

# Reviews

## Anarchy, State and Utopia

R A Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, Blackwells, 1974  
367pp £5.50

By elaborating *A theory of Justice* in terms of a general social, political and moral theory, and by arguing specifically for a form of welfare-state liberalism, John Rawls brought political philosophy back to the academic groves from the wilderness. No longer will bourgeois academic philosophy be at ease in disguising its apologetics in the form of 'analysis' and no longer will the 'fact/value' dichotomy have the status of official doctrine. Nozick's book (he is himself, like Rawls, a Harvard professor) is at once smarter and shallower than Rawls' and it is explicitly joined in debate with Rawls. And so, while Norman Daniels' *Reading Rawls* confronts Rawls from the left, Nozick's criticism comes from the far ultra-Reaganite right, through a difficult marriage of convenience between Locke and Kant or at least such elements of their philosophy as Nozick finds useful in the defence of inviolable property rights.

What Nozick does is to work from a 'state of nature' of property-hugging individuals to the development of the state as a 'protective agency' guaranteeing property. Since private property does not itself involve the violation of any rights, the state which guarantees those rights itself does not violate rights. Only if it interferes, especially by robbing the rich to give to the poor, does the state violate rights. Hence Nozick's book is an attack on the welfare state and a *fortiori* on socialism. As there are 6,791 arguments and 'examples' in the book (on last count) I think it might be most useful if, instead of trying to sketch and abuse the whole book, I rather advertise its approach by a reasonably close look at one small part. Nozick's book was enthusiastically received: Quine clearly thought it divinely inspired

and even Peter Singer in the *New York Review of Books* hailed its 'exciting brilliance' (while modestly exposing its fragility). Mary Warnock thinks Nozick 'the handsomest young philosopher in the business' and the author of a 'handsome book' (*New Society*). My impression is that the book is impressive but flashy and that it will not stand up to examination even as a major text in right-wing thought. Because the topic interests me I shall focus on Nozick's attack on equality and specifically on industrial democracy.

As I have indicated, the book is a defence of the rights of owners, especially against state interference, through such things as taxation to bring about greater equality of income; its message is that you are entitled to have what you own. Nozick calls himself a 'libertarian' and makes great rhetorical play of the bullying interventionism of the allegedly 'redistributionist', or 'welfare' state. But when it comes to the protection of property, Nozick is a member of the law-and-order brigade (more money on police and army - less on welfare scroungers!) and when it comes to control of working people's working lives, Nozick belongs to the orthodox regimental school. In short, Nozick is a 'free-enterprise' man.

Rawls, positing self-respect as a basic value whose absence makes other goods devoid of positive worth, claimed that it was in equality within the 'civic' sphere that people's self-respect could primarily be established. 'Economic' inequality, into which Rawls packs both inequality of income and inequality within the organization of production, is regulated only by the uncertain operations of the 'difference principle' - and it is at that point that the state comes in to 'redistribute' wealth. Now, enough has been said to raise the question whether people brought up to think of themselves as defeated hacks and spending their lives doing degrading work would find the charms of 'equal citizenship'

sufficient props to their self-respect. But Nozick has a short way with all this talk about equality of self-respect. Self-respect, says Nozick (equating it with 'self-esteem') is invidious. Considering Trotsky's olympian vision of a time when 'the average human type will rise to the heights of an Aristotle, a Goethe or a Marx. And above this ridge new peaks will rise', Nozick remarks that the unfortunate average human will then feel pretty inadequate as, from the level of a mere Marx, he looks up at the new peaks. As a comment on Trotsky's macho formulation, the comment is apt. But Nozick insists on a general moral:

People generally judge themselves by how they fall along the most important dimensions in which they differ from others. People do not gain self-esteem from their common human capacities. . . Self-esteem is based on differentiating characteristics; that's why it's self-esteem. . . ' (p243)

As an expression of the fate of the ego in an individualistic and competitive culture such as that of capitalist societies, Nozick's remarks are pertinent. Within such societies, rooted as they are in maintaining scarcity as a condition of maintaining value, price and profit, 'differentiation', of product and of personality, occupy a central place. Hence it matters, not so much whether you have a good thing or do a good job as whether you have what others lack or do what others haven't done - a veritable recipe for manic-depressive psychosis. But it is possible and common, even in our culture, for people to take pride in the adequate performance of valued tasks, where the pride comes principally 'from the object' and only secondarily, if at all, from the receipt of special praise. A boat builder is happy if his boat has what a boat needs; he doesn't need a reserve army of incompetents to keep up his self-esteem. Using competitive games as his paradigm, Nozick says that 'there is no standard of doing something well independent of

how it is done or can be done by 'others' (p241). But this is utterly distorted - a boat either floats or it doesn't, a fishing net either holds or it doesn't, people either can do mouth-to-mouth resuscitation or they cannot, and such things are valued without the need for point-scoring and all the paraphernalia of winning and losing with which Nozick is so preoccupied. What Nozick's idea that there have to be losers does, of course, is blind him to the culturally specific viciousness of a system which confines human beings to jobs which, however the fact might be disguised by wage-differentials and competitions for the tidiest kitchen, are tedious, degrading, and as often as not, useless.

Nozick then considers the idea that 'meaningful work' is a condition of self-esteem and that the mechanical repetitiveness and subordination characteristic of capitalist industry should be done away with. But, says Nozick, look at the ordinary members of symphony orchestras, army draftees, socialist factory organizers, 'persons on the way up organizational ladders'. Such people do not suffer lack of self-esteem (p246). Well, that is questionable. But suppose Nozick is right - let us ask: why? People who get into symphony orchestras enjoy contributing to something

beautiful. They also enjoy a certain prestige. Draftees, assuming a random draft process, cannot think that their subordination is a function of their own failings (unless in respect of their failure to dodge the draft). Socialist factory organizers exercise initiative during working hours challenging the power of a class whose position they consider illegitimate. They do not see their own or their workmates' subordination as a function of personal shortcomings; that's part of their socialism. Continuing this (necessarily tedious) rebuttal with Nozick's young men on their way to the top, we can take it that such spiralists, given that they are truly upward-bound, perceive their present subordination as a temporary necessity, as part of their career. As long as they assume that they are on the way up they will not attribute their position to personal failings. In all cases we do not have that characteristic situation of the subject classes in liberal capitalist society where myths of opportunity and social mobility meet realities of static hierarchies and mindless drudgery to induce that sense of personal failure, of damaged and low self-esteem, that is so characteristic of working-class psychology. (For an exploration of this, see Bennett and Cobb, The Hidden Injuries of Class, Vintage Books, 1972). The question of self-respect, self-esteem, and of the psychology of class is much more complex than this brief rebuttal suggests. But there is little evidence that Nozick has thought about it very much at all.

