

# U.S.G.

## NEWSLETTER

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enclosed is an important announcement concerning

the 1978 Annual General Meeting of the

Union of Socialist Geographers

## A GEOGRAPHER'S LAMENT

We stand on the outskirts of Tomorrow and throw our models to the wind, hoping to read in their falling pattern the shape of the Future as a gypsy reads tea leaves -- the dregs of a tastier brew. While we flatter those we call "scientists" with our poor imitation and faltering emulation; they, themselves, admit to wading in the swamp of Ignorance, plodding to the shore called Understanding with the muck of Knowledge and Data and Fact sucking at their feet.

As Ray Mansarek says in his cosmological rock trip Golden Scarab, "In the beginnning was the Rhythm, but I had forgotten and was waiting for the Word...." Life breathes in and out, constantly hanging between yes and no, just maybe. Maybe is the infinitely possible, the wave of Becoming we all ride. What we become depends on what we desire. Mao has taught that right thinking leads to right action. Logically, wrong thinking leads to wrong action. Attitude, desire, is all-important. What do you desire? Think carefully.

Mike Walsh

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

Maybe it's all the cornfields with long, straight rows, maybe it's that sharp north wind biting through any coat in winter, maybe it's the spirit of the lakota and anishinabe or maybe it's growing up with the geography of the absurd where objectivity blinds us to Viet Nam and human rights---explanations... In this issue we in Minnesota collectively articulate a spirit which has been growing in many forms here from study groups, coop enterprises, community organizing, dreams, special seminars, to the belches of barroom talk. If we are less positivistic than some of our comrades it is because we are not so concerned about the latest model of academic maze or no longer wait for a sugar pellet of success. Our struggle is one of working cooperatively with people for self-determination.

Many thanks to all those who contributed directly or indirectly to the work represented in this Newsletter. Extra special thanks and gratitude go to Barb and Carol for typing this when we needed it.

# AN ANARCHIC SEMINAR: INTRODUCTION

The following three essays are outgrowths of an informal seminar held during Fall 1976 at the University of Minnesota. It was informal in the sense that there was no such seminar offered by the Geography Department, but it was formal in the sense that many of the graduate students registered for directed readings credit with one of the three faculty participating. The participants in the seminar were: Bob Britton, Bryan Higgins, Mickey Lauria, Fred Lukermann, Bill Pissarra, Phil Porter, Earl Scott, Mike Walsh, and Rob Warwick. The first essay "The Anarchist Seminar? Undirected Readings," is an attempt to portray the internal dynamics of a small reading group: delineate different opinions, reactions, interactions, and interpretations of the readings and subsequent discussions to illustrate the benefit different insights can contribute to a small reading group. This essay also incorporates an annotated bibliography of the main works read by all. It excludes articles. The second essay "Why Study Anarchism," delineates some after-the-fact reasons for studying anarchy. The third essay "Anarchy: Structure for Our Time," considers how and in what degree anarchic forms of organization might serve human groups given both the scale and complexity which characterize contemporary societies. People's comments on these issues would be appreciated, although no formal arrangements are needed.

## THE ANARCHIST SEMINAR?

### UNDIRECTED READINGS

The objectives of this essay are to criticize the materials read and their subsequent seminar discussions and to delineate the possible direction of further study (pertinent to this seminar).

I shall discuss each book read and the seminar discussion that transpired in the order in which they were read (some emphasized more than others). I would like to say from the start that the two books that I found to be the most fruitful were Anarchy in Action by Colin Ward (New York: Harper-Row, 1971) and Moving Toward a New Society by Susanne Gowan, et al. (Philadelphia: New Society Press, 1975). The former because it set up a tight structure for the theory of Anarchism and its practical implications and the latter because it delineated a program for social change.

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In much of the literature on evolution two different aspects of the struggle for life are distinguished: the "exterior war" of the species against adverse natural conditions and rival species, and the "inner war" for the means of existence within the species.<sup>1</sup> Kropotkin believed that the extent of this "inner war" and its importance in evolutionary theory had been exaggerated, while the importance of the sociability and social instincts in animals for well-being of the species in that "exterior war" was under-rated. He wrote Mutual Aid (Boston: Porter Sargent) to counter this situation and to extend this argument by showing the importance of mutual aid and support in the history of wo/mankind and the growth of wo/mankind's progressive social institutions. Although I do not feel qualified to judge this work from a biological standpoint,<sup>2</sup> it was argued well and it does satisfy my own moral and ethical values.

The seminar discussion centered around Kropotkin's view of time (history) and nature. The dichotomy posed by Bryan Higgins was linear time and scientific nature (inferred from Kropotkin) as opposed to a cyclical time and spiritual nature. If one accepted the latter view, one could not accept Kropotkin's thesis. It appeared to me that Kropotkin held neither view entirely. He held a scientific view of nature, but he synthesized the two opposite views of time into a curvilinear or spiral view of time. The problem of scientific nature vs. spiritual nature still exists and I cannot conceptualize a synthesis of these two opposites.

Anarchy in Action is a crucial book because in one hundred thirty-three pages it develops the theory of Anarchy and delineates its existence in and pertinence to the world we live in. The four major points of the book are the following: one, Anarchy is not a utopian state, or a "speculative vision of future society, it is a description of a mode of human organization, rooted in the experience of everyday life, which operates side by side with, and in spite of, the dominant authoritarian trends in our society,"<sup>3</sup>; two, "The state is not something which can be destroyed by a revolution, but it is a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of human behavior, we destroy it by contracting other relationships, by behaving differently,"<sup>4</sup>; three, the theory of spontaneous order is that "given a common need a collection of people will, by trial and error, by improvisation and experiment, evolve order out of the situation -- this order being more durable and more closely related to their needs than any kind of externally imposed authority could provide,"<sup>5</sup>; and four, the question of Anarchy and a plausible future is "not whether Anarchy is possible or not, but whether we can so enlarge the scope and influence of libertarian methods that they become the normal way in which human beings organize their society."<sup>6</sup> The first, second and fourth points are fundamental ideas that have to be accepted in order for people to adopt the method of direct action -- taking responsibility for their actions. The third point puts an end to hierarchies with control imputed from the top down and hopes to establish hierarchies with control imputed from the bottom up.

The subsequent seminar discussion centered around direct action and power. It was argued that people have become so politicized that they don't believe they can solve their own problems -- only the experts can do that. Direct action is a revolutionary idea that a person can take responsibility for his/her actions and can take direct action to solve problems. Bill

Pisarra elegantly phrased the distinction between power or strength with state authority and power or strength without state authority. With state authority power is gained at the expense of another. To gain power or strength one must make others weak. But, without state authority the opposite is so. To gain power or strength one must help others become strong. If this principle holds, as Bill believes, equity and justice can never be achieved within a state university.

Post-Scarcity Anarchism (San Francisco: Rampart Press, 1971) is probably the weakest of all the books read. Bookchin believes we are past the point of scarcity -- unlike in Marx's time, Marx was trying to allocate the preconditions for freedom (economic freedom) -- Bookchin believes that freedom (beyond economic freedom) can only be attained through an anarchist society. As Bryan Higgins put it, "If you replace the word scarcity with the work materialist -- post-materialist anarchism -- the book is alright." I still can't accept it. We are hardly past the point of scarcity, and his idea of the elimination of toil, to me, would be another way of alienating wo/man from his/her labor. This seminar discussion centered around ecology and technology and the problem of elimination of toil and the alienation of labor. Nothing very cohesive came from it.

Dear America (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1975) has value in that it is one person's account of how he was radicalized to the point of becoming an Anarchist and living that ideology. It shows one the power of direct action. It has problems in that it is written from the right libertarian perspective -- with individual freedom espoused over social goods. The seminar discussion centered on direct action (Karl Hess's) and its plausibility as a political alternative. The conclusion of the group appeared to be that direct action (unless universal direct action) was necessary but not sufficient (as a political alternative) to bring about social change. There must be some form of man's consciousness raising.

Moving Toward a New Society is excellent because it delineates a program for social change that can be experimented with and improved. They step right forward and present all their biases and basic assumptions in "aspects of a healthy society". They then proceed to diagnose the U.S.'s and therefore the world's problems (e.g. environmental problems, exploitation, and capitalist political economy). They then prescribe their new society along with a path to get there. Their main goal is to bring about a situation where a majority of the people demand that the present system of corporate capitalism be replaced by an entirely new society which might best be described as non-violent, non-exploitative, democratic, eco-socialism (Anarchy). Their attack consists of three prongs.

1. An analysis of issues requiring systematic change.
2. To put forth alternatives in political debates by comparing presently accepted systems to reality, comparing the alternative systems to reality, and comparing the present and alternative systems to each other.
3. A mass educational movement (consciousness raising and mass demonstrations).

The authors delineate four organizational forms or functions needed to bring

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about this situation. These are: one, non-violent revolutionary groups -- people living the revolution now, simple life styles, cooperatives -- teaching by example; two, radical caucuses within an occupational group -- press the group to take more advanced stances on political and social issues -- main emphasis is the close relationship to the non-radicals in the occupational group, this ensures a dialogue and reduces chances of isolation (U.S.G.); three, counter institutions -- acting out and testing alternatives (e.g. free schools, land trusts, co-ops, extended families); and four; training communities which take the form of schools for social change, non-violent training, and action centers. These four organizational forms or functions must be integrated into a unified movement (at least in the sense of a common goal and certain accepted means of achieving that goal). Within an anarchist framework this is best provided by a complex network of communication. Nothing more is needed, in fact more may be harmful or be an unacceptable means to the desired end. The seminar discussion was centered around Fred Lukermann's obsession with the use of what he believed to be an absurd analogy -- that of a healthy or diseased society. We did not get to discuss the interesting aspects of the book -- the organizational forms or functions which it delineates to attain the healthy society. The main question I have here is: Is it possible to integrate these four into a non-exploitative non-hierarchical network of communication? Especially since every situation they are working within is an exploitative hierarchical network.

There seemed to be some basic questions all through the seminar that went unanswered and like most questions will most likely go unanswered. I will briefly go through the ones I can recall. Anarchy implies decentralization . . . What degree of isolation will be necessary? Can large cities with small neighborhood communities as the basic unit exist? Can there be a non-exploitative non-hierarchical network of communities? Can there be a non-exploitative non-hierarchical network of scales of these communities at a world scale (world federalism with an anarchist framework)? Are the ramifications of the classical Marxist criticism of Anarchism unavoidable (i.e. is the capitalist state capable -- and will it -- of crushing any anarchist movement when it reaches the point of being threatening)? Does the Movement for a New Society's program (the integration of the four organizational forms) provide a way to avoid that plausible outcome? Underlying all these questions (as I see it) are the questions: is Anarchism and all its components a practical and effective program for social change? and Is it a program in which its means and ends are not contradictory and therefore will not destroy each other? I hope to pursue the latter two questions in my subsequent research. Another question, one that I find the least interesting, is: At what standard of living is it possible for people to live under an anarchist system?

The last seminar discussion rotated around possible questions unanswered or generated from the seminar as possible research topics. At this point creative thought began and people posed the questions that bothered them the most. Bill Pisarra -- can there be planning under anarchism? If so what structure would it pose? Is it necessary? What happens during the transition to an anarchist society? Phil Porter -- There seems to be tension between anarchism and the everpresent (?) hierarchical organization of economic and political life. Is this resolvable? If so, we must examine theories of hierarchical structures. Rob Warwick -- It is important to find the cooper-

ative aspects of society that exist today. Our society is hierarchical and it appears the most communication and cooperation occurs between equal levels among hierarchies. Therefore one will be forced to use a Marxist class analysis of society in order to establish equal level of the hierarchy and to examine them for modes of human behavior which are anarchistic. As stated earlier, the question I wish to pursue is: Is Anarchism and all its components a practical and effective program for social change? One way to get at this question is to look at the anarchist activities that exist today and observe how they effect social change. I plan to examine the retail co-operatives in the Minneapolis - St. Paul area and analyze their organizational structure, origin, continuity, ideology, interrelationships, and volunteers. Hopefully by doing this, they will operationally divide themselves into subgroups. Then I will look at each subgroup and see to what extent being active in the cooperative affects the rest of the person's life. This being my measure of the potential for political and social change.

Mickey Lauria

#### Footnotes:

1. Kropotkin, Petr. "Preface 1914 Edition," Mutual Aid. Boston, Mass: Porter Sargent, p. 2.
2. see Wilson's book Sociobiology: The New Synthesis. Harvard, 1975, for present day support of Kropotkin's thesis.
3. Ward, Colin. Anarchy in Action. New York: Harper and Row, 1973, p. 11.
4. Ibid., p. 19.
5. Ibid., p. 28.
6. Ibid., p. 134.

## WHY STUDY ANARCHISM?

Author's note: The short essay which follows is simplistic, and for the most part will be useless to those that have undertaken a rigorous study of anarchism. The paper was meant to be a simple recollection of where I had been "coming from" before the seminar, and some reflection on where I should be "getting to" afterwards. These are the questions and comments made after only the briefest introduction to a complex body of thought. Its primary role in appearing in the newsletter is to remind all of us of how ignorant and fearful our colleagues and friends are of these ideas.

The seminar was initiated in a very informal way and never was publicized. At a departmental meeting, one of the seminar's participants mentioned our group as an example of a way of coping with the lack of specialized seminars within the department. In the course of discussion the topic of the seminar was made known. One faculty member was outraged by the topic

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and by the fact that we were lending intellectual credence to its study. The point that I am trying to make is that we must be patient with those that have succumbed to all of the bad press that anarchism has received. We must go out of our way to deal with their fears and their insecurities. We must be careful to make our arguments cogent and understandable. These discussions must not be presented with the idea that the audience is hostile, but on the assumption that the audience is fearful. The issues discussed below are an example of the issues that can be used to start a dialogue with the uninitiated. It is through this type of effort that the praxis of anarchism can be achieved.

Why bother to study anarchism? Two purposes come to mind. One, the study of anarchism was, and remains in many places, a taboo subject for study. Because taboos often do not serve the interests of society, society must examine both the utility and the reasons for the maintenance of specific taboos. Therefore, examination of the taboo against the study of anarchism provides a service to society. Two, extant models of social, political, and economic organization show increasing inability to cope with the problems of maintaining the human population on this earth. Particularly pressing are the problems of:

- 1) the increasing disparity between the standard of living experienced by the haves and the have nots;
- 2) degradation of the physical environment to such a point that the ability of the earth to support life beyond the year 2020 becomes a serious question;
- 3) the proliferation of nuclear weapons to the extent that man possesses the ability to destroy all of human life many times over.

Because the stated problems do exist we must examine alternative models. At the outset of the seminar, anarchism appeared to be one such alternative model.

Did the seminar serve the purposes? We quickly dispelled any belief that the taboo was valid. In regard to the second purpose, some progress was made; the results are not definitive, but we came some ways towards formulating the proper questions.

The destruction of myths often accompanies the elimination of taboos. In fact, the destruction of myth is a process that helps us eliminate taboos. During the seminar many myths were dispatched, below is a sampling of the discussion.

Myth 1: Anarchists are fanatical bomb-throwers, hell-bent on the destruction of human society.

Although a number of so-called anarchists were involved in bomb throwing incidents in the nineteenth century, the literature reviewed by our group revealed the work of sober, thoughtful men. Anarchist writers of the past and present appear to be very far removed from the terrorists of an earlier era. Colin Ward, in his book Anarchy in Action, commented on authoritarian and terrorists methods of social change:

If you are powerful enough and ruthless enough you can impose almost any kind of social organization on people -- for a while. But you can only do so by methods which, however natural and appropriate they may be for any other kind of 'ism' -- acting on the well-known principle that you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs, are repugnant to anarchists... You can impose authority but you cannot impose freedom. (Ward, 1973, p. 135)

Myth 2: Anarchists are dogmatic; life under an anarchist system would be static and stultifying.

The literature reviewed yielded a view of social change and of life under an anarchist system as being dynamic and challenging. Kropotkin, in Modern Science and Anarchism, wrote:

The life of society itself we understand, not as something complete and rigid, but as something never perfect -- something ever striving for new forms, and ever changing these forms in accordance with the needs of the time. That is what life is in nature. (Kropotkin, 1908, p. 8)

Ward does not even envision an anarchist society. Rather he views anarchism as a force constantly influencing society, and not an end product.

