

LIBERAL STILL:

NOTES ON THE POLITICAL THEORY OF C.B. MACPHERSON*

Alfonso J. Damico

I

C. B. Macpherson has defined his work as an effort to find some "common ground between Mill's and Marx's concern for individual self-development".¹ One of the more attractive features of this attempted reconciliation of liberalism and socialism is Macpherson's effort to persuade liberals in the tradition of J. S. Mill that the imperatives of their own principles make them natural allies of those who reject possessive individualism. Thus, there is a certain awkwardness in my rejection of Macpherson's overall project; one is more accustomed to radical criticism that seeks to dismiss liberalism than to effect a reconciliation. But Macpherson's statement of the terms of reconciliation collapses certain important distinctions between liberalism as a rights oriented theory and utilitarian justificatory theories. In fact, my hunch is that Macpherson's main target of criticism is Benthamite man or various utilitarian versions of liberalism, a target often aimed at by liberals as well.² It is not Macpherson's "downgrading of market assumptions and the upgrading of the equal right to self-development"³ that divides him from other liberals. Rather, it is that he too quickly moves from Locke's understanding of the individual as a bearer of rights to Benthamite man as a consumer of utilities. This is to suggest that there is another world of liberalism, a third liberal ontology that fits neither of the two accounts of the liberal ontology discussed by Macpherson. What follows, then, are a series of comments, less exegetical, perhaps, than many assessments of Macpherson's writings, but appropriate, I trust, for exploring what it means to still be a liberal some twenty years after the publication of *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*.

II

That liberalism's understanding of human nature is a central subject of Macpherson's various studies will not be news to any of his many readers. At least as early as 1954, in an article entitled "The Deceptive Task of Political Theory," he stated that the great question asked by political theory is "what state is most congruous with the nature of man?"⁴ The adequacy of a political theory, he argued, turns in large measure upon its analysis of human nature. What gives this statement added significance is the sociological twist applied to it. The

LIBERAL STILL

adequacy of a theory's ontological postulates is said to depend on something more than the postulates themselves; it depends upon how they fit the imperatives of an existing society. This sociological twist makes Macpherson especially attentive to the ways in which the particular imperatives of a given society, once translated through a theory of human nature, appear in the guise of universal principles. It also explains Macpherson's non-rancorous indictment of various liberal thinkers for their narrowness. So long as such narrowness was really a function of the limited possibilities of their society, Macpherson faults the society and not the theorist. This method of critiquing the liberal ontology received its first elaborate presentation in the prize-winning *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*.

"Tell me where you stand on possessive individualism" has almost become a new shorthand for focusing many of the issues about liberalism and its viability, testimony to the mastery with which the thesis of possessive individualism was first argued. Nevertheless, I am not going to explain where I stand on possessive individualism *per se*. Rather, I want to reconsider the critique of liberalism as possessive individualism, i.e., consigning liberal principles to the status of an ideology whose primary function is to justify capitalist exchange relationships with their attendant imbalances of power and inequalities, in light of certain themes that have become more conspicuous and prevalent in Macpherson's later writings. In such works as *Democratic Theory* and the more recent *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*, the chief target of Macpherson's criticism of early liberalism is Benthamite man: infinite appropriator, infinite desirer, and infinite consumer. In juxtaposing this conception of man to that version of the democratic ontology that understands the individual as a doer, an exerter of his capacities, Macpherson has sharpened some of the issues separating liberals and their left critics. But that sharpness has simultaneously blunted some of the issues dividing the liberal ontology of man as a bearer of rights, on the one side, from either liberal ontology of man as a consumer of utilities or as an exerciser of his capacities, on the other side.

Liberalism, I had been taught and come to believe, had its origins in those movements and currents of opinion towards the end of the seventeenth century that sought to control the powers of the state by insisting upon the primacy of the law-making or legislative activity in society. When Locke wrote that "Wherever law ends, tyranny begins," many felt that this captured the essence of liberal constitutionalism. Or, again with Locke, the demand that there be but "one rule for rich and poor, for the favourite at Court, and the countryman at plough" was seen as more of a juridical than an ontological principle, more of a political than an economic demand. Or if some conception of the individual's essential nature was being invoked, it was the most general liberal principle that it is a *prima facie* good for an individual to act on his own understanding of his wants and interests free from arbitrary interference by others. Whatever maximizing principle (e.g., of individual utilities) that might be implied was secondary to what could be termed a minimizing principle: limit the harm that rulers can do by securing the individual's natural right to liberty through a system of juridical defense.