Nozick hints that the reason for workers' low self-esteem may be that they are personally inferior (pp246-7) and that subordinates' defeatist psychology

... may be due to the fact that those predisposed to show low independent activity are just those who are most willing to take and remain with certain jobs involving little opportunity for independent flowering (p248)

Think of the assembly-line as a kind of asylum for the unenterprising, or the home as a shelter for the weaker

sex! Looking at our schools and bearing in mind that career 'success' is generally a function of number of years spent in them, we might well conclude that the opportunity to do independent things in later life is a reward for refraining from them in earlier life. But if Nozick is ignorant of the processes that prepare people for 'their place', he is ignorant too of the bitter struggle that capitalist industrialists had to wage to bring production under their control and out of the relatively free hands of the artisan class. The drudgery-habituated worker inhabits the site of centuries' battles and defeats.

Nozick assumes (p248, 251) that since capitalists and unions haven't invested in firms which provide meaningful work or are under workers' control, such forms of production must be less efficient. Nor are such forms of production attractive to workers, who are fortunate enough to be able to 'choose among their employment activities on the basis of the overall package of benefits it gives them'(p249) But, as the government's special commission concluded in its study Work in America (M. I. T. 1973), the introduction of more 'meaningful' and autonomous job patterns in certain firms has proved profitable. More important, you cannot equate capitalist profitability with efficiency in production. Given a situation where a boss wants to get as much out of his workers as possible and given the rival disposition on the part of the workforce, it is in the boss's interest to establish as much control over the work process and product as he can - otherwise his subordinates will exercise their initiative in avoiding work or appropriating for themselves some of the product. The reduction of work to maximally controllable and accountable units, in other words, is in large measure, a function of the fundamental conflict in the production situation itself. And this reflects itself in the fact that the schemes of 'meaningful work' that have been tried and have succeeded are in factories where there is little history of militancy or insubordination. A problem for Nozick: capitalist initiated amelioration of work, inviting the subordinates to

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exercise initiative, is successful precisely among workers who on other grounds could be said to be unenterprising and obedient.

Nozick wonders (p250) why workers haven't gone in for worker-controlled firms, setting up 'microindustrial schemes' within the capitalist economy. Such questions, like questions of the continuing subjection of women, require historical exploration and it is a sort of insult to consider them within the framework of a priori psychology. Nozick talks about workers leaving 'risk' to big investors. But a big investor, unlike a proletarian co-operative, is able by diversifying to minimise the risk to him of a factory's failure; unlike his employees his many eggs are in many baskets. Given the pressures and vagaries of a system of production for profit, it is little wonder that most 'worker-control' oriented proletarians look to smash the capitalist system rather than to set up vulnerable islands of co-operativism within that system.

Nozick attacks the general idea that 'people have a right to a say in the decisions that importantly affect their own lives' (p269). In his usual style he brings up two putative counter-examples. Toscanini's leaving an orchestra, he says, 'importantly affects' its members; but that doesn't give them the right to a say in Toscanini's decision. Now, talk of rights here may be obscuring, for there is no question that Toscanini ought to give weight to the impact of his leaving on an orchestra - whether that amounts to their having a right to a say, which is not a right to decide, is unclear to me. But note the peculiarities of the case: it's Toscanini, so the orchestra has been extremely lucky to work with him. And he hasn't entered a situation where the established expectation is that he is a member of a sovereign mutually beneficial collective. But if we want to ask the general question whether orchestras should be so organized, whether such rights should be defended, Nozick's example leaves us dangling; for its force depends on the very features of the status quo, the established expectations that it seeks to support. So it is with Nozick's second example, that of lend-

ing someone a bus for a year and finding on your return that it has become important in the borrowers' lives so that it might be claimed that they therefore have a right to a say in who keeps it. Again the talk of rights is obscuring, for it suggests clear criteria of whether or not a right exists. In England, for example, squatters 'have' rights similar to those whose existence Nozick is denying. But, given that private property in motor cars persists with all its attendant expectations, needs and obligations, Nozick's claim to have his bus back has a prima facie force. Notice that he (generously) lent it, that it, like Toscanini, is a big unreciprocated bonus to its beneficiaries. Notice too, as the examples get mentioned in the broad context of an attack on industrial democrats, that neither example is a case of people not having a right to a say in the government of their own lives, to a say, for example, over whether they are fired from a job. To establish the general injustice of such a demand, Nozick would have to be prepared to defend by parity of reasoning the idea that as long as positions of governmental authority were bought and sold on the open market

those subject to such authority should not think their rights were being violated. Even Nozick might shrink from that position. Certainly the capitalist boss stands in a different relation to his employees than Toscanini stands to his orchestra or a gratis lender to a borrower. Nozick abstracts details of every day life under capitalism and uses them to defend the structure within which those examples have their very intelligibility. (Any social system can be defended thus.)

That Nozick should consider it philosophically relevant to attack the workers' control movement signifies a major advance in bourgeois academic thought, for it marks the end of a period when the conditions under which people spend much of their waking lives have, like other subjects not fit for polite conversation, have exercised a latent impact on the whole framework of philosophical inquiry, from moral philosophy to aesthetics. Nozick, though clearly ignorant of the things about which he writes, at least has the

hide to write about them. And once people start to look at the way work is organized in our society, it will emerge fairly soon that any publicity for capitalist industry is bad publicity.

Tony Skillen

## Labour Process and Class Struggle

Conference of Socialist Economists, ed., The Labour Process and Class Strategies (Stage 1, London, April 1976)

Zerowork 1  
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New York

'A Crisis of capital is equally a crisis of revolutionary organisation and theory.' Melodramatic, perhaps, but a fair indication of the ferment on the left which has accompanied the stuttering collapse of the 'long boom', not least in the debates within the Conference of Socialist Economists, which has registered a rapid turnover of theoretical preoccupations within the past few years. The first casualty of the developing crisis was Keynesianism, unable to comprehend simultaneous unemployment and inflation, which gave way to a Neo-Ricardianism capable of recognising a genuine crisis of profitability when it saw one. The Neo-Ricardian tracing of the root of the crisis to wage struggle was in turn attacked by a 'fundamentalist' Marxism as failing to recognise that Capital was a contradictory social relation of self-expanding value. Now, the inability of this 'value-logic' approach to seize the specificity of the present situation has given rise to a new turn which questions the basis of the abstractions upon which Political Economy rests, to judge from the number, variety and enthusiasm of participants at a 'Pre-conference' called by the C. S. E. in February to prepare for this year's annual conference (Coventry, July 10-12) which is to be given over to an examination of the 'Labour Process'. (For information, contact John Humphry, 6 Bloomsbury Place Brighton)

Political economy must

come to terms with the way in which commodity economies themselves abstract products from their particular condition of production and compare them against competing products, complementary products, and social needs. As Marx recognised, this abstraction of 'value' is the means by which a society based on private property in the means of production allocates labour in the proportions needed to ensure its own reproduction. This general form of property, based on 'socially necessary labour' time, provides the measure in terms of which capital analyses and transacts the world.