The degree of social cohesion implied in the idea of an 'anarchist society' could only occur in a society so embedded in the cake of custom that the idea of choice among alternative patterns of social behaviour simply did not occur to people. I cannot imagine that degree of unanimity and I would dislike it if I could, because the idea of choice is crucial to any philosophy of freedom and spontaneity. (Ward, 1973, p. 136)

Myth 3: Anarchy leads to mindless individualism and chaos.

Anarchism is based on the principle of individual freedom, but anarchists recognize the fact that man must live in society. Therefore, anarchists believe that individuals must be free to act in accordance with their own beliefs, but that no individual act should impose on the freedom of another.

Moreover, it is evident that life in societies would be utterly impossible without a corresponding development of social feelings, and especially of a certain collective sense of justice growing to become a habit. If every individual were constantly abusing its personal advantages without others interfering in favor of the wronged no society-life would be possible. (Kropotkin, 1902, p. 78)

Most models of anarchist society are far from chaotic. In fact, Colin Ward describes anarchism as a 'mode of human organization'. The differences between anarchist forms of social organization and present political forms of organization is not a question of chaos versus organization, it is a question of freedom versus authority. Anarchists view governments as the institutionalization

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of a power structure that must, because of its nature, destroy individual freedom. All present governments concentrate power and authority in the hands of a few privileged individuals. In order to maintain this power, these individuals must decrease the power of those whom they govern, in order to insure the maintenance of their privileged position. This was as true in Mao's China as it was in the Nixon White House.

Anarchists hope to avoid this problem. Organization would be accomplished through the voluntary formation of loose federations. Participation in any group would be totally voluntary, there would be no barriers to entry or exit from these federations. This form of organization forces individuals to constantly analyze their roles in organizations, this in turn forces individuals to take responsibility for their own actions, and the actions of groups with which they are associated. Ward refers to this as the 'habit of direct action.'

In the modern state, everywhere and in every field, one group of people who make decisions, exercise control, limit choices, while the great majority have to accept these decisions, submit to this control and act within the limits of these externally imposed choices. The habit of direct action is the habit of wrestling back the power to make decisions affecting us from them. (Ward, 1973, p. 24)

If this form of organization ever became a reality, we would no longer need to listen to the guards at German concentration camps or B52 pilots as they excuse themselves with the words: "I was only following orders."

Of course this all seems quite idealistic. It is, but most models are idealistic. Does the proposed model seem any more idealistic than the notion of perfect competition? I think no. If the question of idealism is put aside what other questions should be dealt with? Many western critics would argue that such a system would cause a decline in the standard of living. This is, in all likelihood, true; but under the present system it would be ecologically impossible to raise the standard of living of the entire world population to this level and maintain it. Of a more pressing nature is the question of transition. All of Ward's examples, small group that transitioned to an anarchist form of organization, experienced chaotic conditions during the transition. Certainly such a transition at a world scale would be disastrous. One solution to this problem is to view anarchism as a force and not as an end. Anarchist thought can lead us to ask different types of questions about our present problems. If we can continue to teach and depend on organizational models that are based on notions of competition, then only competitive solutions will be found. This will result in more government, less individual freedom, and more exploitation.

Anarchist forms of organization are being tested by many different types of groups. Cooperatives of all types are springing up to serve many types of functions agricultural marketing, food provision in urban neighborhoods, and children's playgrounds are just a few examples. Study of these types of organizations can help us learn how to deal with problems at a much larger scale.

In areas that competitive models have failed to provide solutions, such as housing for the poor and unemployment, we can explore the possibility of cooperative ventures. In addition, and perhaps more importantly we can scrutinize the failure of competitive models to see whether or not they failed because of the institutionalization of exploitative relations. This is very different from examining such failures to see whether or not they were competitive enough. The failure of LDCs to develop and the creation of urban ghettos might be explained through

the failure of the competitive model. These possibilities should be explored. The work of the seminar has enabled us to ask more perceptive questions and to do away with some of the more inaccurate myths.

Bill Pisarra

## ANARCHYTECTURE FOR OUR TIME?

To be asked to write on a subject (in this case, anarchy and its relation to geography) when one's own ideas about it are ill-formed, perhaps ill-informed, and partly reasoned presents an opportunity of supreme danger. Normally we submit our ideas and findings for publication when we are confident about what we have written. The following comments were written out as a "bluebook" at the end of an ad-hoc, ten-week reading-discussion group comprised of several graduate students and faculty at the University of Minnesota. Since December 1976 they (the comments, that is) have been mislaid any number of times, only to reappear when least expected or needed. I have revised them somewhat for this issue of the newsletter, but so far as I am concerned they remain provisional. If what I serve up turns out to be year-old, half-baked Alaska, I want to be able to disclaim responsibility along with everyone else.

The main question to be asked is to what degree can anarchic relations among people in the creation of social and economic goods be successful in societies of today. Ancillary questions are: Can anarchic arrangements solve the problem of scale and level of organization? What sorts of changes do anarchic arrangements require in the personality and self-concept of the individual, in expectations regarding level of consumption of materials and services, in technology and the production of goods? Still another question is what implications do anarchic arrangements have for the family and kinship as they have evolved and as they currently exist in different societies?

Autonomy, Hierarchy and Scale. There are three ways to do something: 1) do it yourself; 2) cooperate with others to do it; and 3) be told by someone to do it and do it. Some things can be done individually; some things cannot. In some cases mere numbers are not the only problem, but authority has to be concentrated (even if only for awhile) in the hands of one or a few to accomplish the task. In negotiating a dangerous crevasse, in making a winning touchdown, in performing Bach's Magnificat, someone must be in authority.

"Do it yourself" is called autonomy. "Cooperate with others" is called a number of things; one of them: anarchy. Anarchy is defined as the absence of authority; but clearly sentient life does not function in the absence of authority. Activities have purposes; they are directed toward ends. Thus they need shape and direction. Human behavior is generally not Brownian motion. The anarchist perspective is served by recognizing that it is the entrenchment of authority that is the problem in human organization, not the temporary organization of activity along hierarchical lines.

Most human enterprises exhibit cooperation, the division of labor, and concomitant with the division of labor a division or differentiation in authority for decision. Authority in its dictionary meaning includes: 1) power to enforce obedience, and 2) derived or delegated power. The invention of devices which make it easy to move goods and information great

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distances, rapidly and at "low cost" (refrigerated ships, trains, telecommunications, computers), make possible the organization of world activity and permit the concentration of authority and important decisions in a few places. The very cybernetic revolution that would permit disaggregation and small scale, also is susceptible of hierarchical organization and the concentration of information and power. The same thing may prove to be true in the important case of solar energy.

Family, Kinship and Dependency. An argument can be made on both sides of the proposition that the family and kinship are inherently hierarchical: children are helpless at first, and need to be taught before they can do certain things; a certain age is necessary before an individual has the necessary experience of the world to act wisely. Eventually age begins to take its toll and people in some ways become less capable of leadership and doing certain kinds of work. Dependency and interdependency are thus inherent in the family whether defined narrowly or broadly. Dependency only intensifies as one moves to larger groupings. Levi-Strauss regarded kinship as a system of communication, a control structure within which certain things about our social and property relations get "said".

The character of the family has certainly been different in different times and it differs widely in the world today. In Victorian England and America the child was "to be seen and not heard," and norms of proper behavior were strict and enforced. It was only in the late 19th century and the 20th century that children were thought of as human beings. Before that time children in Europe (even among royalty) were thought of as uncivilized proto-humans with few if any rights. (Yi-Fu has been reading about this.) Mistreatment of children and child labor were commonplace in Europe and the U.S. in the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries, and still persist (exemptions of employees of teenagers from minimum wage laws -- McDonalds, etc.). Women have had a similarly difficult time in establishing equality with men. Until the Crusades (12th century) women did not have souls. A Papal encyclical granted them souls in case the husband off at the war was killed. Woman did not have the vote or rights in property until recently. In the 19th century in Britain a wife was a husband's chattel and was heritable by brothers of the deceased. The "merry widow" is a product of the late 19th century.

On the other hand, "the child is father of the man." Concepts of the family as a cooperative anarchic group are widespread, as is the evidence of something different: families wherein permissive parents virtually abandon the task of mutual education necessary to the growth of children. Anarchy is a form of non-consanguinal filiation; it needs to be examined as much in terms of family and kinship as it does with reference to political theory.

Psychological Underpinnings of Anarchy. A spirit of anarchy is always in the air, largely because it arises from certain fundamental features of western civilization if not of human nature. Among these features are the desire to be one's own person and the desire to cooperate with one's friends and neighbors. In revolt against global interdependence and the gigantic scale at which activities have become organized many people have turned to

anarchic ways of thinking and living. Reaction against the concentration of power is expressed in a search for local autonomy and a human scale for living. The "affective domain" (as the educationists term it), how we feel about one another and ourselves, provides an important underpinning for anarchic ideas.

We feel we are being robbed of the opportunity to do for ourselves. The roles of certification and commercialization are pertinent here. Certification is at once a bane and triumph in American society. Although I want a trained physician to remove my appendix (should it need removing), certification of competency makes its unwelcome intrusion into more and more parts of daily life, reducing autonomy, local self-help, and the option of doing for one's self. Certification is accompanied by commercialization which increasingly affects all phases of life. If you were born in North America within the past half-century, chances are you were born in a hospital (where you got your first certificate), grew up in a house your parents and friends did not build, were educated and cared for in a sequence of certified schools -- nursery, kindergarten, K-12 and beyond, all the while consuming foods you and your family did not grow, while your father or mother was employed by a company or government which said in a variety of subtle and unsubtle ways: Be loyal and we will look after you. Your free time has increasingly been coopted by professionalized and commercialized organizations as you watch the NFL on TV, or buy the expensive equipment and lessons necessary to hit a round object properly. When you die, several fully professional institutions will complete the arrangements of your life cycle for a price and supply one final certificate.

The existence of the reading group on anarchy is comprehensible to me only in the context of today. I encountered no reading groups on anarchist perspectives when I was a graduate student in the 1950s. The impetus for our readings and discussions lay as much in dissatisfactions we held about human society as it did in geographical questions that can be examined in the light of ideas about anarchy. Robert Heilbroner (Minneapolis Tribune, late October 1977) proposed four observations that have a bearing on our discontents: 1) We cannot expect social contentment from economic growth; 2) Western industrial societies are moving both toward planning and toward the market; 3) The deepest subversive threat to capitalism is the acquisitive drive on which it depends; and 4) The threat within socialism is its commitment to virtue.

Anarchie Avenir. The high school/college cohort of the 1960s and early 1970s in the United States has had a particular experience of civil rights, Vietnam, and governmental repression that has set it to exploring alternatives to, and ways of dismantling, a large structure: the presentday political/economic structure of the U.S. and the world which is dominated by institutions so large and powerful as to be (or appear to be) incapable of change, either from within or without.

The youths of the 1960s are now experimenting with new forms of social organization for production and consumption: the bookstores, garage cooperatives, bakery cooperatives, food cooperatives, housing communes, extended

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The youths of the 1960s are now experimenting with new forms of social organization for production and consumption: the bookstores, garage cooperatives, bakery cooperatives, food cooperatives, housing communes, extended

sisterhood families. The people in these systems are, in part, autonomous and in part parasitic/dependent on the mainstream hierarchical society. They depend on the dominant society when problems of scale or technology are insurmountable. They cannot manufacture their own bread ovens, provide their own dental care, let alone train their own dentists; they cannot function without trucks and cars manufactured by the dominant society. In time, some of these things they might do. Some skills will always elude them; some skills they would reject in any case. In part they succeed by living with lowered expectations of material well-being. In part they succeed by giving one another mutual support -- a new kind of family or kinship/comradeship exists wherein the person (often a man) is not traumatized by the persistent necessity for a job, job security, and tenure. They know the joy of being able to ignore the admonition: Don't rock the boat politically or you may find yourself unable to provide for your spouse and children.

The complexity of the structure of production and exchange in modern industrial society from an anarchist's point of view is overwhelming, as is the structure of knowledge on which it is based. Anarchic theorists have not been able to enlarge their formulation to incorporate this complexity. They resemble philosophers of science whose elegant analyses draw examples from scientific thought up through Newton but not after. Federation is often cited as a way anarchic groups form larger aggregations and deal with the scale problem. I cannot escape a feeling that scale and complexity usually defeat anarchy.

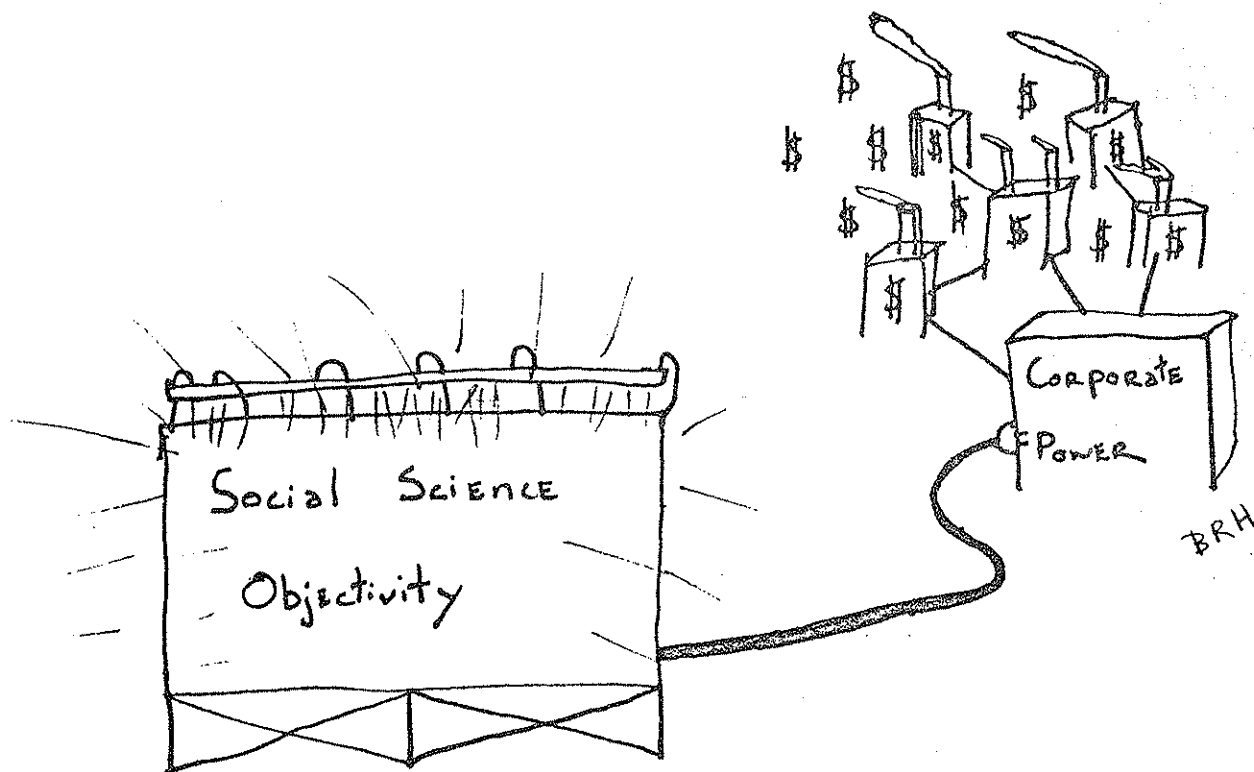
Anarchy appeals to something innate in human beings; but human behavior is so readily guided and conditioned by norms, rules, laws, and customs that anarchistic forms of cooperation cannot be made (are permitted no opportunity?) to work. Anarchy is merely part of an internal contradiction in human beings -- the part which says leave me/us alone, in contrast to another which says: I am willing to circumscribe my own behavior in such-and-such a way provided that others do so; and in the interests of order, predictability and the common good, I am willing to grant authority to others to ensure that this is done. (Students in Law and Political Science learn to express these simple ideals with greater subtlety.) Years ago certain African groups in the Sudan had kings or leaders who reigned so long as all went well. When the king lost his powers, as evidenced by a crop failure or sickness among the people, he was buried alive (along with his wives, unfortunately) and a new king was chosen. This was a system with accountability. Generally, those in authority in modern societies are not accountable, which is a source of our difficulty.

