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REVIEWS

**Andrew Harrison, ed., *D. H. Lawrence in Context*.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.
Pp. 368. £84.99 (hardcover). ISBN 978 1 1084 2939 9**

Reviewed by Jane Costin

D. H. Lawrence in Context is a somewhat umbrella title, but its intent is probably one that Lawrence would have approved of because, as Judith Ruderman aptly reminds us in her chapter, he felt that even “the best poetry, when it is at all personal, needs the penumbra of its own time and place and circumstance to make it full and whole” (242; *IPoems* 656). However, Andrew Harrison takes the idea of context further than might be anticipated and, in outlining previous, restrictive views of Lawrence, points out that “Lawrence today is a far more complex, eclectic and contradictory figure than he has seemed in the past” (xv). Setting out the book’s ambitious aim to “present a new, clearer, more nuanced image of the author” (xvi), Harrison is to be congratulated for assembling a sterling group of international scholars to help him in his task. They, drawing on the superlative resources now available through the Cambridge Edition of Lawrence’s Letters and Works, have contributed chapters on a wide range of topics that blend together to offer a multifaceted portrayal of Lawrence. Inevitably, with such a diverse box of delights, some chapters will attract a reader’s attention more than others. But the great joy of this collection is its variety. This allows a reader to be drawn into unfamiliar topics, to discover unlooked for information and to be rewarded by stimulating fresh trains of thought.

The thirty-three concise chapters are helpfully divided into six sections, ‘Life Writing/Writing the Life’, ‘The Literary Marketplace’, ‘Literary and Cultural Contexts’, ‘Social and

Historical Contexts’, ‘Critical Fortunes’ and ‘Creative Legacies’. Some chapters have clearly been written especially for this book, whereas others have been extracted from longer pieces of work. Whilst the former approach ensures that the book offers topical information and insights, the latter course of action is particularly successful when, as in many examples here, the author has updated their previous work. Naturally, when reworking existing publications, care is required to ensure that the new chapter stands alone without necessitating recourse to the earlier work. Most authors have fully achieved this, but not all. Nevertheless, this mote does not detract from the excellence of this offering, which provides such a wealth of interest that it earns its place on any bookshelf as a volume that will be repeatedly consulted and referenced.

The first section contains three chapters on ‘Biographies’, ‘The Letters’ and ‘The Life in the Writing’. Making ample use of Brenda Maddox’s biography of Lawrence, *The Married Man* (1994), Michael Squires explores concerns about Lawrence’s sexuality and his portrayal of sexual relationships. Keith Cushman then looks at the way earlier collections of Lawrence’s letters were edited and John Worthen provides a stimulating conclusion by exploring the way Lawrence used multiple selves in his novels. Focusing on a biographical piece that Lawrence was asked to write by the French publisher Kra, Worthen examines how Lawrence’s “auto-biographical method” of writing, “not only recalled himself and his experiences, but *identified* the person he had been at various times: and hoped he had moved on from” (29).

A minor problem with the next section, ‘The Literary Marketplace’, would seem to be that authors had too much information to fit into the confines of a chapter. Joyce Wexler’s work on ‘Book Publishers’ points out that between 1911 and 1929 Lawrence published more than a book a year as well as poems and essays, but mainly concentrates on just *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. Annalise Grice offers an interesting look at ‘Journals, Magazines, Newspapers’ but, in a good way, left

a reader wanting more examples. However, no such problems hampered Harrison's excellent chapter on 'Private Publication' which packs in a significant amount of detailed information about Lawrence's expensive limited editions of his works as well as his more affordable and mainstream publications.

The next two sections, 'Literary and Cultural Contexts' and 'Social and Historical Contexts', contain many fine chapters that speak to the context that is suggested by Ruderman's quote at the top of my review. In the first of these Suzanne Hobson ('Lawrence and his Contemporaries') and Holly Laird ('Modernisms') both look at the groups surrounding Lawrence, while others focus on the various art forms that Lawrence engaged in: Dominic Head (short stories), Bethan Jones (novellas), James Moran (theatre), Neil Roberts (travel writing) and Jack Stewart (painting). This overview of Lawrence's work ensures something of interest for most readers. However, I feel, special mention needs to be made of Christopher Pollnitz's recently completed epic work on Lawrence's poetry (reviewed in this number of the Journal), which allows his comprehensive knowledge to shine through in his masterly chapter on 'Verse Forms'. Two chapters in this section push the boundaries of context further. Susan Reid's work on 'Literary Realism' examines the gap Lawrence saw between language and reality and his fascination with his idea of "wonder", while Michael Bell puts forward a strong, and delightfully eloquent, case for viewing Lawrence as a philosopher. Bell also makes a very valuable point in his view that Lawrence's "intense responsiveness to the multiple otherness of the world ... imbues his work with a philosophical significance comparable to that of major contemporaries and endorsed by later modern thinkers" (159-60).

