BOOKS

Dick J. Reavis on

- John Trumpbour, et. al., *How Harvard Rules*, South End Press, 1989.

Jeremy Brecher on

- Arthur MacEwan and William K. Tabb, eds. *Instability and Change in the World Economy*, Monthly Review Press, 1989.
- Robert A. Irwin, *Building a Peace System*, ExPro Press, 1990.
- The World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Rachael Kamel, *The Global Factory*, American Friends Service Committee, 1989.

Diana Reynolds on

- William Preston, Jr., Edward S. Herman, Herbert I. Schiller, *Hope and Folly: The United States and UNESCO 1945-1985*, University of Minnesota Press, 1989.

Paul Garver On

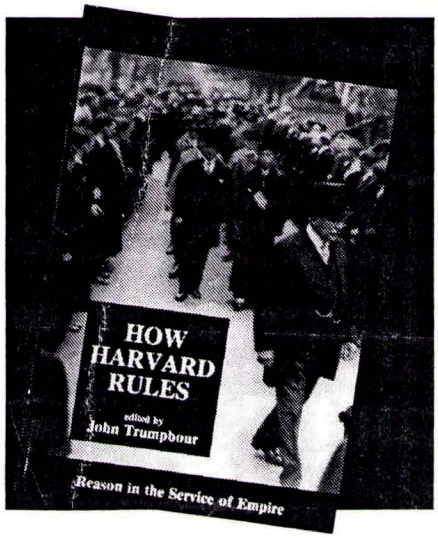
- Jeremy Brecher and Tim Costello, eds. *Building Bridges: The Emerging Grassroots Coalition Of Labor And Community*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1990.

Chip Berlet On:

- Robert I. Friedman, *The False Prophet: Rabbi Meir Kahane—From FBI Informant To Knesset Member*, Lawrence Hill Books, 1990.

Margie Bernard On:

- Padraig O'Malley, *Biting At The Grave: The Irish Hunger Strikes And The Politics Of Despair*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1990.



HOW HARVARD RULES

DICK REAVIS

REVIEWERS WHO haven't ignored *How Harvard Rules* (hereinafter called *HHR)* haven't been kind. *The Boston Globe* calls the book "a collection of...vitriolic essays." *Harvard Magazine*, an alumni publication, says that it exhibits "a limitless capacity for hatred and name calling," and—shades of the alliteration of Spiro Agnew—calls its authors "a literary lynch mob of self-styled leftists."

The critics say that the charges made in *HHR* are unfair, but they don't exactly say that its authors are falsifiers. Perhaps nobody can know whether *HHR*'s charges are true. Certainly, no one person can know whether all of them are true: *HHR* is a compilation of some twenty essays by some two dozen authors, and some of *HHR*'s claims—about faculty and bureaucratic infighting, for example—are not subject to public verification. Though 535 footnotes document some 353 pages of text, numbers can't certify truthfulness.

HHR is in many ways a history of Harvard since World War II—it grew out of a project to mark Harvard's 350th anniversary, in 1986—and there's really nothing to compare it with. Two books currently available in campus shops, *Three Centuries of Harvard* and *Glimpses of a Harvard Past*, stop short of the modern era, and *The Harvard Century*, an out-of-print 1986 work by Richard Norton Smith, doesn't dare step close to the thesis that lies at *HHR*'s heart.

The point that *HHR*'s authors—including professors Ruth Hubbard and Stephen Jay Gould, and writers Alexander Cockburn and Andrew Kopkind—try to make is that knowledge is not, as people generally believe, something developed and pursued for its own sake, an abstract unaffected by the social order which produces it. Instead, learning and the reputation of having attained it are formed by, and usually serve the contemporary social order: *Reason in the Service of Empire* is the book's subtitle. *HHR* is a straightforward, compact, radical assessment of modern Harvard, modern America, and modern higher education.