ALFONSO DAMICO

Complementing the notion of liberalism as the rule of law was the understanding of liberalism as a rights-based theory. Postulating, as Hobbes did, that “when all is reckoned together, the difference between man and man is not so considerable, as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit to which another may not pretend, as well as he,” liberal individualism substituted contractual rights and obligations for the constraints of divine law, natural teleology, and ascriptive authority. One might worry, as did Burke, that liberal individualism undermines men’s attachment to the values resident in society as a social whole, i.e., as a gradation of ranks; or, as did Rousseau, that the individual within liberalism is a caricature of real persons. What one did not doubt, prior to Professor Macpherson, was that it was the individual — rich or poor, Court favourite or country farmer — that was the bearer of rights within liberalism. Additionally, by “taking rights seriously” liberal morality was normally distinguished from utilitarianism. Both were individualist, but one evaluated forms of government and social rules according to whether or not they maximized the satisfaction of person’s wants, the other according to the rights and duties they secured. What J. S. Mill labored to separate — liberty and utility — Macpherson has been required to put back together, so as to better develop his own radical critique.

This is not to accuse Macpherson of any sleight of hand; his own position has always been clear. Repeatedly, he has argued that the understanding of human nature is continuous from Locke to Bentham. Towards the end of *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*, he wrote that the difference between these two versions of liberal individualism is not very great: “. . . when tastes changed, as they did in the eighteenth century, the facade of natural law could be removed by Hume and Bentham without damage to the strong and well-built utilitarian structure that lay within” the theories of Hobbes and Locke.⁵ Or again, the protective model of democracy presented in a more recent work as the product of Bentham and James Mill is pictured as the possessive individualism of Hobbes and Locke with the addition of the democratic franchise.⁶

The advantages Macpherson’s overall goal of reconstructing the meaning of liberal-democracy derives from this identification of Locke’s and Bentham’s ontologies is apparent in the 1967 essay “The Maximization of Democracy.”⁷ Where others have seen three doctrines of liberal individualism — natural rights, utility, and self-development — Macpherson argues that there are two. Translated into its political equivalents, the first doctrine of man as maximizer of utilities justifies, he argues, that “extractive power” that inheres in the continuous “net transfer of powers” at the core of capitalist exchange relationships. In other words, the capitalist class, through the wage relationship, appropriates part of the power of the working class. While this imbalance of power is presented as a key result of liberal-democracy in its Utilitarian version, we are reminded that it is “firmly embedded in the liberal tradition” as developed earlier by Hobbes and Locke.⁸ The other version of liberal individualism, associated with J. S. Mill, is said to rest on a different maximizing claim, the claim to maximize “men’s human powers, that is, their potential for using and developing their uniquely human capacities”.⁹

LIBERAL STILL

There are, as many of Macpherson's admirers and critics have noted,¹⁰ serious ambiguities in the notion of an individual's self-development. But I am more concerned with how this juxtaposition of the two maximizing claims within the liberal-democratic tradition alters the ways in which the traditional political rights associated with that tradition come up for treatment. To put it differently, it is the political consequences of Macpherson's interpretative maneuver, not its internal validity, that most interests me. There are two steps to the maneuver. First, Macpherson grants that such liberties "are certainly held to have a value apart from their instrumental economic value . . . they are less often thought of as *utilities*." Thus, the first or utilitarian maximizing claim can be handled as strictly an economic claim, setting aside consideration of the place of various political liberties within this version of liberal individualism. The next step is to shift the analysis of such liberties to their role in creating the "conditions for the exertion and development of individual powers".¹¹ Two important things have happened. First, the juridical features of liberalism have now been shifted aside in favor of the critique of possessive individualism and market societies, i.e., utilitarianism as economic doctrine. Secondly, when those more political liberal values reappear in Macpherson's work they do so as instrumental values, instrumental to the second maximizing claim of self-development. In neither instance are those values understood independent of their contamination by possessive market society or, alternately, of their contribution to some more constitutive value of self-development. The final effect of this scheme is to bolster attacks upon capitalist societies. By linking liberal ontology, first, to utilitarianism and, next, to self-development, Macpherson is in a strong position from which to argue that liberalism has either never been a theory of the "rights of the individual against the state but a defense of the rights of expanding property" or that the liberties it values for the sake of the individual's exercising his human capacities requires the abolition of the right to private property. Much of this is salutary, reminding us once again, but in new and interesting ways, how the inequities arising out of a production system organized around private ownership leads to serious imbalances in individual life chances. And, surely, part of Macpherson's persuasiveness is that he employs the language of liberal-democracy — utilities, rights, self-development — to refashion the implications of that language. All of this is appealing. Yet, as Locke might have said, there are certain inconveniences attached to this scheme of interpretation.

