

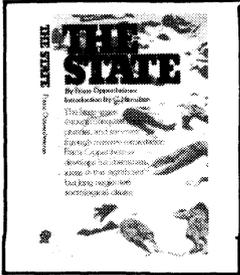
# Libertarian Review

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## THE STATE

By Franz Oppenheimer



For centuries, the State and its intellectual apologists have propagated the myth that the State is a voluntary instrument of society. Essential to that myth is the idea that the State arose on a voluntary, or at least on a natural, basis, arising organically out of the needs of society. For if the State arose naturally or voluntarily, then it probably follows that it fulfilled and still fulfills a vital societal function. Two major variants of the myth of State origins are the idea that the State arose out of a "social contract" entered into by all members of society. Throwing over theories of how the State

should have arisen for a realistic historical inquiry of how it *actually* arose, the late-nineteenth century Austrian sociologist Ludwig Gumplowicz pointed out that, in fact, states were born of conquest and coercion of one ethnic or "racial" group over another.

Inspired by Gumplowicz' researches, the German sociologist Franz Oppenheimer systemized his mentor's work in his brief and beautifully written book *The State* (1908). Oppenheimer pointed out that *all* states have arisen through conquest. His paradigmatic history of the State began with nomadic tribes conquering the non-state peasant societies. At first, the conquerors usually looted and murdered their victims and then went on to find others. After centuries, however, the conquering tribes decided to settle down among their victims; instead of killing them, they regularized and rendered the loot permanent, settling down to rule their victims on a long-range basis. The annual tribute became "taxes," and the land of the peasants was parcelled out among the warlords to become subject of annual feudal rent. In this way, a state and a ruling class emerged from previously stateless societies. Thus, Oppenheimer analyzes the State as a "social institution, forced by a victorious group of men on a defeated group, with the sole purpose of regulating the dominion of the victorious group over the vanquished, and securing itself against revolt from within and attacks from abroad. Teleologically, the dominion had no other purpose than the economic exploitation of the vanquished by the victors." Oppenheimer then goes on to show the ruling-class attitudes and ideology which emerged from the attempt of the conquerors to fasten their exploitative rule upon their subjects.

In contrast to Gumplowicz, who cynically saw nothing wrong with this tooth-and-claw process, Oppenheimer, as a libertarian, went on to a scintillating and brilliant analysis of the State as a parasitic and antisocial institution.

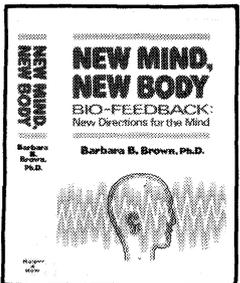
*The State* is unsurpassed in its analysis of the State as parasite and exploiter. Thus, Oppenheimer points out that there are two and only two ways by which men can acquire income and wealth: One is through production and voluntary exchange, what Oppenheimer calls "the economic means" to wealth, the means consonant with human nature and with the prosperity of mankind, the means which benefits all parties to the market and exchange process. The other means is robbery, the coercive looting and expropriation of someone else's production. This is the parasitic means, which not only violates the nature of man, but imposes a crippling burden on the victims and on production and economic growth. This path to wealth Oppenheimer called "the political means." Oppenheimer then goes on to define the State, on the basis of his historical researches, as the organization, the regularization, of the political means. It was this analysis of the essentially coercive and exploitative nature of the State that was the major inspiration for the libertarian theories of the American Albert Jay Nock.

In contrast, then, to the Marxian theories of the ruling class, which includes the capitalist as "exploiter" and ruler of the workers he hires, Oppenheimer's ruling class is whatever group has managed to conquer others, and thereby to create or to get control of the coercive apparatus of the State. Oppenheimer's history and analysis thus becomes one of the most devastating and thoroughgoing critiques of the State ever penned.

An important question for us is: how does Oppenheimer's historical analysis of the origin of the State hold up after all these decades? The answer is: very well. The analysis of the "political" vs. the "economic" means is of course timeless. As to the history of the origin of the State, the latest anthropological researches have modified, but not changed the essence of, the conquest theory. We now know, more than ever, that *no* State ever emerged out of the family or by social contract. The latest modification is that many states emerged typically, not so much out of the conquest by one tribe of an entirely different tribe, but by central villages conquering neighboring villages of the same tribe, as population grew and pressed on limited geographical space, and then imposing continuing rule and tribute over the conquered villages. Thus, we see that many states arose, not simply out of conquest of one tribe by another, but also by some villages conquering others within the same tribe. But the Oppenheimer vision of the State as always emerging from conquest and violence remains solidly intact, to strip away our last illusions about its alleged natural "beneficence." Reviewed by Murray N. Rothbard / *Political Philosophy* / LR Price \$3.95

## NEW MIND, NEW BODY

By Barbara B. Brown



If someone told you that his/her thoughts were accompanied by visual, brightly colored images, and all you ever saw when thinking was a gray field, it probably would not surprise you to learn that the two of you were fairly distinct personality types. But would it mean that your subjective worlds also differed? And if so, to what degree? And how could it be proven, measured, and communicated?