"To plan is to choose," said Julius Nyerere. But to choose is not necessarily to plan. Anarchy appears to have no program; yet it appeals to something romantic, transcendental and basic in western civilization. I see anarchic institutions flowering in America the way quartz forms in the fissures and cracks of granite. They will meet many affective needs among people; they will produce goods; they will generally be less destructive

ecologically than the productive modes of capitalistic society; they will stand as models and moral examples for the consumption-hooked dominant society. They will not influence the development of underdeveloped countries; indeed, they are likely to draw some of their inspiration from third world examples; and they will not change the capitalist structure of America. Their lack of program and their inability by their very nature to organize at large scale and to delegate authority consign them to an interstitial role in American society. Anarchist organizations are the Peace Corps of the 1970s. They channel the idealism and energies of a particular cohort of young Americans into activities that enhance their feelings of self-worth and well-being.

I feel a strong warmth and sympathy toward the ideals of anarchic forms of living and toward those who live in this manner. Am I hypocritical in not wanting to live fully in the same way? Is my position comparable to those who applaud Tanzania's attempts to create a socialist way of life, but are grateful that they don't have to live under it? The main question of the reading group was the relevance of anarchy for the social and spatial organization of human activity. My conclusion is that it may serve some people nearly all the time, that it does serve all the people some of the time, and probably could do so in more ways, but that it is not an answer for all people all of the time. Nonetheless, the attractive concepts of humanity, society and nature which underlie anarchic philosophy can be of use, interest and inspiration to us as we negotiate the passage between the permitted evils of capitalism and the enforced virtue of socialism.

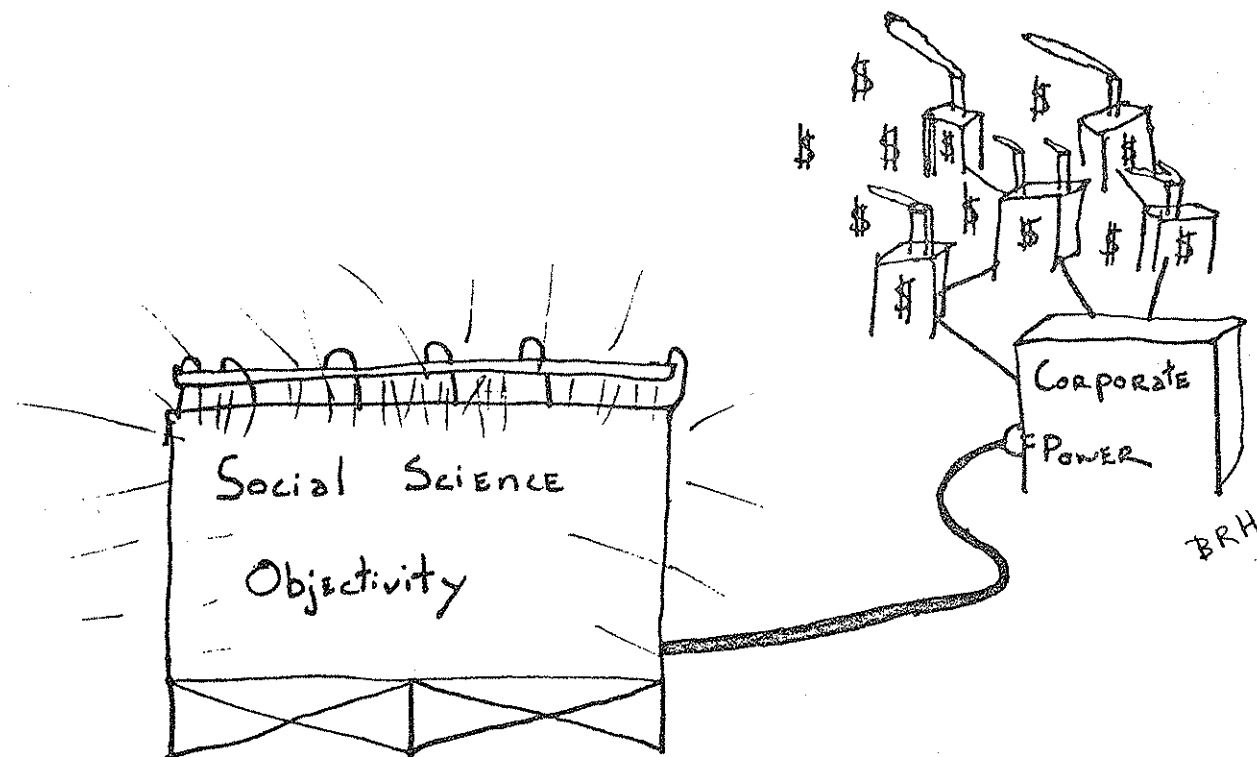
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## LIBERTARIANISM AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

In the past several years a body of literature has been growing within a tradition called libertarianism. The libertarians describe themselves as the heirs of classical liberal thought and thus of that which is most important in the political tradition of the United States. Although there are substantial variations within the movement (see Rothbard, pp. 1-22, for a summary written by a libertarian), most agree that the notion of the inviolability of the rights of the individual is a cornerstone. As a consequence they present a two-fold argument against traditional political theorists. Against anarchists, who argue that no state is morally justified because any state violates people's rights, they argue for the possibility of a legitimate, if limited, state. And against modern liberals, who argue that the state ought to provide a variety of goods and services, they argue that such provision inherently involves the violation of individual rights.

Much of libertarian thought, e.g., Rothbard, Ayn Rand, is in the popular, non-academic tradition, but in 1974 Robert Nozick produced Anarchy, State, and Utopia, in which he attempted, within the confines of academic philosophy, to provide a justification for libertarianism. The book opens, "Individuals have rights, and there are things no person or group may do to them (without violating their rights)." (Nozick, p. ix) He continues, "... a minimal state, limited to the narrow functions of protection against force, theft, fraud, enforcement of contracts, and so on, is justified; that any more extensive state will violate person's rights not to be forced to do certain things..." (Nozick, p. ix).

The state which Nozick claims to have justified can be criticized from both ends of the political spectrum. First, he fails adequately to refute the claims of anarchists against the legitimacy of any state. Second, the state, as he defines it, lacks internal consistency; despite his claims to the contrary it would indeed violate people's rights. And third, contrary to Nozick's expectations, given his premises the provision of public goods and the maintenance of common pool resources, both concerns of those who advocate greater government intervention in the market, would not occur.

### THE ILLEGITIMACY OF THE STATE

In brief, Nozick argues that given a particular state of nature, specifically, anarchy, a state will ultimately arise of its own accord. Specifically, individuals, at first without protection, would tend to band together, to form first groups and then agencies for protection. Gradually, because of economies of scale, an oligopoly would arise. And because the strongest of the agencies would always be able to provide a package of services far more desirable than that provided by the second strongest, it would ultimately acquire a monopoly. But assuming the initial state was just, then, since in the above process the state at no point takes on functions which the individual did not initially have, the state is no less legitimate than the individual. But here Nozick has failed to appreciate the importance of individual autonomy. He has accepted the anarchist's premise that rights ought to be

considered inviolable. But he has failed to see that the inviolability of rights implies that each individual, insofar as he is acting morally, ought to act autonomously, ought to decide for himself what is right and what wrong. The possibility of autonomous action is related not to some hypothetical genesis of society but to the very real concerns of the individual in his day-to-day decision making. These, insofar as they are social, are related to the notions of decision-making costs and of the free rider.

As the size of a population increases the cost of decision-making on the basis of a rule of unanimity also increases. This is the case, in terms of ultimate utility, because individuals may subvert the process. And for a given sized population, the greater the proportion of agreement required for action, that is, the stricter the decision rule, the greater the cost of the decision. In this case too the action of a single individual may subvert the will of all others. The result may be that any compromise reached will be to the satisfaction of that person alone.

This problem is closely related to the problem of the free rider. Assume that it is agreed that a certain action ought to be taken. Assume also that the action will benefit no one person in particular and that it will be impossible to require people to pay precisely for the share of the good or service that they use. Then it will be in the best interest of each individual to declare himself to be not in favor of the action. If it is not taken, if the good or service is not provided, he has lost nothing. If it is provided he has gained the value of the good or service and has paid nothing. The problem of the free rider is a distinct and some would say insurmountable problem for one committed to a rule of unanimity. And without a rule of unanimity there can be no autonomy. Without autonomy individual's rights will be violated. Thus the state will not be legitimate.

#### THE ILLEGITIMACY OF NOZICK'S STATE

Nozick attempts to avoid this problem of unanimity by appealing to a market notion of the state. Market transactions are usually conceived of as being dyadic and occurring under the implicit rule of unanimity; that is, both parties negotiating at a particular time must agree, there must be unanimity in order for the trade to be effected. But in a market transaction, particularly when an individual deals with a monopoly, what sorts of safeguards might there be? If the individual disagrees with the state he has two options. He may decide to go along, decide that the overall actions of the state are worth supporting. But in so doing he has deferred to the will of the state and has thus rejected his autonomy. Or the individual may reject his membership in the state; he may decide to go it alone. But in that case he is forbidden by the state to protect himself from the members of the state. The state which he has just rejected has the right, according to Nozick, to compensate him, according to its own judgment, for the wrong inflicted on him by its members.

The individual may of course move, relocate within the jurisdiction of another minimal state. But how realistic, how just, are these options? Nozick might assert that there is yet a third option, recourse to the market. That is, those who do not support the state may group together in order to start another state. But within the area dominated by an existing state the creation of a new state would be difficult almost to the point of impossibility, for three reasons. First, the existing state would have the advantage of economies of scale. Second, it would have the right to forbid smaller agencies from punishing its members or from exacting compensation from them. And third, and most important, is the problem of collective action, the problem of the free rider. Each individual will, in assessing his

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options, see that his resigning from the state to set up another will require certain risks; he will immediately lose a large part of his protection. But the benefits will be less immediate and less certain; they will accrue to him only if a large number of people do precisely as he does. His response, insofar as he is rational, will be to remain with the state and to hope that another arises which is capable of replacing the first. He then will be able to join the new one with a minimum of risk, although at the unfortunate cost of a loss of autonomy.

The above argument applies explicitly when a state engages in an act which its members consider to be wrong, e.g., when one state declares war on another or when one state decides to incarcerate or otherwise damage those of its own members whom it feels to be dangerous. But it applies equally to those instances in which the state acts in ways which are not within its initial rights. The state supposedly has no rights beyond those accorded its individual members. But certainly there are problems of application here. There is no mechanism for accountability on the part of those who head the organization; to say that the head can be voted out of office is to appeal to a notion of democracy which Nozick has seen as unjustifiable. One might look, for example, for guidance, to existing monopolies, but few would argue that they provide acceptable models.

The institution of a monopoly on protection has certainly reduced the costs of making decisions, but has done so at enormous cost to the individual. But assuming that within the context of Nozick's state these problems could be avoided, another problem internal to his theory arises, a problem of applicability. This question arises most prominently in the area of property rights. "A process normally giving rise to a permanent bequeathable property right in a previously unowned thing will not do so if the position of others is no longer at liberty to use the thing is thereby worsened..." (Nozick, p. 178) Nozick applies this principle within the broader context of his entitlement theory. The entitlement theory states that a person has the right to something if two criteria are met. First, the holding must have initially been in accordance with a principle of justice. In other words, "A distribution is just if it arises from another just distribution by legitimate means." (Nozick, p. 151) Nozick contrasts this principle with an "end result" principle such as that of Rawls. According to an end-result principle it is the final result or state that is just or unjust. Thus, one who believed in such a principle might think that in a just state there would be no hunger, that food would be distributed equitably among all members of society. Nozick thinks that his process-oriented principle overcomes the major objection to such a principle, specifically that it requires redistribution. He believes that redistribution violates people's rights and is therefore unjust. The problem with Nozick's view is that he has replaced an end-state principle with an initial-state principle. If one wished, today, to put into effect Nozick's state, one would have to decide which existing property rights would be retained and which would not, which would be considered legitimate and which would not. Imagine that a person had in the past owned a monopoly on a resource and had since sold it to several individuals. Would the proceeds of such a sale be legitimately his? Clearly, in determining the starting point Nozick would have to make many such decisions, choose from among a number of possible initial states, and he has failed to provide adequate grounds for doing so, indeed, has claimed that there are no such grounds.

This problem is exacerbated by the additional question of the definition of a resource. A resource is a means to the satisfaction of a desire. Desires quite obviously change with time. Thus, resources also change with time. And thus, those things the ownership of which by a single individual will result in the worsening of the positions of others will change with time. Nozick explicitly mentions this situation but fails adequately to deal with it. What limitations might be placed on

membership in the group of objects the lack of which will worsen people's positions? How might one differentiate between those objects which are needed and those which are merely wanted? The category "necessary for life," when applied to humans is hopelessly vague and hopelessly culture-bound. Is "life" to be interpreted as sedentary existence or as active work? The requirements are surely different. Is adequate prenatal care, the result of which statistically is a great diminution of brain damage in infants, to be considered a necessity of life? Nozick tries to resolve this question by appealing to the notion of a base line. The base line is the level at which one would be if one existed in a state of nature. He suggests that the actions of an individual in making property his own are not permissible if they would place another below the base line, but believes that the benefits of the state are so great that there is very little likelihood that that would ever occur. But what is a baseline? Does it change through time? Presumably if one assumes that changes in technology could occur in the absence of the state then one ought to conclude that the base line would change. How might this change be determined? And who might determine it? And who might adjudicate disputes over its determination?

And assuming that one could adequately define resources and articles necessary for life and could determine at what point it was necessary that they not be monopolized, is a system of justice based on initial states any more fair than one based on end states? In any society undergoing social or technological change, and particularly in one in which such change is rapid, there would be an almost constant revaluation of resources; those things which it was permissible for one to monopolize would be constantly changing. Might it not be that in such a society the amount of redistribution would be greater than that required in an end-state system?

## THE PROBLEM OF COMMON POOL RESOURCES

A final criticism of Nozick arises in the case of common pool resource. The problem in its classic formulation was set out by Hardin in his essay, "The Tragedy of the Commons." Suppose, Hardin suggests, that there is a resource that is available to all. And suppose that this resource is regenerative, that is, that it is possible to extract from a fund a certain amount on a continuing basis. What will happen if a group of people are given unfettered access to the fund? The answer, Hardin argues, is that each individual will find it in his own best interest to use as much as possible of the resource. If the person conserves the resource he is really only making it available for someone else's use. And the amount that he could use over and above his fair or proportional share will not seem very large in relation to the total amount consumed. But the result of the aggregate of each person's actions will be that the fund which, managed properly, could have supplied everyone indefinitely will rapidly be exhausted. Hardin argues that this result follows directly from the lack of well-defined property rights. But he adopts a radically situational approach to the definition of such rights. "The morality of an act is a function of the state of the system at the time it is performed." (Hardin and Baden, p. 22) Hardin explicitly considers an end-state definition of rights to be desirable. The particular end state which he supports is one in which population and exploitation of renewable resources are stable. In this case property rights are defined in terms of their ultimate utility; no one has any inherent rights. A political system based on such a premise would clearly require strong authority vested in a small group of administrators, and this authority would include the authority to redistribute. Hardin argues that without such sanctions population would continue to rise dramatically. At the same time the supply of resources would dwindle. Indeed, Clark argues (Hardin and Baden, pp. 82-95) that within the context of laissez faire economics it is often

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in the best interests of individuals totally to exhaust resources in order to acquire large amounts of capital for investment. In those situations the returns from such an action would exceed those from preservation of the resource.

