

Radical Philosophy Group

Contemporary British philosophy is at a dead end. Its academic practitioners have all but abandoned the attempt to understand the world, let alone to change it. They have made philosophy into a narrow and specialised academic subject of little relevance or interest to anyone outside the small circle of Professional Philosophers.

Many students and teachers are now dissatisfied with this state of affairs, but so far they have been isolated. The result has been that serious philosophical work outside the conventional sphere has been minimal.

The Radical Philosophy Group has been set up to challenge this situation, by people within philosophy departments and in other fields of work. We aim to question the institutional divisions which have so impoverished philosophy: for example, the divisions between academic departments which have cut philosophers off from the important philosophical work already being done by psychologists, sociologists and others; the division between students and teachers which has divorced academic philosophy from the radical activity and ideas of students; and, above all, the divisions which have isolated the universities and other educational institutions from the wider society, thereby narrowing the horizons of philosophical concern.

As well as exposing the poverty of so much that now passes for philosophy, we shall aim to understand its causes. We need to ask whether its barrenness is the inevitable consequence of its linguistic and analytic methods as opposed to, for example, their application to trivial 'problems'. We shall examine the historical and institutional roots of recent British philosophy and investigate its ideological role within the wider culture.

But we do not want to become exclusively preoccupied with the inadequacies of this type of philosophy. Our aim is to encourage and to develop positive alternatives. For this there are other traditions which may inform our work (e.g. phenomenology and existentialism, Hegelian thought and Marxism). However, the Group will not attempt to lay down a philosophical line. Our main aim is to free ourselves from the restricting institutions and orthodoxies of the academic world, and thereby to encourage important philosophical work to develop: Let a Hundred Flowers Blossom!

A C T I V I T I E S

The initial activities of the Group will be:

- (1) Publication of a journal: RADICAL PHILOSOPHY
- (2) Regular meetings to be arranged in as many different places as possible. Local groups are being formed in London, Glasgow, Oxford and elsewhere.
- (3) We also hope to organize Conferences and other activities at a national level.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE CONTACT:

Sean Sayers, Keynes College, The University, Canterbury, Kent.

LOCAL GROUPS

- London: Jerry Cohen, 26 Twisden Road, London N.W.5. (01-485 1322)
Oxford: Jonathan Ree, Balliol College, Oxford.
Glasgow: Scott Meikle, Department of Moral Philosophy, University of Glasgow, Glasgow W.2. Scotland.