Ordinarily, a person can barely apprehend what goes on inside his own mind, much less explain it to another. He is even more in the dark when it

comes to what goes on inside his own body. Bio-feedback, the phenomenon by means of which man can learn to control his own biological and mental functioning, is beginning to show signs of changing all that, according to Barbara B. Brown:

There are many precious jewels in the storehouse of the subconscious which our consciousness rarely permits us to view, and then only fleetingly. . . the ecstasy of the daydream or the intriguing imagery just before sleep. . . or the mysterious logic of the dream. There are strong research hints that we may soon be able to recapture these moments of the other-mind, perhaps even learn to hold them in view and become well acquainted with the world within.

This is the potential of bio-feedback that Brown talks about in *New Mind, New Body*. As a physiologist, and early pioneer in bio-feedback, and currently one of the most prominent researchers in the new science, Brown probably knows as well as anyone of what she speaks, including the danger of too much hope and too much promise.

The systematic study of internal awareness is so new, she states, that "we have no real idea of just how aware we are of internal sensations, nor how aware we could be." Most of the book then, tells the human drama, the frustration, and the luck and excitement of scientific discoveries already made in bio-feedback, and the possibilities these have triggered in the imaginative mind of Barbara Brown.

The working concept of bio-feedback is simple enough. Body processes generate specific electrical waves. These can be picked up by strategically attached electrodes which feed them into a machine where they are reported by an indicator. Watching the indicator allows one to follow what goes on inside oneself. It seems that if a person can see something of himself that formerly had been unknown and involuntary, he can identify with it and in some way learn to exert control over it. In fact, it appears we are able to control any internal activity that we can monitor; with practice we can do it without the electronic sensors to guide us.

(Continued on page 2)

**Brown** (Continued from page 1)

*New Mind, New Body* covers the body systems involving the skin, muscles, heart, blood vessels, and brain waves, and describes the biological, physiological, and psychological bases of bio-feedback for each of these body systems. Brain-wave activity has received the most attention because of the "feel-good" state produced by the alpha wave and has been promoted as "instant Zen." Brown believes that the skin "talks about the mind" more than any other body system, telling us much more than just when we are lying. And through bio-feedback people can learn profound muscle relaxation fairly rapidly. She says that muscles express nearly every aspect of our physical and mental life. Living without excess muscle tension is the strongest known protection against the large family of psychosomatic disorders. And further, what the mind can cause to go wrong in the body, it can also reverse, restoring health.

Brown's answer to "how" the mind can control itself and the internal processes will surprise and delight you. Will power has lost nearly all significance in most laboratories dealing with the study of behavior, but it obviously rattles around Brown's lab like a loose bolt looking for something to do. "What else but human will causes a man to control his heartbeat when he sees it pulsing on an oscilloscope?" she asks.

She feels that the neglect of will power by the behavioral sciences has severely limited the goals and success rates of the Pavlov and Skinner operant-conditioning techniques, because it reduces the study of man to the elemental forces of physical nature shared by animals.

Only a young psychologist completely out of tune with his inner self would continue to administer electric shock to change the heart rate of a patient while his own heart is racing with the thought of returning home to a new

bride, she says. There are two fundamental assumptions here, she continues, "First, regarding his heart rate, a man is a dog; second, a man who is a subject in an experiment has no emotion, no thought, and no feeling about what is going on."

Brown points out that in Eastern cultures, yogis, Zen masters, and others have long devoted lifetimes to the art of physiological self-discipline, discovering that attention to the inner self could lead to awareness and fine control of physical and mental processes. This, in turn, produced better communion and unity with the self and the universe. In the West, the seekers of new mind states—the mind-control devotees, encounter-group enthusiasts, the drug-takers, the psychics, the meditators—have burgeoned only in recent years, causing alarm among those concerned with our social well-being. Why? Because "they are all on a journey into the interior universe, trying to burst the limits of the socially conditioned mind."

Barbara Brown is "tripping" on bio-feedback and showing a noticeable lack of concern about possible consequences to the social contract. She says "Survival tied to the group has not evolved to liberate the individual." Two things are astonishing here. One, that the idea that individuals should not be faced with choosing between society's welfare and their own should be expressed by a person whose research is supported by government funds, which Brown's is, and two, that the government would continue to support a promoter of such ideas.

But then there is a lot more to bio-feedback than learning how to generate enough brain-wave electricity to start the coffee perking without getting out of bed. What it is really all about sounds like the neatest trick of the week: having your head, heart, and gut saying the same thing at the same time. Reviewed by Ida Walters / Psychology / LR Price \$9.95

## ESSAYS ON SEX EQUALITY

By John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill

John and Harriet Mill anticipate many of the significant arguments of contemporary feminism, but in an elegant, carefully reasoned and logical style that is rarely matched in modern rhetoric. As would be expected from John Stuart Mill, the arguments are libertarian, emphasizing again and again that legal and cultural equality between the sexes is called for if one truly believes in the concept of individual liberty.