III

Obstructing Macpherson's attempted reconstruction of the meaning of liberal-democracy is the existence of a third liberal ontology: defining persons as bearers of rights with an equal capacity for autonomy or independence. There is a usage of rights (and a companion notion of freedom) within liberalism that is neither a rationale for the activities of an emerging capitalist system (possessive individualism and/or the maximization of utilities) nor identical with some other principle of the equal right to self-development. Demonstrating that this other or third version of the liberal ontology better fits the theories of Hobbes and Locke

is not critical to my current inquiry. While I believe that to be the case, what is more important is identifying the ways in which this liberal ontology of independence differs from the two maximizing principles argued for by Macpherson as definite of the liberal tradition.

Recalling that picture of liberalism which opened this essay, there are at least two ways in which this other account of liberal individualism differs as a theory of politics from those theories, utilitarian and developmental, based upon Macpherson's two maximizing principles. First, an important effect of what might now be termed the juridical version of the liberal ontology is that individuals are understood to possess certain rights prior to and independent of any utilitarian calculation of the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The significance of the priority of right over utility was well understood by Bentham who attacked the French *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen* as "absurd and miserable nonsense".¹² Something more would seem to be involved here than just a "change in tastes." That something more is the way in which the independence of the individual comes up for treatment. Within utilitarianism the wants and interests of individuals are *collected together* such that a social rule or political decision is evaluated in terms of its effects upon the maximization of the interests of this aggregate, apart from the question of its good for any particular individual. In contrast, the liberal individualism of juridical theory pivots upon the independence of the individual; it presupposes and protects the value of individual thought and choice. And it also makes "use of the idea of moral rules, codes of conduct to be followed, on individual occasions, without consulting self-interest".¹³ This non-utilitarian strain within liberalism feeds into the notion of the free person as one who is independent, not dominated by others.

Secondly, the liberal principle of autonomy or independence is distinct from the principle of an equal right to self-development, albeit less so than the contrast between right and utility. Macpherson properly insists that the concern of such liberals as J. S. Mill for individuality ties together the ideas of freedom as independence and as self-development.¹⁴ More exactly, it might be argued that Mill does not usually make a very clear distinction between these two aspects of freedom. For Mill, the right to be free from arbitrary control by others and the good of self-development that he associates with the freedom of choosing are simply two ways of stating the same thing. What is clear, however, is that Mill would have been unwilling to use the concept of freedom as self-development to determine when individual autonomy was or was not a good thing: "That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his own will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant".¹⁵ At times, when discussing woman's suffrage, Mill went further. On a quintessentially liberal note, Mill allowed that "Men, as well as women, do not need political rights in order that they may govern, but in order that they may not be misgoverned." And, noting the argument that women would only vote as dependents, as male relatives dictated, Mill added that "It is a benefit to human beings to take off their fetters, even if they do not desire to walk."¹⁶ In short, individuals have rights, but

LIBERAL STILL

the having is not contingent upon whether or not they use those rights to develop their "essentially human capacities." What Mill keeps sight of here is the distinctly political problem of freedom. The free person at the center of his theory is assured a level of independence such that the laws and conventions of society will guarantee the individual a range of possible action, understood as rights, where a person has the chance to follow his or her own desires. This is not to defend those rights or that general claim to freedom on the basis that such persons, in Macpherson's language, will "make the most" of themselves as "exerters and enjoyers" of their own powers.¹⁷

There are, then, two seemingly similar but rather different ways in which the justification of individual freedom and choice can be undertaken. Following Mill's statement that "all restraint *qua* restraint is an evil," the justification of individual choice is surrounded by arguments to the effect that the person *qua* person merits equal consideration and is entitled to equal respect in the formation of the social rules that circumscribe individual freedom. But within theories of self-development, the justification of individual choice is replaced by the surrogate problem of whether or not a particular social formation makes possible the equal opportunity for every individual to "live a fully human life." Whether or not Macpherson will ever satisfy his critics who charge that the notion of individuals' "essentially human capacities" is elusive and indeterminate, the point here is that there is another defense of the civil and political liberties within the liberal tradition that rests neither upon utilitarian nor developmental claims. Living in a liberal society, each person should be free to form his or her own understanding of one's good (freedom of choice), to take part in shaping and reshaping the environment within which that self-understanding occurs (political rights), and be allowed room for a more personal life and special attachments (a right to privacy). The value of such a scheme is something more than the claim to maximize individual utilities and something less than the claim to maximize the essentially human capacities of each individual. The first claim confuses the possession of a right with the gratification of some desire or interest, the second claim makes the worth of such rights, given the opacity of human nature, seem dark and elusive.