For at least 40 years, rightwingers have assailed Harvard as the "Kremlin on the Charles"—as if Harvard cultivated Marxism or radicalism. It was never so, says *HHR*, which pictures the University as related more to yuppies and actors in the White House than to philosophers at the British Museum or Georgian despots in Moscow. Harvard is not an independent conscience of the Establishment, *HHR* says, but a terminal in the intellectual network of modern American capitalism. It "rules" only in an ironic way: by creating and educating within the limits of culture-bound, profit-driven software.

Essential to making the point is a distinction—often overlooked by Americans—between liberalism, at least in its Cold War armor, and leftishness. The difference is especially dear to John Trumpbour, editor of *HHR*, author of seven of its essays, and a Harvard doctoral candidate in history: "One of the sources of belief that Harvard is a progressive institution," Trumpbour writes, "has to do with the University's wild boasting about its role in the undoing of Joseph McCarthy...Harvard gained its reputation because of a misperception about its actions... If a professor with liberal—or even conservative—beliefs came under attack from McCarthy, Harvard rushed gallantly to his/her defense. But with the few professors who had genuine socialist or Marxist sympathies, Harvard practiced a policy of constructive engagement with McCarthyism. Its administrative apparatus turned over much information to the House UnAmerican Activities Committee...To this day, the supposedly open 'and liberal' [University President Derek] Bok regime

denies access to Harvard's archives for scholars who want documents concerning this activity."

Charges like that ought to be damning, if they're true. And that charge, in particular, isn't being denied: according to the *Globe*, President Bok refuses to comment on the allegations made in *HHR*. Trumpbour, citing Bok, says that twice as many Harvard men served in the Reagan administration as any prior one—a claim, that if true, might place even Harvard's liberality in doubt.

"The major architects of the Vietnam war," Trumpbour continues—naming McGeorge Bundy and Robert McNamara, among others, "were Harvard men, who behind a facade of technocratic and peaceful rhetoric reveled in the Rambo values of machismo." Rambo? "In February 1986, The Hasty Pudding Theatricals, one of the more renowned student organizations at Harvard, gave its coveted Man of the Year award to none other than Sylvester 'Rambo' Stallone," Trumpbour says. He lists Zbigniew Brzezinski, Elliot Abrams, Cap Weinberger, Richard Pipes, and Donald Regan as the most important recent Harvard players on reactionary teams, and Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, he claims, presented Ed Meese with a medal for "distinguished public service." Trumpbour also reproduces a summary of Harvard's 1988 financial portfolio, showing investments in Phillip Morris, Exxon, and the Dow Chemical Company, and although Bishop Tutu is now on Harvard's board, Trumpbour claims that the University has invested some $163 million in firms that do business in South Africa.

It's always possible that, as its critics seem to think, a work can be both essentially truthful and nevertheless fatally flawed by ill will and paranoia. The *Globe* says that Trumpbour's prose is "acidic" and *Harvard Magazine* says that he sees "malice and ugliness in just about everything at Harvard." But my reading tells me that those charges are made partly because reviewers suffer poorly developed senses of humor. When, for example, Trumpbour mentions Rambo, he's playing on the ridiculous, and when he calls Harvard Business School "the West Point of U.S. capitalism," he's making a quip, not proposing a model for serious study. Nor is he endorsing Shiite fundamentalism—or the rule of kings—when he reports that "the decision in the late 1960s to present the Shah of Iran with an honorary degree is perhaps the most pathetic reminder of Harvard's age-long commitment to upholding social justice and human decency." Sarcasm, irony, and damning with faint praise have long been among the virtues of the writings of clever oppositionists, and *HHR*'s Trumpbour especially upholds the tradition. His reward, thus far in the prudent press, is an upbraiding for "apocalyptic visions of conspiracy."