Hardin is clearly arguing from the position that the situation of the world as a whole is most important. He is applying an ecological model to the world and extending its application to people. Within the ecological context rights have only instrumental significance; they are valuable only insofar as they help to bring about certain ends. Nozick has argued that that end, man in a dignified and moral state, can only be reached within the context of a state that takes individual rights to be inviolable. Hardin, on the other hand, argues that without a steady-state system, without a world in which there is enough -- and he has the same problem of definition as Nozick -- man can have no dignity and cannot behave morally. The patent and radical difference between the two, between their visions of what is important to man, strongly suggests that each has overstated his case. In sum, Nozick has failed to provide convincing justifications for the existence of the state and has failed to demonstrate that, if such justification could be provided, the sort of minimal state that he and other rights-oriented libertarians support would be preferable to a situation in which there was a greater state or none at all. If one accepts Nozick's arguments, and specifically if one accepts the premises that individual rights ought to be given foremost consideration in determining what sort of state is appropriate and that people act in order to maximize their own individual utility, then one must, insofar as one acts morally, opt for a state in which the general utility is strongly diminished. One may, on the other hand, reject the premises. The hypothesized conclusions could presumably be avoided if one denied one or the other of the premises, if one denied that people act strictly in their own interests and supported the notion that they act for other reasons, e.g., in response to symbols or notions of the common good. Or one might deny that the rights of the individual ought to be taken as foremost; one might consider those of the group to be most important.

Michael Curry

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## IDEOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Report of a one-day conference for undergraduates organised by the Social Geography Study Group, on 25 November 1977 in London

The experiment of an IBG conference for undergraduates was a success - in the opinion of the undergrads as well as the organisers. Seventy students attended, half of them in their final year, the rest mainly 1st. and 2nd. years with a sprinkling of postgrads. Professor Ron Johnston (Sheffield U.) kindly agreed to be Chairman for the day, jollyng the conference through three main sessions, a division into smaller discussion groups, and a general concluding session.

The three main speakers looked at 'ideology' - by which they meant rather different things - in three key areas of geographic study and involvement: locational analysis, ecology, and planning.

Speaking on The ideology of locational analysis, Doreen Massey (Centre for Environmental Studies) started by outlining three of the ways in which 'ideology' is defined. Very commonly it is seen in terms of the 'values' of individuals or groups, a matter of personal preference whose basis is explained inadequately, if at all. In relation to theory and research the main problem, apart from the inadequate explanation of 'preferences', is the implication that the ideology lies in the individual researcher - but not in the theory itself. In this positivist approach, theory is 'neutral'; it is only in the way it is used by the researcher that ideology may creep in (though just how it is excluded when researchers first construct the theory is not explained). In another view, theory is seen to embody particular ideologies and it is recognised that there are a number of competing theoretical approaches or paradigms. But choosing between them is seen as a matter of intellectual preference, a process entirely within the realm of ideas. A third view of ideology, the one Doreen advocated as the best of the three, sees it in terms of a particular relationship to the world and a way of constructing theories about the world; an ideology does not exist simply in the realm of ideas. On the contrary, it derives from social reality, from a particular system of social organisation, a mode of production such as feudalism or capitalism. The continued existence of a particular mode, and of the dominant social class in that mode, indeed depends in part on the effectiveness of its ideology: an interpretation of the world which serves the interests of the dominant class.

Locational analysis was developed under capitalism. The ideology it embodies is capitalist for it reflects, uncritically, as if it were the only possible view, the capitalist's view of the world, emphasising the individual entrepreneur, the individual firm, competition and exchange in the market, with profit as the unquestioned criteria of success.

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The very existence of a separate "locational analysis" is ideological. In industrial location models the firm is typically taken as given, so is its product, and the way it is made, and the entire social system of production appears as the 'natural' order of things rather than as an historically specific and continually changing reality. It is these 'givens' which determine locational patterns but when they change over time the resulting locational changes cannot be explained within the terms of location theory (classical or behavioural). Its single- (simple-? minded focus on 'spatial' factors excludes most of the important variables, concealing changes in production processes and in the relations between labour and capital. In consequence, its explanations of the changes it describes are spurious or at best misleadingly partial.

Following Doreen's well-structured argument (which can't be done justice in the space available), Trevor Williams (Central London Polytechnic) spoke on Ideology and Scarcity, attacking the so-called 'ecological crisis' and its twin bogeys of population growth and economic growth. This ideology had spawned the discredited birth control programmes in countries like India. More emphasis was now given to economic growth and per capita consumption with speculation about a 'zero-growth' economy. However recent experience of very low growth rates showed that 'zero-growth' (even if possible) would have harmful effects for the great majority of the world's population. The common element in ideologies which latched onto 'growth' as the problem rather than looking at how inequalities were structurally produced by the whole social system was the notion that 'scarcity' was physically determined by nature. In fact it is socially determined, natural factors being given their significance only within specific historical and social contexts. 'Scarcity' is man-made, vital to price and profit maintenance in capitalist economies - as evidenced by the destruction of farm produce - and it has to be seen in context of the wastage which is now structural to the capitalist system, from the massive production of arms to built-in obsolescence. The main problem of human survival lies not in per capita consumption but in the system of production, capitalism, and its insatiable quest for profits and economic growth whatever the human costs.

In the third session, on Planning Ideologies, Professor Peter Hall (Reading U.) surveyed the changing value-systems of British planners, from the moral certainties of the 1940's, the anti-urbanism still expressed by the middle-class Town & Country Planning Association, to the 'systems' managerial approach, the very recent recognition of political conflicts in planning, and the current uncertainties. There were clashes of ideology between city and country, metropolitan boroughs and shire counties, inner and outer city. Some of the Community Development Projects had developed a marxist approach identifying the problems of industrial decline with the investment decisions of large multinationals and advocating state takeovers to save depressed areas. The ensuing conflict with the Home Office resulted in the shut-down of CDP's. The discussant to Professor Hall's paper, Chris Paris (Centre for Environmental Studies), questioned the view of the state and state planning as outside or above class struggle. The contradictory interests in capitalist society became planning dilemmas because the contradictions became internalised within the state apparatus; they were not removed. To comprehend the changing ideologies of planners it was necessary to understand the role of the state

and the class interests if furthers.

As well as discussion after each presentation there were small discussion groups where the undergrads had more opportunity to express their opinions. One was that future conferences should allocate more time for such discussion groups, and reactions ranged from 'too much marxist jargon', through questions whether marxism was just another fad like quantification or behaviourism, to the need for more clarification of the different types of marxism and their political implications and relation to empirical research.

James Anderson

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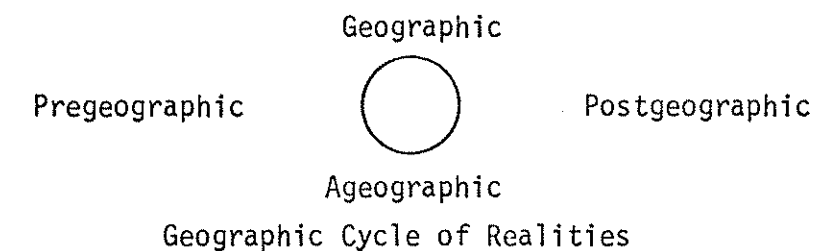
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## VISIONS OF PEOPLE

### Geographical Realities

Geography as a discipline of the social sciences is not only a theory and body of knowledge but also a group of practitioners who write, converse, teach, and act in a particular manner. A central point to the invention of the scientific discipline of geography involves the way these practitioners envision people in the world. While a scientific-geographic worldview is the dominant doctrine among modern geographic scholars its brief existence forms one of the many realities which may be called pregeographic, geographic, postgeographic, and ageographic visions of people in the world.



From the modern meaning of geography, a discipline of social science, an experimental attitude pervades the landscape. Highlighted by a search for general laws ordering space geographic reality strives to measure objects and isolate the variables. Most prosaically stated by Sauer<sup>1</sup> culture is detached from the land and becomes an overlay upon a natural, objective landscape.

Previous to the rise of science in Europe many people wrote and talked about the earth. While some have called these early European writers classical geographers, in relation to modern geography their vision may also be termed pregeographic reality.

Recent cultural and ecological awareness allows us to also imagine a perspective of the earth which has been influenced by a scientific attitude, knows the language of space and yet does not feel scientific doctrines are the one reality. Native peoples upon contact with modern culture or modern philosophical radicals may both share this sense of postgeographic reality.

Finally, acknowledging this recent European landmyth (or scientific attitude towards the earth) places in a planetary perspective the many cultural myths or ways of knowing the earth. Sacred visions of sky, sun, moon, water, trees and earth thus embody a psychological world we may call ageographic reality.

From a planetary view of human action we now have a sketch of multiple realities or philosophical attitudes toward the earth. Such a vision does

not provide distinct classes to pigeonhole people but flows to different degrees in all of us involving emotional attachment, intuition, dreams, sacred places, stories of the land and all aspects of experience.

### Politics of Geographical Realities

While traditional geographers have treated the different spatial levels of individual, household, neighborhood, city, state and nation as different levels of aggregation in a data manipulating model an experiential approach describes how each mode of experience is treated or valued in human action. At all of the previous spatial levels this means sensations, feelings, intuition, logic, intention, dreams, reverie, hallucinations, and fantasy are significant features in the psychodynamics of geographical realities. The way in which certain modes of experience are valued or excluded from this process and labeled un-real shows the experiential politics in the formation of a communal geographical reality.

It is important to note the radical nature of such a search. By that I mean it does not provide an additional chapter in a human geography textbook or a specialized methodology to be included in an objective classification of the field. Rather it goes to the root of our understanding of reality and human action to embody a vision of people or philosophical quest.

### Experiential Planning

Much of the literature of planning talks about conceptual or theoretical schemes for people. Millions of pages have been written compiling information, modeling a theoretical reality or statistically analysing the fit for a standardized population. Often plans constructed by professionals create mountains of abstract information to serve as a sugar pellet at the end of a maze. Yet seldom if ever does such experimental writing consider the philosophy, experience or vision of the people directly involved. With an awareness of geographical realities we can see the need to start with people and their experience. A philosophical issue this raises is the relationship of people to planning. A phenomenological planning study might describe the experience and intentions of people and contrast that to the objective analysis a professional offers.

For example Little Earth of the United Tribes is a housing corporation owned and operated by the American Indian Movement in South Minneapolis. With a busy state highway running through the middle of the complex all the residents felt they should have a stoplight to protect the many pedestrians crossing the street. The complex was designed by a professional and built with a skyway overpass at this point but since the overpass required walking four times farther it was seldom used. As the residents developed a planning proposal they heard many reasons why they couldn't have a stoplight. Peaceful demonstrations blocking the street were met with the riot squad and numerous arrests; all of which were dismissed. Although not even a mile away a similar overpass and stoplight existed in a white, upper-class financed project (Cedar-Riverside) Little Earth's planning proposal was

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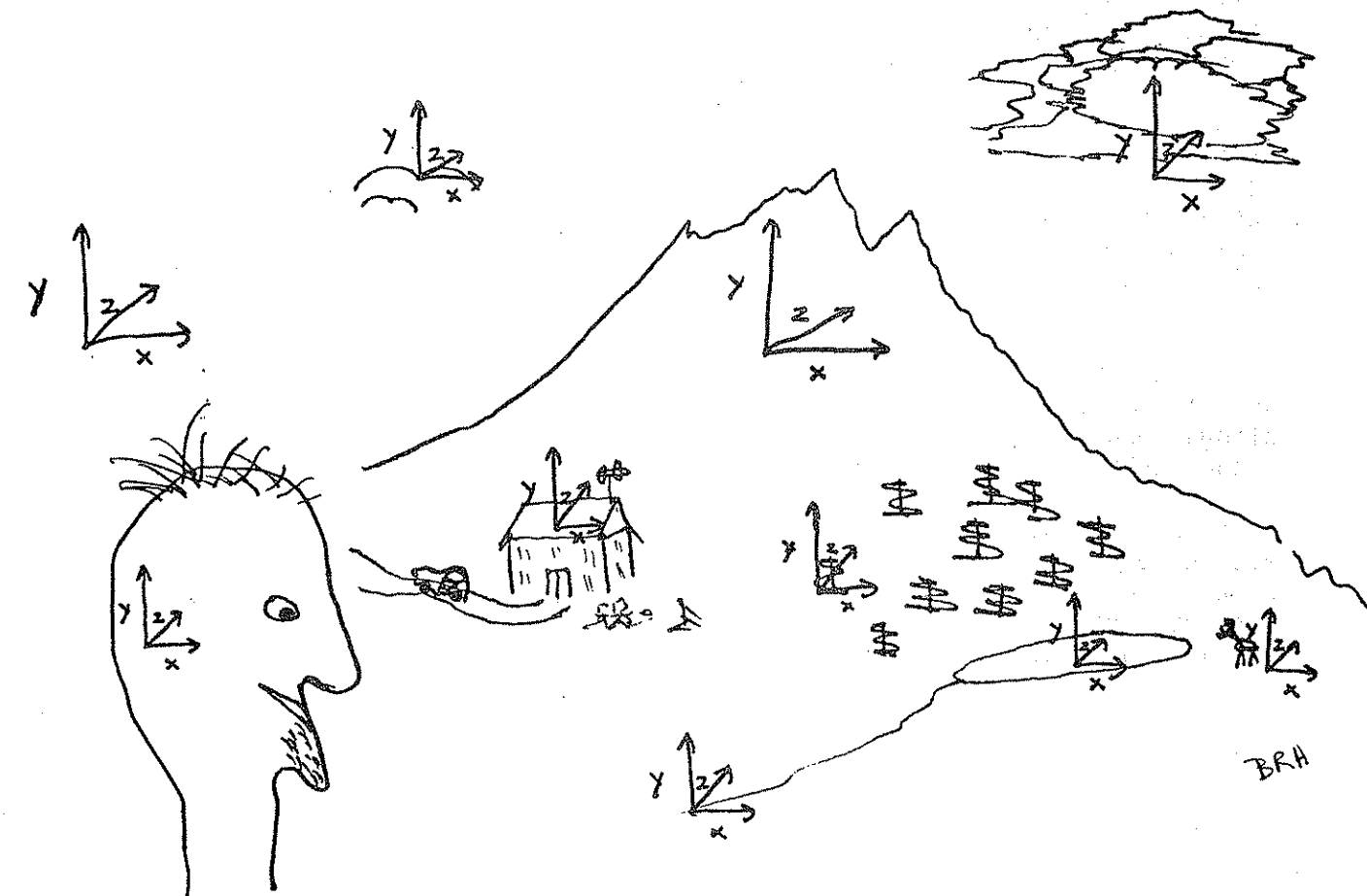
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denied. While endurance finally brought a stoplight this situation illustrates an attitude toward the experience of Little Earth's residents which is oppressive and blind to the psychological context. Allowing a stoplight for a white, upper-class project and refusing a similar minority proposal is a blatant oppression of their experience. The use of the riot squad to enforce such an abusive view points to the militaristic attitude underlying much experimental planning; controlling the variables. In contrast to a test tube approach experiential planning places the visions of people in the center of a planning process. From this origin of psychological identity and self-realization planning becomes the politics of self-determination and human rights.

Bryan Higgins

<sup>1</sup>Morphology of Landscape. University of California Publications in Geography, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 19-53.



CARTESIAN DREAMS OR  
space is not imaginary it's reality

# NEIGHBORHOOD GEOGRAPHY

26

## FROM THE 'INSIDE OUT'

This brief essay suggests an alternative perspective for writing about places. The comments derive from my work with Phillips Neighborhood, a poor and working class inner city district in Minneapolis. The approach may be called phenomenological in that I attempt to explore aspects of the lived world -- the world as constituted in everyday life -- of Phillips residents. In other words I try to describe what it is like to live in a poor and working class neighborhood. This kind of work investigates "place"; it could be conceived as a regional geography from the "inside out." Instead of emphasizing the experience of an "objective" outside observer, an attempt is made to delineate the experience of insiders.

