

Revisiting the Pansies Notebook

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Revisiting the *Pansies* Notebook: New Approaches to D. H. Lawrence's Late Archives

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ABSTRACT

D. H. Lawrence completed several significant works concurrently during the last three years of his life (1928–1930), including the poetry collection *Pansies*. Though the three volumes of *Poems of the comprehensive Cambridge Edition of the Works of D. H. Lawrence* offer valuable insight into Lawrence's verse-writing, this article underscores the importance of critically examining the materiality and intertextuality of Lawrence's late works by returning to the archives. It proposes two innovative approaches: reconstructing the *Pansies* notebook by situating dispersed archival materials back into the notebook, and analysing the intertextuality of seemingly unrelated pieces across various genres. This study complements the existing scholarly edition by providing a fresh perspective for examining Lawrence's late archives and appreciating his works synoptically and compositionally. It emphasises the significance of archives in the study of D. H. Lawrence and the broader field of modernist studies.

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1. Introduction

D. H. Lawrence was a prolific writer who exhibited various literary personae throughout his career. Those acquainted with his working pattern would recognise his inclination to engage in multiple projects concurrently, a working process never more pronounced than in the last three years of his life (1928–1930). During this period, Lawrence completed, revised, and published *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, one of his most renowned and contentious novels. He also ventured into popular journalism, cultivating a new persona for a different public. Moreover, he composed some of his most-discussed poetry, including *Pansies*.¹ Though the title might be somewhat misleading, *Pansies* is a collection of *pensées* reflecting his immediate thoughts, with some early entries showcasing Lawrence's new poetic style.² With the publication of the third volume of the *Poems* in 2018, the forty volumes of the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of*

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¹For a detailed account on the reception of *Pansies*, see Pollnitz, "Composition, Publication, Reception," 784–86.

²In Lawrence's first draft of the introduction to *Pansies*, he noted that "each *pensée* little piece is just a thought put down, and it doesn't pretend to be a half-baked lyric or a melody in American measure". See, D. H. Lawrence Collection, Harry Ransom Centre, Box 13 Folder 7. Henceforth referred to in the form "HRC DHL Box.Folder". *Poems*, I, 657.

D. H. Lawrence present researchers and the public with up-to-date, accurate and all but comprehensive texts. Subtitled *Uncollected Poems and Early Versions*, the third volume of Lawrence's *Poems*, edited by Christopher Pollnitz, "[offers] a new idea of the scope and scale of [Lawrence's] verse-writing".³ For the first time, readers can access "more than 120 poems which Lawrence either chose not to collect or was [...] unable to collect during his lifetime, and which have therefore been largely neglected", including the first draft of *Pansies*. However, despite the painstaking endeavour of prominent scholars dedicated to the production of the Cambridge *Works* since 1980, the editorial practice of presenting and reading Lawrence generically has resulted in current scholars' relative neglect both of Lawrence's archives and of the intertextuality of his work across different genres composed during a particular period. By examining the *Pansies* notebook (E302d or MS150) as an example, this study proposes two innovative approaches to interpreting Lawrence's late archives and advocates for critical attention to the materiality and intertextuality of his archives.⁴ First, this study reconstructs the initial portion of the *Pansies* notebook by situating the archival materials dispersed across various locations—such as misplaced loose leaves and manuscripts pulled from the notebook that are separately catalogued—back in the notebook in the correct order. Second, based on the reconstructed section of the notebook, this research introduces a cross-sectional analysis of Lawrence's new polemical and poetic styles to examine the intertextuality of these generically diverse pieces. This approach seeks to understand Lawrence's pragmatic strategies in modulating his tones while endeavouring to engage in dialogues with different audiences. Reading Lawrence synchronically, in short, offers insight into how works composed concurrently in Lawrence's late career—at a time his work involved multiple genres—cross-pollinated each other. Alongside other experimental archival research on modernist authors, such as Joshua Phillips's new approaches to Virginia Woolf's late archive, this study also underscores the irreplaceable significance of archives in Lawrence studies and the broader modernist studies.⁵

By dedicating a separate volume to the early versions of Lawrence's poems, Christopher Pollnitz and the Cambridge University Press addressed some limitations inherent in traditional editorial approach.⁶ The Anglo-American editorial convention typically aims to establish a "definitive edition" and relegates earlier or alternate versions to the "Appendix" or "Textual Apparatus" sections at the end of a volume. In the "General Editor's Preface" at the outset of each volume, James T. Boulton defines the editorial policy as "[providing] texts which are as close as can now be determined to those [Lawrence] would have wished to see printed".⁷ After settling on a base text, the editorial methodology for presenting the various editions involves listing "significant deleted MS readings" in the "Explanatory notes and, at times, in the Textual apparatus".⁸ This approach to some extent harmonises academic rigour with publication considerations. However, for an author like Lawrence, who habitually revisited his earlier drafts and

³Pollnitz, introduction to *Poems*, III, lxxix.

⁴Roberts, *Bibliography*, 643; Pollnitz, "Manuscript Listing," lx–lxiii.

⁵Phillips, "How Should One Read the 'Reader?'" 195–219.

⁶Similar publishing practice of allocating a distinct volume for earlier editions in the Cambridge *Works* is exemplified by *The First 'Women in Love'* (1998), *The First and Second Lady Chatterley Novels* (1999), *Paul Morel* (2003, early version of *Sons and Lovers*), and *Quetzalcoatl* (2011, early version of *The Plumed Serpent*).

⁷Boulton, "General Editor's Preface," xi.

⁸*Ibid.*, xii.

extensively revised and even rewrote works at various stages—manuscripts, typescripts, proofs and collected editions—a condensed apparatus and fragmented textual alterations no longer sufficiently represent the differences in the numerous versions of Lawrence’s works or their compositional development. Since the materialist turn in editing and criticism, scholars have increasingly recognised this inadequacy and called for a return to the original site of composition—manuscripts and other archival materials. In the *Poems*, it was at first planned to present a comprehensive variorum apparatus in the final volume or volumes, an apparatus which would have allowed readers and scholars to reconstruct the various versions of Lawrence’s poems and to trace the compositional development each poem underwent, from its inception to its appearance in newspapers/magazines, its inclusion in editions, and finally (or all but finally, in the 2020s) to its publication in the Cambridge *Poems*.⁹ This expectation was only partially fulfilled, but the third volume of the *Poems* has introduced new materials from archives to a broader readership and fosters a comprehensive understanding of Lawrence’s evolving poetic style and thematic development, thus paving the way for further critical assessments of his poetry.

