

REVIEWS:

Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century*. Foreword by Paul Sweezy. New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1974. xiii plus 465 pages.

One of the paradoxes of North American Marxism is that its generally impoverished history has yielded a body of literature—perhaps even a ‘school’—which is equal to any, and is read and studied throughout the world: the writings associated with *Monthly Review*. In part this is no mystery. Paul Baran was European-born and educated, and the conduit for Paul Sweezy’s Marxism was Schumpeter. In any case, Sweezy’s *The Theory of Capitalist Development*, Baran’s *The Political Economy of Growth*, and their *Monopoly Capital*, to name only the major works, have constituted a series of texts which have introduced a generation to a serious and nondogmatic Marxism. Harry Braverman’s *Labor and Monopoly Capital* is an able and articulate addition to this ‘school.’

Sweezy is, in fact, a bit too cavalier in slipping *Labor and Monopoly Capital* into the *Monthly Review* corpus. In a forward to the book, he deems it as simply making good the neglect of the labor process in *Monopoly Capital*; as such it was anticipated and is theoretically derivative. Sweezy states, “In terms of theory, as he [Braverman] would be the first to say, there is very little that is new in this book” (xi). Whether Braverman would be the first or last to say this can be left aside; in any case he would be wrong. There is much more here than a rounding out of *Monopoly Capital* or—to follow the subtitle—a documentation of the degradation of the labor process.

Braverman’s object is to restore the critique of the capitalist mode of production. In recent decades this critique has suffered eclipse—including *Monopoly Capital*. The theoretical task signals a political orientation that requires comment, especially insofar as it affects the structure and atmosphere of the book. In brief, between *Monopoly Capital* (published in 1966) and *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, there is not only a theoretical but a political shift. *Monopoly Capital* can loosely be categorized as a third world-new left perspective. The de-emphasis or omission of labor in *Monopoly Capital* was not simply the tabling of a vital matter, but was loyal to the analysis of the book. “The answer of traditional Marxian orthodoxy—that the industrial proletariat must eventually rise in revolution against its capitalist oppressors—no longer carries conviction. Industrial workers are a diminishing minority of the American working class and their organized cores in the basic industries have to a large extent been integrated into the system of consumers and ideologically conditioned members of the society.”¹ So Baran and Sweezy in 1966 in a statement exuding new leftism.

Braverman’s book is less the filling out of this perspective, than its refutation. In nearly direct response to the statement of Baran and Sweezy, Braverman writes “It has now become a commonplace to assert that Marxism was adequate only for the definition of the ‘industrial proletariat’ and that with the relative shrinkage of that proletariat in size and social weight, Marxism, at least in this respect, has become ‘outmoded’ ” (13). Braverman directly opposes this commonplace; he seeks to demonstrate the viability of Marx’s concepts and, accordingly, the existence and expansion of the proletariat.

The contrasting theoretical axes of *Monopoly Capital* and *Labor and Monopoly Capital* express a contrasting politics; and these politics, in turn, follow the development of the left. The interest in culture, consciousness, students and blacks of the

1. P.A. Baran, P.M. Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1968), p. 363.

1960s has given ground to class analysis and class organizing; or student, black power and third world politics have made way for the working class and party building. The new left spawned traditional Marxism. Braverman's return to labor within Marxism parallels and participates in the recent history of the left. All of this lends an air of orthodoxy to *Labor and Monopoly Capital* which *Monopoly Capital* did not or could not obtain. As if to confirm this orthodoxy Braverman states that he specifically is not concerned with class consciousness. "No attempt will be made to deal with the modern working class on the level of its consciousness, organization or activities. This is a book about the working class as a class *in itself*, not as a class *for itself*" (26-27).