IV

With a thinker as keen as Macpherson, one does not anticipate catching him off guard or pressing points that have not been pressed upon him before. His indictment of liberalism, finally, belongs to that stream of radical thought that has always employed some ideal of social harmony to deplore the competitiveness and conflict within liberal societies. Such a juxtaposition can be found in his critique of Isaiah Berlin's two concepts of liberty or in the essay on "Natural Rights in Hobbes and Locke".¹⁸ Berlin's belief in the permanent clash of ends or the conflict of values, the inability, according to Macpherson, of either Hobbes or Locke to place men under a secure obligation to respect the rights of others: each failure is said to be due to that limited vision which assumes that man's nature is "predominantly contentious and competitive" and that society must

ALFONSO DAMICO

always be "conflict-ridden." Macpherson's final complaint about liberal individualism and the atomistic society that is said to sum its parts is made in the name of a more perfect social union where "there is not necessary destructively contentious opposition between the exercise of fully human capacities".¹⁹

We are now full circle, back to the questions about the picture of liberal society, especially its individualism, with which this paper started. Even if the liberal ontology is grounded in some larger Kantian understanding of the person as an autonomous agent, the radical critique holds that liberalism is either guilty of a failure of nerve — resigned to the clash of ends — or false heroics — manufacturing a right of recipience where none exists. These are serious charges, no less unpleasant for all of the considerable novelty and insights with which Macpherson presents them. Any satisfactory response would either need to show that within liberalism there is the potential for more communitarian experiences which make possible a right of recipience or that Macpherson's vision of a more harmonious society is simply not viable.

Some have, in fact, challenged the notion that the liberal understanding of the individual as a bundle of rights and duties necessarily loosens all close ties or participation in the practice of some common good. Richard Flathman, for example, in an important defense of the liberal principle of natural autonomy argues that, once that principle is socially embodied as a network of practices, the network itself becomes the site of some communitarian features:

Rights provide the individual with at least some of the elements of a place, an identity, a role in the social milieu. . . . In its concrete manifestations the practice of rights consists of an elaborate and extensive pattern of such interdependences. It is quite possible to object to the tone or quality of the relationships of which the pattern consists, but it is . . . simply not cogent to argue that the practice of rights isolates participants from one another or is categorically destructive of social relationships.²⁰

Perhaps, Macpherson would not quarrel with Flathman's argument that we do not face an either-or choice between liberal individualism and features more characteristic of community; but he does obviously insist that such individualism can only be communitarian rather than fragmenting and destructively competitive in a society where "diverse, genuinely human (not artificially contrived) desires can be simultaneously fulfilled".²¹ The fairly casual characterization of some desires as genuine and others as non-genuine or "mindless" evidences Macpherson's belief that a more harmonious society is possible, albeit not assured, once the competitiveness and contentiousness endemic to capitalist society is overcome. About Isaiah Berlin's thesis that we live in societies where some ends will always clash, Macpherson argues two points. Berlin's definition of negative liberty is too narrow, sharply separating the individual's opportunity to choose and act from the presence of the conditions which enable the individual to exercise his freedom. It is this sharp separation between freedom as an

LIBERAL STILL

opportunity concept and as an exercise concept that Macpherson believes accounts for most of the conflict among values that Berlin sees as part of the social landscape. To refashion that landscape, Macpherson relies upon a notion of social harmony in which the consensus constitutive of a moral community makes the freedom of each the condition for the freedom of all, i.e., "capacities can be simultaneously fulfilled." Critical to this alternative, more communitarian society is the rhetorical question that asks how many conflicts among various values would still exist in a society without "class conflict and without scarcity?"

It is not quite clear, however, whether we are being asked to agree that competition would disappear in a classless society without scarcity or, as seems more plausible, that such a society would not be "conflict-ridden." The state, for example, "will still be needed for the coordination of productive activities and probably for the adjudication of different individual interpretations of what rules and interference are necessary to maximize individual self-development".²² But while this sort of disagreement and subsequent need for adjudication will continue, society will be much more harmonious because of the agreement (engendered by the end of scarcity and definitive of a classless society) that in settling such issues the principle of an equal right to self-development is to be controlling. The assumption here, of course, is that one person's trying to make the most of himself will not conflict with another person's effort to do the same. And Macpherson chooses to make that assumption largely because he prefers to take a "fundamentally optimistic view" of man's future.