A fundamental limitation of the Cambridge *Works* is that they constrain the encounter with Lawrence to be generic. Confined to a generic silo, a poem’s connections with other generically diverse works composed in the same period are effaced. The two instances, of the *pensée* “The Jeune Fille”, composed and published in 1929, and the essay, “The ‘Jeune Fille’ Wants to Know”, composed and published in newspaper form in 1928 and collected and published posthumously in *Assorted Articles* in April 1930, are a test case of how readily a user of the edition can negotiate the generic divides imposed by the Cambridge *Works*. The titles themselves suggest these are late works which might be valuable to compare. “The Jeune Fille” was one of the 29 *pensées* (E302g or TS167b) which Lawrence added to *Pansies* between 26 January 1929, when he decided “to type the *Pansies* all over again”, and 11 February 1929, when he sent the carbon typescript of the second typing of *Pansies* to New York.¹⁰ Despite the coincident titles, there is no compositional link between the *pensée*, composed in January-February 1929, and the essay, composed in April 1928 and given its final revision in November-December 1929.

One means of redressing the shortcoming of generic specialisation in the Cambridge *Works* is via explanatory notes referring to other *Works* volumes, such as annotations appearing frequently in volumes dedicated to the major novels. In the *Poems*, Pollnitz’s explanatory note for “The Jeune Fille” referred readers to the *Assorted Articles* version of the essay, “The ‘Jeune Fille’ Wants to Know”, as edited by James T. Boulton in *Late Essays and Articles*.¹¹ Because of the editorial apparatus of the *Works*, Pollnitz is not able to point to the significance of an earlier version of the essay, published in the London *Evening News*, under the title “When She Asks Why?”, in May 1928. Nor does Pollnitz mention the title, “The Bogey Between Generations” under which Lawrence sent the article to the literary editor of the *Evening News*. For these, Boulton’s note to the essay’s final version must be consulted. While this note and an appendix are packed with

⁹Pollnitz, introduction to *Poems*, I, xxxiii; *Poems*, II, 813; Pollnitz, introduction to *Poems*, III, lxxxiv.

¹⁰Roberts, *Bibliography*, 644; *Letters*, VII, 152, 173. See Ellis, *Dying Game*, 593–4, for the 29 *pensées*; for an accurate dating of the period in which Lawrence composed the 29 *pensées*, see Pollnitz, “Composition, Publication, Reception,” 762–3. For a listing and dating of all typescripts of *Pansies*, see Pollnitz, “Manuscript Listing”, lxvii–lxxi: first typing, TS164a, TS164b, TS164c; second typing, TS167a, TS167b; third typing, TS167e; fourth typing, TS167c, TS167d.

¹¹*Poems*, II, 1162.

information about unpublished and published versions of the essay, Boulton is unable to find space to reciprocate Pollnitz's reference to the essay with a note of his (Boulton's) own to the *pensée*. Boulton concludes by maintaining that there is no certainty Lawrence gave the essay the title "The 'Jeune Fille' Wants to Know".¹² It is clear, however, that the title was given to the essay by someone familiar with the *pensée*. In May 1929, Lawrence was involved in protracted arguments with Secker, when the publisher insisted on adding "The Jeune Fille" and two other *pensées* to the list of poems which had to be omitted from the trade edition.¹³ There are reasons for thinking that it was Lawrence who gave the essay its cross-referential reference to the *pensée*. Editorial annotations in particular editions go some way towards enabling readers to consult Lawrence works in different genres, but in some editions, such cross-referential notes are few, and readers are given little guidance. What explanatory notes there are do not overcome the fundamental shortcoming of the genre-based editorial framework, that it does not adequately reflect how Lawrence's works in a given period interconnect and influence each other.

While recent scholarship, such as that by Paul Eggert, has called for critical attention to Lawrence's habit of writing concurrently across genres, research in this field remains limited.¹⁴ This deficiency may stem from certain hurdles, including traditional approaches that categorise Lawrence's works in genre-based compartments, as previously alluded to. This study strives to address these gaps by conducting a thorough analysis of one of Lawrence's early *pensées*—the notebook's major form—"I know a noble Englishman", in conjunction with a review for the British *Vogue* and a polemical essay "Sex Appeal". Despite the initial impression of these works being unrelated—and they have not been collectively compiled in any publication nor been the subject of joint scholarly scrutiny—extant records of D. J. Wells and H. K. Wells, and E. W. Tedlock suggest that these pieces all originate from the initial segment of the *Pansies* notebook.¹⁵ This raises an intriguing potential for examining their intertextual relationships, a subject heretofore unexplored.

2. Situating Loose Leaves Back to the *Pansies* Notebook

The extant part of the *Pansies* notebook is arranged in reverse order, commencing with an unlined loose leaf bearing Lawrence's signature, followed by an unnumbered loose leaf containing a poem titled "The Old Orchard". After these two loose leaves, the first numbered page, pencil marked as 2, contains an unfinished draft of Lawrence's review of *The Station* and other three books for the British *Vogue*. Pencil-numbered 3, the verso of this leaf features an untitled poem commencing with the line, "I know a noble Englishman". The poem continues on the recto of the subsequent leaf, pencil-numbered 4, but is preceded by a truncated, one-sentence draft of a polemical article titled "Sex Appeal".

Before delving into a detailed explanation of the reconstructed portions of the *Pansies* notebook, it is necessary to clarify the notebook's binding and some terminologies in

¹²Late *Essays and Articles*, 69–70; see also Appendix I, "Early Draft of 'The 'Jeune Fille' Wants to Know'", *Late Essays and Articles*, 321–5.

¹³Pollnitz, "Composition, Publication, Reception," 769.

¹⁴Eggert, "Revisiting and Rewriting," 219–30.