Capital asserts itself as 'self-expanding value'; but there is a certain amount of bravado in this: 'It is clear, that no labour, no productive power, no ingenuity and no art, can answer the overwhelming demands of compound interest', wrote the Ricardian socialist Thomas Hodgskin in a work which argues that 'actually these demands are constantly made and as constantly the productive power of labour refuses to satisfy them.' Political economy, then, as a science of social reproduction based on values, ignores the material basis of that 'real abstraction' at its peril.

Nor can it assume the command of capital over labour in production and treat the contingency of value expansion simply as a question of technique, of the most objectively efficient transformation of nature. Because the labour process is carried on under antagonistic social relations there can be no question of technique which is not also a question of control over labour and resistance to that control. The 'secret history' of cycles of accumulation, of the end of the long boom, is to be found according to this perspective, in an historical understanding of the concrete class relations in the capitalist division of labour.

To insist, with Marx, on the contradictory unity of the 'technical' forces and 'social' relations of production, has important political consequences, as capitalist social

relations of production cannot be attacked simply as the juridical ownership of the means of production by some which compels wage labour on the part of others, but, equally, as a practical control which the former exert over the latter and the struggle against that control. The compatibility of capitalist technology and socialism is brought into question, and this reflects on the adequacy of classical conceptions of the subjective and objective aspects of transition to socialism.

At Coventry, one gained the impression that the range of concerns had surfaced simultaneously in a number of quite distinct political tendencies. It is also reflected in a collection of articles published by the CSE this month under the title The Labour Process and Class Strategies, which presents in English Raniero Panzieri's attack on the identification of socialism with planning which was the point of departure for much of the exploration into the 'labour process' made in Italy during the 1960s. Beginning with an account of how the young Lenin, in his battles with the Russian Populists, developed a one-sided conception of capitalism as the anarchy of the market, Panzieri draws from Capital a demonstration of how capital develops its planning mechanisms in production and extends them, over a long historical period, into the circulation sphere.

Juxtaposed with this piece is Alfred Sohn-Rethel's argument that capital develops, in Taylorist 'scientific management', an objective time measure of man and machine at the level of 'plant economy' which clashes with the operation of value-economy in circulation. Sohn-Rethel concludes that Taylor's work measurement, used by capital to fragment labour, could, if appropriated by the working class, provide the objective basis for a socialist economy. This approach parallels his analysis of the basis of conceptual abstraction in the development of value formation in market exchange. Completing the first section of the book is Christian

Palloix's recent attempt to situate the current capitalist initiatives of automation and humanisation of work within a schema of the development of capitalist production relations and techniques which is firmly rooted in Marx's analysis of the contradictory tendencies in the expanded reproduction of capital.

The second half of the book concerns itself with the process by which the working class forms an adequate response to the initiatives taken by capital to ensure its continued development. It incorporates two products of the reappropriation of history forced on the Italian left in the 1960s during a period of accelerated accumulation and unprecedented class formation in that country. Sergio Bologna sets the classic debates about the theory of the party which took place in the Social Democratic movement at the turn of the century in the context of the forms of self-organisation (workers councils) adopted by skilled engineering workers before the liquidation of their control over production by scientific management. Carefully put together and modest in its conclusions, Bologna's piece implicitly raises the large and disturbing question of the adequacy of models of organisation outside the material conditions in which they were created, and indeed the class significance of their survival independent of those conditions, emphasising our need to situate in an historical materialist way the 'classic writers'.

Part of this task involves forming a more satisfactory 'conception of the epoch' than we have in Imperialism as 'mature' or 'putrescent' monopoly capitalism. Mario Tronti's ambitious essay aims to aid us in establishing such a perspective by sketching the history of capitalist society since 1870 as international cycles of struggle in which workers and capital have endeavoured to form strategies to meet each others' initiatives in production. Tronti provides us with the elements of a multi-dimensional conception of the epoch which relates the separation of the control over production

from individuals or groups of workers with a strategy for the circulation sphere which starts with the wage demand as an independent variable.

This characterisation of the epoch is taken as a starting point by the collaborators in the new American journal *Zerowork*, although they develop a position rather different from that of Mario Tronti. They see capitalist crisis as a product of a complex cycle of struggles defined by different concrete relations between labour and capital. In their view a capitalism characterised by the anarchy of production and the control of the working class by a 'wage cycle' was replaced during the interwar period of restructuring with the control of the working class by mass production machinery and the 'wage pivot' of Keynesianism. Expanded reproduction on this basis was itself brought into crisis by the 'refusal of work' or a demand from the working class for income independent from productivity, which is seen to arise from the breakdown of workers' identification with an increasingly fragmented and uncontrollable work, and the provision of non-wage incomes to 'plan' circulation and accommodate working class demands in a period of very rapid and uneven development. This perspective is followed in accounts of struggles in particular sectors, out of which is drawn a political orientation asserting the present primary importance of the unity between waged and unwaged members of the working class and the end of any relevant distinction between politics and economics. This involves a rejection of 'socialism' as representing either a 'romantic restructuring of work', or a guise for the reassertion of capitalist planning and work discipline, which fails to exploit, or even see, the contradiction between the desire of capital to free itself from dependence on the working class and its need to reimpose work discipline as a means of social

'I actually don't think my television discussions interfere with my philosophy, because if I consistently worked a four-hour day on my subject I could produce a philosophical work every six months.' Ayer

control. Behind this perspective lies the premise of the working class as an historical subject which recomposes itself at higher and higher levels of power, in overcoming capital's attempts to decompose it. Must attempts to de-objectify Political Economy and re-awaken historical self-understanding lead us to endorse historicist (in this case, rather Hegelian) formulations of class relations?

Tim Putnam

## Housework

Ann Oakley, *Housewife* (Allen Lane £3.50), *The Sociology of Housework* (Martin Robertson £1.95)

Both these books, but especially *The Sociology of Housework*, bear the marks of a painful emergence from the methodology of academic sociology. Together with her earlier book, *Sex, Gender and Society*, they are made up of material which was gathered from Ann Oakley's PhD thesis, but they are nonetheless important contributions to the theory of the women's movement.

*Housewife* has a fairly general approach, placing the material in its historical context; she draws on the studies of people like Alice Clark and Ivy Pinchbeck which are still the best labour histories of women (see Alice Clark, *Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century* and Ivy Pinchbeck, *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution*). She also looks at some of the general theoretical questions surrounding the issues of women and work, and at the more biased assumptions of recent sociological and anthropological accounts of women, patiently providing counter-arguments to ethologists and others.

*The Sociology of Housework* is more ambitious and more creative theoretically and I'll spend the rest of the review mainly talking about this book, though some of the arguments (particularly to do with her political conclusions) are duplicated in *Housewife*. *The Sociology of Housework* begins with a lengthy critique of the treatment of women by mainstream sociology, in which Oakley argues a systematic blindness of sociology to the existence of women. However, while she claims that this probably amounts to a structural defect in sociological analysis, and invalidates many of

the concepts and categories, her own approach to the study of housework starts well within mainstream sociology. What comes of this, is a book which is sometimes more successful in showing the limitations of sociology than in analysing the situation of women. But I think any limitations on her own sociological approach are made apparent because her aims are feminist and her questions are not all internal to the academic discipline.