Another nuance that reviewers can't fathom in *HHR*'s prose is the way that leftists appreciate, and in some ways accommodate to realities that they can't wish out of existence. My reading tells me that it is not accurate to indicate that *HHR*'s authors somehow hate Harvard, any more than it makes sense to say that Engels hated London. Both Engels and *HHR*'s authors would likely say that they recognize their subjects as "historical products," i.e., for what they are. The *HHR* essayists, even though they aren't going goo-goo over Harvard, regard it as superior to say, Oral Roberts University, which they probably hold in utter contempt—and they don't waste a lot of time confessing or imputing moral guilt. Most of them are now or have been what might be called critical members of the University, and the book in no way repents of their association with the place.

Several of *HHR*'s contributors, including Trumpbour, place their hopes in transforming Harvard upon the emergence of a new student protest movement, an eventuality, at best, in today's campus climate. In this regard, *HHR*'s most pregnant charges are brought in a chapter on minority and Third World students by three writers—one of whom, said to be a Harvard undergraduate, is identified in the book by pseudonym only. Though Harvard's student body is no longer drawn from an exclusively upper class and white clientele—African Americans account for 8 percent of the class of 1993, for example—hiring and promotions of minority faculty members have lagged more than a generation behind. "Of the 946 tenured members of all Harvard's faculties in 1988," *HHR* says, "fifteen are black men and a mere two are black women." That figure can be digested in several ways, but its basic import is that less than 2 percent of Harvard's tenured posts have gone to African Americans.

The Law School has a somewhat better record for minority hiring: two of its some 60 tenured professors—nearly 3 percent of the total!—are African American males. Perhaps perfection is demanded where perfection seems most within reach: this spring, Harvard law students turned out to protest the school's failure to tenure a black female professor. The revolt of the law students, which included a couple of all-night sit-ins, was encouraged by law school professor Derrick Bell, who took an unpaid leave pending the hiring of a black female. But it did not ignite a campus-wide, let alone, a nationwide protest against white shuffling. That kind of groundswell, even at elite universities, usually waits for a signal from the poorly-educated rabble, who taught even Herr Marx that erudition is not always what it seems.

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INTER NATIONAL LABOR

JEREMY BRECHER

THE CONCRETE problems people face in daily life are more and more shaped by global forces. Radioactivity pours out of a nuclear power plant or acid rain from a conventional one; they contaminate a dozen countries downwind. A corporation closes a workplace, leaving unemployed workers and a devastated community; it reopens in another country with lower wages and health-destroying working conditions. Armed forces in rival countries pile up overkill capacity to make each other's rubble bounce; the children in each grow up poorly educated and malnourished. Such realities create the need—and the possibility—for a grassroots global politics.

Such a politics raises a host of questions. Are there, for example, forces already at work transforming the established world order? By what kind of process might a new world order be

generated? What transnational norms and policies should be imposed on institutions? How can grassroots movements in different countries start imposing them? The four books reviewed here each contribute some of the answers.

The 19 essays in *Instability and Change in the World Economy*, despite some variations, recount different aspects of a single story. In the quarter-century that started with World War II, the economic, military, and political dominance of the United States created conditions for rapid economic growth and an increasingly integrated world economy. These very forces have led in turn to the rise of international competition, the decline of U.S. hegemony, and the globalization of production and finance. As the framework provided by U.S. "world leadership" has collapsed, all that has come in its place is "instability and change." (The "collapse of Communism" in Eastern Europe, which became manifest after the publication of this book, suggests that instability and change will mark the countries formerly subject to Soviet economic hegemony as well.)

The essays trace the impact of this instability and change on particular national economies, specific industries, and on women, labor, and other affected groups. Most maintain that capitalism can achieve stable growth only within an institutional structure that helps it overcome its contradictions. With the decline of U.S. hegemony, however, no force is visible which might be able to provide such a structure.

As a result, the world economy will continue to exhibit the stagnation and crisis that marked the 1970s and 1980s. But growing interdependence will make it increasingly difficult for any single nation to institute progressive internal reforms that contradict the needs and wishes of the transnational corporations.