¹⁵In the Cambridge *Works*, the "Review" is collected in *Introductions and Reviews* (2005), the poem "I know a noble Englishman" in *Poems, III* (2018), and "Sex Appeal" in *Late Essays and Articles* (2004). See also, Wells and Wells, "Appraisal," 262–63; Tedlock, *Frieda Lawrence Collection*, 104.

bookbinding. Differing from the final product of books on the shelf, the contents of bound books are initially printed on both sides of several large sheets. Depending on the number of times a sheet is folded, different formats of sheets are termed, such as folio, quarto, octavo, and 12mo. Once folded and its edges cut, a single sheet transforms into a gathering (also called a section or signature) with various leaves, depending on the folding format. Subsequently, it will be sewn and/or glued together with other gatherings to form a book. A folio is folded once, resulting in two leaves, a quarto twice in four leaves, and an octavo three times in eight leaves. The 12mo format, as seen in the *Pansies* notebook, deviates slightly from the previous formats but results in twelve leaves.¹⁶ It is worth noting that in practice, a sheet will not be cut into separate leaves but will end up in various folio units to form a gathering. By matching the tearing patterns and page stubs between manuscripts originally collected in different locations, this study has been able to reconstruct certain gatherings of the *Pansies* notebook.

Through meticulous examinations of the notebook, it becomes evident that several leaves between pencil-numbered pages 3 and 4 have been removed. This deduction is based on the comparison of quality and size of the remaining leaves, the patterns of tearing, and the presence of page stubs. Further investigation of archival evidence suggests that the final leaf of the review's final draft was originally positioned in the notebook, presumably between "I know a noble Englishman" and the dropped version of "Sex Appeal" (Figure 1, a. and b.). The glue pattern and the results of page reconstruction indicate that the leaf containing the dropped version of "Sex Appeal" should be the first leaf of a gathering. Owing to the considerable number of leaves that have been torn from the preceding gathering(s), it is impossible to reconstruct the exact beginning gathering(s) in reverse order solely based on the materials at hand. Nevertheless, the extant archival evidence enables us to discern the sequence of surviving leaves in the gathering(s) prior to the dropped version of "Sex Appeal", as outlined in Table 1, while the gathering containing it can be pieced together as shown in Table 2. However, it is crucial to recognise that within the realm of Lawrence's archives, the sequence of leaves in a notebook does not necessarily correspond to the order of composition. Lawrence was often frugal with paper, composing on loose leaves remaining in a notebook, or even on scrap paper available to him. This is evident in the case of the *pensée* "I know a noble Englishman", which was composed on the verso of the second draft of the "Review" and interleaved after the discarded version of "Sex Appeal".

A critical distinction must be made between the writings that Lawrence himself removed from the *Pansies* notebook, and those that Frieda removed posthumously, in order to accurately reflect the sequence of composition and examine the intertextuality between these pieces. For example, archival and biographical evidence suggest that Lawrence only removed the final version of the "Review" from the *Pansies* notebook. This implies that the first draft of the "Review" and the second version of "Sex Appeal" remained within the notebook when "I know a noble Englishman" was composed. This claim is supported by the presence of blue ink deletion lines on "I know a noble Englishman" and faded blue ink shades on the leaves of the second draft of "Sex Appeal". Lawrence likely made these markings, as he was known to use the same blue ink during the period when he was preparing the first draft of the introduction to *Pansies* in Christmas 1928. Around the same period, Lawrence began reviewing these *pensées*

¹⁶For a comprehensive elucidation of folding books in sheets, see Diehl, *Bookbinding*, II, 61–65.

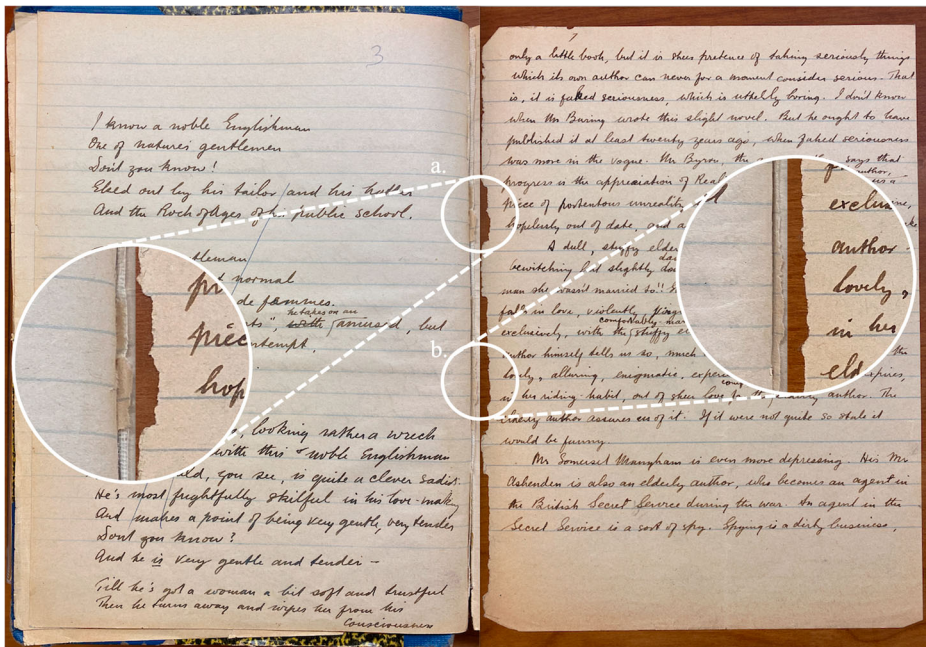


Figure 1. Magnified comparisons (a. and b.) between the remaining page stubs (left, HRC DHL 13.7) and the last leaf of the final draft of the “Review” (right, HRC DHL 16.3). © The Estate of Frieda Lawrence Ravagli, and Harry Ransom Centre, the University of Texas at Austin.

Table 1. Sequence of extant works in the gathering(s) prior to the dropped version of “Sex Appeal”.

