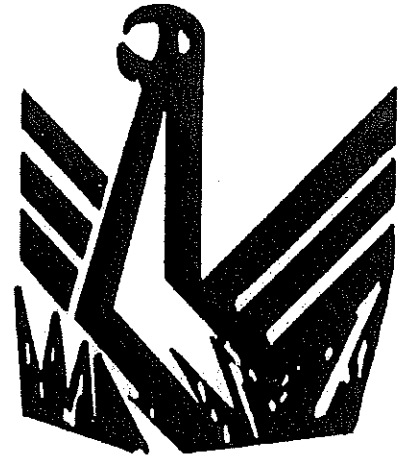


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# The D. H. Lawrence Society Of North America Newsletter



Volume 38, Fall 2009

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## Greetings from Jill Franks, DHLSNA President

This Fall I am happily reading more Lawrence than usual. When I don't teach him, I don't tend to re-read him for fun, either – reflecting no disrespect to our hero, only my taste for the new. Yet, a week ago, I picked up *Mr. Noon*, the novel that most often gets left out of our syllabi and conferences. Reading about Gilbert and Johanna's challenging hike through the Tyrolean Alps, I was impressed by their stamina and courage. Conditions and equipment were rough; they did not carry maps, compasses, or guidebooks; they were willing to take the chance of finding accommodations at nightfall, whether hay hut or empty chapel (just a small booth holding an altar and Christ icon). I know from experience that travelling with your new lover in such rough conditions puts strain on your relationship, and this was supposed to be their honeymoon! I was so proud of Lawrence's soul-baring honesty about the depths at which his relationship shook him (I consciously skip to the biographical fallacy here). Several relationship conflicts are explored in depth, usually from Johanna's view as well as Gilbert's. To me, this fairness is what redeems Lawrence from his fears of women: he understands, at his best, that they undergo similar horrors of intimacy as he does, or that his horror offends them. Because of this honesty, and the freshness of his experience, the dialogue in Johanna and Gilbert's encounters seems realistic in ways that, for instance, Birkin and Ursula's, or Connie and Oliver's, never do.

In the next month, I'll be re-reading a few more key Lawrence novels and stories that focus on love, as I prepare a talk, entitled "Lawrence: The Prophet of Love," for our university's Library Athenaeum series. The event for this library talk is a happy one for Austin Peay State University, for I will be introducing the university community to the James Cowan Collection of

Lawrence criticism, in the process of being shelved in the Woodward Library. As a result of negotiations throughout this spring, Judith Cowan donated eighteen boxes of Jim's materials on Lawrence to Austin Peay's library. After discussions with the curator of special collections and the library dean concerning whether the readership was better served by showcasing the collection in a private, locked room, or by integrating the material into the PR 6023 section of the circulating collection, we decided to honor Jim's desire to give the greatest possible access by shelving the Lawrence collection with the rest of the library's books. Fellow Lawrenceans, you'll appreciate what I mean when I say it sure looks good there!

In other news, things are looking up for international conference planning. In recent correspondence, Nancy Paxton and David Game offer to be conference directors of the Twelfth International D. H. Lawrence Conference in Sydney, Australia, to be held in summer 2011. Their contacts at the Sydney Tourist Bureau will help them compile a detailed bid for hotel, banquet, and session space, as well as a possible discount on Qantas airlines. Kudos go to Nancy and David for undertaking this work.

Meanwhile, back in North America, two MLA sessions are planned. "Lawrence's Short Stories" will be held at on Tuesday, December 29, at 8:30 a.m., featuring Beth McFarland-Wilson, Carrie Rohman, and Pamela Wright. "The Lawrences' Circle" will take place at 1:45 on Wednesday, December 30, at the Philadelphia Marriott Hotel, with speakers Lynn Talbot, Joyce Wexler, and myself. The Lawrence Society Dinner and business meeting will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 29<sup>th</sup> at a nearby restaurant.

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**Newsletter of the D.H.  
Lawrence Society of North  
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**Editor's Column  
By Nancy L. Paxton**

I am most grateful for the opportunity to spend six months in Australia as a Fulbright Senior Scholar. Thanks to an award from the Australian-American Fulbright Commission, I have traveled up and down the East coast of this vast and beautiful country, going as far north as Cairns and as far south as Canberra. Along the way, I have seen some of the places that the Lawrences visited in 1922, including Sydney's wonderful harbor, the Botanical Gardens and zoo, as well as the beautiful, white sand beaches near Thirroul. I have travelled through many miles of bushland that still conveys a sense of its

untouched "newness," as Lawrence said. Since I arrived in Sydney on the first day of July, I can also verify his remark that in midwinter "every day is as sunny" as an English summer and the "sun is almost as hot as our June."

Lawrence has a different reputation here, it seems to me; he did, after all, have some rude things to say about Australians, but his accomplishments and ambitions are also perhaps more widely recognized nonetheless. At the meeting of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature (ASAL) held in Canberra in July, Philip Mead, one of the keynote speakers, presented an eloquent analysis that began with a meditation on Lawrence's *Kangaroo*; I offer a brief summary in these pages.

Living in Australia for a short time has also allowed me to experience a place that is perhaps less provincial than many towns and universities in the United States. At various times of the day, the news is presented in Italian, French, or Japanese, and weather reports mention places many American students wouldn't recognize and couldn't find on a map. Being here has shifted my field of reference too, I hope, to a more international one. Thanks to responses from our members, I include news from parts of the world we have not featured in recent newsletters, including stories from Japan and India. I have also had the great pleasure of an inspiring electronic correspondence with Gour K. Das recently. Her comments highlight some of the reasons why David Game and I have proposed the theme of Colonial/ Postcolonial Perspectives on Lawrence for our next International D. H.

Lawrence Conference in Sydney in 2011. Dr. Das asked: "Is it not true also that the present high tide/ tornado of cultural globalization has a sweepingly castaway effect on indigenous cultures that Lawrence valued? The emergent readership in every country, almost, seems more interested in popular (consumerish) culture rather than value-centered culture. Is not the decline of interest in Lawrence studies an index of that trend? Should not some of the vanishing breed of D. H. Lawrence scholars be pondering the intellectual / emotional drainout effect that many amongst the younger generation show to-day, or is there no cause for anxiety?" I share Dr. Das' concerns about the future of Lawrence studies and hope that we will debate these and other issues when we gather in Sydney in 2011.

Composing the newsletter while on the go in Australia has had its challenges. I especially want to thank our past president, Elizabeth Fox, and future president, Betsy Sargent, for their helpful advice, over the last few weeks.

These are difficult economic times for universities, so in closing, I want to express my thanks again to Dr. Allen Woodman, Chair of English, and Dean Michael Vincent of the College of Arts and Letters at Northern Arizona University for their ongoing support for this newsletter.