About Macpherson's arguments on these issues, I want to make two points, one fairly short. The shorter point concerns Macpherson's apparent inability to decide whether we must presuppose that an equal right to self-development will bring about a more harmonious society or whether the right itself can be formulated in such a way as to include criteria for distinguishing between destructive and non-destructive (i.e., harmonious) exercises of the right. Initially, the argument is quite modest. We cannot really know that a classless society organized around the right to self-development will be substantially harmonious. It is a point that can only be proved or disproved "by trial." In short, we will simply have to wait and see how things turn out. All of this sensibly suggests that the principle of developing human capacities will itself be one of those essentially contested or politicized norms about which persons will press different claims and interpretations. And one certainly cannot quarrel with Macpherson for preferring to believe that the result of this experimental politics will be a clearer understanding that the essentially "*human*" capacities are also those that are non-destructive.²³ But this also means that such an understanding is not available to the state's officers ahead of time for determining how to adjudicate such conflicting claims. Yet, Macpherson seems often to make just this additional assumption. It seems to account, for example, for his lack of concern with the possibility that the state's officers will use their position "to extract benefit from the use of others' capacities." Speaking about the injustice of such extractive power, Macpherson assures us:

ALFONSO DAMICO

One other non-capital kind of power may be noticed and dismissed as irrelevant here. Lawful and proper use of office gives some personal power to those with leadership and organizational talents. But if it is lawful and proper, i.e., used in the interests of those on whose behalf it is exercised and subject in some degree to their control, it is not extractive.²⁴

Restricting our concern to just those cases where the state must decide which self-development claims are in the people's interests, what we need is some clear criteria for distinguishing between destructive and non-destructive demands for exercising human capacities. But it is just such criteria which Macpherson has previously said must await the outcome of a process of trial-and-error. In effect, we cannot really know when the state's officers are acting in the interests of their subjects or when they are exercising extractive power. And a thinker as sharp as Macpherson cannot be permitted the luxury of arguing that we must defer to the reality of a not yet realized condition to prove or disprove the postulate of greater harmony and simultaneously deploy that postulate as a criterion for regulating conflicting claims here and now — nor can it be used to define the "lawful and proper" exercise of state power.

Considering Macpherson's thesis from a different angle, one might grant for the moment that the principle of an equal right to self-development can be made sufficiently determinate so as to function as the site of a more comprehensive social interest. From this perspective, my inclination is less to quarrel with such a thesis than to insist that it is probably too true. That is, there are too many possible sites within which individuals might conceivably work out some understanding of what the principle of self-development entails. Self-development, of course, is not something that one does by one's self; it is a process that occurs in interaction with others. Self-development is a form of social intercourse; the individual cannot know what his capacities are — nor make some judgment about their fit with the claim of others to develop their capacities — except through experiences that are shared with others. Macpherson would admit, indeed, insist upon all of this. But the admission is a fairly large one, forcing us back to some fairly typical liberal claims. First, not just any experience is likely to lead individuals to identify the development of certain capacities as a good for themselves and others. That process does not occur, say, in society in general but within the particular social networks where the individual's participation and the presence of others is a tangible reality.²⁵ The case for self-development within liberalism is a case for meaningful patterns of participation. But, as J. S. Mill well understood, this is also then a case for associative freedom and the subsequent pluralism this entails. The liberal case suggests the further observation that the greater harmony produced by the awareness among persons that it is a good for each to be a doer or exorter of his capacities is inversely related to the number of persons involved in a given form of social intercourse. The more distant and impersonal the others with whom one is cooperating the less likely that such transactions will overcome the individual's attachment to his particular interests or, alternately, that such transactions will

LIBERAL STILL

be the site of some more comprehensive good. Neither the indifference nor the persistence of different and competing interests in such a society can plausibly be explained as just a function of scarcity or the existence of classes. It is as much a function of the special attachments persons form within their communities and the abstract nature of their relationship with others outside of those communities.