As I mentioned, Oakley's arguments against current sociological discussions of women begin with noticing the way in which sociology has concealed the social presence of women. And she points out how this is connected with the way in which the various subject divisions of sociology present themselves as natural or obvious:

The broad subject divisions current in modern sociology appear, at first sight, to be eminently logical and non-sexist. Social stratification, political institutions, religion, education, deviance, the sociology of industry and work, the family and marriage, and so on: these are, surely, just descriptions of different areas of human social life (pp3-4)

One of the main aims of her book is to show how these 'logical' divisions have obscured part of the reality of women's experience through ruling out the possibility of talking about housework as work. Work studies, effectively by definition, deal with the sphere outside 'the home'. So when she talks about housework as work, one of her ploys is to use concepts and approaches which have been thought inappropriate to talking about 'the home'. For example, she has a chapter devoted to 'Work Conditions', which uses such concepts as 'work satisfaction', as well as raising questions of working hours and technical conditions - all in relation to housework. This way of importing 'work' concepts into the home helps demystify the apparently natural categories of sociology. It also helps demystify the distinction between housework and 'real work', which is found socially as well as in sociology, but which is the sort of distinction notoriously enshrined by, for example, the functionalists' expressive/instrumental distinction, where housework will come out as emotional support, in contrast, say, to men who 'manipulate the environment', working the assembly line.

Oakley shows another implication of the sociological concealment of women when she points out a relationship between the areas of sociological study and the exercise of social power. There's a sociological importance attached to the various institutions of social power, which institutions are dominated by men. What might be described as avenues of specifically female power - e.g. gossip - are scarcely respectable areas of study. (Of course, the relative sociological importance, here, reflects the reality of social evaluation). At the same time, there's a tendency through all areas of sociology to deny or distort women's social experience; for example, work studies tend not to talk about female workers, stratification studies assume that social status attaches to family units through a man's job status (so single women, unmarried mothers, and other abnormal cases, are scarcely held to exist.) The tendency of sociology to reflect the specific experience of men at the expense of that of women, can be seen in terms of the affirmation of (male) social power through the denial of women's experience. And with this phenomenon of the affirmation of the reality and power of the ruling class or group. It's a demonstration of the actual non-neutrality of sociology, in contrast to common claims that it's 'value free'.

However, when she comes to giving a description and analysis of the situation of women as housewives and houseworkers, Oakley often seems still to be hampered by the categories and concepts of the sort of sociological analysis she's trying to supercede. This seems to be the case, for example, in her important central discussion of the identity of women as housewives through an identification with the mother. Her suggestion is that the role of housewife is central to women's self-identity. Her definition of identification is pretty much a simple role-model type:

... (identification with the housewife role) is defined as a condition in which responsibility for housework is felt as feminine, and therefore a personal attribute, normally as a result of childhood identification with the mother as role model (p117)

She seems to take this childhood identification to be operating through such mechanisms as training in housework, playing

with housework toys etc and, I think, copying the mother. The evidence for identification with the mother seems to be a frequency of remarks like -

"I like washing. I like to see the washing out on the line - especially sheets and the boys shirts. I think this is a bit of my mother - she's extremely particular my mother" Office manager's wife (p116)



The social pressure on girls to accept housework as feminine, along with other behaviour traits which are encouraged as appropriate to girls, are well described by Oakley. But I don't think she makes the case that the housewife role is central to a woman's self-identity, at least not as something which lies at the heart of a life-long sense of self. It seems that the role-model account of identification can't begin to account for the insidiousness with which gender identity is curled in the heart of self-identity.

This sort of account can be contrasted with something like a Freudian account - this is an important contrast because Freudian theory is currently being explored by feminists on the hypothesis that it can yield the unconscious structures which support patriarchy, or which create male and female subjects. One aspect of the Freudian account of identification which is crucial here concerns the identification of the little girl with her mother as castrated. This is the point where the girl comes to regard herself as female, like her mother, where to be female is to be castrated. In feminist terms this could be

recreated as the woman's lack of power (or perhaps loss of power) and the realisation of that lack or loss. This account is at a different level of generality than Oakley's, for 'castration' doesn't just refer to sexuality, as the housewife role does just refer to domesticity. 'Castration' can be regarded as a structural concept which, presumably, would help to explain the possibility of some of the processes described by Oakley. (However, almost everything still remains to be done for a feminist recreation of psychoanalysis, and it's still not clear how modified an appropriately 'socialised' Freud would be.)

However, at an everyday descriptive level of what being a housewife is about, both Oakley's books are very good. The life comes over mainly via chunks from the depth interviews she had with 40 London housewives. Perhaps only one of these women seems really to enjoy housework:

"I love it. (Cleaning?) I just love it. I'm just happy when I'm doing it. (Washing?) I love doing my own washing. I don't believe in washing machines ... " (p109)

More believable attitudes range from the almost obsessional to the harassed and fairly sluttish.

Finally, there are the political and strategic conclusions. These are, naturally, heavily influenced by the consideration of the extremely alienating nature of housework as work - for she has certainly shown this to be the case. This is one reason for placing a priority on removing the inevitable destiny which housework represents to most women. Another consideration is her view that the housewife role is essential to the feminine gender role, hence struggling against the destiny of housework is, for Oakley, absolutely central to the ideological struggle against gender identities which, in turn, she takes to be central to the struggle for women's liberation. She draws out useful lessons for the extension of consciousness raising techniques which would particularly deal with the question of domesticity. And she also usefully demonstrates the complex ambivalence which many women feel towards the Women's Movement. The most immediate activities these considerations suggest are consciousness raising with the final aim of breaking down the sexual division of labour (say through shared housework or

socialisation of housework) as it presently operates in generating housework as women's particular responsibility.

These suggestions are clearly all very important, though I wonder if she doesn't place too much stress on ideological struggle, or at least rule out too quickly the relevance of social economic struggle to housewives. She may be right that "the revolutionary potential of the housewife seems immediately to be less than that of other women" (p193) and that the housewife's daily situation is efficient at reinforcing gender ideology. However, immediate action must have some reference to the future; the social-economic implications of the disappearance of housework, as women's unwaged work, would be so great that they must be reflected in current analysis and strategy. Again social economic analysis, and even action, doesn't seem irrelevant to consciousness-raising; when the alternative to housework appears simply to be the lowest paid industrial work (for the sexual division of labour continues into waged work), women aren't necessarily deceiving themselves to think that housework is the better of the two.

Janet Vaux

## Sex-Pol

WORKING PAPERS IN SEX,  
SCIENCE & CULTURE  
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Working Papers in Sex, Science & Culture was formerly 'G. L. P. (Gay Liberation Press): A Journal of Sex and Politics'. The change in title marks a change in direction. The new aim is to avoid the a-theoretical and confused (or pluralist) stance of G. L. P., and to develop an analysis of sexual repression within a theoretical/scientific Marxist framework, and to see sexual repression, particularly of women, as a central issue in Marxist analysis, rather than something to be relegated to the side. The difficulties of such an endeavour are self-evident; that of balancing crude economic determinism against the need for a psychological approach to the ideological level which will succeed in

avoiding crude psychologism. It's an approach that is clearly much needed, and the journal has made a promising start, particularly in the two papers that present a critique of Juliet Mitchell's Psychoanalysis and Feminism.