It is not fortuitous, finally, that Braverman parts from Baran and Sweezy in their most 'revisionist' concept—their concept of surplus. Baran and Sweezy sought to redefine surplus value into a critical and moral concept, or at least, add another dimension to a political economic concept. To this end, the social purpose of commodities became relevant. Surplus to Baran and Sweezy was not measured simply by surplus value extracted; this measurement does not suffice once the entire commodity is—in a different sense—surplus or irrational and wasteful, e.g., military commodities. Braverman returns to the traditional meaning of surplus, openly differing with Baran and Sweezy. "The surplus we seek . . . is somewhat different from the surplus Baran and Sweezy sought to trace . . . The fact that labor is used in the making of useless or harmful products does not for the moment concern us" (255).

The book, then, like the left today, smacks of orthodoxy and doctrine, a return—or a retreat—to a traditional Marxism. Undoubtedly this is how *Labor and Monopoly Capital* is being received by many parts of the left. Yet this reading would be a misreading, even if it is the one that Braverman prefers or implies. Rather, *Labor and Monopoly Capital* explodes its own limits and concepts; its orthodoxy is a promise or a threat, but not a reality. The very marrow of the book violates the static concepts of 'class in itself' and 'class for itself,' which Braverman himself defends. Braverman shows not explicitly, but implicitly how these two categories can no longer be cleanly severed. He undermines a technological and retrograde Marxism. The book is no simple return or retreat to orthodoxy; it is a chunk of critical Marxism.

The cutting edge of the book slices through mystifications about the division of labor in capitalism, which Marxists themselves have often accepted and even promoted. A venerable Marxist tradition has been more than delighted at the progress and efficiency of capitalist manufacturing. In keeping with this, the usual Marxist critique has tended to skirt the actual labor process and divisions in favor of questions about exploitation, safety, labor intensity, and so on. These latter categories are derived from the imperatives of surplus value. The divisions of labor themselves are treated as a technical relation. Or, the oppressiveness of capitalism is traced to the context of the division of labor, not to the divisions themselves. The schema assumed in this traditional critique is the use and abuse of a technical apparatus. Capitalism misuses its technology; the socialist society will inherit lock, stock and barrel this technological structure, and once stripped of the compulsion of surplus value, it will usher in a new society.

The great value of Braverman's book is in its refutation of this schema, and its inspiration, a technological Marxism. Braverman examines the extent to which the division of labor itself is capitalist, and not simply its utilization. He uncovers the ingression of capitalism into the very mechanics of the labor process. The specifically capitalist form of the division of labor disassociates knowledge and activity; the intention is not to produce more efficiently, but to subordinate and mesmerize the

laborer. The technical apparatus is shot through with layers of capitalism. Domination does not begin just outside the technical apparatus—in its abuse—but in its existence. The separation of intelligence and activity, in particular, is not a technical requirement of modern production; it is an element of the domination of labor. Management strips intelligence from muscle and co-ops it up in the office so as to better dominate both—labor and intelligence.

Braverman's argument hits at the underbelly of positivist Marxism; he demystifies the labor process. Consciousness has been systematically excised from the labor process; this both partially explains the passivity of a working class and debunks the positivist dream that a socialist society simply inherits the achievements of the capitalist order. The clean and sharp separation of substructure and superstructure, forces and means of production, social relations and technology is put into question; these are inextricably intertwined. Socialism is not simply electricity plus soviet power. Technology itself incarnates bourgeois ideology, and to this degree, it must be retooled.

To be sure, this is an interpretation of Braverman, a drawing-out of his argument. In tune with the orthodoxy of the book, Braverman is quite reserved about the political implications of his analysis. He does not say that a positivist Marxism is under scrutiny; or that his analysis of the suppression of intelligence in the labor process undercuts the concepts of class 'in itself' and 'for itself.' Only on the last pages of the book does the orthodox container spring a small leak, and it is not by accident that this does not happen in the text proper. In a long footnote Braverman criticizes the notion of workers' control and participation. His objection is not the usual one, that such a program ignores state power, and so on, but that it is conservative in its acceptance of the existing labor process and divisions. "The demands for 'worker's participation' and 'worker's control' . . . far fall short of the Marxist vision. The conception of a democracy in the workplace based simply upon the imposition of formal structure of parliamentarism . . . upon the existing organization of production is delusory. Without the return of the requisite technical knowledge to the mass of workers and reshaping of the organization of labor . . . balloting within factories and offices does not alter the fact that the workers remain as dependent as before upon 'experts' . . . Thus genuine worker's control has its prerequisite the demystifying of technology and the reorganization of the mode of production" (445). This note illuminates the subversiveness of Braverman's project for traditional Marxism.