The second of these two sections contains a clutch of strong chapters which, in different ways, look at Lawrence's "intense responsiveness to the multiple otherness of the world" (159). This includes Ruderman's chapter on 'Race and Cultural Difference', which draws attention to how Lawrence reflects contemporary racial and cultural prejudices, but also how he "sometimes rose

above prevailing attitudes of his times” (250). Ronald Granofsky considers Lawrence’s struggles with class and determines that he “never really did escape his complex class origins” but that this helped him to “become the writer he had it in him to be” (181). Engaging and informative chapters by Luke Ferretter (‘Religion’), Howard J. Booth (‘Sex, Sexuality, Sexology’), and Jeff Wallace (‘Science and Technology’) all detail Lawrence’s interest in and shifting attitudes towards these important aspects of his world, while John Turner’s chapter on ‘Psychoanalysis’ explains Lawrence’s keen attention to this subject and the influence of David Eder.

The timing of this book probably meant that Nancy L. Paxton was unable to avail herself of Robert Spoo’s work, *Modernism and the Law* (reviewed in this number of the Journal), which is a pity as they cover similar ground. However, to demonstrate the wide scope of this section, her chapter on ‘Censorship’ is joined by Elizabeth M. Fox’s writing on ‘Edwardian Feminisms and Suffragism’, Helen Wussow on ‘The Great War’ (between men and women) and Carrie Rohman on ‘Ecology’.

The penultimate section, ‘Critical Fortunes’, offers some engaging chapters that cover familiar, as well as less well-known topics. Carol Siegel’s contribution ‘Lawrence and Female Authors/Memorists’ compellingly builds on her seminal work, *Lawrence Among the Women* (1991), recalling Lawrence’s determination to make the female voice heard in his writing. David Ellis’s intriguing discussion about F. R. Leavis’s relationship with Lawrence’s work illuminates how critics can shape an image of Lawrence they want to project, which also underlines Harrison’s premise of the demonstrable complexity of Lawrence’s personality, thought and work. Marianna Torgovnick’s chapter on ‘Lawrence and Feminism’ includes a significant discussion about Lawrence and sex. Paul Eggert’s engaging prose in ‘The Cambridge Edition’ enlivens his factual account and, in the process, conveys yet more information about the background to Pollnitz’s work on editing Lawrence’s poems. In his invigorating look at ‘Lawrence and

Theory’, which draws on the work of several philosophers, Garry Watson argues that Lawrence is not better known as a theorist today because of the language he used and the shift that has occurred in our view of politics, advocating that, particularly in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, Lawrence’s thinking is perhaps more “theory in progress” than theory (318).

Finally, readers are treated to two further essays that consider Lawrence’s creative legacy; Louis K. Greiff draws on his extensive knowledge of the subject to offer a chapter on ‘Film Adaptations’, while Lee M. Jenkins writes a detailed and informative account of ‘Lawrence’s Influence on Later Writers’. Arguing that Lawrence “has been a missing link in histories of the English working-class novel” (329), Jenkins discusses the effect Lawrence had on a wide range of other poets and novelists, on both sides of the Atlantic.

The sheer volume and variety of the chapters in this book is testament to Harrison’s success in his ambition to present a new, clearer and, importantly, more nuanced image of Lawrence. This volume should engage anyone who has even a passing interest in Lawrence. For scholars of his work, it provides an essential point of reference.

**Susan Reid, *D. H. Lawrence, Music and Modernism*.
Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.
Pp. 260. £59.99 (hardcover). ISBN 978 3 0300 4998 0**

Reviewed by Bethan Jones

As Susan Reid is keen to emphasise in her ground-breaking monograph, the subject of Lawrence and music has long been neglected or misrepresented. Reid attributes this in part to Lawrence’s preference for small-scale musical works – the song over the symphony – which runs counter to the trend evident within many of his literary modernist contemporaries. (She also distinguishes Lawrence, Nietzsche and Carpenter from the