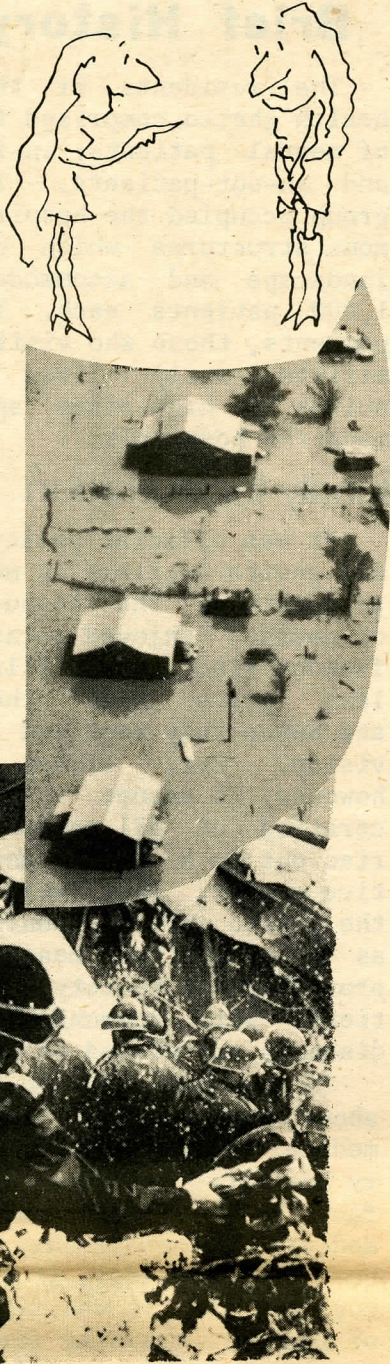


READER IN RAD PSYCH

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Radical Psychology, edited by Phil Brown. New York, Harper Colophon Books, 1973, 548 p. \$2.95

Phil Brown, who taught courses in radical and Marxist psychology at Alternate U. in New York and formed an important part of the collective who put out the tabloid Radical Therapist (now Rough Times), is editor of a bulging new paperback entitled Radical Psychology.

Much of this lengthy collection is heavy going, especially the Marxist Foundation to psychology which is based on the relationship of social classes to certain behaviour, certain problems and institutions. (The working class, for instance, represents the largest group of people committed to mental hospitals.)

If you skim through selections on Marxism versus Freudianism; the dependency of colonized peoples and their attendant mental ills; alienated labor; and the sexual struggle of youth, you'll get the feeling of the book.

What Phil Brown is saying (over and over) is that traditional psychology is a "class rip-off" and that radical psychology is "simply the discovery of our day-to-day life and the transformation of it," not dependent on research and writing of the past, but on practical application. Radical psychology, he states, is not academia, but a force of revolution.

In this context he presents the views of those recognized writers who have contributed towards a new psychological approach.

You'll find selections here from Thomas Szasz, Erving Goffman and Thomas Scheff who question the "medical model" of mental illness. R.D. Laing, David Cooper, Aaron Esterson and Mary Barnes of the Antipsychiatry Movement of the sixties are also included. Laing and Cooper set up counterinstitutions like Kingsley Hall and Villa 21. Laing showed how social roles could be destructive, even at the family level. Later these men questioned that mental illness existed at all. Laing asked, "Who was crazier, the patient who claimed to have an atom bomb inside himself or the government leader who actually had the capacity to drop the bomb?"

Cooper advocated the "death of the family," as a destructive institution.

In an introductory discussion of sex roles, Phil Brown asserts that "it has become increasingly clear, that the psychological and related professions have been probably the most vicious attackers of women and gays," and that "sexuality and sex roles are of great importance in terms of society as a whole."

His argument is backed up in articles by Nancy Henley (who also helps produce Rough Times), Carl Wittman on Gay Liberation, Phil Brown and the Radicalesbians.

Four personal accounts by Nadine Miller and others contribute to Brown's attack on psychotherapy which he describes as "the area of psychology in which people have most frequently been oppressed."

"Therapy," he says, "offers adjustment (to the accepted values of straight society) rather than liberation"... "Places like Esalen, Janov's primal scream Institute and many others are financially available only to people with a lot of money." In these settings "the person doesn't change his/her life but simply lives in another partial life for short periods of time."

The sixth section of the book entitled Fighting Back sets forth a Mental Patients Bill of Rights and a look at radical psychiatry in Italy in light of the progressive work of Dr. Franco Basaglia in a large custodial state institution on the Yugoslavian border.



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Basaglia sees therapy as "an encounter between equals, and the less equal the power distribution, the less possibility there is of a therapeutic encounter."

Brown concludes on an optimistic note that feelings of apathy and defeat can be overcome if we consider (in the words of French existentialist Albert Camus) "that strength of heart, intelligence and courage are enough to stop fate and sometimes reverse it."

- Jackie Hooper

You Can't Help But Admire A Man Of Principle

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Martha Mitchell, describing in detail the erosion of her marriage, said Sunday night her husband, John, left her four days ago on advice of his lawyers.

She denied reports in Newsweek magazine that she and her husband, President Richard Nixon's former attorney-general and campaign-manager, engaged in "violent outbursts" after previous telephone calls to the news media and that he had tried to send her to hospital for psychiatric care

Newsweek quoted an "intimate friend" of the family as reporting John saying, "You'd think the media would understand and leave Martha alone.

It's obvious to anyone who knows her that she's a sick woman"

"Friends say Mitchell feels his wife needs medical help," Newsweek said, "but add that he cannot bring himself to the necessary legal steps to have her committed."

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