As with so much of critical Marxism, Braverman's contribution is not simply an addition to Marx but a rediscovery and restoration. A (re)reading of Marx shows that the formation of the division of labor was as central to him as its misuse by capitalism. Marx on occasion very carefully bisects the labor process into a rational form of cooperative labor and a capitalist form of domination. "All combined labor on a large scale requires, more or less, a directing authority, in order to secure the harmonious working of the individual activities. . . . A single violin player is his own conductor; an orchestra requires a separate one." The rational form of divisions of authority and labor slides into a capitalist one, directed at extracting surplus value. "The control exercised by the capitalist is not only a special function, due to the nature of the social labor process, and peculiar to that process, but it is, at the same time, a function of the exploitation of a social labor-process." "The control of the capitalist is in substance two-fold by reason of the two-fold nature of the process of production itself. . . ." ² The

2. K. Marx, *Capital I* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1961), p. 330-31.

composite nature of the labor process, a welding together of rational and capitalist forms of domination, reflects its dual function of producing use and surplus value.

Recently there has been the beginnings of a literature documenting that the labor process has been an amalgam of technical efficiency and capitalist domination.³ Of course to a tradition of labor historians, including Marx, this is hardly news. For example, Norman Ware's *The Industrial Worker* (1924) has chapters "The degradation of the worker," "The degradation of the operative" that parallel Braverman.⁴ In fact, however, it is enormously difficult and not always urgent to sort out the unfreedom incorporated in the labor process from that which is imposed from without. Yet the tendency has always been to exempt the labor process itself, as a technical advance, from the indictment of capitalism. The source of the evil was located externally to the division of labor. It was assumed that socialism would inherit intact the labor process while revamping relations outside of it.

This tendency was abetted by what started as a positivist note in Marx and ended as the song and dance of reformism. This note was the positive, if not enthusiastic, appreciation for the achievements of bourgeois society—its productivity, technology, inventiveness, etc.⁵ One aspect of this expressed itself in the translation of Marxism into social planning. This program preserved the economic and productive apparatus as a unit while altering the legal and commercial relations. Textual support for this translation could be found in Marx, but it missed the substance.

Braverman, in fact, discusses—though for a different purpose—one of the very quotations that lent itself to the planning interpretation. This is where Marx stated that the division of labor within the workshop and within society differed in kind; the former was rational, and the latter anarchistic. Subsequently this notion was attractive to reformers because it implied that the irrationality of capitalism was restricted to the market place and found its limits at the factory gate; it meant that the cure was state planning. Furthermore, this notion was in accord with a common sense that could confirm the anarchy of the market but was mute before the (apparent) rationality of production within the factory. Such a program and analysis capitulated to the mystique of technology; it reduced revolution to sacking the bosses and rationalizing relations between factories, while leaving sacrosanct the divisions and authority within the workshop.

In the critique of capitalist technology and division of labor Braverman converges with a major effort of critical theory: the demystification of capitalist science and technology. Of course exactly here begins one of the central debates: what are the limits and parameters to this critique? Does the critique encompass the structure of technology and rationality or simply its use and abuse? Within critical theory Marcuse and Habermas have generally represented two poles.⁶ Braverman, as well as the history of

3. For example, A. Gorz, "The Tyranny of the Factory," *Telos*, 16 (Summer, 1973); A. Gorz, "Technical Intelligence and the Capitalist Division of Labor," *Telos*, 12 (Summer, 1972); S.A. Marglin, "What Do Bosses Do?" *URPE*, VI:2 (Summer, 1974); K. Stone, "The Origins of the Job Structures in the Stee. Industry," in *Root and Branch* (Fawcett, 1975); M. Davis, "The Stop Watch and the Wooden Shoe," *Radical America*, IX:1 (Jan.-Feb., 1975).