How does one carry out the ambitious goal of exploring the lived world of another person or group of people? Wild writes that "I must hold my present attitudes and beliefs in abeyance (put them in parentheses) and then use my feelings, my imagination, every noetic power at my command to put myself into the position of the person involved, to enter into his attitudes until I learn to follow them, to grasp their living sense."<sup>1</sup>

An experience of the neighborhood newspaper's editor illustrates a problem with this idealistic approach. Despite good intentions, the writer may lack the understanding that is necessary for an accurate portrayal of a person or group. The editor's story about a Native American Pow Wow offended people rather than expressing the intended admiration. He wrote, "In writing about an event in someone else's life one has the ironic responsibility to understand things he or she cannot possibly understand."<sup>2</sup>

A good way to get at the experience of neighborhood residents would be to live or talk at length with them. Materials from local organizations (e.g., neighborhood association, local newspaper) could be useful because they may reveal residents' feelings about the neighborhood. Additional sources are the experiences and writings of other urban dwellers or observers.

Doing neighborhood geography from the "inside out" makes one sensitive to the great variety of experience in a neighborhood. One thing seems clear, then, is that when we speak of the inner city experience, it is helpful to know whose experience we are referring to. This idea has implications for those interested in neighborhood satisfaction. One group's needs may differ greatly from another's.

Jim Hathaway

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\* Ted Relph's influence is gratefully acknowledged.

1. John Wild, Existence and the World of Freedom (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963).
2. "Editor Learns a Lesson," Phillips Alley, June 1976, p. 2.

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### FROM THE 'INSIDE OUT'

This brief essay suggests an alternative perspective for writing about places. The comments derive from my work with Phillips Neighborhood, a poor and working class inner city district in Minneapolis. The approach may be called phenomenological in that I attempt to explore aspects of the lived world -- the world as constituted in everyday life -- of Phillips residents. In other words I try to describe what it is like to live in a poor and working class neighborhood. This kind of work investigates "place"; it could be conceived as a regional geography from the "inside out." Instead of emphasizing the experience of an "objective" outside observer, an attempt is made to delineate the experience of insiders.

How does one carry out the ambitious goal of exploring the lived world of another person or group of people? Wild writes that "I must hold my present attitudes and beliefs in abeyance (put them in parentheses) and then use my feelings, my imagination, every noetic power at my command to put myself into the position of the person involved, to enter into his attitudes until I learn to follow them, to grasp their living sense."<sup>1</sup>

An experience of the neighborhood newspaper's editor illustrates a problem with this idealistic approach. Despite good intentions, the writer may lack the understanding that is necessary for an accurate portrayal of a person or group. The editor's story about a Native American Pow Wow offended people rather than expressing the intended admiration. He wrote, "In writing about an event in someone else's life one has the ironic responsibility to understand things he or she cannot possibly understand."<sup>2</sup>

A good way to get at the experience of neighborhood residents would be to live or talk at length with them. Materials from local organizations (e.g., neighborhood association, local newspaper) could be useful because they may reveal residents' feelings about the neighborhood. Additional sources are the experiences and writings of other urban dwellers or observers.

Doing neighborhood geography from the "inside out" makes one sensitive to the great variety of experience in a neighborhood. One thing seems clear, then, is that when we speak of the inner city experience, it is helpful to know whose experience we are referring to. This idea has implications for those interested in neighborhood satisfaction. One group's needs may differ greatly from another's.

Jim Hathaway

\* Ted Relph's influence is gratefully acknowledged.

1. John Wild, Existence and the World of Freedom (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963).
2. "Editor Learns a Lesson," Phillips Alley, June 1976, p. 2.

## THOUGHTS ON AN ABORTED FIELD TRIP

27

Within the past year I attempted to do some overseas research, the attempt was a first class disaster. In this essay I will try to sort out some of the reasons for this failure, in the hope that some others might learn from my mistakes.

The starting point for this adventure was a day last spring when a cable arrived inviting me to join a research group for a two year stay on a local contract. I was overjoyed. Here was a chance to work and study in a country which had fascinated me for years. With little hesitation I accepted. I rushed pre-lims through in four weeks, within another two I was off.

I had had the most limited of contact with my future employer, and had not even seen my contract. I received some advice from individuals that had worked with the same group some years before, but I received little information on current conditions. Through my readings I knew that a number of radical geographers had worked with this group, I further expected that some of them were still there. More importantly I thought that the group I was going to work for believed in the ideals of the political leadership of the country. This nation had in my mind been one of the few throughout the world in which there was some hope for the development of a sound socialist form of organization. It was my hope and belief that my work would aid this development. Finally, I had a great deal of confidence in myself. I thought that I could overcome my white, bourgeois, male background. Perhaps this was my greatest mistake. Filled with high hope and determination I arrived.

I encountered many problems, some that were mundane and some of a more important nature. I will start with the mundane. Most advice suggested that I would not need simple things such as pots and pans, sheets, towels, and other household furnishings. This advice was bad. Having agreed to work for local wages, acquiring these simple goods would have been a heavy strain on my small budget. In addition, many of the desired items simply could not be bought, for love or money. All in all my blatant consumerism is my problem.

Food, love of my life, how hard you were to come by! My work place was a few kilometers further from the market than I could walk every day. Buying food would have been a daily chore, given the fact that I did not have a refrigerator (refrigerators are considered luxuries, therefore only senior faculty on local contracts and expatriates on expatriate contracts have them). One could devote an entire paper to the economy of expatriate faculty. Most reaped a handsome profit for the goods they sold on completion of their contracts. The market in these goods was cut-throat. Another personal myth exploded: I could not get along without a refrigerator (to keep food fresh and to cool water after boiling) and some form of motorized transport (to get to the market). Which leads me to my next problem, lack of a spouse. Cooking and cleaning in a tropical environment are a full time job. Instant foods and washing machines are quite rare. Being single I did not have anyone to help me with these chores. Unfortunately having a spouse does not provide an ideal situation either. I found that many of the wives were quite dissatisfied playing housewife while hubby played at being a scholar.

I am quite sure that many of you reading this essay are wondering to yourself -- what did he expect -- Shangrila? The answer to that question is no. I did expect that I would not have to worry about getting food and preserving it. I fully expected conditions to be quite uncomfortable while on safari but of a more comfortable nature while at home base. My personal problems were compounded by the fact with one exception all of the other expatriate staff members were on expatriate contracts (i.e., they had been provided with houses, air conditioners or fans, refrigerators, and cars, usually by their own governments). My personal reaction to this state of inequality was very bourgeois. I began to feel insecure and unappreciated. Admittedly I should have compared my lot to that of the majority of the population and felt guilty about my comparative wealth. In fact, I did feel guilty, but that only exacerbated my problems. The result of all this along with a monumental case of jet lag and a mild case of culture shock was to make me feel very confused and depressed.

A brief discussion of medical care will complete my discussion of mundane issues. I assumed that I would be provided with adequate medical care. When I read my contract after arrival I found that the only medical care provided was through the university's dispensary. The dispensary was staffed by a para-medic, a doctor was not on call. Needless to say many of my colleague's questioned the para-medic's competence. Horror stories abounded. I have a serious medical problem that recurs on an irregular basis. Treatment of this problem requires hospital care, and at times surgery. The standard practice among expatriates was to leave the country upon becoming ill. Not having any medical insurance, or even the price of a ticket home I was quite concerned. [As it turns out I was hospitalized within three months of my return.]

Taken alone each of these problems seemed minor, but as I sat in an environment that was quite literally foreign, they all began to add up to an unbearable weight.

As I had said earlier I firmly believed that the political and social environment of this country was open and participatory. More importantly, I thought that the group with which I was going to work was dedicated to the political and social ideals of the nation's leadership, the major goal of leadership being a complete transformation of the country to socialism. I had hoped to find stimulating discussions of how this could be accomplished. I had hoped to find democratic socialism in operation within the group with which I was working. What I found was an ugly bureaucracy that feared for its own existence. The perverse nature of the bureaucracy was made most clear to me at the departmental and university level, although there were many indications that the cancer of bureaucracy had invaded many other parts of the nation.

Work that might have benefitted many people was hampered at every turn by petty bureaucrats that were disguised in the robes of scholars. Many resources were wasted for the sake of appearance. For example, the group with which I was working was charged with coordination of regional planning. Research groups from any number of countries each took a section of the country and prepared regional plans. No coordination of plans took place until after the regional plans had been completed. The coordination consisted of writing national summaries. The whole effort was more or less wasted, with the sole exception of those lovely bound volumes that will collect dust and grace the director's bookcase. Academic freedom did not exist. You could do anything you wanted as long as the bureaucracy approved. Even when approval was given certain projects always seemed stalled, while others progressed

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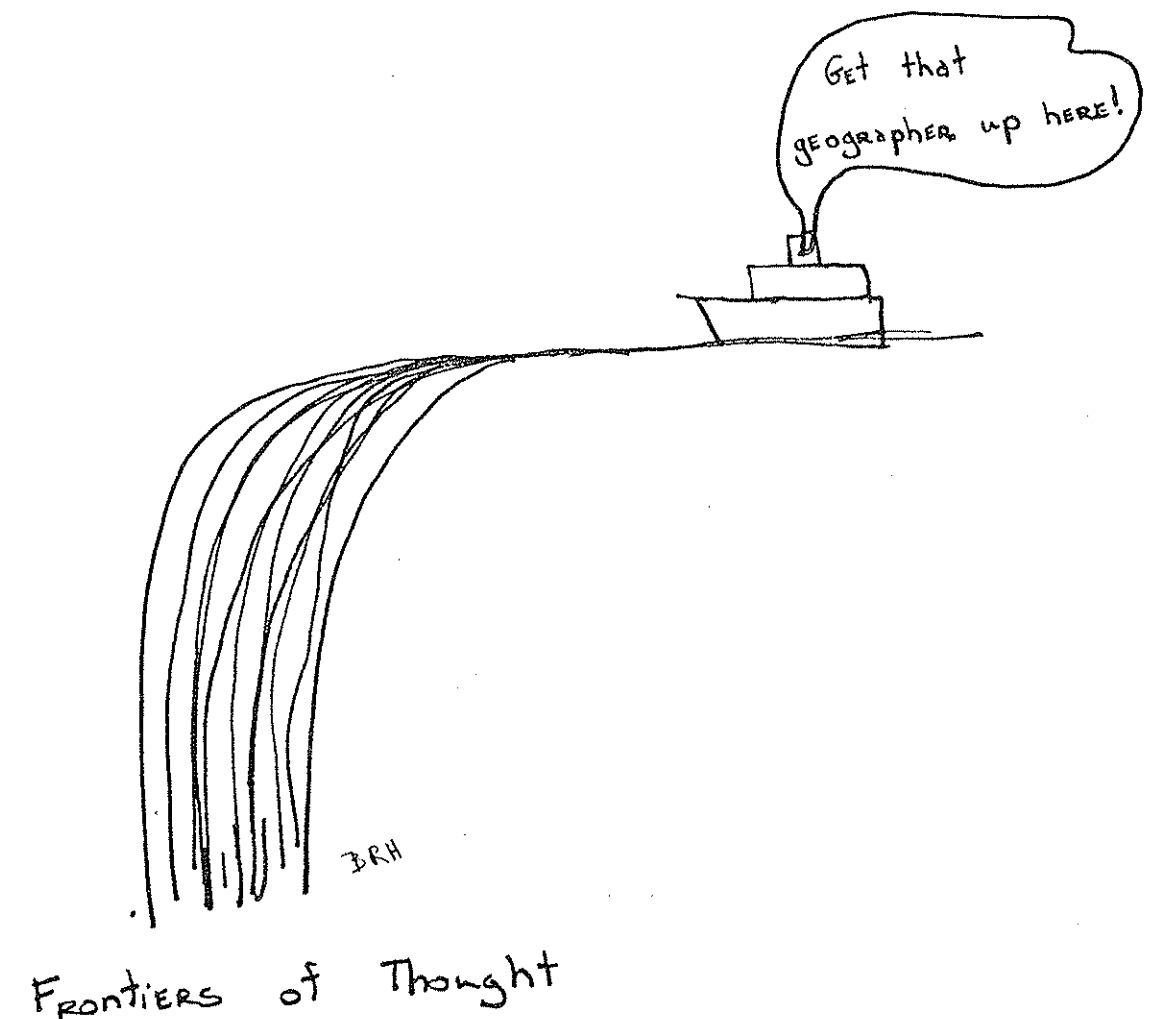
rapidly. In a place where I thought radical thought flourished, I found that the radicals had been systematically removed. I found the group's leadership indifferent at best to ideological issues.

The final straw came when I was warned to be careful of my words in a friend's home. Evidently some staff members had had their houses bugged.

What had started as a wonderful adventure had turned into disaster. With the help of the American embassy I left; I arrived home heavily in debt but somewhat wiser. The lessons I learned are few and quite simple. I thought I knew them well before I left. I didn't.

1. Know yourself. Understand your motives. Can you live up to your ideals? Can you live in the tropics without cold water, cool air, and western medical care, while many of your colleagues have them?
2. Know the group you are going to work with. Just because a nation is socialist don't expect its planning and research arms to be sympathetic to radical thought. Learn about their politics and personalities. Lastly, be sure that you will have academic freedom before you arrive.

Bill Pisarra



# THE QUIET REVOLUTION IN GEOGRAPHY

Bonnie Loyd,  
Sedway/Cooke Urban and Environ-  
mental Planners and Designers,  
San Francisco, California.

Research on women emerged slowly and hesitantly in geography, while the other social sciences embraced women's studies with fervour. The struggle to identify a distinctive geographic perspective on women hampered progress for several years. In sociology, anthropology, and history research issues appeared quickly, and publications began appearing in quantity by 1970. Another obstacle in geography was the small number of women to spur interest in research: geography is a small discipline in North America, and the number of women in the profession hovers around 10 per cent.

Despite the delayed start, studies on women began to attract attention in geographical journals in 1973 and 1974. Each year the number of articles and papers almost doubles, so that a steady stream of research has now been established. The availability of new material spurred several university courses on the geography of women: at Portland State University in Oregon, Canada College in California, the University of Oregon, and the University of Oklahoma all offered special courses in 1976-77, and more are planned. The geography of women is reaching an even broader audience as more instructors incorporate lectures on women into their standard courses in cultural, regional, and urban geography.

What research has been done? Trends in research on women parallel general trends in geographical research. Spatial analysis dominates now, with the mapping of distributions and analysing of activity patterns of women receiving most attention. Economic patterns such as employment, daily circulation patterns, and demographic characteristics are primary themes, although the possibilities for further work appear unlimited.

Regional studies occupy a small niche, and the cut in federal funds for overseas research has led to a decline in international regional studies at universities. Although geography might be expected to take the lead in cross-cultural studies of women, this position has been filled by anthropologists. Among the few regional studies in geography are the research in Sweden by the Hansens, the Latin American work of Rengert, and the African studies of Silberfein, Lowry, and Lee. The position of women in

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other cultures, their socialisation, economic role, and demographic patterns remains a rich area to be mined. These studies are crucial in helping us to define our own position.

The theme of landscape has attracted few researchers besides Holcomb and myself: the question of whether women play a distinctive role in the modification of the landscape is awkward even to speculate about. One way to address the problem may be to redefine the scale that geographers adopt. Shifting to smaller spaces such as the interior of the home makes many geographers uneasy, but at this scale the differences between male and female handling of landscape and space come into focus much more easily.

Remarkably little research has been directed at perception: variations in male and female perception of space and distance, differences in socialisation about the meaning of places, and beliefs about the quality of places (such as safety or hostility) all appear as obvious topics for exploration. Hart and Saegert have initiated this work with children, and Wilkinson takes a historical perspective. Because research in perception can be difficult to document, many geographers resort to mapping spatial patterns instead. They leave differences in perception for us to infer from the data. So we still know little about contrasts in the way men and women perceive space and how this affects their use of space.

Political studies are still sparse, and Hayford, Mackenzie and Seymour have made the largest contributions to political analysis. Much of the research which has been done has great political potential in highlighting inequities in urban life.

We also have studies of ourselves as geographers. Beginning with articles by Zelinsky and Berman, we have explored the position of women in the field of geography. The results repeatedly show that our numbers are small and the resulting sense of isolation discourages many women from pursuing geography.

Where we going? The quantity of studies in spatial analysis has gone a long way in legitimising the study of women in geography. They have pointed out that women are a distinctive sub-population with activity patterns of their own that are worthy of study. Comments that women are not an adequate research topic have faded considerably. But few studies are an adequate basis for social change: we are still documenting patterns and quietly pointing out differences.

