

Political Megastar

CLR James' meticulous class analysis sometimes obscures the black perspective and analysis of racism which one would expect from a man of his history and experience. But his intellect, breadth of interests and sheer longevity make CLR James one of the political megastars of this century.

CLR James, His Life and Work edited by Paul Buhle Allison & Busby £5.95 pbk. offers a fascinating collection of critiques, reviews and speculations about James' life and work. The jigsaw spans his influence and involve-



ment in African, American, European and Caribbean politics, as well as his output as a fiction and sports writer.

Indeed it's as James the cricket writer that his political analysis comes across best. **Cricket Allison & Busby** £14.95 hbk. is a collection of his writings on the subject. For James, to analyse cricket is to analyse the class nature of British society and one of the symbols of colonialism. A comment made in 1957 sums it up: 'By cricket I mean not only the game but the code connected with it'. ●

Trevor Carter

Women world-wide Women in the World: an international atlas by Joni Seager and Ann Olson Pan £7.95 pbk. gives a pretty but impressionistic view of women's lives world-wide, reducing reality to maps and numbers. Some interesting correlations emerge; seclusion and early marriages occurring in countries where there is no sex tourism or beauty queen contests.

But when women's oppressions and freedoms vary so fundamentally throughout the world perhaps any attempt to quantify and compare across cultures will provoke the banal. An example: 'high status' is attributed to women in the West, while 'unknown status' is attributed to those in the USSR.

Women in the World may be useful for highlighting some less complex points, but it is a disappointing depiction of women's many varied lives. ●

Haleh Afshar

Body Packaging

The Conran of cosmetics, Anita Roddick, founder of The Body Shop has in 10 years created one of the most successful franchise businesses of the 80s. In **The Body Shop** by G Mackay and A Corke Pan, Anita Roddick's story is told. Or as she puts it: 'Natural' products, no animal testing, no advertising, and a refusal to 'create false needs by playing on women's fears of lost beauty'.

But part of the Body Shop's success is that it plays on our distrust of the glossy sophistication of cosmetic companies, while relying on their advertising to create demand for its beauty products.

Yet environmentally concerned and successful is a great thing to be. The charm of the 'natural' is enhanced by attractive packaging, constant product development, sophisticated merchandising and creative PR – producing a dynamic retail concept with enormous appeal.

As a book **The Body Shop** won't tell you *how* it's been done – or about the 'hard' details of franchising and finance. Glossy descriptions of the business's development make it clear that Anita Roddick is a zealous entrepreneur with a superb feel for hype. It's no wonder that a book about her reads like an over-long press release. ●

Catherine Luyster

Vines and Wines

Just as winemakers are tempted to increase the alcohol level of their product by adding sugar (or worse), so wine writers too often fall into the trap of a language larded with pretentious and inappropriate adjectives. Not so, I'm glad to say, **Jancis Robinson**, best known for her path-breaking tv series on wine.

Vines, Grapes and Wines Mitchell Beazley £16.95 hbk. is, astonishingly, the first comprehensive English-language survey of the most important material element in the make-up of a particular wine – the grape variety or varieties used by the grower. Beside this, the 'south-facing slope', 'vigneron's craft' or 'flinty soil' so beloved of traditional wine writers is of minor importance.

Informatively but with a light touch, Jancis Robinson takes us through both the famous varieties which make up the great wines of France and also hundreds of lesser, but equally interesting, grape types used elsewhere in France, other European countries and wherever else wine is made and enjoyed, from China to Sussex. ●

Stephen Hayward

Child Sexploitation

Judith Ennew's The Sexual Exploitation of Children, Polity Press £5.95 pbk and **Alice Miller's 'Thou Shalt Not Be Aware': society's betrayal of the child** Pluto £5.95 pbk both tackle the increasingly publicised subject of child sexual abuse. Psychoanalyst Alice Miller rightly challenges some of the basic tenets of orthodox psycho-analytic theory (such as the drive and Oedipus theories) which have dominated in a very negative way our perception and handling of sexual abuse this century. The book promises a radical reappraisal of approaches to child sexuality. But Miller's deep roots in those same psycho-analytic modes of thought, and her esoteric meandering into, among others, Kafka's psyche makes for heavy reading.

As a result some valid points, such as our reluctance to face up to the abused child's rage, lose their impact. Sadly 'Thou Shalt Not Be Aware' is destined to gather dust on the shelves of academics and psychiatrists.

Judith Ennew's The Sexual Exploitation of Children is, in contrast, succinct and informative. She covers a wide range of child sexual abuse, including prostitution and pornography, making comprehensive use of both historical and cross-cultural material.

Stressing children's position of

powerlessness within the family, Ennew makes no apologies for the fact that her book is as much about power as sex. Her argument that child sexual abuse is an extreme manifestation of prevailing social and sexual values is credible but very uncomfortable.

Contradictory views of child sexuality exist side by side in our society; we see children as total innocents, while also possessing a strong sensuality. In fact I think it is true to say that, while children have an awareness of pleasurable body sensations, to



equate this with adult sexuality is to attempt to excuse and rationalise our exploitation of them.

The Sexual Exploitation of Children raises difficult, complex questions to which there are no easy answers. Nevertheless, answers must be urgently found both to prevent the continued abuse of children and to give children the rights they so clearly need. ●

Kath Parr



A Proud Past

John Gorman's Banner Bright: An Illustrated History of Trade Union Banners Scorpion £19.50 hbk/£9.95 pbk shows the often proud, but also poignant, face of the British labour movement

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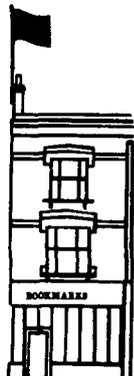
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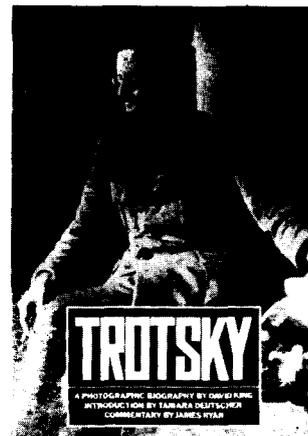
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