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[Review of] An Annotated Critical Bibliography of Thomas Hardy

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While this work does not replace or even adequately supplement *Thomas Hardy: An Annotated Bibliography of Writings about Him* by W. Eugene Davis and Helmut E. Gerber (see ARBA 74, entry 1384 and ARBA 85, entry 1109), it does act as a useful stopgap as we await the next Davis/Gerber supplement or revised edition. Draper and Ray selected 724 entries that are "the more substantial and important recent contributions" (p. vii). The bulk of the entries are from the 1970s and 1980s, but a scattering of major items come from earlier in the century. The selection is primarily restricted to English-language material and is divided into 17 sections, including recent editions; biographical material; background works; essay collections; full-length studies; critical works on each primary novel, the minor novels, short fiction, and poetry; and items exploring various themes and areas of criticism (e.g., regionalism, textual studies, Hardy's philosophy). Arrangement within each section is alphabetical. Annotations vary in length from a brief sentence to over 100 words, but almost all of them contain critical commentary. Limited use of abbreviations makes for easy reading. Three indexes give access to names and subjects (access not provided in the chronologically-arranged Davis/Gerber), authors, and titles of Hardy's works, but not, unfortunately, to characters within Hardy's works. Though not a comprehensive work, this bibliography contains the primary critical articles, essays, and books on Hardy published through the mid-1980s.

—ROBERT AKEN