4. N. Ware, *The Industrial Worker* (1924) (New York, 1974), Chapter VI and Chapter VII.

5. Braverman, p. 72ff. Cf. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (N.Y.: International Publishers, 1963), p. 135ff.

6. For one chapter in this debate, see R. D'Amico's review of W. Leiss's *The Domination of Nature*, *Telos*, 15 (Spring, 1973) and the response, W. Leiss, "Ideology and Science," *Social Studies of Science*, V:2 (May, 1975).

Taylorism and management, would seem to lend support to Marcuse; the very technology embodies an ideology designed to subordinate and atomize. Of course, such a position is rife with difficulties; where and how a social dynamic enters the natural sciences and technology is not a matter for general theorizing. It is probably a different story for each science. In any case the difficulties involved are no reason to mystify science. The retreat from the critique of science opens the way for the humbug and scientism of Althusser and technological Marxism.⁷

Though his most forceful and important contribution, the critique of capitalist specialization and rationality hardly exhausts Braverman's book. Two other topics deserving some discussion are his analysis of the structure of the working class and its homogenization. In both these subjects, Braverman's approach, writing and analysis are fresh and spirited. Braverman is a pleasure to read. Yet here the orthodoxy exacts a heavier toll than in his critique of the division of labor; it suppresses or hides the heresy of the material that Braverman is presenting. Braverman too hastily slips the material into traditional Marxist categories; this he does deftly and finely—and not without reason, but all the same too rapidly. Attention is finally diverted from rethinking these categories to acclaiming their soundness. This is no 'either or' situation, but insofar as Braverman only accentuates the adequacy of the concepts, and not simultaneously their frailty, he helps prop up an orthodoxy he is otherwise undermining.

A pivotal chapter, "The Structure of the Working Class," interprets the composition of the working class in terms of Marx's general law of accumulation and its impact on the laboring and reserve populations. Marx's own discussion in *Capital* is rich and suggestive; it is in no way monochromatic. Marx's analysis follows, however, a basic contour: surplus laborers and population are a function of changes in the organic composition of capital. Within a fluctuating cycle, the central movement of the organic composition is increasing; or, relatively less labor and variable capital are needed by modern industry, and proportionately, more labor is being "released" to various forms of un- and under-employment. As Braverman cites Marx: "The whole form of the movement of modern industry depends, therefore, upon the constant transformation of a part of the laboring population into unemployed or half-employed hands."⁸

Given the cycles of capitalism, the release of labor takes numerous expressions. As Marx states, "The relative surplus population exists in every possible form."⁹ Much of Braverman's discussion of the present working class and surplus population seems to be a loyal and accurate application of Marx; but his major argument seems to violate the essential drift of Marx's concepts. In brief, Braverman presents the facts of the bifurcation of the working class—not his word—as an expression of the laws of accumulation and the reserve armies. Industries suitable for mechanization have released labor to those that are not, essentially service and sales industries; the former are capital intensive, the latter are labor intensive. Braverman stresses several related facts. The working class of the mechanized sector is relatively highly paid and static in numbers, while the sales service sector is rapidly growing and poorly paid—and this has been true for several decades.

Braverman is not alone in registering this phenomenon of the polarization of the working class into two sectors; but there is less precedent for interpreting it in terms of reserve armies and surplus population. Again Braverman has done this subtly; but

7. See the provocative essay by S. and H. Rose, "The Radicalization of Science," *The Socialist Register 1972* (London: Merlin Press, 1972).

