About Gillian Rose

(28.9.47 - 9.12.95)

On Saturday 9th December a hundred people came to Warwick for a one-day Conference on 'The Soul and the City', a title which encapsulated Gillian Rose's interests as comprehensively as any phrase could: the perplexities begin with the multiple referents of the two terms and the complexities with their linkages. In different ways these issues have been the leitmotif of her four major academic works, Hegel Contro Sociology (1981), Dialectic of Nihilism: Post Structuralism and the Law (1984), The Broken Middle (1992) and Judaism and Modernity (1993). However, what was remarkable about this event is that it was organised by two of her doctoral students with help from many more. Gillian never lived for her students. Instead she wanted to enliven, embolden and excite them - to adventure with integrity and to keep faith with reason. "We are going to study Hegel", she would announce to her new graduates, "this book (the Phenomenology) is very difficult" (hugging it close) "but it is going to become as familiar to you as your children. And the personal crepuscule of her office (light switches inoperative under layers of sellotape) the inner ignition sparked. Gillian revelled in her pyrotechnic art. Her inaugural lecture married erudition and theatre: intellectual presentation demanded choreography and the taut orchestration of this one-woman show should have turned those who stood at lecterns peering down at their texts into worried people. Yet Gillian wanted to ignite not to intimidate, to light up Warwick because quite simply this was where she worked out her vocation. When she published Love's Work, written in three weeks as a reflection on her ovarian cancer, it was to fill the vacuum which was equally abhorred by her possessive doctors and promissory healers, and she chose to launch it in Warwick's Bookshop. She stood in a forest green silk shift (but already the standing was painful) and through crinkling curtains of Burne-Jones hair she read us part of her confessions which called up no contrition. As the champagne frothed onto the heavy-duty carpet tiles, Gillian had momentarily made the Bookshop central. Appropriately so. Books for her were necessity and indulgence: their acquisition was needful and extravagant, purposeful yet profligate. And Warwick is to be the beneficiary of her 8,000 volumes. Her less tangible bequest will be greater. There are three unpublished manuscripts which carry forward Love's Work into what she called her Paradiso. When the conference was over on Saturday 9th December her guest list (students, friends, colleagues) joined her family at the Walsgrave Hospital for the Baptism of one who declared herself "a Jew and a Trinitarian Christian". She died a few minutes before our arrival, having been quietly received by the Bishop of Coventry. The service of thanksgiving in Coventry Cathedral on December 15th was our doing: as a lover of life this was the one event Gillian would not and could not have choreographed herself. I hope she did not find it entirely sans brillo: it certainly was not lacking in love.

Professor Margaret Archer
Chairman, Department of Sociology

The Death of Hugh Clegg

(22.5.20 - 9.12.95)

I first met Hugh Clegg in 1964, when I applied for a research studentship at Nuffield College, Oxford. It was a slightly intimidating experience: though only in his mid-40s, he was already the guru of the study of British industrial relations, with a string of books to his name and a prominent role in public policy. Somehow I survived the test, and Hugh became my PhD supervisor. It was the start of an enduring relationship in which I learnt enormously from his compendious knowledge and tested my ideas against his sharp critical intelligence. I became the first member of staff to join him at Warwick in his new role as founding Professor of Industrial Relations, and we remained colleagues and friends throughout the rest of his career.

Throughout those years I had the benefit, not only of Hugh's immense scholarly competence but also of two qualities which marked him out from many other academics. The first was his respect for debate and difference. He had clear views, but also a commitment to the classic ideals of academic liberalism. Arguments and theories should never become a protected orthodoxy; intellectual advance required the cut-and-thrust of vigorous debate. He defended the right to disagree and, I think, particularly respected those who disputed his ideas despite his professional eminence - only so long as their disagreement had some foundation in evidence. A notorious left-wing radical such as myself would have had a hard time surviving in academic industrial relations anywhere else. Though Hugh's politics had changed considerably since his wartime period in the Communist Party, I suspect that his benign attitude to later generations of dissidents indicated that he had not altogether disavowed his rebellious past.

The second quality was his loyalty to and support for his students and junior colleagues. He shared in the pleasure of our successes, and often, I suspect, did much behind the scenes to assist in their achievement. In collaborative work, he leaned over backwards to ensure that others received their fair share, and usually far more than that, of the credit. Even more perhaps than the library shelves which his academic output filled, the affection he inspired in those fortunate to work with him will remain an enduring testimony.

Hugh built up Warwick industrial relations to an outstanding reputation for both teaching and research, throughout the world. After he retired, first to complete his monumental History of British Trade Unions, then eventually 'for real', he maintained an active interest in our success, continuing to the end as a member of the Advisory Committee of the Industrial Relations Research Unit. It was a privilege to have known him for over thirty years. The University of Warwick has lost one of the outstanding contributors to its success.

Richard Hyman
IRRU

The Death of Mary Read

The Newsletter is saddened to learn of the death of Mrs Mary Read, a clerical member of staff in the Academic Office, on 22 November 1995, after a long illness. Mary had worked at the University since 1991 and we would like to pass our condolences to her family.

The Death of Phillip Lofts

The Newsletter regrets to learn of the death of Phillip Lofts, an MBA (Distance Learning) student in his final year of study, on Sunday 19th November 1995.