BUILDING A PEACE SYSTEM is an extended literature survey and guide for study groups. It synthesizes the major ideas developed by the peace movement over the past decade on the conditions necessary for a peaceful world.

The author characterizes the present condition of international politics as a "war system." This system is composed not only of armed forces but of the entire complex of political, economic, and cultural structures which support and are supported by them. Transforming this to a "peace system" will entail not only shifting governments to non-threatening security strategies, but eliminating potential causes of war by global reforms "to restore ecological sustainability, reduce economic and political inequalities, and help people live together without belligerence."

The author points out that a wide consensus on global norms has already been codified in international law and in such documents as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the World Charter for Nature, and the various covenants of the International Labor Organization. The establishment of a peace system would be, in effect, the implementation of those norms.

The process of transition to a peace system would be multifaceted. A "global civic culture" would need to develop embodying "the agreed norms of behavior for societies and states." Individual citizens would need to recognize and act on their responsibilities under those norms—working with, around, or against their national governments as appropriate. Citizen movements would pressure states and social groups to accept conflict resolution and demilitarize their security strategies. International organizations, including not only a strengthened and reformed United Nations but also many specialized institutions and nongovernmental associations, would promote global cooperation to address such needs as environmental protection, economic development of poor countries, disarmament, and workplace democracy. All these elements together would compose a "peace system" which reduced conflict and constrained it into nonmilitary forms.

OUR COMMON FUTURE is the 1987 report of the UN's World Commission on Environment and Development. Though headed by Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway, the Commission's majority came from Third World countries. In many respects the report sounds like an Earth Day oration, laying out the devastation of the planet resulting from present economic and military practices. It goes beyond conventional environmental rhetoric, however, in asserting that world poverty is a principal cause of environmental destruction and that environmental degradation is in turn a principal cause of poverty.

The report argues, therefore, for an alternative world development strategy based on international cooperation and environmental sustainability. It lays out in broad outline what this would mean for more and less developed countries and for population, food, energy, industrial, urban, and national security policies. It also defines institutional changes at various levels necessary to realize those policies—above all a restructured international economic system.

While the Brundtland Report, as it is known, has gone virtually unnoticed in the United States, even by the Left, it has been widely discussed in Europe. In some European countries its policy guidelines are even being incorporated in local planning decisions.

THE GLOBAL FACTORY is an attractively designed, concise primer on how poor and working people in the U.S. and the Third World are responding to the effects of economic globalization. It links the poverty and community disruption that result from deindustrialization in the U.S. with the exploitation that is occurring in Third World Export Processing Zones (EPZs). While its description of the misery caused by transnational corporations and its analysis of economic forces will be primarily of interest to those who are learning about such matters for the first time, its account of grassroots movement response represents a "snapshot of the state of U.S. organizing around the global factory" in which even the grizzled expert will find something new.

The author argues that, because transnational corporations affect many constituencies, they are a natural focus for coalitions involving organized labor, religious bodies, communities of color, women's groups, the environmental movement, economic development organizations, and even some local and state governments. And the strong transnational links of some of these groups make it possible to extend cooperation beyond national borders. For example:

- Manufacturers Hanover Trust, a major investor in South Africa, of-

fered to reschedule loans South Africa was having trouble paying off. The Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility in New York coordinated a campaign of religious groups throughout Europe and the U.S. to demand that the loans not be extended. Meanwhile, Manufacturers Hanover gave the Pittston Coal Group a $100 million line of credit one month before the start of the 1989 Pittston strike, which the company drew on during the strike.

Manufacturer's Hanover had also been redlining in Brooklyn, reinvesting less than $3 million in an area in which it had billions of dollars of small deposits. And so both the Interfaith Center and the United Mine Workers joined with local community groups to block the bank's effort to acquire 11 Brooklyn branches of another bank. While the campaign didn't stop Manufacturer's Hanover from rolling over its South African loans, the cumulative effect of such efforts has been substantial divestment from South Africa by corporations as a whole.