First, we need more direct comparisons. When we study

the patterns of women we need to complement them with patterns of men so that contrasts can be shown explicitly. The spatial mobility of women becomes a political issue only if we can show that it is much more constrained than the spatial mobility of men.

Next, we need to venture some value judgements about these patterns. Although most of us undertake research on women with political motivations, we need to find a forum to express our opinions -- not to let them be buried under pressures for academic objectivity. Our judgements about the inequity of female geographic patterns may raise controversies amongst us. Should women's patterns be the same as men's? Do we need to create opportunities for new patterns in employment, travel, or dealing with the environment?

We also need more investigations of the reasons behind differences in male and female patterns. Research into perception is a high priority. We need to know more about perception of space and our opportunities and constraints in order to make concrete suggestions for change.

Where does this lead? Studying women may be revolutionary in humanising geography. We have been content for a long time to study social geography without looking at people. Aggregate statistics substitute for real individuals with emotions and needs. Cultural geography textbooks present cultures as abstract entities removed from the separate people that make them work. The weaknesses of aggregate statistics have been pointed out before. Research on women has made these weaknesses clearer. It points out that a substantial subgroup does not fit the averages and means. The wedge opened by studies on women seems to be supporting more studies on old people, Blacks, Chicanos, gays, children and other groups removed from the 'average' way of life. The myth of the average has burdened most of us as people and as geographers. Studying women is one means to show that other patterns of life are possible and even desirable. Creating opportunities to explore new patterns may be a revolution in itself.

#### CONFERENCE OF SOCIALIST ECONOMISTS: HOUSING WORKSHOP

We have received notice of the existence of this spin-off from the CSE, which may be of interest to socialist geographers. It has met six times since 1973. Although this was originally formed by economists "planners, sociologists, geographers, social administrators and community studies people" now attend. Those wanting more detail can contact Steve Merrett, 43 Anson Rd., London N7 0AR, England.

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## REFLECTIONS ON READING CAPITAL, VOL.#1

Having read, at least once; The German Ideology, Karl Marx; Early Writings, The Marx-Engels Reader (Tucker); Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Selected Works, History and Class Consciousness (Lukacs), etc., I reacted very defensively (internally) when Joern Barnbrock indicated that he was appalled that many persons in the U.S.G. had not "even" read Capital. This occurred in New York at the 1975 Annual General Meeting of the U.S.G. It was not until September 1977 that I began to appreciate Joern's reaction.

The reading of Capital in a small group has exponentially enhanced my understanding of the basic concepts of Marxism. Reading Marx's early writings or sections of Capital in Marx and Engel's readers isn't enough. The long, tedious, structured, and "needed" arguments that support or develop Marx's basic concepts are missing -- for obvious reasons. Marx, himself, recognized a similar potential problem in his preface to the French edition of Capital,

"To the citizen Maurice Lachatre

Dear Citizen,

I applaud your idea of publishing the translation of "Das Kapital" as a serial. In this form the work will be more accessible to the working-class, a consideration which to me outweighs everything else.

This is the good side of your suggestion, but here is the reverse of the medal: the method of analysis which I have employed, and which had not previously been applied to economic subjects, makes the reading of the first chapters rather arduous, and it is to be feared that the French public, always impatient to come to a conclusion, eager to know the connection between general principles and the immediate questions that have aroused their passions, may be disheartened because they will be unable to move at once.

This is a disadvantage I am powerless to overcome, unless it be by forewarning and forearming those readers who zealously seek the truth. There is no royal road to science, and only those who do not dread the fatiguing climb of its steep paths have a chance of gaining its luminous summits.

Believe me,

dear citizen,

Your devoted,

Karl Marx"

It is obvious that Marxist scholars have not heeded Marx's warning, but have popularized his writings -- not for the working-class, but for North American

intellectuals as such. This bastardization has been beneficial in that it has exposed many North Americans to Marx's writings. But it has been harmful in that many radicals develop a false (weak) sense of security due to these abstracted readings. They believe they understand the concepts, but when challenged by intelligent sceptics the depth they lack becomes obvious; e.g., Marx's labor theory of value. These are also harmful; in that, they leave more room for misinterpretation of some of the basic concepts of Marx's thought, e.g., the fetishism of commodities; the law of accumulation of capital. The shallowness of these abstracted readings also leads to difficulties in making use of Marx's concepts. I have been told by many sociologists that Marx's concepts cannot be operationalized, e.g., alienation, the labor theory of value. Finally, these abstracted readings often lead people to believe the language used by Marx and his followers is pedantic jargon. This tendency, I believe, exists but not to the extremes I had thought in the past.

I personally have been subject to each of the above harmful effects of this popularization. After two and one-half years of trial and error, I have found the antidote: reading Capital (and hopefully more) in small groups.

Group process has been of major concern to socialist groups since their original conception. I have not taken part in any other small reading groups, so I cannot compare this group with others, but I'd like to outline the process (or structure) that worked very well for us. The group was comprised of four core persons (persons who attended almost all sessions, read diligently, and contributed to discussion) and two peripheral persons. We met once a week in the evening for a preseminar dinner. This enabled us to take care of all personal discussion, etc., during dinner and not during the seminar. We rotated the meeting place and, therefore, the dinner preparations. Various sorts of alcohol and other beverages were consumed in modest amounts during the seminar. We assigned fifty to one hundred-fifty pages of reading (depending on the difficulty of the material -- one member had previously participated in a similar group which helped in determining the reading length) per week. One person each week was assigned to prepare and lead the discussion for the next week. This person would present his/her version of the reading material and discuss areas s/he had trouble with. During this presentation, people were free to question the presenter's interpretation of the material. After the presentation others were given time to mention and lead discussion of important points that the assigned presenter had either left out or brushed over, and to ask questions about difficult parts that had not been mentioned earlier. The seminar would run between two and two and one-half hours. We would then break up and return to some serious drinking and socializing. This process worked remarkably well for us. We (the core group) were able to complete volume one of Capital in ten weeks.

The composition of the group, I believe, was a large factor in the success of the group. The core members had extremely varied academic backgrounds (philosophy, Third World underdevelopment, U.S. urban neighborhood development, and theoretical and economic geography with a good knowledge of Marx's peers and predecessors) which added to the discussions and interpretations. I believe the success of a reading group is primarily dependent on the dedication of individual members, the composition of the group, and the process implemented by the group.

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Mickey Lauria

Greetings,

Socialist theory is strong on economic analysis and weak on political analysis even tho' we tend to think of political economy rather than of economics divorced from politics.

As socialist geographers, our primary task, if we are academics, is to transform our academic thinking and practice socialistically. We ought also to make our skills available to non-academics who are struggling with the problems capitalism imposes on us, but we ought also to be in contact with socialist-minded people who are in wider networks than the USG or some local committee or other.

I would like to see a session of the USG on politics some time. What sort of political movements are there in Canada and the U.S. which are explicitly socialist? How effective are they? What sort of socialism do they think they are fighting for? Where in womens' organizations and other minority organizations, and where in the environmental/ecological organizations, are socialist views being raised?

The idea of a Vanguard Party is popular with traditional Marxist-Leninists. I think it smacks of arrogance and elitism.

Some socialist groups oppose electoral politics altogether. I think they are rejecting an important type of action.

Some favor working within the Democratic Party (in the U.S.), while others want independent or third-party action. I think socialists should work within the Democratic Party or in opposition to it, depending on the situation.

Traditional Marxists think socialist political action should be directed especially to the "working class" and especially to "productive workers." I think socialists should appeal to any and all people who have doubts about the viability, sanity, or desirability of capitalism regardless of the "class" they are supposed to be part of.

Ever since the Bolsheviks achieved power, socialists have been split over the issue of reform VERSUS revolution. I don't see reform/revolution as an either-or problem.

Traditionally (i.e., since World War I) socialists have looked to foreign models -- to Lenin, Mao, Che, or West European Social Democrats. I agree with James and Grace Boggs that we will have to build our own model: no foreign model fits the American situation. [I don't agree with everything the Boggses have written, but they do write in plain English, without the heavy Germanic abstractions, the jargon, and the cliches that clutter much Marxist writing. If any USGers have read the Boggses Revolution and Evolution in the Twentieth Century (Monthly Review Press, 1974, paperback 1975,) I'd appreciate hearing from them.

If socialist theorizing does not lead to effective political action, it is a waste of time. Therefore we ought not only try to relate socialism to our geographizing, but we ought also to relate ourselves to the political arena. I have indicated in this letter, in brief, some of my political inclinations. Where do other USGers stand on these or other political questions?

Yours in dialog,

*Laurence G. Wolf*

Laurence G. Wolf

# THE STILLBORN RADICAL SCHOOL

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## OF GEOGRAPHY

My copy of Webster defines a "school" as "a large number of fish or aquatic animals of one kind swimming together." The word has other definitions, to be sure, but the piscine analogy seems singularly appropriate when talking about schools of geographers. I have been a participant observer of one such school, an observer of the second, and have been watching the third for any vital signs, but have finally been forced to conclude that it will never get off the ground. Why have schools of cultural geography and quantitative geography been successful, whereas the radical school of geography seems doomed? The best answer seems to be that radical geographers are not serious drinkers, but they take everything else entirely too darned seriously.

A school of geography lives by and for its exchange of ideas. Ideas may be exchanged in the classroom, in print, in public, or in person. Classrooms are probably the poorest possible place to try to exchange ideas. Some people kid themselves into thinking that ideas are exchanged when they pontificate before a class, but they are only transmitting ideas, not exchanging them. Few students are equipped to challenge any idea put forth by an instructor, no matter how foolish it or he may be; any who has ever been a student knows that every teacher gets away with perpetrating some outrageous balderdash from time to time, but who in his class can dare to say him nay? Every teacher is king in his own classroom.

The printed word is a far better medium for idea exchange than the classroom, because ideas are exposed to searching scrutiny by competent colleagues when a scholar is courageous enough to commit them to print. Ideas in print are also communicated to a far wider audience, and they are far more permanent. We can still learn from the writings of Ellen Churchill Semple or William Morris Davis, for example, or from Varenus or Ptolemy or Herodotus, even though we are deprived of the pleasure of listening to them lecture.

The major disadvantage of the printed word is that most of us write painfully slowly; and our ideas, once written, must be reviewed by referees before they can be accepted for publication, and then they are subjected to the tender mercies of some irascible editor, and after that the production process seems to take forever, so most ideas are at least moderately stale by the time they finally appear in print. Any scholar who depends solely upon what he reads will run the risk of being woefully out of date, especially if his field is changing rapidly.

The scholar who really wants to keep up with his discipline must regularly attend and participate in scholarly meetings, because ideas presented in papers at meetings predate their appearance in print by at least a couple of years. Those who know no better have been heard to complain that presenting a paper at meetings is an exercise in sterility, and they are partly right, because the formal presentation of a paper is only the tip of the iceberg. Old pros know enough to seek out the author afterwards if they want to discuss his ideas, because they have learned that ideas are best exchanged on a face-to-face basis between peers.

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# THE STILLBORN RADICAL SCHOOL

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The real purpose of the scholarly meeting is to give scholars a chance to feed on

each other's ideas in informal discussion. A "school" develops when a critical mass of like-minded scholars begin exchanging ideas on a regular basis. They will not do this unless they like each other, and if they like each other they will enjoy getting together socially as well as professionally. And that is where the serious drinking comes in. Some of the most fruitful exchanges of ideas at meetings take place over a couple of drinks in a smoke-filled hotel room; the heady atmosphere seems conducive to irreverent challenge, to easy given and take, to the prompt deflation of any stuffed shirts who may have wandered in by mistake. Not all serious drinkers are thinkers, to be sure, but most thinkers enjoy relaxing over a drink, and this is where I find fault with radical geographers: they never enjoy, they never relax, they never drink, they are a bunch of stuffed shirts in dirty dungarees. They must learn to get to know each other as whole people, not merely as dogmatic dialecticians; they must learn to take themselves a little less seriously, and their drinking a little more seriously, if they ever hope to amount to anything as a school of geographers.

John Fraser Hart

### ANNOUNCEMENT

ANTIPODE/U.S.G. - DUBLIN CONFERENCE

Antipode/U.S.G. will hold a conference/workshop entitled:-

"Radical approaches to the study of Irish Geography: Historical and contemporary".

at

Department of Geography, University College Dublin, Belfield.

on

Thursday and Friday, March 30th & 31st, 1978

Papers have already been submitted on:-

"MNC's North and South since 1921"

"Cultural Imperialism and the 'Irish Question'".

"Regional inequality and territorial structure"

"Discrimination in post-war Northern Ireland"

"Housing, a comparative study of Dublin and Belfast"

We wish to invite all those interested to take part - papers will be accepted up to March 15th. Accommodation will be provided free. For further information please contact,

Colm Regan  
25 Kinahan St.  
N.C.R.  
DUBLIN 7, IRELAND.



### APPROACHES TO HOUSING RESEARCH: A BIBLIOGRAPHY - PART 2

This represents the second half of a bibliography prepared by John Holmes of Queens University, Kingston, Ontario. The first half appeared in the last issue of the U.S.G. Newsletter (Vol 3 #2). Quoting from the original introduction "The material reviewed...was drawn largely from the U.K., France and the U.S. Canadian material...was the focus of a complementary paper...by Chris Sharpe".

#### III. The Political Economy Approach.

The references cited in this section represent a fundamentally different approach from that of neoclassical, positivist work on urban housing. It's theoretical base lies in Classical and particularly Marxian Political Economy. This section is divided into three parts corresponding to the particular areas under study: France and Italy, the United Kingdom and, finally, North America.

##### (A) France and Italy.

Increasingly, this work is becoming available in English through the reviews and translations by Pickvance and Scott, the recent English translation of Castells's major theoretical work La Question Urbaine and the launching this year of a new Edward Arnold journal, The International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. (Information on this journal, subscription rates etc., is contained in this Newsletter. See pg. ).

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Urban Contradictions: New Sources of Inequality and New Models for Change, Comparative Urbanisation Studies, School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of California, Los Angeles, Ca.

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##### (B) United Kingdom

This work is broadly within a Marxist framework but is far more empirical in content than the French material. There are three principal organizations involved in this work:

(i) Conference of Socialist Economists, Political Economy of Housing Workshop (P.E.H.W.). - This is a group of academics and community organizers who have produced two volumes of papers (with a third currently in preparation): Political Economy and the Housing Question (1975) and Housing and Class in Britain (1976). Both volumes are available from Fred Gray, School of Cultural and Community Studies, University of Sussex, Falmer, Sussex BN1 9QN, England.

(ii) Community Development Project (C.D.P.). - This was set up by the British Home Office in 1969 as a "neighbourhood based experiment aimed at finding new ways of meeting the needs of people living in areas of high social deprivation". It consisted originally of twelve local projects. However, five of them were closed down by their local authorities. In October 1973, the Central Information and Intelligence Unit was set up as a central resource for all the projects and to facilitate inter-project work. It published a series of increasingly radical and controversial reports showing 'deprivation' to be symptomatic of structural problems within capitalism, and exposing the ineffectual nature of government policy'. In October 1976, the Information Unit was closed down. In their own words. . . . "set up by the government to take part in the tinkering, now C.D.P.'s voice is being closed down. The State sent us in, this is what we found, so the State is shutting us up." D.D.P. reports can still be obtained from either Newcastle C.D.P., 85-87 Adelaide Terrace, Benwell, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE4 8BB, England or Home Office, Urban Deprivation Unit, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1.

(iii) Community Action - This is a non-profit magazine produced entirely on a sparetime basis and has been in publication for 5 years. In addition to being a vehicle for news and the exchange of information among community groups all over Britain, it also contains penetrating analyses of welfare cuts, unemployment, housing, transport, etc. Written in a direct and graphic style. Subscriptions are £1.50 overseas (6 issues). Direct to Community Action, P.O. Box 665, London SW1X 8DZ, England.