Contents	Pencil no.	Ref.	Note
“The Old Orchard”	1 (recto)	HRC DHL 13.7	1pp on 1 leaf. Verso left blank and not pencil numbered. Connected to the first leaf of the first draft of the “Review”.
First draft of the “Review”		HRC DHL 16.3	4pp on 2 leaves.
Second draft of the “Review”	2 (recto)	HRC DHL 13.7	On the same leaf.
“I know a noble Englishman”	3 (verso)	ditto	
Final draft of the “Review”		HRC DHL 16.3	8pp on 4 leaves.
Unfinished draft of “Sex Appeal”	4 (recto)	HRC DHL 13.7	Figure 1. First leaf of the next gathering.
“I know a noble Englishman” cont.			
“I know a noble Englishman” cont.	5 (verso)		

and marked them with blue ink deletion lines, indicating that these early *pensées* would be superseded by updated versions. Additionally, the absence of folding lines substantiates the conclusion that the second draft of “Sex Appeal” remained within the notebook at the time these deletion lines were drawn. Though Lawrence only mentioned “here is the article on ‘Sex Appeal’” in his 5 November 1928 letter to Nancy Pearn and did not specify whether he was sending her the original manuscripts or typescripts of “Sex Appeal”, it is evident from Pearn’s recipient notice of “two copies of [Lawrence’s] article on ‘Sex Appeal’” that Lawrence only sent her the typescripts in this instance.¹⁷

¹⁷Letters, VI, 606; HRC DHL 36.6.

Table 2. Sequence of extant works in the gathering containing the two drafts of “Sex Appeal”.

Leaf	Contents	Pencil no.	Ref.	Connects to leaf
1	Unfinished draft of “Sex Appeal”	4 (recto)	HRC DHL 13.7	12
	“I know a noble Englishman” cont.			
	“I know a noble Englishman” cont.	5 (verso)		
2	<i>missing</i>			11
3	“Sex Appeal”		HRC DHL 20.1	10
4	ditto		ditto	9
5	ditto		ditto	8
6	ditto		ditto	7
7	ditto		ditto	6
8	“How beastly the bourgeois is!”	14 (recto)	HRC DHL 13.7	5
	“If you live among the middle classes”	15 (verso)	ditto	
9	“Natural Complexion”	13 (recto)	ditto	4
	“The English Voice”	12 (verso)	ditto	
10	“The English Voice” cont.	11 (recto)	ditto	3
	“The Gentleman”	10 (verso)	ditto	
11	<i>missing</i>			2
12	“What Matters”	6 (recto)	HRC DHL 13.7	1
		7 (verso)		

Archival evidence further suggests that it was most likely Frieda who removed the first draft of the “Review” and the second version of “Sex Appeal”, among Lawrence’s other polemical pieces, from the notebook following Lawrence’s death. Motivated by the manuscript trading culture and the understanding that manuscripts detached from a notebook would yield greater returns, Frieda hastily removed these articles and haphazardly pencil-numbered loose leaves, such as pages 10 to 15 of the *Pansies* notebook, inadvertently turning rectos to versos (Table 2).¹⁸ This further led to these manuscripts being categorised and auctioned on the basis of genre, resulting in the compartmentalisation of these archives. This has also shaped the conventional scholarly methodology of editing and examining Lawrence’s works generically and has influenced existing scholarship to predominantly focus on the poems within the *Pansies* notebook while neglecting works in other genres composed within it. For example, while Pollnitz’s reconstructions of the *Pansies* notebook are instrumental in elucidating Lawrence’s process of reviewing and rewriting his poems, these examinations concentrate solely on the poetry segment, leaving possible intertextuality across genres unexplored.¹⁹ However, as Pollnitz insightfully concludes, “the scrutiny of Lawrence’s practice as a reviser of his own verse is not only of value in preparing a variorum edition”.²⁰ This observation further underscores the importance and necessity of returning to the original sites of composition, as scholars

¹⁸By the time D. J. Wells and H. K. Wells examined the notebook in January 1937, it contained several manuscripts aside from the *pensées*. However, when Jake Zeitlin sold Lawrence’s manuscripts later that year, both the notebook and the manuscripts recorded in the Wellses’ “Appraisal”, including the first draft of the “Review”, “Sex Appeal”, and “Do Women Change”, were sold as separate items. See, Wells and Wells, “Appraisal,” 262–63; Powell, “Excerpts,” 283, 286–87, 290. For a detailed account regarding the misplaced and misnumbered loose leaves at the beginning of the *Pansies* notebook, see Pollnitz, “Sniffing the Humus,” 44–46.

¹⁹Pollnitz, “Cough-Prints,” 157; Pollnitz, “Sniffing the Humus,” 39–57.

²⁰Pollnitz, “Cough-Prints,” 155.

and Lawrence enthusiasts should “access the manuscripts themselves, not only photocopies or facsimiles”. With most manuscripts from the *Pansies* notebook eventually acquired by research institutions, such as the Harry Ransom Centre at the University of Texas, Austin and the Manuscripts and Special Collections at the University of Nottingham, researchers can investigate and examine the possible connections between them. Despite the challenges posed by geographical distances and individual archival materials originated from the same site of composition (such as the *Pansies* notebook) being preserved separately, a synoptic and compositional reading of these seemingly unrelated Lawrence archives collectively, in response to the limitations of current scholarship, becomes feasible and practical. To understand how Lawrence reshaped his late literary personae through inventing new polemical and poetic styles, the following section will read the three pieces from the *Pansies* notebook cross-sectionally and examine the intertextuality between them.

3. Inventing New Polemical and Poetic Styles

The year 1928 marks a pivotal moment in Lawrence’s literary career, in terms of both his poetic and polemical personae. After enduring years of tension with his readership, the acclaimed success of “The ‘Jeune Fille’ Wants to Know” in May 1928 led Lawrence to re-evaluate his rapport with the general reading public: “Perhaps after all the public is not such a dull animal, and would prefer an occasional subtle suave stone to polish its wits against”.²¹ Encouraged by Nancy Pearn’s assertion that “the publicity [through popular journalism] is far from negligible, sometimes having immediate results in the way of increasing book sales” and the promising prospect of “a coming boom in D. H. L. articles”, Lawrence seized the opportunity.²² Having just finished *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, he capitalised on the chance to “trot in a four-pager now and then” and demonstrated a willingness to collaborate with newspaper editors in order to connect with a broader audience and shape his public persona.²³ Alongside this new polemical style, Lawrence has also exhibited a desire to introduce a novel style in his poetic compositions during the same period. As Pollnitz accurately notes, Lawrence “reinvented a new style of free verse ‘each time’ he embarked on a new phase of writing”, and the new poetic style he invented for *Pansies* is “among early entries in the *Pansies* notebook”.²⁴ The subsequent section will use the three pieces from the *Pansies* notebook as examples to scrutinise how Lawrence concurrently developed his new polemical and poetic styles to address diverse audiences.

