. The Society plans to publish the papers from the conference and from earlier lectures.

May 1999 will feature a conference in Costiera Amalfitana on "D. H. Lawrence and Italy: Places of Art and Memory" with a variety of theatricals, translations, and lectures on Lawrence in cooperation with such organizations as the CAI (Club Alpino Italiano), Italia Nostra, and Lega Ambiente. It will include excursions to a number of Lawrence-related places, including Capri and the Villa Ferraro, where the Lawrences lived in the south of Italy. This is the first conference in the area for literary scholars linking a foreign artist to the region.

The address of the Society is c/o Antonella De Nicola, Viva Silvio Spaventa 9, 80142 Napoli. Telephone and fax: 0039/081/553-4719.

In addition, the Istituto di Anglistica, of Art History, and the Department of Philosophy of the University of Milan jointly organized a series of interdisciplinary seminars on "The Influence of Cézanne on Writers, Poets, and Philosopher." These seminars have taken place every two weeks and will conclude in May. In March Giovanni Cianci and Stefania Michelucci lectured on Lawrence, focusing their talks on "The Appleness of Cézanne's Apples: The Recovery of Corporeality" and on "The Painted Body." The latter was a slide lecture that dealt in part with Lawrence's paintings. A conference to discuss the results of the seminars will take place in September.



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# The D. H. Lawrence Society of North America

**M**embership is US\$10 a year, with the option of a ten-year membership for US\$60. Make checks payable to the Society and forward to Louis Greiff, Membership Secretary/Treasurer, Division of English, Alfred University, Alfred, NY, 14802.

The newsletter appears twice a year. Send information to be included to Eleanor H. Green, Editor, University of Maine at Presque Isle, Presque Isle, ME, 04769.