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## ANTIPODE — RECENT ISSUES

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| Vol. 8 No. 1 | Urban Political Economy   |
| Vol. 8 No. 2 | Origins of Capitalism, Politics of Space, etc.                        |
| Vol. 8 No. 3 | Kropotkin, Ireland, etc.  |
| Vol. 9 No. 1 | Underdevelopment: I Socio-Economic Formation and Spatial Organization |
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| Vol. 9 No. 3 | Underdevelopment: II Mode of Production and Third World Urbanization  |

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We have received (from Damaris Rose) information on an organisation known as THE PLANNERS' NETWORK. This has been going since 1975 and has over 700 members. A periodic mailing is put out to maintain communication between people, and give information about meetings etc. There are also a number of local Network groups in different parts of the U.S. Membership is self-selective: those not maintaining regular contact with Network are dropped from the list. There is no membership fee but a donation of \$10 is suggested as they have little money. More information can be obtained from: Planners' Network, 360 Elizabeth Street, San Francisco, California 94114, U.S.A. (tel. (415) 282-1249; Chester Harman).

Roweis, S. (1975) Urban Planning in Early and Late Capitalist Societies, Papers on Planning and design, 7, Dept. of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Toronto, Canada.

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Antipode, P.O. Box 225, West Side Station, Worcester, Massachusetts 01602

See also Radical Geography, the best of our previous articles. \$7.95 from Maaroufa Press, 610 N. Fairbanks Court, Chicago 60611.

We have received (from Damaris Rose) information on an organisation known as THE PLANNERS' NETWORK. This has been going since 1975 and has over 700 members. A periodic mailing is put out to maintain communication between people, and give information about meetings etc. There are also a number of local Network groups in different parts of the U.S. Membership is self-selective: those not maintaining regular contact with Network are dropped from the list. There is no membership fee but a donation of \$10 is suggested as they have little money. More information can be obtained from: Planners' Network, 360 Elizabeth Street, San Francisco, California 94114, U.S.A. (tel. (415) 282-1249; Chester Harman).

REVIEW: Michael Novak, The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics (New York: The Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.: 1971)

The rise of ethnic consciousness must be counted as one of the major cultural events during the 1960s. Articulation of black pride encouraged similar developments among the Spanish surname population, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and white ethnic groups. Michael Novak's The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics attempted to explain the basis for the bitterness and defensiveness that seemed to underlie the white ethnic movement in terms of their experiences and relationships with other groups in America. His effort aroused considerable hostility on the book's publication in 1971; a look back seems in order.

The assimilationist view of the United States as a melting pot has been at least partially discredited by Glazer and Moynihan and numerous others, some as far back as World War I. Novak claims to finish the job. He approvingly quotes the novelist James T. Farrell: "The melting pot was essentially an Anglo Saxon effort to rub out the past of others...." The melting plot, it seems. The term actually comes from Israel Zangwill's (He doesn't SOUND Anglo-Saxon) play of 1909, "The Melting Pot," a paen to the merging of the diverse immigrant cultures into a glorious new American culture. Many immigrants were torn by the conflict between adherence to the culture of their homelands and their hopes for full participation in a great America in which their children could succeed. To acknowledge that many immigrants brought Zangwill's sentiments is not to deny the nativist pressures which forced them to this acceptance, or the trials which resulted from trying to learn a new language and culture. Novak described the cultural amnesia from which descendants of immigrants suffer. Their relatives do not speak of "what it was like," and each year "more and more of the aging witnesses go silently to the grave." The poignant fact is that the revival of ethnic consciousness for many comes too late to rescue more than fragments of a buried past. The melting pot succeeded in obliterating much of the immigrant culture, but the end product has not been a new culture shared by all; rather, it is one from which many ethnics still feel themselves excluded.

The story of where white ethnics are in American society and where they and other Americans are going is an important one. Unfortunately, Novak's frenzied labors toward that end are unsatisfying. Confusion arises near the outset. There is no homo americanus. "We do not, in fact, have a culture at all ... at least not a highly developed one, whose symbols, images, and ideas all of us work out of and constantly mine afresh." Yet he immediately and repeatedly thereafter refers to the "superculture" of a hazily defined group of WASPs who have been trying to judge the PIGS (Polish, Italians, Greeks, and Slavs) by, and force them into, a cultural mold which they find unpleasant and ill-fitting. The WASP, purveyor of a dominant culture, the existence of which Novak denies and then acknowledges, emerges as the chief villain in his analysis, responsible for an alienating technology, and the dissolution of family, neighborhood, and local community, entities most prominent in the lives of blacks and ethnics.

At times his points are well made, and his ideas stimulating. He sees the growth of technology, and a language of program, function, machine, and input as dehumanizing. His solution sounds familiar to us in the period of Schumacher's vogue, but no less valid: "We need a politics of smallness. Think small. It is a time for smallness and quiet ways." Industry must be decentralized. He dreams of industry that conceives of itself as "subject to children and other living things." Shades of the counterculture!

Services must be returned to the neighborhood level. "The neighborhood would put many potentials and yearnings for satisfaction to great use if it reclaimed many of the functions now grabbed up -- and made fantastically expensive -- by professionals." He refers especially to schools and hospitals, whose large scale and bureaucratization, and failure to deliver promised benefits, are regrettably familiar to city dwellers, especially the poor and lower middle class.

Another intriguing point of Novak's is the importance of ethnicity in shaping behavior. "People are ineffably ethnic in their values and actions.... When a person thinks, more than one generation's passions and images think in him." The role of characteristic, learned, ethnic traits in affecting individual and group perceptions of each other must surely be a far more important part of American life than we imagine, or have been able to evaluate.

The validity of some of Novak's points are hard to argue. But he vitiates their effectiveness by his careless approach. WASPs and their dominant, yet nonexistent, culture are poorly defined. Presumably, Novak's unmeltable ethnics are the PIGS, excluding Irish Catholics, Jews, Germans, and Scandinavians. Yet at times he lumps PIGS, Jews, and Irish Catholics together if this strengthens his arguments. At other times he separates them because of their dissimilarities. His treatment of the family, once such a source of strength for white ethnics, but now said to be under assault by the ideas of the intellectuals, is unconvincing. He trots out anecdotes about ethnic family life which suggest he is relying more on stereotypes than on evidence.

Most upsetting is his failure to deal with economic and class realities. He dreams of decentralization of industry, the revitalization of community, and an alliance of blacks and white ethnics. Nowhere are the mechanisms for such changes discussed, or even hinted, unless it is through ethnic consciousness. Early in the book he writes: "During the past decade, an upsurge of morale has transformed the black community. It is one of the most stirring stories in our nation's history. The faces of blacks as one watches them on the streets are purposive, resolute, often radiant." Six years later, on a walk through neighborhoods on the south side of Chicago, I failed to discover the resolute and purposeful looks on black faces, let alone the radiance. Pride alone often withers in poverty. What are the goals of Novak's alliance -- what or whom will blacks and ethnics ally against: the Sun Belt technocrats? Northeastern WASP elites? Corporations?

My extreme exasperation with this book is hard for me to understand. It contains much of value. In the end, I think it is Novak's self-righteousness -- the very quality for which he berates the WASPs -- glaring through each chapter which makes the virtues of the book difficult to appreciate. There is something to offend nearly everyone: WASPs, blacks, Irish, Jews, and Germans. The book, rather than achieving its goal of promoting better understanding and the growth of communities of interest, risks further polarization as it enflames the overheated passions of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Mike Albert

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Ian M. Matley, *The Geography of International Tourism* (Washington, DC: Association of American Geographers, 1976). 40 pp. \$2.50.

H. Robinson, *A Geography of Tourism* (London: MacDonald and Evans, 1976). 476 pp. \$4.25.

Reviewed by Robert Britton

The appearance of a pair of geographical works on tourism is most welcome. The discipline has for too long dismissed the study of leisure activities as trivial or unscholarly, or has ignored its importance. Accordingly, with some notable exceptions, works on tourism and kindred topics have tended to be dreary, excessively descriptive, incompletely researched, or lacking a critical perspective. Both works are unfortunately guilty of the latter two.

AAG resource papers vary widely in quality and depth of presentation. It is admittedly difficult to discuss the whole of international tourism--presently the second largest item in world trade, with an annual value of some \$40 billion--in forty pages, but Matley appears little interested in an even-handed attempt. This attitude is not surprising, since much previous American research also exhibits a superficial, Panglossian tone. Thus, before any discussion of costs and benefits of tourism in underdeveloped countries, Matley can declare that "a further expansion of tourism in these countries is desirable" (p. 1). The most brazen and disturbing aspect of the study is the almost complete omission of any discussion of the economic, social, and cultural maleffects of tourism. His treatment of critical books (such as John Bryden's *Tourism and Development* or Louis Turner and John Ash's *The Golden Hordes*) tames their strident objections to tourism-as-usual. This is classic academic lobotomization. Nor did Matley seek out the few dissenting works by geographers. Economic benefits are trumpeted as loudly as by the "experts" in the metropolitan tourism industry, development organizations, or the elite in places where tourism happens. There is little mention of negative economic impact--leakage of revenues to buy imported inputs, foreign ownership and other forms of dependence, structural inflation, competition for land and manpower--and virtually nothing on social and cultural impact: tourism-induced migration, prostitution, beach alienation, bastardization of arts, and many others.

Robinson's book fares only somewhat better. Like Matley, he discusses tourism in traditional geographic terms: how big is it, where does it happen, how many arrive, why does it grow. The chapter on economic and social significance touches on a very few negative impacts but ignores substantive issues. Bryden, Turner and Ash, and others are missing from the bibliography. The book is one-half thematic and half a regional survey of tourism. There are several chapters that deal with planning problems but heavy reliance on the British experience diminishes their applicability.

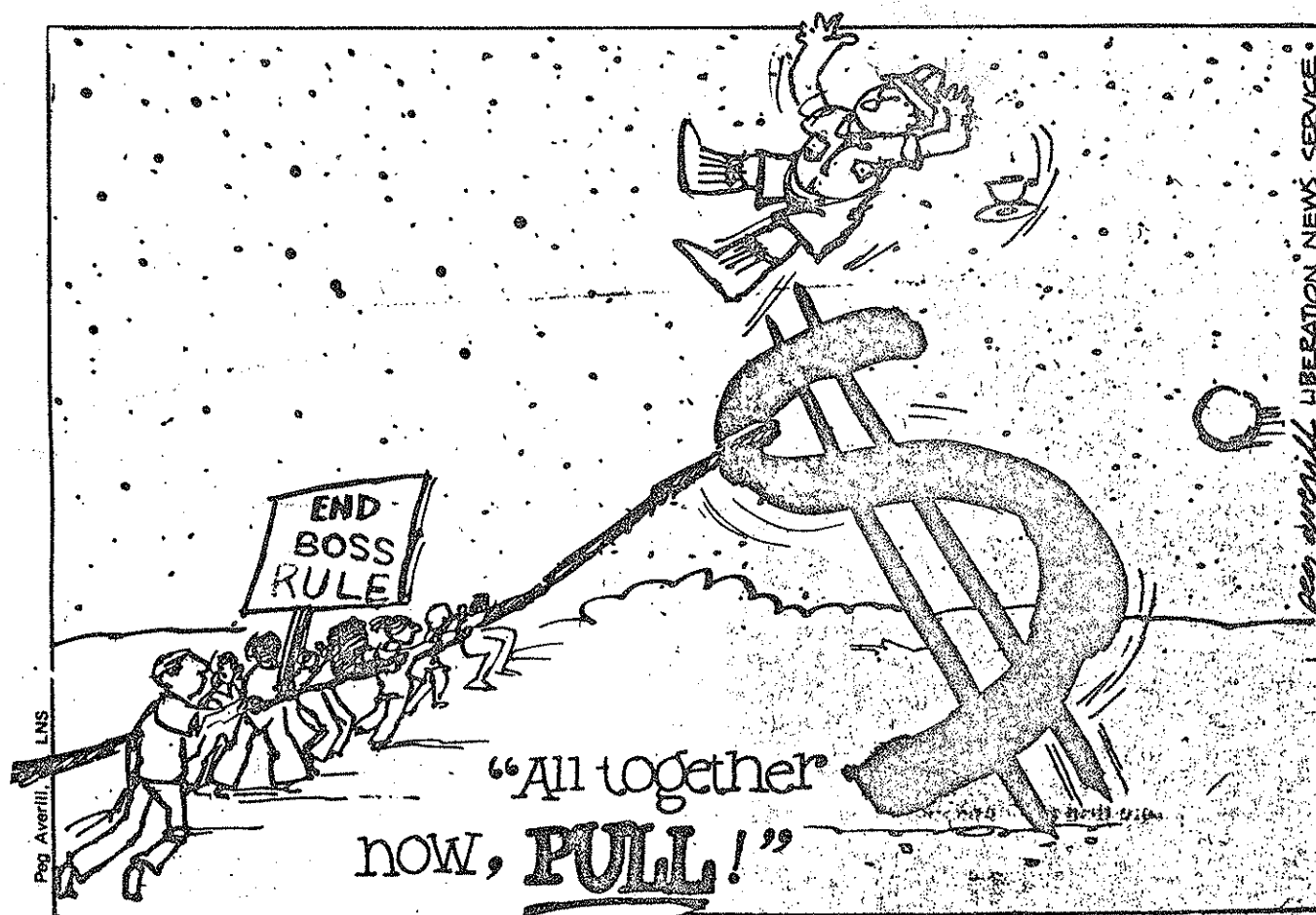
Neither piece considers the philosophical underpinnings of contemporary

tourism; the wisdom of the existing system is not challenged. Never mind that tourism is one of the most potent homogenizing forces in the modern world (bringing forms like Holiday Inns, McDonalds, and "international" cuisine); bearer of perverse modernization, that much of leisure is as alienating and meaningless as work, or that the travel experience--once a legitimate means of non-traditional geographical learning--is becoming debased by an increasingly manipulative industry.

Both works devote space to the need for applied geography such as theirs--to prepare students for real-world roles--and the authors are evidently delighted to be part of the effort to deliver the industry more shuffling, obedient servants wearing "Have a Nice Day" buttons.

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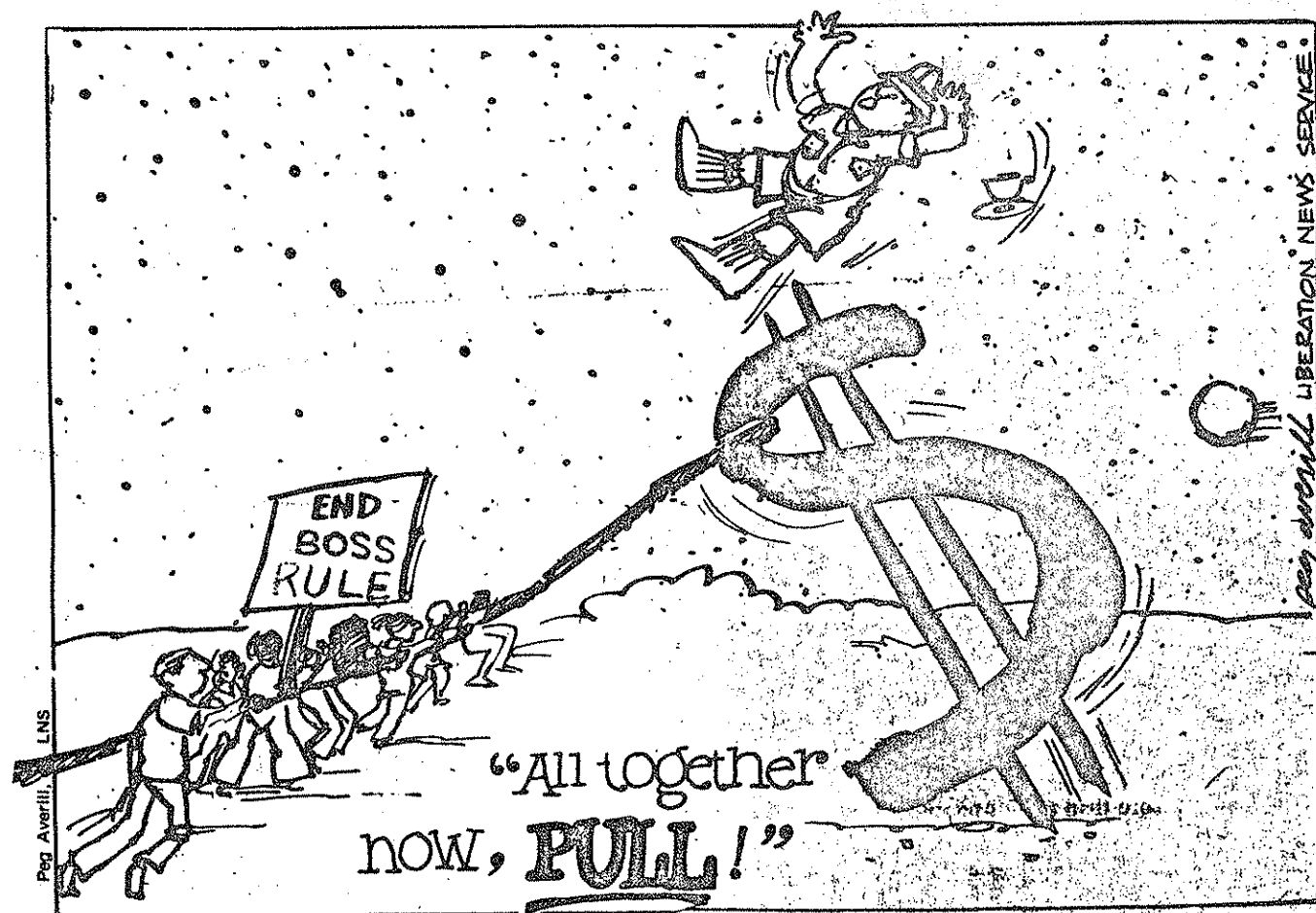


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REVIEW: T.A. Broadbent: Planning and Profit in the Urban Economy (London: Methuen: 1977)

Starting from an analysis of the role of government in a mixed economy, this book is an attempt to describe the structure of urban planning in the British context, and to explain its impotence and failings.