Despite being the last composition within the trio, the context of “I know a noble Englishman” and its placement in the *Pansies* notebook imply its potential close intertextual relationship with the “Review” for the British *Vogue*. Existing textual, biographical, and calligraphic evidence suggests that Lawrence composed this *pensée* during his sojourn on the island of Île de Port-Cros, motivated by his aversion to Richard Aldington’s manipulative behaviour towards Dorothy (“Arabella”) Yorke and Bridgit Patmore.²⁵ For

²¹ *Letters*, VI, 403.

²² HRC DHL 36.6.

²³ *Letters*, VI, 401.

²⁴ Pollnitz, “Verse Forms,” 121, 126.

²⁵ For a detailed account of Aldington’s behaviour on Port-Cros, see Harrison, *Life of D. H. Lawrence*, 371–73.

example, Lawrence's introduction of a female speaker in the third stanza appears to ridicule Aldington from the perspective of Yorke, the woman Aldington abandoned for his mistress, Patmore. The speaker unleashes her contempt upon the "noble Englishman", aiming to rehabilitate the sense of self that this man has compromised. According to Pollnitz, Aldington "is the model for the Englishman" in this *pensée*, later revised as "The noble Englishman", because he shares notable similarities with the character "Ronald", who, in the female speaker's words, "is quite a clever sadist".²⁶ Lawrence's deteriorating health on the island and the other early verse entries in the *Pansies* notebook, such as "How beastly the bourgeois is!" and "If you live among the middle classes" ("Worm either way"), lead Aldington to interpret these *pensées* as Lawrence's expressions of his "irritations with healthy people and people of a different class [...], in fact with almost everybody".²⁷ Aldington's assessment of Lawrence's attitude towards him and the middle-class is accurate. The stay on Port-Cros marked a crucial turning point in Lawrence's literary career, a shift propelled by his revulsion against middle-class complacency, presumption, and the critical reception of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. These resentments and contempt for Aldington motivated Lawrence to vent his frustration through his verse. As examined above, by the time Lawrence composed "I know a noble Englishman", the two early versions of the "Review" for the British *Vogue* remained in the *Pansies* notebook. It is reasonable to speculate that these two pieces could have catalysed the satirical genesis of "I know a noble Englishman". While preparing the "Review", Lawrence had to modify his polemical tone and follow the style of a sample review article filled with middle-class pretentiousness, wherein the author presents himself as a "trustee for posterity" and claims in the opening paragraph that "English gentlemen will know how to value the work of an English gentleman".²⁸ Lawrence's revulsion towards such pomposity likely inspired him to begin the satirical *pensée* with the line "I know a noble Englishman".

The "Review" serves as a prime example of the new polemical style that Lawrence endeavoured to develop in order to foster dialogues with his readers. This new style was based on Lawrence's characteristically provocative tone, tempered in an attempt to reach a broader readership. In a letter to Lawrence on 11 July 1928, Nancy Pearn forwarded Alison Settle's request for a contribution. Settle was the editor of the British *Vogue* and Pearn took care to relay her warning that they "could not publish a type of article which would be perfectly all right for one of the more serious and less conventional reviews".²⁹ To ensure that Lawrence understood the desired tone and style for the book review suitable for the magazine and its readership, Settle attached a previous book review by Humbert Wolfe, intending it to provide Lawrence with "an idea of the form of the article".³⁰ As N. H. Reeve and John Worthen note, Settle might have wished for Lawrence to adopt a "slightly facetious, man-about-town tone", similar to Wolfe's style.³¹ Given Lawrence's notoriety and his typically provocative literary style,

²⁶*Poems, II*, 1091n; *Poems, III*, 1591, 1877n1.

²⁷Aldington, introduction to *Last Poems*, x.

²⁸Wolfe, "Turning Over New Leaves," 79.

²⁹After Dorothy Todd stepped down in 1926, Alison Settle became the editor of the British *Vogue* till 1935. Under her editorship, British *Vogue* has commissioned influential modernist writers such as Virginia Woolf, Evelyn Waugh, and Edith Sitwell. HRC DHL 36.6.

³⁰HRC DHL 36.6.

³¹Reeve and Worthen, introduction to *Introductions and Reviews*, lxxxi.

such caution on Settle's part seems justifiable. This concern is distinctly reflected in the first draft of Lawrence's "Review", the opening paragraph of which reads:

There's a difference between a sad book and a depressing book. If you say of a book: Oh, but it's so sad! – then many people will rush to read it. But if you say: it's such depressing reading! – they will hold off.

Three of these books are distinctly depressing. [...]³²

Lawrence opens the article with conversational casualness, interlaced with his typical provocative tone. He criticises three of the four books he is going to review and subtly derides the reading public, particularly those who would read the British *Vogue*, for their reliance on others' recommendations rather than their personal appreciation of a book. With the first example, *England and the Octopus* by Clough Williams-Ellis, Lawrence challenges his readers' stereotypical presumption that a depressing book is not worth reading. After presenting an eye-catching and flippant argument at the beginning, Lawrence clarifies that it is not the book, but the current landscape of England, "the millions of streets and rows of mean little houses which spread over the face of the land and devour the country", that causes one to feel depressed.³³ As an active critic of modern consumer culture and industrialisation's all-encompassing effect on individual's life, Lawrence observes the tendency for England to be "swallowed up entirely by beastly little pink houses and blasphemous bungalows". His pursuit of an organic society must have resonated with Williams-Ellis's concern and his image of streets sprawling across rural England like a brick-coloured octopus. In the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the figurative meaning of "octopus" is of an "organised, usually harmful or destructive" entity resembling or "suggestive of" the eight-limbed cephalopod.³⁴ However, the rest of the book, should one finish it as Lawrence did, becomes "alive" and "interesting".³⁵

