

Science in a Free Society, by PAUL FEYERABEND. New York: Schocken, 1978. 221 pp. \$15.50 cloth.

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This volume is intended to be a companion to Feyerabend's *Against Method*. In it he continues his attack on standard (rationalist) accounts of scientific method, expands his criticism of the exalted status of science in free societies, and murderously assaults his critics. *Against Method* may become a classic. *Science in a Free Society* is mostly a postscript; it explains what was meant in its predecessor, adds some afterthoughts, and spells out some implications.

Feyerabend does not argue against method. He argues against any monolithic method. His catching phrase, "anything goes," is not meant to suggest that one may proceed without rules or standards nor is it meant to be a principle for a new methodology. Feyerabend holds that any method has its limits and may have its uses, and so the tradition of thought and practice in which some particular method is situated should not be suppressed nor should any one method be canonized. He argues that not only is there no one method in the practice of science but that successful science often requires one to violate the rules laid down by methodologists. Scientific theory building is said to have much in common with tribal myth making. Feyerabend views the unity of scientific method that emerges from standard rational reconstructions as wishful thinking, which, if taken seriously in research, would suffocate creativity. The arguments he musters against methodological dogma within science are quickly turned against the institutionalization of scientific dogma within a free society.

Feyerabend denies that science, as a tradition of thought and practice, is inherently superior to any other tradition or that it has proven itself to be so. In free societies it dominates nonscientific traditions because apostles for science have had greater access to resources and have succeeded in institutionalizing their ideology in educational systems. Because Feyerabend holds that all traditions must have equal rights in a free society, he deplores the fact that tra-

ditions supporting witchcraft, or the Biblical story of creation, or astrology (to use his examples) are not allowed to have competitive chances. Aryan physics, too? The genetics of Lysenko? Evidently.

When scientific practice affects the welfare of the lay community, Feyerabend continues, the community should be given a vote. He is willing to take this rather far. He will not acknowledge that some expertise may be inaccessible to laymen or that laymen might not be motivated to become sufficiently educated on technical matters to make intelligent decisions. Thus, he says, he would have lay committees evaluate the evidentiary status of the theory of evolution. One can even imagine a lay committee debating the merits of *E. coli*, as opposed to some other bacterium, for use in recombinant DNA research. Let it be, Feyerabend would say, even if the success rate of decisions is lowered. Feyerabend claims that no satisfactory answer has been given to the question, "What is so great about science?" Consequently, in a free society no special privileges should be afforded to its practitioners. Feyerabend is not a naive anarchist, as some have suggested. He is a naive democrat.

Feyerabend is only partially responsive, and not at all persuasive, regarding one very important issue. Some philosophers may be unable to explain what is so great about science; most diabetics would find it easy. Granted, there may be other ways to control diabetes than with scientific remedies—as Feyerabend insists, nonscientific alternatives may sometimes work as well or better than scientific procedures, and they may even supplement scientific knowledge. The issue is: How does science, in its applications, fare *proportionately* compared to its alternatives; and, accordingly, how should scarce resources be allocated to claimants representing alternative traditions? Free societies, under conditions of economic scarcity, must judge and decide how to commit resources for the attainment of goals. They cannot afford the luxury of the philosopher to forever re-examine alternatives. If, in the belief and experience of most people in free societies, science has been generally more effective than other traditions, and Feyerabend knows that is the belief, then why should the alternatives science has supplanted be resurrected and given the

resources necessary to guarantee their equal access? In brief, who is going to pay for Feyerabend's touching egalitarianism, and why should they when they doubt its utility?

The Radical Will: Randolph Bourne, Selected Writings, 1911-1918, edited by OLAF HANSEN. New York: Urizen Books, 1978. 548 pp. \$17.50 cloth. \$7.95 paper.

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Randolph Bourne was a remarkable member of a progressive generation that matured immediately prior to World War I. His wide-ranging writings reflect the diversity of this generation's progressive interests, which were literary and political in nature, and expressed through cultural criticism. Bourne was a disciple of Dewey, lay sociologist, and prolific essayist—in little more than three years he wrote 90 articles for a new journal of liberal purpose, *The New Republic*. A central theme of Bourne's essays is his ambition to transform cultural life from a privileged pastime of the leisure class into an instrument of popular enlightenment.

Bourne is a thinker whose talent reveals itself in the flash of insight. His thought defies systemization. The force of his observations on education, the intellectuals and politics, militarism, and social reform derives not only from indignation tempered by insight, but from the eloquence of his prose. Bourne is, perhaps, an American version of Walter Benjamin. Like Benjamin, Bourne endured personal tragedy, and his writings were fated to be periodically "discovered" years after his untimely death (at the age of 32).

Bourne's thought represents an indigenous tradition of American socialism, a tradition bearing little trace of European Marxism. His outlook is shaped by idealism (Royce) and pragmatism (Dewey). This outlook is evident in his analysis and defense of the educational reforms that had been implemented in the Gary, Indiana, school system. Bourne combined Dewey's notion of progressive education with the larger problem of democratizing culture, arguing that a public school "cannot make

the rarefied and strained products at the top the test of its effectiveness" (p. 204).

The problem of the intellectuals and social reform is squarely confronted by Bourne, who unabashedly supports a notion of intellectual radicalism. "The only way by which middle-class radicalism can serve [the cause of reform] is by being fiercely and concentratedly intellectual" (p. 299). "Cultural radicalism" is, for Bourne, the cutting edge of reform. But Bourne was well aware of the propensity of intellectuals to press high ideals into the service of the prevailing powers. He carefully reconsidered the prospects for intellectual radicalism when progressive thinkers, such as those associated with *The New Republic*, justified American entry into World War I as an exalted venture serving the most selfless and idealistic of aims: democracy and internationalism.

Bourne's writings on other subjects, e.g., ethnic pluralism, are also to be commended for their relevance to current concerns and their undogmatic admission of complexity. This is a valuable collection of writings, both as a piece of our cultural history and as a series of penetrating observations on the intellectuals and politics.

Dawn and Decline, Notes, 1926-1931 and 1950-1969, by MAX HORKHEIMER. New York: Seabury Press, 1978. 252 pp. \$12.95 cloth.

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If Wittgenstein (*Zettel*) wrote Gibran's parables with a raised political consciousness, the result would be Horkheimer's *Dawn and Decline*. This collection of several hundred reflective fragments provides a window of sorts into the nuances of critical theory as developed by a leading theorist of the Frankfurt School.

Critical theory, best understood as a form of human *activity* rather than a body of *thought*, has society itself as analytic and practical object. It implies freedom of thought and action to explore and develop, without constraint, alternative meanings. Unlike "traditional" theories (e.g., positivist and neo-Kantian thought), which contain no theoretically-derived imperatives that necessarily lead to specific forms of con-