Broadbent starts with the position that Britain is the most advanced of capitalist economies, with a higher proportion of the national labor force absorbed directly into the capitalist economy, earning wages or salaries, than is the case anywhere else. Since there are no non-capitalist branches of production for capital to expand into, growth is only possible by increasing productivity. This leads to intense competition between industrialists as they attempt to reduce production costs. These trends are used to explain the rise of oligopolies in production and finance, which in turn account for the high level of urbanisation and the decline of the inner city. Turning to the role of the state in this system, Broadbent seems to accept Mattick's argument (from Marx and Keynes: London: Merlin: 1975) that state intervention in a mixed economy is only possible up to a point. Increased intervention cuts into the profits of private industry, and sooner or later the state will be forced to take over private production, or reduce its level of intervention. This critical point is seen as the dividing line between a mixed economy and a 'socialist' (or state capitalist) one.

His further analysis develops from this position, so it would have been nice to see a statement about what the role of government ought to be in a mixed economy. This would have provided a basis for normative judgements about the role of planning. However, any such value judgements are avoided. Rather, he argues that what the state does is facilitate industrial (capitalist) expansion by taking on some of the costs of production, and of reproduction of labor power (following O'Connor's The Fiscal Crisis and the State: New York: 1973). He seems to accept this, at least implicitly, as a valid role for government in a mixed economy, since no alternatives are propounded.

In fact he explicitly disagrees with one school of thought (which he terms the 'ultra radicals', i.e. Marxists/anarchists) that is proposing an alternative. He sees their argument, that the state should be dismantled because it oppresses the people, as "nihilistic". However, there seems to be a mis-interpretation here. It is not necessary to view the state as some participant in a conspiracy of the "ruling classes" in order for it to be oppressive, as Broadbent seems to think. Instead, if one accepts the Marxist argument that capitalism is oppressive because it exacerbates inequalities in society, then all the state has to do to be oppressive itself is to help private industry and thus extend the domain of capitalism. Even if one of the state's roles in helping the market is to alleviate such inequities in the short run, there is good reason to regard this as a de facto oppressive strategy in the long run. Thus in rejecting the argument that the state should be dismantled, Broadbent must either think that radicals believe in the conspiracy theory, which is frequently untrue and certainly unnecessary, or he must believe that capitalism can be made beneficial to all. But the latter position is inconsistent with his arguments elsewhere that inequities are endemic in Britain's mixed economy. Reading between the lines, it seems that his real reason for rejecting the "ultra-radicals" is because they are not advocating any policies that can be used to change things by working within the current system.

Applying his analysis to the role of the state and its planners in the city, Broadbent argues that local government is severely circumscribed for three reasons. First, the city is part of a highly integrated economy, and many of the events determining its future are a result of decisions made in corporate headquarters elsewhere. Local government cannot control this and therefore has limited influence over the local economy. Second, it has only limited powers to raise its own revenue and thus finance local intervention. Third, a national policy that restricts intervention from actually taking over the production process (because of Mattick's hypothesis?) reduces local government to a role of secondary importance relative to the market. On the other hand, he suggests that direct local intervention in urban production may be more feasible than it would be at the national level, since it may well not affect the national profitability of private industry.

As regards current planning practice, Broadbent is severely critical of it for reflecting current trends, rather than attempting radical change, and thus maintaining the status quo. In the weakest part of the book (chapter 5) he tries to relate this failing to the types of (neoclassical) economic theories relied on by planners for a justification of their actions. He does not provide a creditable alternative to the neoclassical paradigm (once again rejecting the Marxist approach) despite its obvious weaknesses, and thus does little to reduce planners' dependence on it.

In analysing the failure of planning to be positive, and the inevitability of this given the structure of a mixed economy and Mattick's hypothesis, he again seems caught in a contradiction. State intervention/planning in a market economy cannot go beyond a certain level without taking over production and distribution, and below this level it is a tool facilitating capitalist production together with minimal redistribution. However, he explicitly rejects Marxist/anarchist attempts to replace this system with one based, not on the destruction of the state to leave the battlefield to capitalists vs workers as Broadbent seems to think, but rather to a collectively organised society where society is the people. Then control by any elite; aristocratic, capitalist or technocratic is unnecessary and impossible. Presumably he would regard this as a dream world and thus not a constructive criticism. He does consider state control as one solution to the passive and status quo nature of planning but seems a little uncomfortable with espousing this as a viable alternative. He is happier recommending changes that will strengthen planning within the current mixed economy, such as land nationalisation. However, if Mattick is right such approaches might make planners more powerful, but they could not change the fact that the market will be the dominant force in society with government as its servant. Quantitative change will not give rise to qualitative change.

By thus rejecting radical alternatives, Broadbent is left with lower level recommendations that implicitly retain the current balance of forces in society. He is, then, guilty of the same support of a status quo that he criticises planners so severely for. Once again this reflects his unfortunate reluctance to make any value judgements or normative statements about the way that society and government should be structured. Instead he relies on describing what 'is' which then often becomes what 'ought to be'. Overall, his analysis of how the current state of society and its planners has arisen at the national and local level is plausible, and is a refreshing change from conventional approaches. This analysis may be applied to any Western economy. However, his argument collapses at any attempt to provide a real alternative. Perhaps this is what is meant on the book jacket by "a radical but constructive argument".

Eric Sheppard

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RADICAL AMERICA, Vol. 11, #6 and Vol. 12, #1 (November 1977 - February 1978).

Alternative Education Project, Inc., 60 Union Square, Somerville, Massachusetts 02143. \$10 per year. LINDA GORDON and ALLEN HUNTER, "Sex, Family and the New Right: anti-feminism as a political force." This is an attempt to analyze the nature of the New Right's offensive and why the left has been unable to adequately respond to that offensive. The authors consider the economism of the left today to blame and that 'socialists ought to develop programs and organizations that address the dissolution of patriarchy, and the left will also have to make sex, family and women's liberation among our primary issues.' JIM O'BRIEN, "American Leninism in the 1970s". This article outlines the history of the development of the major Leninist organizations in the 1970s and assesses the successes and failures of these organizations along two lines: their concrete work in the workplace and their attempts at building a vanguard revolutionary party. SUZANNE COWAN, "The Unhappy Adventures of 'Alice' in Blunderland: Counter-culture, Revolt and Repression in the Heart of Italy's 'Red Belt'." Cowan uses a 'free radio station' and its role in the March 1977 student uprising in Bologna to criticize the Italian Communist Party and to document that criticism. DAVID HUNT, "Remembering the Tet Offensive." Hunt documents the National Liberation Front's employment of a socialist military strategy that was far different and superior to the capital-intensive strategy employed by the U.S. CARL BOGGS, "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control." Boggs analyzes three examples of 'pre-figurative communism': the council or socialist movement in Russia (1905-1921), the federation of councils in Germany (1918), and the factory council movement in Italy (1918-1920). 'Prefigurative communism', as Boggs uses the term, refers to political traditions which attempt to embody within their own organization some of the social relations which a socialist revolution could bring about. This article emphasizes that Leninism is not the only revolutionary tradition: 'prefigurative communism' is an important alternative tradition.

Mickey Lauria

AMERICAN ECONOMIC REVIEW, Vol. 67.

This bastion of conventional economics surprisingly contains the occasional article of interest. In the belief that U.S.G. members do not wish to wade through this journal themselves, brief summaries of four relevant articles appearing last year are included here. D. LAIBMAN, "Towards a Marxian Model of Economic Growth." A mathematical model of growth based on capitalists behaving in a Marxian way derives a falling rate of profit, rising rate of exploitation, and a slowing in the growth rate of output and capital stock. D. J. POIRIER, "Econometric Methodology in Radical Economics." Argues that the bourgeois normative implications underlying many econometric models should not deter radical economists from using the techniques to bolster their often superficial empirical analysis. Bayesian methods, allowing explicit a priori inclusion of value statements, ought to be of particular use. B. W. FOGEL and S. L. ENGERMAN, "Explaining the Relative Efficiency of Slave Agriculture in the Antebellum South." Comparing Northern and Southern agricultural output (what ever happened to profit?) they find slaves worked 72% more intensely and had shorter hours of work only because of this. Even with their longer breaks their "pay" per unit of production was 33% less. The concluding paragraph of this article is quite amazing. D. LAIBMAN and E. J. NELL, "Reswitching, Wicksell Effects, and the Neoclassical Production Function." (Only understandable if you have a good background in bourgeois capital theory.) A wholesale attack on the neoclassical conception of production, claiming that it is only feasible under unrealistic conditions. They argue it should be replaced by post-Keynesian and Marxian conceptions.

Eric Sheppard

## FORMATION OF U.S.G. IN THE BRITISH ISLES

Minutes of Hull Meetings - January 1978

During the annual Institute of British Geographers conference in Hull, two evenings discussions were organised to ascertain whether or not a Union of Socialist Geographers should be established for the British Isles (apologies for the dubious geographical title). The discussions were attended by approximately 45 - 50 people and it was the majority decision at the end of those meetings that a U.S.G. should be established. The following is a report on the discussion which led to that decision.

The meeting was chaired, on the first evening, by Phil O'Keefe (Clark) who informed those present that the meeting had been arranged by local socialist geographers plus members of the North American U.S.G.. He asked those present to consider whether or not a structure comparable to that of the U.S.G. in North America would be a useful tool for promoting socialist geography. A brief history of the U.S.G. was then presented, outlining its structure, the role of individuals and locals, the benefits of collective work and finally the nature and function of the U.S.G. Newsletter. It was the feeling of those present from Canada and the United States that the Union structure had been useful and had worked well to date.

This was followed by a report from Dick Peet (Clark) on the present condition of Antipode. Dick reported that at a recent editorial meeting a decision was taken to establish an editorial board for the journal as soon as possible. He also reported that each edition now prints 2,000 copies, 800 of which are on subscription. The meeting was informed that the journal would include more socialist and Marxist material in the future although liberal editions would continue to be promoted. Dick also discussed the relationship between Antipode and the U.S.G., arguing that while the latter promoted and supported the journal, it nonetheless maintained a separate identity.

After these brief introductory comments the meeting was opened for discussion from the floor on the possibilities of a U.S.G. in the British Isles (sic!).

Initial discussion centred on the question as to what benefit the U.S.G. structure might offer which the Social Geography study group (a sub-group of the I.B.G. concerned with broad issues affecting society in all its aspects) could not. There was a fear that to establish a U.S.G. would divert limited resources from one group to the other, thereby dissipating the total effect. The argument was made that many socialist geographers were already committed outside the formal academy and that such people could not afford extra time to establish a union. Another argument against the forming of a union was that it would alter the focus of geography by directing it towards politics and more specifically socialist politics.

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In reply to the above comments it was pointed out that the U.S.G. did not exist to direct geographers' attention away from non-academic activities but rather to provide a focus for socialist academic activity. It was felt that the Social Geography study group could not do this because, 1. it was open (and rightly so) to people of all persuasions and therefore could not easily pursue outright socialist activity, and 2. it was a subgroup of the I.B.G. and therefore, not independent. As far as introducing socialist politics into geography this was seen as a progressive act since bourgeois politics and ideology had a complete monopoly of this field to date.

Arguments were also presented that an umbrella organisation, the Conference of Socialist Economists, already existed for socialist social scientists and that to establish another organisation would only serve to duplicate work. In reply it was argued that the C.S.E. was primarily concerned with general questions of political economy and had no specific concern for those within the geographic discipline. A U.S.G. could both organise within the discipline and act as a bridge to the C.S.E.. It was argued that both organisations would be mutually supportive. Other arguments presented in favour of a union were that it could promote internationalism and comradeship, the usefulness of the Union in aiding isolated individuals and in developing collective activity and in defending comrades in struggle. The union could also be useful in breaking down artificial boundaries between disciplines and above all it could aid in the development of a systematic and sustained analysis of, and opposition to, capitalism.

At the end of the evening's discussion a straw vote was taken to determine whether or not a union should be established. The feeling of the meeting was that it should.

The second evening's discussion was concerned primarily with questions of organisation although there was some initial discussion on whether a structure was, in fact, a necessity. An outline and discussion of the structure of the North American union was presented although it was stressed that such a structure might not be applicable in Europe due to the different political and economic structures existing there. Debate centred on whether or not, the "locals" structure would be applicable at either the national or regional level. Although there was no definite agreement (decision was left over to the U.S.G. 1st AGM at the I.B.G. 1979 Meeting in Manchester) it was accepted that where more than one or two individuals existed, some loose structure would automatically evolve.

As an interim measure it was decided to form an organising committee to smooth communications over the next year, to organise a full U.S.G. meeting in Manchester at the 1979 I.B.G. meeting and to distribute the North American U.S.G. Newsletter for the first year. It was stressed that this committee was only a caretaker one and that a formal structure could not be adopted until 1979.

To this end a volunteer committee was established. Martin Brennan (Winchester) agreed to act as correspondence secretary with Ian Cook (Liverpool) as finance secretary. Other members of the committee are Damaris Rose (Sussex), Tommy McLaughlin (Northern Ireland), Chris Gibson and Tom Marion (Lancaster) and Colm Regan (Dublin). The committee is to compile a mailing list (names to Ian Cook please!), circulate the Newsletter, collect subscriptions (staff £2, students £1, unemployed and marginalised 50p) and promote the U.S.G. meeting for Manchester.

Many issues remained unresolved at the end of the meetings although it was agreed that tremendous progress had been made. The most pressing problems yet to be resolved are those of the relationship between the U.S.G. in North America and that in Europe, the question of the Newsletter (should there be two editions?) and what kind of structure should the Union have. These are all important questions and ones worthy of serious debate, debate to which the committee invites contributions. The committee would also welcome the names (and subscriptions!) of those interested or potentially interested. The Union can only function through collective support AND ACTIVITY and therefore we urge you to

#### SUPPORT YOUR UNION

More information from  
and correspondence to

Martin Brennan  
King Alfred's College  
Winchester

Names and subscriptions to

Ian Cook  
Department of Social Studies  
Liverpool Polytechnic  
Walton House  
Tithebarn St.  
Liverpool

Since the Hull meetings I have received a few contributions to the issues raised above. It is my intention to compile a contribution to the next issue of the Newsletter (Vol. 3, #4) on this topic. All those interested should write to me,

Colm Regan  
25 Kinahan St.  
North Circular Road  
Dublin 7  
Ireland

My thanks to the other committee members for help in preparing these minutes (Colm Regan).