In this first draft, Lawrence discusses only three out of the four books, omitting Robert Byron's *The Station: Athos, Treasures and Men*. After reproaching Maurice Baring for his "infinite stuffy dulness" and characterising W. Somerset Maugham's protagonist, Ashenden, as suffering from an out-of-date seriousness, Lawrence probably realised Settle's requirement for a review article appropriate for her "terribly refined and pleasant journal".³⁶ Thus, he turned to Wolfe's piece in an attempt to discern the stylistic preferences and expectations of the British *Vogue*'s readership. Both the second and final drafts reveal Lawrence's diligent efforts, even struggles, to refine his polemical style and shape it into what he believed would be appropriate for the British *Vogue*. Lawrence undertook a significant structural reorganisation by starting with Bryon's work and planning to sequentially discuss the remaining books by Williams-Ellis, Baring, and Maugham. This structure allows Lawrence to initiate the dialogue with his readers using two less "heavy" titles, thereby avoiding provocation from the outset.³⁷ Lawrence also adjusted his critical tone, offering readers a comparison between the light-hearted younger

³²HRC DHL 16.3; *Introductions and Reviews*, 407.

³³*Ibid.*

³⁴*OED*, s.v. "Octopus, n.2".

³⁵HRC DHL 16.3; *Introductions and Reviews*, 407.

³⁶HRC DHL 16.3; *Introductions and Reviews*, 408; HRC DHL 36.6.

³⁷HRC DHL 13.7; *Introductions and Reviews*, 411.

generation and the “depressing” older generation of writers in order to establish a more conciliatory tone in his critique. Likely influenced by Wolfe and recognising that the majority of the British *Vogue*’s readers were female, Lawrence adopted Wolfe’s euphuistic style and substituted terms such as “gracefulness” and “honesty” with a butterfly simile:

The younger generation, the war generation, of which Mr Byron is an example, has the gracefulness and the honesty has a charming butterfly manner, and an engaging honesty. It avoids, at all cost, being heavy.[...] ³⁸

This important textual alteration, which exemplifies Lawrence’s strategic adjustment of his polemical tone and language, is not documented in *Introductions and Reviews* (2005).³⁹ This editorial oversight reinforces the necessity of engaging with archival resources in conjunction with the *Cambridge Works*. The vivid “butterfly” simile in this excerpt illustrates the younger generation of writers’ captivating manner and neatly aligns with the preferences of the magazine’s predominantly female readership. In contrast to the critical tone employed in the opening paragraph of the first draft, Lawrence opts for a more gradual and cumulative approach. This technique paves the way for a less confrontational introduction of his forthcoming critique against Baring and Maugham, thereby augmenting the potential acceptance of his arguments by the readership. Nevertheless, Lawrence’s irritation with Wolfe’s perceived hypocrisy—demonstrated by personal attacks on the author rather than an objective review of the work—still persisted.⁴⁰ The discontent is reflected in his letter to Pearn, where he enclosed the final manuscript of the “Review”. Lawrence expressed his frustration by stating, “I could never rise to the fatuous idiocy of Humbert Wolf [*sic*], whoever he is. Imagine their sending me him as a pattern! Tell them to go to simpering simpleton’s hell”.⁴¹ Despite these challenges, the editor of the British *Vogue* accepted this review and promptly published it with minor modifications within a few weeks. The success of this new polemical style testifies to the effectiveness of Lawrence’s stylistic adjustments, underscoring their potential to appeal to a diverse and broader audience.⁴²

After finishing the “Review” in July 1928, Lawrence did not use the *Pansies* notebook in reverse order until he composed the polemical essay “Sex Appeal” during his stay on Port-Cros, from 15 October to 17 November 1928. Despite this, Lawrence still utilised this period to hone his new polemical style for a wider readership through several contributions to mass-circulated newspapers, such as the London *Evening News*, the *Daily Chronicle*, and the *Sunday Dispatch*. When Lawrence received the *Sunday Dispatch*’s invitation for a contribution to a series “under the heading ‘WHAT IS SEX APPEAL?’” on 30 October 1928, he immediately agreed to fulfil the request and sent out his reply to Pearn on the same day.⁴³ Alongside Pearn’s correspondence, Lawrence also received several newspaper clippings regarding his recently published novel, *Lady*

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹*Introductions and Reviews*, 411, 605.

⁴⁰See Wolfe’s review of Rose Macaulay’s *Keeping Up Appearances*. Wolfe, “Turning Over New Leaves,” 79.

⁴¹*Letters*, VI, 464.

⁴²The “Review” appeared in the British *Vogue* on 8 August 1928, 35, 58.

⁴³It should be noted that the introductory note of “Sex Appeal” in *Late Essays and Articles*—stating that Lawrence “heard of the proposal in a letter from Nancy Pearn, 11 October 1928” and accepted it “at the end of the month”—could be slightly misleading. Though Pearn’s letter to Lawrence was indeed dated 11 October, it was put on hold because his letter updating Laurence Pollinger about his new address was not forwarded to Pearn, who therefore put on hold six accumulated letters which she sent in a registered package on 25 October, thereby avoiding the “the horrid possibility

Chatterley's Lover. Though the novel had only been printed in Italy at that time, it had already attracted attention and stringent criticism in England. The *Sunday Chronicle* dedicated an entire column in the centre of its frontpage under the title "Lewd Book/ Banned./ Under Name of/ Noted Author./ Printed out/ of England".⁴⁴ The report characterises *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as "one of the most filthy and abominable ever written; and an outrage on decency", which "reeks with obscenity and lewdness about sex". Another review sent to Lawrence appeared in *John Bull*, a magazine that "has always hated [him]".⁴⁵ Under the title "Famous Novelist's Shameful Book: A Landmark in Evil", *John Bull* devoted nearly a page to criticising Lawrence and his *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.⁴⁶ In the section entitled "Fatal obsession", the anonymous reviewer claims that "Lawrence has a diseased mind. He is obsessed by sex. We are not aware that he has written any book during his career that has not over-emphasised this side of life. [...] He can write about nothing else, apparently". The section concludes with the reviewer chastising Lawrence for "creating a literary cesspool". In an attempt to tarnish Lawrence's literary and personal reputation, the magazine included a portrait of Lawrence alongside the article, captioned "D. H. Lawrence, the world-famous novelist, who has prostituted art to pornography".