The Global Factory gives a variety of such examples of coalitions addressing the impact of transnational corporations through inter-movement cooperation. Plant closing movements have demanded corporate responsibility or developed their own alternative economic proposals. Labor rights legislation initiated by union and development organizations has blocked trade benefits for some countries that repress their own workers. International labor solidarity and pressure on stockholders around the world has forced concessions from recalcitrant corporate giants.

The Global Factory concludes, "The idea of a broad-based, multinational movement to tackle the problem of the global factory is still a vision...By understanding that every local story is part of a global 'big picture,' we can open up space for dialogue and sharing of experiences—especially across the barriers of language, nationality, gender, race, and class. And as that process of communication moves toward networking and coalition-building, the vision of a multinational movement can become a reality."

Notwithstanding the absence of a world state, a grassroots global politics is in fact developing. Besides the economic examples included in *The Global Factory* there are many others. After all, worldwide pressure by environmentalists allied with indigenous peoples forced the World Bank to change its policies on development of the Amazon rain forest. The European nuclear disarmament movement played a major role in the process which has led Gorbachev to embrace a defensive military strategy and begin to unilaterally disarm, leading in turn to still-unfolding pressures for demilitarization in the rest of Europe and the U.S. International human rights pressure played an enormous role in the rise of dissident movements which ultimately overthrew authoritarian rule in Eastern Europe. And international boycotts and divestment campaigns were crucial in driving the South African government to lift the state of emergency, free Nelson Mandela, and come to the bargaining table to negotiate the abolition of apartheid.

Such actions can play a greatly expanded role in the future precisely because the established world order is disintegrating. Not only is the bipolar organization of the Cold War vanishing, but the centuries-old alignment of economic, political, military, and cultural formations with the boundaries of the nation state is crumbling as well. New national, ethnic, gender, and other identities are asserting themselves. There will be many players involved in shaping any successor world order, and a transnational alliance of grassroots movements can at the least be among them.

From the books reviewed here I would extract five guidelines for the development of a transnational movement capable of helping shape a viable world order.

1. The current structure of power, and those who direct it, cannot solve the basic problems of environment, impoverishment, oppression, and war.

2. Any meaningful political paradigm or program must orient toward a transition to a different global system.

3. Such a transition has rather rapidly become more feasible because of the breakdown of both national and cold war structures in economic, political, military, and cultural realms.

4. A wide consensus actually exists on the basic norms that such a global order should embody and the broad policies that individuals and organizations must follow to implement them. The norms are expressed in such documents as the U.N. Charter and other codifications of international law, the Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter for Nature, and related documents. The policies are spelled out in *Our Common Future*. While ambiguities and conflicts exist within these as within any set of norms and policies, they are clear enough to provide guidelines for the governance of firms, governments, and other major institutions.

5. These norms and policies support the most widespread demands of grassroots movements around the world for human rights, cultural autonomy, self-controlled economic development, and environmental protection. Grassroots movements can and should make themselves part of a global movement by grounding their own principles in them and by cooperating across national boundaries to impose them on states, corporations, and other institutions.

BUILDING BRIDGES

PAUL GARVER

HAS THE corporate-right offensive of the 1980s succeeded in permanently reshaping American politics in a reactionary direction? Or has it laid the basis for a new grassroots oppositional alliance capable of empowering the majority in the 1990's? This is but one of the major issues addressed by Jeremy Brecher and Tim Costello, the editors of *Building Bridges*.

The 28 contributors are themselves labor and community activists and/or supportive intellectuals. Most of their essays are reflections on specific local experiences with coalition-building at the grassroots. These case studies of labor-community coalitions include support for strikes and other labor struggles, jobs and local economic development, electoral coalitions, and issue campaigns. The lessons they draw are quite diverse, and the more self-critical essays are generally the more informative and useful ones.

Barbara Richards' article on the Community-Labor Alliance of New Haven excels in this respect. She