8. Marx, *Capital*, p. 633.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 640.

Marx's discussion for all its openness does not anticipate a situation in which there is a bifurcation of the working class as a long term trend, or as Braverman puts it, a "polarization of income among job holders." (393) This seems to transgress the limits of the various forms of reserve armies and suggest other kinds of processes at work, e.g. state capitalism, imperialism, etc. O'Connor, for example, states there are "two major and distinct labor markets." One of these is characterized by big corporations, high wages, unionization and the other by low wages, low unionization, and expanding work force.¹⁰

Marx's analysis of accumulation and reserve armies does not anticipate this development of two distinct labor forces. The 'release' of labor that formed the reserve armies was not a release for an entire new set of expanding industries. Of course there are other concepts which could be adopted here, e.g. the 'aristocracy' of the working class. The power and attractiveness of Braverman's analysis is that he does not seek to reinvigorate this jaded concept; but the weakness is that he does not confront what at least the aristocracy of labor concept was responding to—a segmented labor force.¹¹

At issue here are the related concepts of class and class consciousness. It would be unfair to burden this book with the task of working out a theory of class; and it would be unjust to burden it with a task specifically excluded, the question of class consciousness. To cite Braverman again: "No attempt will be made to deal with modern working class on the level of its consciousness, organization or activities. This is a book about the working class as a class *in itself*, not as a class *for itself*" (26-27). Yet the theoretical costs of such a procedure should not be ignored; at a certain point it affects the internal coherence of either concept. The clean separation of class and class consciousness has been the approach of Marxists and non-Marxists for many decades. It has yielded a mass of data about the objective situation of the working class, on the one hand, and about its subjective perceptions on the other.¹² The relationship between the two has remained obscure.

Simply for the sake of handling the amount of material, it may be necessary to separate out class and class consciousness. Yet the question mark that stands between class and class consciousness may not be removed if the two are explored separately. To establish there is an increasing and homogeneous working class, as Braverman does, and put off for another day the analysis of working class activity and consciousness paralyzes dialectic thought. The failure of the class 'for itself' as well as the success, must also have objective roots. To chalk up to secondary and minor factors the eclipse of class consciousness, after a certain period of time, becomes non-Marxist and ideological. Investigations into the 'objective' class situation which ignore this problem turn, willy-nilly, abstract and subjective.

There is no need to mince words here; within the boundaries of class 'in itself' Braverman shines; he is a model of clarity and lucidity. He debunks with ease and sureness the standard claim about a new, educated, skilled working or middle class. The 'new' working class, especially clerical workers, are deskilled, dehumanized, poorly paid, routinized, and so on. "The problem of the so-called employee or white-collar workers. . . has thus been unambiguously clarified by the polarization of office employment and the growth at one pole of an immense mass of *wage-workers*."

10. J. O'Connor, *The Fiscal Crisis of the State* (NY:St. Martin's, 1973), p. 26-7.

11. For a historical defense of the aristocracy of labor concept see E. Hobsbawm, "The Labor Aristocracy in 19th Century Britain," in his *Laboring Men* (Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1967).

12. For a survey of the concept of class in American sociology, see C.H. Page, *Class and American Sociology* (NY:Schocken Books, 1969) especially the "Introduction Thirty Years Later."

The apparent trend to a large non-proletarian 'middle class' has resolved itself into the creation of a large proletariat in a new form" (255).

Traditionally Marxist contributions to this problem have followed two directions. A 'right' position has perceived a 'new' middle class or the embourgeoisement of the working class. Conversely, a 'left' position has argued for the proletarianization of the middle class. Bernstein and Kautsky were already debating the point. Kautsky adopted the position that was genial to the orthodox till the present. "As much as they cling to bourgeois appearances, the time will come for every one of the proletarianized strata of the white collar groups at which they discover their proletarian heart."¹³

Systematic and detailed studies of the 'new' middle or working class—salaried, government, clerical workers—date from the early years of this century, such as Lederer's *Die Privatangestellten* (1912). Braverman infers, somewhat unfairly, that Lederer was an exponent of the 'new' middle class theory. Rather Lederer situated the salaried worker *between* classes, and partaking of both; its politics were conservative and bourgeois while its living standards and conditions were approaching the proletariat's. And Lederer left open the ultimate development of the salaried worker. "In which direction the dominant tendencies of the salaried point—whether towards the working class movement, or more towards the conservative direction of middle class politics—will depend above all on the further development of the conditions in which the salaried work."¹⁴ Later Lederer, as many others, would emphasize the convergence of this sector and the proletariat. "The salaried are now a part of the proletariat," he stated in 1928.¹⁵ Corey's *The Crisis of the Middle Class* (1935) declared that the 'new' middle class and salaried workers are "economically and functionally a part of the working class: a 'new' proletariat."¹⁶