Though Lawrence expressed his indifference towards the attacks on *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and his character on various occasions, such as in his letter to S. S. Koteliensky, these scathing criticisms undoubtedly caused him distress.⁴⁷ As Brigit Patmore recounts in her reminiscence piece, Lawrence was in good spirits at dinner, but his mood abruptly changed after coffee when they began perusing the reviews of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* arrived earlier that day, most of which "were disgraceful".⁴⁸ While others mocked the critics for becoming "so heated over imagined dirt that the odour of their sanctity was tainted" and were "amused", they neglected that "the author of the book was being hurt". The situation escalated when someone read the review published in *John Bull*:

"My God!" one of us gave a shout. "Here, in this one, Lorenzo, one of them calls you a cesspool!"

He made a grimace which might have been a smile or slight nausea.

"Really? One's fellow creatures are too generous. It's quite worth while giving of one's best, isn't it?" Then as if speaking to himself, "Nobody likes being called a cesspool."⁴⁹

Lawrence's frustration was evident in his subsequent actions. Without a word, he persistently fuelled the fire despite the "painful smoke and lovely perfume" and the others' protests. To Patmore, Lawrence's incensed behaviour symbolised his defiance: "having served up his enemies [...] as a burnt sacrifice, he never bothered about them again". As a dedicated advocate for sex as an essential aspect of life, Lawrence had no reason to retreat from engaging in the debate. The contribution request from the *Sunday*

of such a large bunch going astray". These letters, including the *Sunday Dispatch's* contribution request, took another five days to arrive Lawrence on 30 October. See, *Late Essays and Articles*, 143; HRC DHL 36.6.

⁴⁴*Sunday Chronicle*, "Lewd Book Banned," 1.

⁴⁵*Letters*, VI, 598.

⁴⁶*John Bull*, "Famous Novelist's Shameful Book," 11.

⁴⁷*Letters*, VI, 604.

⁴⁸Nehls, *Composite Biography*, III, 260.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 260.

Dispatch on “Sex Appeal” offered him a timely opportunity to redress the slanderous reviews and clarify his own views on sex to the newspaper’s mass readership, while honing his new polemical style.

A premise of the attacks on *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* was that sexual acts could not be depicted in literature without descending into pornographic filth. However, Lawrence’s detractors failed to substantiate their claim as to *why* and/or *how* sexuality, a fundamental aspect of human existence, is intrinsically degenerate or immoral. Their hasty conclusion instead evasively recommended the complete omission of sexual references in literature, arguing for a puritanical approach. Countering this logical inconsistency, Lawrence commences the article with a question in a colloquial tone to encourage reader engagement: “[...] what is sex, after all? The more we think about it, the less we know”.⁵⁰ Lawrence then unravels the society’s bias toward sex, attributing it to the conflict between the naturalness of sexuality and the profit-driven mechanisms of modern society: “Science has a mysterious hatred of beauty, because it doesn’t fit in the cause-and-effect chain. And society has a mysterious hatred of sex, because it perpetually interferences with the nice money-making schemes of social man”. In comparison to the opening line of the dropped first draft—“It is all very well asking what sex appeal is, when we know so exceedingly little about sex”—where Lawrence criticises the public’s narrow and clichéd understanding of sex, the second version’s opening is more conversational and invitational, encouraging readers to reflect on their own prejudices towards sex and consider their logical validity.⁵¹ This effectively foregrounds the possibility that the readers might arrive at a conclusion similar to Lawrence’s and, therefore, find common ground with his argument.

The examination of the two versions of the article’s opening line reveals Lawrence’s strategic decision to suppress his indignation stemming from the reviews of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, choosing instead to follow his new polemical tone. However, in “I know a noble Englishman”, composed shortly after “Sex Appeal”, Lawrence does not hesitate to unleash his disdain for Aldington and his revulsion towards the reviews. This *pensée* is the first instance in which Lawrence adopted the new poetic style that he invented for *Pansies*. As Pollnitz’s observes, this new poetic style was “based on English speech rhythms and idioms, and line-to-line shifts in tone”.⁵² For example, this *pensée* begins with the narrator satirising the “noble Englishman” with conversational casualness:

I know a noble Englishman
 One of nature’s gentlemen
 Don’t you know!
 Eked out by his tailor and his hatter
 And the Rock of Ages of his public school. (ll. 1–5)⁵³

Maintaining the same colloquial tone as his polemical style, Lawrence’s new poetic style, as reflected in this *pensée*, embodies his distinctively provocative tone. The exclamation “Don’t you know!” (l. 3) and the question “Don’t you know?” (l. 17) both motivate readers to think about the characteristics of a true gentlemen, while also signalling an

⁵⁰HRC DHL 20.1; *Late Essays and Articles*, 144–45.

⁵¹HRC DHL 13.7; *Late Essays and Articles*, 396.

⁵²Pollnitz, “Verse Forms,” 126.

⁵³HRC DHL 13.7; *Poems, III*, 1591.

impending shift in the narrative tone. The subsequent phrases, “Eked out” (l. 4) and “Till” (l. 19), accentuate the *pensée’s* satirical tone, drawing attention to the deficiencies of this “noble Englishman” into focus for detailed scrutiny in the third and fourth stanzas:

However
 One of his beloveds, looking rather a wreck
 After an affair with this noble Englishman,
 Said: Ronald, you see, is quite a clever sadist:
 He’s most frightfully skilful in his love-making
 And makes a point of being very gentle, very tender
 Don’t you know?
 And he *is* very gentle and tender –

Till he’s got a woman a bit soft and trustful
 Then he turns away and wipes her from his consciousness
 As if she were a worm, or a hired whore who bored him,
 An absolute nothing. (ll. 11–22)⁵⁴

Both the narrator and the female character, who identifies the “Ronald” figure as a “clever sadist”, recognise his hypocritical behaviour. Despite being a “coureur du femmes” (womaniser) who paradoxically “doesn’t like women”, his exploitative nature does not deter him from engaging in numerous sexual encounters. He lacks genuine “sex-feeling”, but adeptly camouflages his shortcomings, masquerading as a “normal, a lover of women”. In the third stanza, Lawrence subtly introduces the female speaker through the reporting clause (l. 14), then deliberately obfuscates the distinction between the narrator and her by omitting quotation marks and locutionary clauses. In doing so, Lawrence amplifies their shared sentiment, reinforcing the power of their joint denouncement. Such employment of free direct speech allows readers to be drawn more deeply into the narrative, intensifying their emotional responses against the actions of the hypocritical “noble Englishman”.