Nor is it clear how the principle of an equal right to self-development could overcome this tension between particular communities in which a sense of the good is shared and more impersonal forms of interaction in which understanding of the "essentially human capacities" are more likely to conflict. Even if we could anticipate the emergence of some more general awareness of the "non-destructive human capacities," some mechanism would still have to be found for making individuals care or have some degree of active sympathy for the *equal* development of such capacities in others.²⁶ And, at this point, liberalism is ready to settle for less; neither demanding nor expecting that individuals will get beyond equal respect for the rights of others to the radical's vision of a society marked by equal concern for the development of (anonymous) others. The latter vision is too elusive and the politics too dangerous: consensus must be achieved about what constitutes persons' essentially human capacities, a consensus that threatens individual and associative freedom.

But, perhaps, I have misunderstood. Macpherson has also written that:

It is indeed true that each person's judgment of the direct satisfaction he gets or would get from different exercises of his own capacities is a subjective judgment, and is incommensurable with others' judgment about theirs . . . But what has to be measured here is not the satisfaction they get from any exercise of their capacities but their *ability* to exercise them.²⁷

But this begins to sound very much like the traditional liberal strategy, distinguishing between the opportunity to act or exercise powers and the conditions necessary for their exercise and removing the external impediments to persons' equal opportunity to do whatever they want to do.²⁸ If this is the case, then we are all still liberals twenty years after the publication of *the Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*.

University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida

ALFONSO DAMICO

Notes

- * This is a revised version of a paper delivered at the 1982 meeting of The American Political Science Association. It was given on a panel honoring both Professor Macpherson and, more particularly, the twentieth anniversary of the publication of *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*.
1. "Individualist Socialism? A Reply to Levine and MacIntyre," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* (1976) VI: 195.
 2. Two of the more obvious liberal criticisms of utilitarianism are John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971) and Ronald Dworkin's *Taking Rights Seriously* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977). A more explicitly political defense of non-utilitarian liberalism is John Plamenatz's *Democracy and Illusion* (London: Longman, 1973).
 3. C. B. Macpherson, *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 2.
 4. Reprinted in *Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 202.
 5. *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 270.
 6. *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*, pp. 23-43.
 7. *Democratic Theory*, pp. 3-23.
 8. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
 9. *Ibid.*
 10. See K. R. Minogue, "Humanist Democracy: The Political thought of C. B. Macpherson," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (1976) IX: 377-394; and Macpherson's reply, "Humanist Democracy and Elusive Marxism: A Response to Minogue and Svacek," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (1976) IX: 424-430. For a discussion of Macpherson's thesis that relates it to other radical accounts of men's capacities or "needs," see Gary Thom, *Bringing The Left Back Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), passim.
 11. *Democratic Theory*, pp. 6-7.
 12. Bhikhu Parekh, ed., *Bentham's Political Thought* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1973), p. 262.
 13. Ronald Dworkin, *op. cit.*, p. 172.
 14. *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*, p. 48.
 15. J. S. Mill, *On Liberty* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1951), pp. 95-96.
 16. *Ibid.*, p. 391.
 17. *Democratic Theory*, p. 32.
 18. *Democratic Theory*, pp. 95-119, 224-237.
 19. "Individualist Socialism," p. 199.
 20. Richard Flathman, *The Practice of Rights* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 188.
 21. *Democratic Theory*, p. 113. Left critics of Macpherson have argued that he avoids the implications of his own analysis at this point; namely, that morally recalcitrant persons must be transformed through some sort of revolutionary breakthrough. See Victor Svacek, "The Elusive Marxism of C. B. Macpherson," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (1976) IX: 395-422.
 22. "Individualist Socialism," p. 197.
 23. *Democratic Theory*, p. 55.

LIBERAL STILL

24. *Ibid.*, p. 43, n. 5.
25. In general, Macpherson's writings contain very little that might be described as a social psychology of man's character. Even the concept of possessive individualism seems most apt as an account of certain types of transactions within Macpherson's model of market society. How individuals engaged in those or other kinds of transactions acquire and retain the particular character traits needed for such relationships to work is not a subject about which Macpherson has written. For a work in social psychology that does explore the role of personal networks in shaping individual character — including the identification of one's own good with the good of the particular social whole of which one is a part — see Norma Haan, *Coping and Defending: Processes of Self-Environment Organization* (New York: Academic Press, 1977).
26. On the important distinction between knowing or understanding a universal moral rule and *caring* about that rule, see R. S. Peters, "The Development of Reason," in S. I. Benn and G. W. Mortimore, eds., *Rationality And The Social Sciences* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976), pp. 299-331.
27. *Democratic Theory*, p. 71.
28. Cf. Amy Gutman, *Liberal Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 152-153.