Braverman's and the left Marxist analysis are appealing; and they are fully in accord with the renewed effort to establish that the proletariat is alive and well and expanding. This is relatively easily shown. If one adopts a criteria such as self-employment,¹⁷ it is not difficult to demonstrate that their number—read: bourgeoisie—are diminishing, and that those who work for others—read: proletariat—are increasing. The problem with this kind of class analysis, which is not Braverman's, is that it barely captures the essence of late capitalism. The 'critique' that emerges from this analysis—capitalism as fewer and fewer rich parasitically living off an expanding and increasingly impoverished proletariat—"is not so much inaccurate—it is not—as it is utterly fragmentary and hardly abreast of the system as a whole."¹⁸

In brief, the concept of class, like any other, is not immune to reification. Severed from the social relations, it is drained of blood and content. Max Adler reminds that the concept of class "is not a mere concept of classification, but one of relations. That

13. Cited in P. Gay, *The Dilemma of Democratic Socialism* (NY: Collier Books, 1962), p. 212.

14. E. Lederer, *Die Privatangestellten in der modernen Wirtschaftsentwicklung* (1912) (NY: Arno Press, 1975), p. 293.

15. E. Lederer, "Die Umschichtung des Proletariats," in A. Thomas, et al, *Angestellte und Arbeiter* (Berlin: Freier Volksverlag, 1928), p. 53.

16. L. Corey, *The Crisis of the Middle Class* (NY: Corici-Freide, 1935), p. 259. For a survey of some of the earlier theories of the salaried worker, see H. Speier, "The Salaried Employee in Modern Society," (1934) reprinted in his *Social Order and the Risks of War* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1969).

17. See A. Szymanski, "Trends in the American Class Structure," *Socialist Revolution*, 10 (July-August, 1972).

18. P. Breines, "From Guru to Spectre," in *Critical Interruptions*, ed. P. Breines (NY: Herder & Herder, 1970), p. 17.

is, the concept of class does not signify a mere external ordering or grouping, similar to the concept of class in zoology or botany. . . . Rather class is a socialized phenomenon, and as such always a link in a larger context."¹⁹

The almost insurmountable difficulty is to remain loyal to an objective concept of class without sacrificing its social, subjective, and historical configurations. One does not have to be an ideologue to observe that in monopoly capital the appearance of class and class consciousness has changed. "In the market economy the untruth of the class concept was latent; under monopoly, it has become as visible as its truth—the survival of classes—has become invisible."²⁰

To insist on the existence of classes without confronting the fragility of class consciousness is un-Marxist; this very fragility must have objective grounds. Class and class consciousness are internally connected; and for this to become more than blind faith, studies cannot simply decompartmentalize them. Of late, increasing numbers of studies have stressed the conditions outside of the labor process in determining class consciousness.²¹ These conditions must be considered in rethinking the concept of class.²² It should be recalled that such attention would hardly be new to Marxism, as Engels' *The Condition of the Working Class in 1844* already included much about city life, living conditions, and so on.²³

Braverman at one point, in passing, makes a statement that illuminates the entire problem. "The variety of determinate forms of labor may affect the consciousness, cohesiveness, or economic and political activity of the working class, but they do not affect its existence as a class" (410). Here Braverman has confessed more than he might grant; for the project of proving the homogenization of proletarian labor, the unity of the working class, is here thrown into question. If the determinate forms of labor decisively affect proletarian consciousness and activity, then the meaning of an objective concept of class which ignores these forms is deprived of substance. The class here erodes into a classifying concept lacking political significance. The logic of the investigation, then, has preserved or even revitalized the class concept but only at the cost of killing it; it no longer penetrates the social phenomenon. Again Braverman is clear enough that he is dealing only with class 'in itself' not 'for itself.' But again the more and longer these diverge—as Braverman is candid enough to state they do—the more problematic the study of either becomes in isolation.