The first of these, 'One Step Forward, Two Steps Back' by Brennan, Campioni and Jacka, accuses Mitchell of failing to locate the struggle against patriarchy within the struggle against class oppression, and so perpetuating the impression that the women's movement is peripheral rather than central to Marxist analysis. Essentially they claim that she has failed to separate adequately the concept of the unconscious from what may be a particular ideological emergence of the unconscious under patriarchy, and has uncritically accepted the patrocenrism of her sources. The most interesting aspect of the analysis lies where the writers claim that Mitchell, in her analysis of the origins of patriarchy, sees kinship in primitive societies as an integral substructural phenomenon, rather than as a superstructural reflection of the mode of production, the confusion arising because, at this primitive level kinship is clearly more directly linked to the substructure. This means that Mitchell's claim that women and kinship structures have been 'cut adrift from history' in capitalist society is untenable, and it is rather (as one would expect) that women's relation to the mode of production under capitalism is very different from that existing in primitive societies. This means that Mitchell's implication that in the breakdown of the need for exogamy, and the use of women as exchange objects lies the conditions for emergence from patriarchy is confused, and a different theoretical approach is needed from which to locate the position of women under capitalism.

Jane Bullen attempts a critique of Mitchell from an Althusserian perspective, which claims that the concept of patriarchy suggests a unity of historical development in the position of women in relation to the material world, whereas in fact it is a misleadingly unifying term used to cover complex interrelationships within the economic, political and ideological

spheres. Both these articles are working papers, and the writers invite comment.

The remaining material is less interesting and merits briefer mention. There is an interview with Juliet Mitchell which does not reach a noticeably penetrating level. Andrew Benjamin's 'A theory of Reading with respect of Freud and Lacan' contains some remarks of interest, but does not overall appear to add much to the concept of the Symptomatic Reading. Graeme Tubbenhauer's 'Reich's Family' comments on Reich's importance in trying to synthesise Marxism and psychoanalysis, and points to the all too apparent flaw, that because of his essentially positivist view of the world, he failed adequately to do so.

Hilary Dickinson

## Lenin's Materialism

Anton Pannekoek, Lenin as Philosopher, Merlin Press  
£2.00 pb £1.00

The re-publication of this key work for an understanding of the difference between Marxism and Leninism is to be warmly welcomed. First published in German in 1938 by the International Communist Group of Holland, it was translated into English by Pannekoek himself and published in America in 1948 under the pseudonym 'J. Harper'. It is this English translation which is now re-published by Merlin Press, together with a review of the 1938 pamphlet by Karl Korsch and an obituary Mattick wrote on Pannekoek's death in 1960.

Lenin as Philosopher is a criticism of the philosophical views expressed by Lenin in his Materialism and Empirio-Criticism written in 1908. Pannekoek begins by explaining the difference between bourgeois materialism and historical materialism. Bourgeois materialism, he says, was an ideology of the bourgeoisie in its fight with the feudal aristocracy for political power. Since religion was the main ideological prop of the aristocracy the militant wing of the rising bourgeoisie carried on a campaign against religious superstition

Advances in physics and chemistry which the development of modern industry, the bourgeoisie's economic and social base, was encouraging, provided material for this campaign.

Bourgeois materialism, in accordance with the then current scientific theories, saw the world as being composed of tiny particles of physical matter, subject to certain natural laws of movement, to discover which was the task of science. Historical materialism, on the other hand, says Pannekoek, is based on social not natural science. While bourgeois materialism saw consciousness as simply a biological phenomenon, a physical-chemical explanation for which would eventually be found, Marx and Engels pointed out as early as 1845 in The German Ideology that consciousness was a social product, both in origin and content.

"Marx", writes Pannekoek, "stated which realities determine thought; Dietzgen established the relation between reality and thought". Dietzgen was the first to clearly formulate the theory of dialectical materialism (a term he himself introduced), though not - and this is the basic point of Pannekoek's pamphlet - of the State philosophy of Russia which goes under the same name.

For Dietzgen 'matter' was not the whole world of observed phenomena, whether tangible or not, a world which was in a constant state of change and which existed only as a whole. Human beings, with their brain capable of abstract thought, are a part of this world. Their capacity for abstract thought means that they can delay and plan their response to the stimulus of their external environment as experienced by their senses. Human beings think abstractly with concepts, which are abstractions made by the mind from the changing world of phenomena. The mind discerns certain regular patterns and distinguishes these from the rest of reality by naming them. Everything we think about is an abstract concept, physical objects like tables and chairs just as much as general ideas like justice and honesty. A table has no independent, separate existence on its own apart from the rest of reality, except as a mental construct. The recurring groups of phenomena we distinguish by the name 'table' only exist as part of, and in relation to, the rest of reality. This dialectical view is expressed thus by Pannekoek:

Understanding in general and

science in particular segregate and systematise into fixed concepts and rigid laws what in the real world of phenomena occurs in all degrees of flux and transition. Because language separates and defines groups of phenomena by means of names, all items falling into a group, as specimens of the concept, are considered similar and unchangeable. As abstract concepts, they differ sharply, whereas in reality they transform and merge into one another (p30)

In the past there was a certain survival value in men imagining that the parts of reality they distinguished by names were independently existing things and of course we must all assume this for our everyday life. But, according to dialectical materialism, this is just a useful social convention which becomes inadequate if taken beyond everyday life into the realms of science and philosophy.

What applies to 'table' applies equally to scientific concepts like 'light' and 'gravity' and even to 'matter'. These are also mental constructs. But this does not refute materialism since dialectical materialism does not identify 'matter' with the 'physical matter' of the physicists and chemists of the last century:

If ... matter is taken as the name for the philosophical concept denoting objective reality, it embraces far more than physical matter. Then we come to the view repeatedly expressed in former chapters, where the material world was spoken of as the name for the entire observed reality. This is the meaning of the word materia, matter in Historical Materialism, the designation of all that is really existing in the world, 'including mind and fancies', as Dietzgen said (p83)

The Austrian physicist Ernst Mach, having shown how the phenomena of physics could be adequately explained without recourse to the concept of physical matter, proclaimed that he had thereby refuted materialism. Mach, who can be said to be one of the forerunners of what has become the dominant philosophical school in Britain (logical positivism, linguistic analysis, and their offshoots) held that the world was made up, not of atoms of physical matter, but of 'sensations'. He then proceeded, in a manner which will be familiar

to anybody who has had to study philosophy in Britain, to justify, on the basis of the evidence provided by his senses, the conclusion that there are an external world, other minds, etc.