On the question of *psychological* equality, John Mill anticipates contemporary social psychology's emphasis on cultural determinants of sex roles. Mill dismisses the nineteenth century assumption (still common today!) that "natural differences" between men and women necessitate male dominance. He argues quite sensibly that "no one can know the nature of the sexes as long as they have only been seen in their present relation to each other—what women are is what we have required them to be."

One of the most conceptually useful arguments in the essay "The Subjection of Women" is Mill's analysis of terms of power. He sees marriage in its usual form as a way for those who are powerless to exercise power. Because of this, male dominance of women is the form most likely to outlast all other forms of unjust authority. To those who would object to his comparison between authoritarian government and male domination—objectors seeing the former as "bad" and the latter as "natural"—Mill makes a point which is of all too much general relevance: "But was there ever any domination which did not appear natural to those who possessed it?"

Mill's analysis of the undesirable psychological consequences of male subjection of women is a particularly interesting libertarian argument. Male domina-

tion, he says, prevents the development of a sense of social justice and genuine love of freedom. "Sentiments of freedom" cannot exist in those "whose nearest and dearest intimacies are with those of whom he is absolute master." Proper moral training in the family requires equality between the sexes.

The other essays in this collection, which includes all of the writings of the Mills' on the subject, are "Early Essays on Marriage and Divorce" by John and Harriet and "The Enfranchisement of Women" by Harriet. While these two are a little more dated in their relevance, the rigorous and logical development of the arguments is certainly of interest to those concerned with feminist issues.

The excellent introduction by Alice Rossi examines Harriet's influence on John's intellectual and emotional development and their subsequent intellectual collaboration. Theirs was apparently a perfect meeting of the minds, a long friendship and eventually marriage that truly involved practice of what they preached. Of interest to libertarians is the fact that much of Rossi's introduction is based on correspondence between Mill and Taylor from a collection owned by F. A. Hayek.

Frankly, when I first began to read "The Subjection of Women" I was skeptical. How relevant and interesting would it be today? But upon reading it, I see that its fame as a feminist classic is well-deserved. Although one of Mill's more neglected essays, it is as significant as his other libertarian works. It deserves to be a libertarian classic as well as a feminist classic. Reviewed by Sharon Presley / Libertarianism-Psychology-Political Philosophy / LR Price \$1.95

## WATERSHIP DOWN

By Richard Adams

I started *Watership Down* with a sense of extreme skepticism. I knew that it had been an astounding popular success—a number-one best-seller for almost a year—and that serious critics had given it almost unbelievably extravagant praise. Yet—I thought—a novel about rabbits? What possible depth, drama, or emotional power could there be in a story about a bunch of bunnies?

From the first page, however, I felt my absorption growing. By the fiftieth page, I was in love with the book. And when I finished the last page, I knew that this had been the most wonderful and, in some sense, the most profound novel I had read in years.

But why? The fact remained that author Richard Adams had started with material that seemed absurdly unpromising. Why—if his goal was to write a novel as exciting and moving as this one—had he chosen as his subject timid creatures that most people think of only as garden nuisances or, at best, as cuddly but rather unintelligent pets? Why not wolves, or elephants, or dolphins? And, given his material, how had Adams succeeded so well?

The answer, I think, is that, despite appearances, the material is essential to the success. *Watership Down* is a story about a profound paradox, a paradox arising from the very nature of conscious life. Every organism, against the backdrop of the whole universe, is terribly small: its lifespan is a flicker, its relative size is that of an atom. In this sense an individual life is utterly insign-

nificant. But most humans find this fact intolerably hard to accept; thus they invent gods and "higher purposes" to give them the feeling that, in some universal, permanent sense, they matter. The point of *Watership Down* is that no such higher purposes are necessary. Life is an end in itself. Conscious life matters because it is conscious life, because it offers experiences, excitements, beauties, meanings. Viewed from inside, every life—even that of a rabbit—is a thing of unutterable importance, and that is all the justification that any life ever needs.

Reading this novel, one is caught between two emotions: an aching sense of how *humble* these creatures are, how little the events of their life matter in any larger scheme of things—and a loving awareness of how much their lives *do* matter, simply *because* they are alive, and conscious, and struggling to remain alive.

*Watership Down* is a libertarian novel, both in the relatively minor sense that it gets in some effective satirical digs at the welfare state and militarism and in the far more profound sense that it is a litany to the importance of the individual life. This, I think, is the key to its strange and gigantic appeal.

At least that is my hypothesis. Read the book and see if you agree. Whether or not you do, I guarantee you won't regret the experience. Reviewed by Robert Masters / Fiction / LR Price \$2.25