

Citation metadata

Author: Joyce Wexler
Date: Spring 2016
From: D.H. Lawrence Review(Vol. 41, Issue 1)
Publisher: D.H. Lawrence Review
Document Type: Article
Length: 1,307 words

Main content

Article Preview :

Peter Balbert. D. H. Lawrence and the Marriage Matrix: Intertextual Adventures in Conflict, Renewal, and Transcendence. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016. Pp. xii + 346-47. B&W illustrations. 52.99 [pounds sterling] (\$90.95) (cloth).

Peter Balbert has written a very personal book. Like many others, he seeks life lessons in the writings of D.H. Lawrence and finds the authority for these lessons in Lawrence's own life. The book is also personal in more specific ways. Balbert dedicates the book to his wife "and the growing resonance of our own marriage matrix." He refers readers to his earlier publications on Lawrence, Hemingway, and Mailer, and he freely expresses opinions of other critics, whether "intelligent" and "brilliant" or "reductive." The final chapters are transcripts of academic talks on the state of the profession that Balbert presented in the 1990s, included here, he explains, to show how Lawrence's themes of renewal and transcendence have played out in his own life as a teacher, scholar, and chairperson. He describes his eclectic critical method as "synergistic analysis," which he defines as an attempt "to productively interface sequential plot development with impinging biography, relevant intertextuality, and authorial doctrine." To do this, he balances "close reading, rhetorical analysis, and historical context." This attention to form is one of the strengths of the book.

Balbert's focus on marriage determines his choice of texts. With Lawrence and Frieda's relationship in mind, Balbert probes *The Lost Girl*, *The Captain's Doll*, *The Fox*, *The Ladybird*, *St. Mawr*, "The Princess," and *The Virgin and the Gipsy* for correlations between the life and the work. These texts have received less attention than Lawrence's earlier writing, and Balbert's provocative readings are welcome additions to the critical record. The vast archive of biographical information about Lawrence allows Balbert to connect his readings to Lawrence's daily life--the places he lived, the people he saw, the books he read. Balbert also draws on the extraordinary amount of information that has been published about...

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Wexler, Joyce. "Peter Balbert. D. H. Lawrence and the Marriage Matrix: Intertextual Adventures in Conflict, Renewal, and Transcendence." *D.H. Lawrence Review*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2016, p. 135+. Accessed 14 Nov. 2020.

Gale Document Number: GALE|A610927051

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D.H. Lawrence and the Marriage Matrix: Intertextual Adventures in Conflict, Renewal, and Transcendence. By Peter Balbert. This book first published 2016. Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK. British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library. Copyright © 2016 by Peter Balbert. 206 Impotence, Renewal, and the Honorable Beast: The Aesthetics of the Fourth Dimension in The Virgin and the Gipsy. viii Table of Contents. II. Some Origins from the 1990's: The Early Thematics of Renewal and Transcendence. Chapter Eight. 244 From Lady Chatterley's Lover to The Deer Park: Marriage, Renewal, and the Dialectic of Erotic Risk. David Herbert Lawrence (11 September 1885 – 2 March 1930) was an English writer and poet. His collected works represent, among other things, an extended reflection upon the dehumanising effects of modernity and industrialisation. Lawrence's writing explores issues such as sexuality, emotional health, vitality, spontaneity, and instinct. Lawrence's opinions earned him many enemies and he endured official persecution, censorship, and misrepresentation of his creative work throughout the second half of The marriage of Gertrude and Walter Morel has become a battleground. Repelled by her uneducated and sometimes violent husband, delicate Gertrude devotes her life to her children, especially to her sons, William and Paul - determined they will not follow their father into working down the coal mines. But conflict is evitable when Paul seeks to escape his mother's suffocating grasp through relationships with women his own age. Set in Lawrence's native Nottinghamshire, Sons and Lovers is a highly autobiographical and compelling portrayal of childhood, adolescence and the clash of genera