None of these remarks are meant to detract from *Labor and Monopoly Capital*. No one book can do everything, and this one does much more than most. Braverman's book is an important and provocative work; it is simply written, but hardly simple. It stands squarely and honorably within a great tradition of Marxist theoretical works. Like *Monopoly Capital* it reflects the development of the left itself, the 'return' from third world politics and a critique of life under capitalism to the proletariat. And like

19. Max Adler, *Die solidarische Gesellschaft* (Wien: Europa Verlag, 1964), p. 36.

20. T.W. Adorno, "Reflexionen zur Klassentheorie," *Gesammelte Schriften*, VIII (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1972), p. 379.

21. For example, H. Kern, M. Schumann, "Zum politischen Verhaltenspotential der Arbeiterklasse," in *Gesellschaftsstrukturen*, hrsg. K. Meschkat, O. Negt (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1978); J. Goldthorpe, D. Lockwood, F. Bechhofer, J. Platt, *The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1969).

22. For an excellent discussion, see J. Alt, "Work, Culture and Crisis," *Telos*, 23 (Spring, 1975). Cf. J. Cohen, "False Promises," *Telos*, 24 (Summer, 1975) and the reply by M.E. Batiuk, P. Fleming, P. Murray in the same issue.

23. See S. Marcus, *Engels, Manchester and the Working Class* (NY: Vintage, 1975), p. 145ff.

the left today it is haunted by an orthodoxy that threatens to suppress its originality. Its greatest weakness which aids this suppression is its theoretical modesty. Braverman does not spell out his own subversiveness, most notably the full significance of the critique of the division of labor and a positivist Marxism. Unfortunately his very modesty abets his integration into an orthodoxy which in many ways he is sharply challenging. We should not let this book slip away to the doctrinaires.

Russell Jacoby

Stuart Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of the Consumer Culture*. McGraw-Hill, 1976. 261 pages.

Tibor Scitovsky, *The Joyless Economy: An Inquiry into Human Satisfaction and Consumer Dissatisfaction*. Oxford University Press, 1976. 310 pages.

Socialist orators all eventually face the hostile questioner who expects to shatter their faith by posing the following dilemma: How do you expect to find willing garbage collectors in the classless utopia? Actually there are a good many easy answers, including Fourier's (let children do it, since they like to play in the stuff anyway—or something like that). If such questioners had looked at much utopian literature from More to Morris, they might have spotted a more serious issue: how terribly *perfect* everyone is expected to be and how terribly *dull* it looks. With the best of intentions Thomas More had designed a social lobotomy for his utopian citizens, long before Zamyatin and Huxley suggested how useful modern technology could be in exorcising the prurient interests of mankind.

Socialist theory and practice have always been more at ease when dealing with the sphere of work and production than in confronting problems of "culture." Twentieth-century revolutionary regimes, faced with shattered economies and the armed might of industrial capitalism, have—for very good reasons—formulated a production ethic which mirrors Ben Franklin's. Meanwhile, the advanced capitalist societies had reached a new stage of development in which the cultural sphere was undergoing a radical transformation. Unfortunately many socialist partisans in these societies, their thoughts fixed firmly on external models, failed to notice what was happening in their immediate surroundings. For them the ideal form of socialist man, factory-forged, awaiting the conjuncture of objective and subjective "forces," stood ready to emerge beneath the ideological trappings of bourgeois society, which were to be hosed off along with the grime of capitalist industry.

In western Marxism the work of Gramsci, Korsch, the early Reich, and the Frankfurt School challenged this outlook (presented above with some rhetorical exaggeration). The emphasis on empirical social psychology—informed by a critical perspective—in Horkheimer's research program for the Institute for Social Research was meant to provide an organized focus for studying in detail the reproduction of social life. The questionnaire prepared for *Authority and the Family*, together with the elaborate theoretical perspective which placed the empirical research in its historical context, is a fascinating example of a comprehensive approach which was disrupted by the Institute's flight from Germany. This combination of empirical and theoretical approaches was revived for *The Authoritarian Personality*, which has received a measure of respect from conventional social science.