In “Sex Appeal”, Lawrence anticipates a dialogue with his readers similar to his approach in “I know a noble Englishman”, albeit with a more restrained and less provocative polemical style. Mindful of the newspaper’s wide readership, Lawrence designs a gentle, congenial, and slightly sentimental appeal in “Sex Appeal”. He focuses solely on the positive aspects of sexual feelings, offering both himself and his readers a respite from the onslaught of vitriol and “sex-hatred” found in the reviews of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* and from the destructive influence of individuals like the “noble Englishman” (Richard Aldington). After elucidating societal animosity towards sex, Lawrence concludes that “sex and beauty are inseparable” and “to love living beauty you must have a reverence for sex”, in order to aid readers’ comprehension of his argument. Having explained his perspective on *what* sex is, Lawrence proceeds to describe *how* to accept it, addressing both the general public and critics. With patience and tact, he encourages them to rectify their logical fallacies by recognising and embracing sex as a standard component of life:

⁵⁴ibid.

But while we are fully alive, the fire of sex smoulders or burns in us. In youth it flickers and shines, in age it glows softer and stiller, but there it is. We have some control over it; but only partial control. That is why society hates it. While ever it lives, the fire of sex, which is the source of beauty and anger, burns in us beyond our understanding. Like actual fire, while it lives it will burn our fingers if we touch it carelessly. And so social man, who only wants to be “safe”, hates the fire of sex.⁵⁵

In contrast to the exclusionary use of the term “we” in *John Bull* and other periodicals, which reproaches Lawrence and his purported “fatal obsession” with sex, Lawrence’s usage of “we” in his article serves as an inclusive device. He employs the first-person plural pronoun to establish a closer connection with his readers. The calm narration of the irrefutable fact—that the desire for sex persists at all ages—allows readers of any age to identify with the essayist. Eschewing any attempt to provoke, Lawrence continues to encourage his readers to expose their better selves in their personal relationships and in the workplace. This sincere and benign polemical persona is the diametrical opposite of the obsessed fanatic the reviewers conjured up. While no direct responses to the essay have been located, the *Sunday Dispatch*’s blurb anticipates a respectful response to the distinguished author. Readers are enticed with the promise of a “brilliant article from the pen of Mr D. H. Lawrence, the famous novelist and poet [...] Unquestionably it is the finest analysis of that elusive quality sex-appeal made so far by any modern writer”.⁵⁶ The comparison between Lawrence’s new polemical and poetic styles indicates that while Lawrence adopted a cynical approach in modulating his journalistic persona to make it more palatable to a wider audience, he remained steadfast in his effort to engage in dialogues with his readers. The cross-sectional analysis of these pieces from the *Pansies* notebook not only facilitates an examination of their intertextuality and an appreciation of Lawrence’s fervour for writing in a more holistic sense, but also presents a more vibrant image of Lawrence from the archives.

4. Conclusion

This study introduces two innovative approaches for exploring Lawrence’s late archives: a reconstruction of the *Pansies* notebook and a cross-sectional analysis of Lawrence’s works in different genres. Utilising archival evidence, these methods facilitate the establishment of connections between ostensibly unrelated pieces, thereby enriching scholarly understanding of Lawrence’s *oeuvre*. In conjunction with the conventional generic presentation and study of Lawrence’s works, such as those encapsulated within the *Cambridge Works*, this research exemplifies how these works can be examined synoptically and compositionally. It encourages researchers to engage with archival materials in dialogue with the definitive scholarly edition. Based on findings that Lawrence’s late poetic and polemical styles share similarities while remaining distinct from each other, researchers can employ these proposed methods to probe the intertextuality between Lawrence’s contemporaneous works across genres. This research not only adds a new dimension to the prevailing examination of Lawrence’s *pensées*, but also suggests a new research trajectory for collectively analysing these seemingly unrelated works, aiming to enhance a holistic comprehension of the compositional context. Moreover,

⁵⁵HRC DHL 20.1; *Late Essays and Articles*, 146.

⁵⁶Lawrence, “Sex Locked Out,” 12.

it accentuates the importance of Lawrence's late archives, advocating for their necessary and continuous scholarly re-examination.

The textual analysis in this study illuminates Lawrence's pattern of writing concurrently in his late years, explicates the coherence of his ideas across genres, and elucidates how they complement one another. For example, though the literary merit of Lawrence's late polemical articles may not equate to that of his late fictional works and poetry, the case study in this article demonstrates his enduring passion and enthusiasm for language and dialogue with his readers, regardless of the tone he employs—be it proactive in poems or calm and sincere in polemical essays. Arnold Bennett's observation, in response to allegations of Lawrence's obsession with sex, highlights that Lawrence “wrote more frankly and more cleanly about it than most. He tried to fish up sex from the mud into which it has been sunk for several hypocritical and timid English generations past”.⁵⁷ This study's cross-sectional reading of the *Pansies* notebook substantiates Bennett's claim and serves as a counterargument to critiques of Lawrence's late works due to their candid exploration and discussion of subjects such as sex.

The last three years of Lawrence's life and literary career saw a prolific output in poetry, polemical essays, and fictional works. While some of his manuscripts are now dispersed among research libraries and private collections around the world, this study—emphasising the significance of archival materials and promoting a cross-genre examination of the intertextuality between Lawrence's works—may herald a promising new direction in D. H. Lawrence studies and the broader field of modernist studies in the future.

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⁵⁷Bennett, “A Tribute of Admiration,” 9.

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