

# EDITORIAL

There is a style of editorial which sets out to demonstrate that the contents being introduced are both necessary and timely, and that it is 'no accident' that they are all together here and now. *Radical Philosophy* however, is a more contingent affair. Its purpose is to provide a forum for philosophical work and theoretical debate on the left. This issue contains a selection of the best material that has been sent in to us for publication. It is not so much necessary as representative, reflecting some major topics of current discussion.

Particularly welcome are the feminist contributions, which form a substantial part of this issue. In recent years, when feminism has been one of the main influences on the left, we have been aware that it has been under-represented in the journal. For this issue, however, a number of good feminist pieces were submitted. We discussed the possibility of putting together another 'special issue' on feminism (as with *Radical Philosophy* 34). However, we decided not to separate out the feminist work in this fashion, but instead to try to ensure that it has a more integral and constant place in the journal. For we felt it important to make clear that feminism is not an isolated, specialised or limited field of interest, but rather one which interacts with and contributes across the whole spectrum of philosophy.

This point is well illustrated by the articles in this issue. Susan Parson's 'Feminism and the Logic of Morality' provides a wide-ranging and well reasoned discussion of recent feminist theory, relating it to current work in moral philosophy. Jean Grimshaw's 'Philosophy and Aggression' originated as a paper at the *Radical Philosophy* conference last December. In it she challenges the view that there is a distinctive feminist form of morality or a distinctive feminist style in philosophy. Nevertheless, she argues, women share a number of concerns which have important implications both for the content of philosophy and for the way in which it is expressed. We expect to carry further articles on questions raised by feminism in coming issues.

Topics of epistemology and method are also prominent in this issue. Both Johansson and Bernstein deal with these areas; but from different points of view, reflecting the two main intellectual currents which presently influence British philosophy, and which are brought together in *Radical Philosophy*. Johansson writes from within the analytical tradition. In 'Beyond Objectivism and Relativism', he gives a vigorous and forthright defence of a 'fallibilist' version of realism. This is developed primarily in the context of the work of Rorty, Popper and Kuhn; but it shares much in common with the realist position developed in previous issues by Bhaskar, Benton, Collier and others, and usefully continues that work.

By contrast, Bernstein's 'The Politics of Fulfilment and Transfiguration' is written in the context of contemporary German philosophy. It takes the form of an extended critical study of a recent work on Habermas and critical theory. However, Bernstein uses

this as a framework within which to raise broad questions about the nature of critical theory; and his article augments and extends the discussion of this topic which has been a feature of recent issues. Both the analytical and the continental philosophical traditions contribute importantly to radical thought, and *Radical Philosophy* remains one of the few places in which both can find expression, meet and enter into dialogue.

Michael Rustin has been a distinctive and original voice within the British left, and we are pleased to be publishing his work. 'Place and Time in Socialist Theory' is a characteristically thought-provoking piece which emphasises the importance of specific historical and local roots for social consciousness and identity, and argues that the left should pay greater attention to these themes – themes more usually associated with conservative than with socialist thought. As with Jean Grimshaw's piece this paper was also originally presented at the recent *Radical Philosophy* conference, where it stimulated a lively discussion.

Hopefully all these themes will be continued in future issues. In order for that to happen, however, we depend upon people sending in material for publication – articles, of course, but also comments and criticisms, letters and news items, jokes, graphics and anything else which will help to make the magazine more lively and enjoyable. We commission few pieces, and only very rarely do we republish material from elsewhere. We really are dependent on readers for the great bulk of our material. In an effort to gain a wider audience for *Radical Philosophy* and to encourage authors to send us their work, we are taking steps to be indexed and abstracted in some of the standard reference sources. *Radical Philosophy* is now included in the *British Humanities Index* and in *The Philosophers' Index*, which will also include abstracts of main articles. We hope to be able to announce our inclusion in further reference sources in due course.

Sean Sayers