Pannekoek notes how Mach did not go as far as showing how, on the evidence of our senses, we could conclude that there is an external world which would exist even without human beings. Mach stopped short at an 'inter-subjective' world, a world external to the individual human being but still dependent on the collective experience of all human beings. Pannekoek takes the argument further thus:

According to our experience people are born and die; their sensations arise and disappear, but the world remains. When my sensations out of which the world was constituted, cease with my death, the world continues to exist. From acknowledged scientific facts I know that long ago there was a world without man, without any living being. The facts of evolution, founded on our sensations condensed into science, establish a previous world without any sensations. Thus from an intersubjective world common to all mankind, we proceed to the constitution of an objective world. Then the entire world view changes. Once the objective world is constituted, all phenomena become independent of observing man, as relations between parts of the world. The world is the totality of an infinite number of parts acting upon one another; every part consists in the totality of its actions and reactions with the rest, and all these mutual actions are the phenomena, the object of science (p54).

Since Lenin called his book Materialism and Empirio-Criticism Pannekoek next examines the views of the founder of 'empirio-criticism', Richard Avenarius. Though his views differed from those of Mach, Avenarius belonged to the same general school of those who saw the world as being composed of 'sense-data' and who tried to logically build up an external world out of the sense-data experienced by an individual.

Pannekoek makes the following pertinent criticism of the individualism of this school:

The essential character in Mach and Avenarius, as in most modern philosophers of

science, is that they start from personal experience. It is their only basis of certainty; to it they go back when asked what is true. When fellow-men enter into the play, a kind of theoretical uncertainty appears, and with difficult reasonings their experience must be reduced to ours. We have here an effect of the strong individualism of the middle-class world. The middle-class individual in his strong feeling of personality has lost social consciousness; he does not know how entirely he is a social being. In everything of himself, in his body, his mind, his life, his thoughts, his feeling, in his most simple experiences he is a product of society; human society made them all what they are. What is considered a purely personal sensation: I see a tree - can enter into consciousness only through the distinctness given to it by names. Without the inherited words to indicate things and species, actions and concepts, the sensation could not be expressed and conceived. Out of the indistinctive mass of the world of impressions parts come forward only when they are denoted by sounds and thus become separated from the unimportant mass. When Carnap constructs the world without using the old names, he still makes use of his capacity for abstract thinking. Abstract thinking, however, by means of concepts, is not possible without speech; speech and abstract thinking developed together as a product of society. (p63)

and concludes:

So this is the difference: middle class philosophy looks for the source of knowledge in personal meditation, Marxism finds it in social labour. All consciousness, all spiritual life of man, even of the most lonely hermit, is a collective product, has been made and shaped by the working community of mankind. Though in the form of personal consciousness - because man is a biological individual - it can exist only as part of the whole. People can have experiences only as social beings; though the contents are personally different, in their essence experiences are super-personal, society being their self-evident basis. Thus the objective world of phenomena which logical thought

constructs out of the data of experience, is first and foremost, by its origin already, collective experience of mankind. (p65)

As can be seen, Pannekoek's pamphlet provides some useful material for a Marxist critique of modern British philosophy, and as such will be useful even to philosophy students. But Pannekoek's purpose was not to provide material for student essays. It was to criticise Lenin with a view to getting the working class to shun Bolshevik tactics which could only lead, as they did in Russia, to state capitalism and to organise themselves, in independent 'workers' councils', to overthrow capitalism and establish Socialism.

Mach's ideas enjoyed a certain vogue in Social Democratic circles at the turn of the century. The Bolshevik wing of the Russian Social Democratic Party, to Lenin's dismay, was affected too, and it was to combat these ideas that he wrote Materialism and Empirio-criticism. Anyone who has read this book will agree with Pannekoek that it was not written in any scientific spirit, but purely as an intra-party polemic.

Pannekoek shows that Lenin misunderstood and distorted both Mach and Avenarius. Not that Pannekoek thought that Mach and Avenarius were not open to criticism; they were, but on the basis of what they actually thought - and from the point of view of dialectical materialism. This latter was Pannekoek's main criticism of Lenin: that he opposed Mach and Avenarius not from a dialectical but from a bourgeois materialist point of view. Mach and others had proclaimed the end of materialism because they identified materialism with the view that the world is composed of tiny physical particles of matter, a view which by the turn of the century natural scientists were finding inadequate as an explanation of physical phenomena. Lenin, instead of denying that materialism was necessarily committed to this view, chose to defend it.

Lenin identified the objective world with physical matter; regarded the movement of this matter as being governed by unchangeable natural laws; and defended the Newtonian theory of Absolute Space and Time (which led, in the 1930s, to the Astronomical Division of the Russian Academy of Science denouncing the theory of relativity

as 'counter-revolutionary'). In short, Lenin was expounding bourgeois materialism. Certainly he called himself a dialectical materialist but on the quite different ground from Dietzgen that, as he believed, there were general laws of dialectics operating like natural laws in the universe of physical matter.

Pannekoek noted another feature of Lenin's book: it was mainly directed at religious ideas or what Lenin called 'fideism'. Mach, Avenarius and others are continually accused of opening the door for fideism, if not being fideists themselves. Indeed, the book's last paragraph suggests that the most important ideological struggle in the world is that between religion and materialism.

For Pannekoek it was not an accident that Lenin's materialism was not dialectical but basically the same as that of the rising bourgeoisie. For in Tsarist Russia the struggle was against a reactionary land-based ruling class, whose main ideological prop was religion, just as it had been for the feudal aristocracies of Western Europe. The anti-Tsarist revolutionary movement in Russia was confronted with the same problems and tasks as had been the bourgeois revolutionaries of a century earlier: to overthrow a land-based ruling class which was impeding the development of modern industry. Only there was a difference: in Russia the bourgeoisie was too weak and too dependent on Tsarism to carry out this revolutionary task itself. This therefore fell to the intelligentsia, a social grouping peculiar to Tsarist Russia, composed of technical and professional people of non-noble origin employed by the State as doctors, teachers, engineers and the like. Lenin provided not only the organisational form for the intelligentsia to carry out this essentially bourgeois revolution (the vanguard party of professional revolutionaries) but also, in militantly atheist mechanical materialism, an ideology.

Lenin's Materialism and Empirio-criticism was not translated into other languages till the end of the 1920s. If it had been in 1908, says Pannekoek, then Socialists in the West might have realised earlier that there was something lacking in Lenin's grasp of Marxism; that in fact he was not a Marxist at all but that Leninism was the ideology of a new would-be ruling class.

Adam Buick

## C.P. Politics

Ian Birchall, Workers against the Monolith, Pluto Press, £3.75 pb £1.50

World communism has come to be identified with the Russian state bureaucracy and the twists and turns of Communist parties, nationally, in defence of Russia's position and interpretation of Russia's policies, internationally. The degeneration from the high point of the Third International with Lenin and Zinoviev crystallising the most advanced achievements and consciousness of the working class, through the distortions and liquidations of class militancy under Stalinism to the stark political bankruptcy, and what Birchall calls 'polycentrism' of today's Communist parties is a momentous historical decline. The movement from class conflict to class collaboration has been neither uniform nor one-sided - it has never been without opposition and confusion among party militants - but it has unequivocally disarmed the working classes and defused Marxism from the most potent political weapon to sterile dogma.

Are these characteristics of the CP leaderships part of the inherent structure and politics of the Party today? The question is a crucial one when one bears in mind that the current period is one in which a number of national CPs take part in government outside the 'Communist Bloc'. How has the Party changed from the days when class forces throughout the world were being sharpened by the very shaky control of one proletarian revolution over a relatively backward country?

If 1919 was the zenith - when Russia waited for European revolution - and 1943 the nadir of world communism - when Stalin dissolved the Third International in anticipation of the post-war carve-up - how have the Communist parties accommodated the aim of socialism to the changing objective circumstances since the war? And how has the official machine contrived to sacrifice preparing the class for socialist revolution to continuity of party line and party control on one hand, and end-politics of manoeuvre within capitalist frameworks on the other? Is there a clear descent from the revolutionary defence of Soviet

Russia (post-1917) to reactionary support for a major world power whose political base is the potential of annihilation not mobilisation - the indefensibility of Socialism in One Country? The Communist parties have rewritten history, brutalised their opponents on the left and themselves in the process, and made sufficiently fundamental revisions of Marx and of Lenin to rationalise every balancing act in the struggle for influence and respectability within state structures - and where class power has been on the agenda outside the Eastern bloc, they have been instrumental in disarming it. Theirs - and ours if we are Marxists - is the wealth of history, an immense tragedy of humanity (Moscow trials, Hungary, Indonesia, Chile...) and a desperate poverty of class action, and ultimately leadership. We can ask why, but to socialists the really critical questions are how, and for how long?

In Workers against the Monolith Ian Birchall outlines the historical process, taking 1943 as a starting point for situating the degeneration and strategic ups and downs of CP politics. Through the period of the Cold War and Stalin's matching of Russian state accumulation with Western consumption - and a consequent attraction to the emerging bourgeoisies of the Third World in the struggle for power with decolonisation - to Detente, relative affluence in the West, the break-up of the monolith with Yugoslavia and China, the nuclear arms race, and the resurgence of political demands in the West, Birchall gives many examples to catalogue the betrayals, the class-bereft analyses of events and the decisive lurches towards species of populism and social democracy.

The fundamental truth is that the monolith has cracked and the parties in different countries now seek national solutions and accommodation to 'progressive forces' which actually relegate the primary role of the working class. Russia can survive now in the permanent arms economy in which it and the USA are the two Queens in the game and the national CPs the pawns far less important than the national governments or the occasional front-figure knight like Sukarno or Nasser. It is a game which Communists as communists lose at every move. The working classes are a stage army reduced to mythology and the imagination. Behind it all remains revolutionary rhetoric and the abstract notions of a

socialist future and 'progress'.

Yet none of this is to deny that CPs have grown in numbers and influence, and organise a large proportion of the best class militants. It is Birchall's contention that this contradiction is incapable of resolution within the CP apparatus, and that whatever damage and isolation have been marked up, the nature of class forces demands that the revolutionary left come in from the cold.

What is left in the shape of Communist analysis and programme? This book does not really touch in depth on the nature of Stalinism and its social-democratic fall-out, on the relationships between the hegemony of ideas in the labour movement or ruling class concepts and CP strategies. But there is a subtle inter-dependence that we must know more about. Birchall does show the inadequacy of CP analysis of world events and class forces and how this rebounds, often with terrible consequences - in Indonesia with mass support and hideous politics, or Chile with an attempt at a socialist programme but an abysmal failure to mobilise (accepting a general Allende-CP identity of interests) - leading to crushing physical defeats and ideological discredit.

What are the characteristic strategies? In the labour movement the concern for machine politics, place-seeking and electoralism become ends in themselves. This is the analogue of the parliamentary road - one in Britain, which, to be kind, we can spare the documentation. CPs throughout the world have developed a replacement strategy: if only there were enough Communist top civil servants, judges, chiefs of police and, yes, captains of industry, socialism could be ushered in. Gone is the understanding of the nature of the bourgeois state. Democracy is something that can be handed down without the self-activity of the working class.

Historically, the parliamentary contradiction is that Parties seek respectability and derivative power, and all energies are channelled in this way, but they will only be chosen (or permitted) within the framework to enter government when the crisis is so deep that they are necessary to control working class aspirations. And that is the very point at which revolutionary politics and class preparation are uppermost. The penalty is fascism.

In eastern Europe, since the

war, 'socialism' has been installed by and large under the aegis of Russian interest and control. Allied to the USSR ruling machine, there is an inevitable divorce from working class activity which in any developing conflict means that class determination threatens the whole basis of power. In the West, revisionism and unbending attachment to the official inheritance of 'Marxism-Leninism' requires that a war of attrition be fought within the capitalist system which by its very nature disarms the capacity for struggle and self-realisation of working class militants; it will only accept class movement when the pace of events gives it no alternative as in France, 1968 - and then only to defuse the potential. The working class is relegated to a passive role in history. CP strength is dependence on working class passivity - an obvious enough phenomenon of bourgeois society in non-revolutionary periods (most of the time, in most countries) - and founders at the precise moments when class activity and historical movement demand leadership and programmatic direction. Capitalism will only bend so far. Then it must be broken. In that situation when socialists find themselves as bosses - as in Portugal now - they act as the most frightened and repressive. How can socialists be bosses? To put the ideological seal on how capitalist control operates, within workers' consciousness, the CPs go out of their way to relate to the existing level of consciousness and its limits rather than activating any sense of advanced class development, and hence at the same time in the minds of countless workers perpetuate the myths of communism as something unachievable, not a political necessity and related to international diplomatic manoeuvring.

The theoretical accommodation surpasses Bernstein - or for that matter the father of bastardised class compromise, Ramsay MacDonald (who believed the Co-op van delivering at No. 10 made it all OK). With 'communist' theories like absolute pauperisation of the working class, or zero growth, who needs Marx? Much of Birchall's analysis hinges on the emergence of Russia, and China, as world powers in their own right, with systems of state ownership and control, and convergence with the dictates of survival in the international

super-power system - maintaining accumulation for arms build-up - which has more to do with out-bidding the capitalists by sweated labour and the containment of proletarian internationalism than it has with liberation of the exploited toilers of the world. Russian, Chinese, Yugoslav foreign policies give ample verification. The monolith is no more, however. Stalinism is the twin pillar of social democracy. They can co-exist happily in one person's mind. Does it mean the atrophy or resurgence of Marxism? It cannot be separated, as the author says, from the struggle for an alternative revolutionary organisation.

Within the CPs, politics do not have to be fought for. Their actual and potential power becomes a latent embodiment for manoeuvre within the bourgeois political apparatus. Meanwhile, the class is denied true leadership, with dependence on 'left' figures in a period of deepening recession, thereby illuminating the seemingly contradictory position of the Scanlons and TU bureaucrats holding back fragmented, but incipient, class struggles. At the same time, Party militants must be won to revolutionary politics, if the historical tragedies are to be reversed. The economic crisis and cries of Trotskyist sectarianism were not able to pose a serious alternative for class-conscious workers. But the impending capitalist current of doom, the ready acceptance of economic crisis as a way of life, the inflationary necessity for states everywhere to intervene against working class interests and the segmented but important re-emergence of class struggles, put the analysis of the state - constituting private, or collective (state) capitalism - and the programmes for its overthrow right into the centre of the stage. This book is an important pocket history, not an explication of ideological means of control and their displacement. It does lay the vital class issues on the line. There is no way out.

"What is clear above all is that nothing can do more to shake the grip of Stalinism on the Western working class than struggle by Eastern workers against the regimes; and nothing can help to break the ideological hold of the Eastern states so much as action by Western workers independent of Stalinist leadership."

Gordon T. Peters

## Theory & Practice

Brian Fay, Social Theory and Political Practice, Allen & Unwin 1975, 123pp, £1.45 paperback ISBN 0 04 30048 7

Fay's main thesis is that there is a conceptual connection between the ways in which the nature of social science is characterized, and forms of political practice. He attempts to demonstrate this connection for three different conceptions of social science: positivist, interpretive, and critical. He opposes the first two both for the inadequacies of their accounts of the proper nature of a science of society, and for the undesirability of the forms of political practice which they logically support. In their place, he outlines a critical social theory, which includes amongst its many virtues a correct view of the relationships between social theory and political practice.

Fay correctly sees his book as transcending the limitations of recent work on the philosophy of social science in the Anglo-American/analytical tradition, by incorporating some of the main elements in the work of the Frankfurt School, particularly that of Marcuse and Habermas. This emerges most clearly in the level at which he poses the problem of the relations between 'facts' and 'values', and of the possibility of value-free social science. Rather than considering whether or not, for example, the acceptance of a particular theory relies upon the adoption of specific moral or political values, he is concerned to show how 'values' are logically related to the general conception of social science that provides the framework within which that particular theory is articulated.

In doing this, he draws heavily upon the kinds of arguments developed by Habermas, especially in Knowledge and Human Interests. Thus the three conceptions of social theory examined by Fay correspond directly to Habermas's three forms of human knowledge - technical, practical, and critical/reflexive; his attempt to demonstrate the political presuppositions of positivist and interpretive social science makes

good use of Habermas's theory of knowledge-constitutive interests; and his specification of the forms of political practice consonant with critical social theory resonates with the concepts of self-reflective critique and undistorted communication developed by Habermas in his examination of Freud.

The greater part of the book (chapters 2 and 3) is taken up by the analysis of positivist social science. Having outlined its epistemology and methodology, he then argues for its constitutive interest in technical control via an analysis of the structural identity of explanation and prediction contained in the D-N model. He then argues that this general interest in technical control gives rise to a particular conception of political practice, namely as policy science, 'a set of scientific laws and axiomatic decision rules which a politician can use to determine objectively the best course of action to take.' (p49) Fay rejects this conception, both for its internal incoherence, and for its objective consequences: reinforcement of the status quo of industrial-capitalist society, and an elitist relationship between politicians and people.

A methodological critique of positivism follows, and leads into the analysis of interpretive social science, which is criticized for, amongst other things, the conservative political implications of its constitutive interest in increasing or re-establishing communicative understanding between groups and individuals. Fay's analysis here, as in the final chapter on critical social theory, is much briefer, though it manages to achieve, for example, a useful distinction between three levels of interpretive understanding.

The book is written throughout with great clarity and lucidity, which compensate significantly for its generally schematic nature and absence of any real advance in the articulation of the nature of critical theory, or in the examination of the difficulties involved in its program for political practice. Above all, it can be recommended as an approachable and helpful application of a generally Habermasian perspective.

Russell Keat

# News

## America

The Radical Caucus of the American Philosophical Association met in New York from December 28 to 30 with all meetings being well attended and with lively discussion. On the evening of the 28th, there was a symposium on Marxist Theories of Ideology with Richard Lichtman as the principal speaker, and Roger Gottlieb and Sylva Ben-Habib. The meeting was attended by about 200 people. On the morning of the 29th, Andrew Brook read a paper on 'Political Education', which was commented on by Naomi Sheman, and Sandra Harding read her paper, 'Does Philosophy Support the Values of the Powerful?', with Joel Levinson as the commentator. In the afternoon there was a symposium on 'Marxism and Critical Theory' with Trent Schoyer and Dieter Nisgeld. The topic for the symposium in the evening was 'Rawls' System of Social Justice: A Critique from the Left', the main paper being given by Gerald Doppelt and commented on by Larry Blum. On the morning of the 30th, James Lawler, Nanette Funk, Dick Howard, and Ken Magill were the panelists discussing 'The Role of a Party in Contemporary Politics', and Wesley Cooper read a paper on 'Marx on Justice' in the afternoon. The program was organized by Joel Levinson, Kai Nielsen and Bob Ware. The discussion was generally cooperative, comradely, and productive, even though the participants came from a variety of political positions. It showed that there is still an active interest in North America in doing radical philosophy.

At the business meeting on the 30th, arrangements were made for the continuation of the Radical Caucus in the Eastern Division with stronger lines of communication being drawn with those who have been organising in the Western and Pacific Divisions. With collections made at a couple of the meetings and generous contributions from those at the business meeting sufficient funds were collected for some necessary travel funds and for

organizing and advertising expenses. The program committee for the next meetings of the Radical Caucus in the Eastern Division was agreed on with the following members: Roger Gottlieb, Philosophy, Univ. of Connecticut  
Sandra Nicholson, Educational Foundations, SUNY at Albany New York  
Kai Nielsen, Philosophy, Univ. of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta Canada  
David Travers, Nasson College, Springvale, Maine  
The meetings will be held in Boston on December 28 to 30, 1976. The members of the program committee are now calling for ideas, abstracts and papers for possible inclusion in the 1976 program. Those who would like to be on the mailing list for the program later in the year should write to Kai Nielsen at the above address.

## Educational "Reform" in France

French education is getting the once-over from a government committed, in its own words, to 'change in continuity'. Last year there was the so-called Haby reform of the schools, presented, deferred, then rushed through with some ambiguous changes, then mysteriously held back from application. This year university programmes are to be reformed. The preposterous rhetoric of reform in France, plus the French acceptance of upheaval, may nevertheless announce more openly the thoughts of governments and ruling classes elsewhere in Europe.

The government's aim, to adapt education to the needs of work and to save money, shows in two ways. First, stages and possible channels that a student may adopt are being multiplied. The effect of this may well be that students stop at an earlier stage because it presents itself as a stage. Thus in school education a new Common Programme Certificate granted at fourteen years of age will be the last diploma some students will receive, thereafter sharing their last years of education between school and apprenticeship. Similarly a Diploma of General