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Susan Howson, *Lionel Robbins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. xiii, 1161, \$135. ISBN 978-1-107-00244-9.

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This is, no doubt, a decisive work on the life of Lionel Robbins, the economist who is probably safe to be viewed as having left a greater legacy on contemporary British society than on the history of economic thought. His academic work essentially consisted of his famous 1932 book on methodology, work on business cycles of the 1930s, and several writings on English classical economists, the last of which he chose as his main research field after WWII. These are certainly not the list of works of a mediocre economist. The list of his jobs outside academia is, however, more impressive: director of the Economic Section of the War Cabinet Office during WWII, chairman of the National Gallery, member of the House of Lords, chairman of the *Financial Times*, chair of the Committee on Higher Education, and many lesser others.

Howson wrote essays related to this work (Howson 2004, 2009). In those papers and the concluding chapter of this book, historians of economics will find discussions intended to satisfy our own general interest on such topics as the origin of Robbins' economic methodology and his views on macroeconomic policy. I leave the readers to those references and will try to do justice to this book as a biography, as it is intended to be, and will discuss a few of the many subjects treated in this book that struck me as a reader with neutral interest. I will do this, not in the chronological order, but in the order of the strength of my interest.

First, Robbins' chairmanship for the Committee on Higher Education (1961 to 1963) is well known, and the book devotes one chapter (Ch. 23) to his service as a chairman. As Howson narrates, he wrote the draft of the final report almost entirely himself. Writing it involved specifying what statistics the commission needed and making trips to Soviet Russia, the US, and many other countries, as well as constant meetings with other committee members. In the course of discussion, he laid out what was called the 'Robbins principle,' which dictated that higher education should be available for everyone who is qualified by ability and attainment. One of the main recommendations of the Robbins Report was, thus, expansion of higher education, which invited opposition from old, privileged universities. These efforts in writing the report required a substantial part of his working hours that could have been devoted to his prolonged and eventually failed project of writing an economics textbook.

Second, one incident that occurred during his chairmanship of the National Gallery was an international diplomatic issue, and Robbins was instrumental in bringing about its peaceful solution. This was the Lane bequest controversy (pp. 805–812). When the *Lusitania* was sunk by a U-boat with him onboard in 1915, Sir Hugh Lane left a will that bequeathed paintings to the National Gallery, but there was also an unwitnessed, signed codicil stipulating that the same paintings should be given to Dublin should a

certain condition be fulfilled within five years of his death. The controversy remained even after the National Gallery became the legal owner of the paintings. When a politician brought up this matter again in the 1950s, Robbins discussed it with other trustees and met another politician who was his former student and who supported the first politician. One trustee suggested a divide-and-exchange plan, which Robbins supported, but a few trustees strongly opposed. After long internal discussion, Robbins met politicians representing the Irish government and settled with this plan.

Third, it is interesting to note that Howson is partly a participant-observer in her narrative about students' protest at the LSE in the late 1960s. She was an undergraduate student and heard Robbins' speech to placate the student unrest that originated from the protest against the Vietnam War. Fourth, Robbins' impression, told in his letter to his father (p. 279), about Germany when he drove through there during a trip in 1935 reveals a ghoulish picture of how common people lived in the Nazi regime. "Tiny children greet one wherever one goes with the Heil Hitler. . . . The hotels & shops are full of photographs of this demigod." Fifth, Howson describes Robbins' estrangement and much-belated reconciliation with Friedrich Hayek—of course, from the perspective of Robbins, who knew Hayek's divorced wife well enough to assist her in a legal matter and had to cover Hayek's teaching load at the LSE.

Now, let me stop being an appreciative lay reader and consider historiographical questions concerning this work; first, about historical materials on which this book is based. Robbins wrote an autobiography (Robbins 1971). Howson does not stoically avoid using it; according to the index, there are thirty-eight mentions in total. To me, Howson's use of the autobiography is modest and effective. Another important source is unpublished materials, such as Robbins' letters and LSE documents, and especially I am impressed by how candid he was to his historian sister Caroline, who taught in Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania. He communicated with her his thoughts and feelings about war, politics, and his work, as well as family issues. Howson also relies on interviews with Robbins' family and other people who knew him.

Second, I treat the question about the style of narrative. Howson does discuss economic ideas relating to Robbins' books, but this is minimal. We cannot call it an intellectual biography but simply a general biography. Most of us historians of economics might be baffled by Howson's very detailed account of Robbins' non-academic activities, private and professional (and I can sympathize with the general sentiment of Wade Hands' review on EH.net). But, of course, I do not mean to deprecate the book by saying this. Simply, I mean to say the book is not exclusively written for an audience of economists. Historians interested in British art policy, for instance, will surely profit from this book; and historians working on the US–UK negotiation during WWII will also gain another window to this high-profile, very complex, international policy-making process.

Third, I should address a bit of a 'science studies' question. Can we see some connections between his academic work and his social obligations, not only in the direction from the former to the latter but also in the opposite direction? With regard to the former direction of interactions, we can point to the reasoning he employed to oppose the plan to charge visitors to the National Gallery. It was obviously the economist's one. He reasoned that demand for enjoying works of art does not need to be reduced by positive prices, unlike performing arts such as opera (and no wonder he was not understood by some people). How about the other direction? Robbins was interested

in policy questions throughout his life but, after the war, this interest was extended into his new research field, the history of economic thought. There is at least an apparent connection there that might shed light on one of the disparate origins of our subfield. This is only a random thought but worth exploring.

After all, how should we receive this book? It is, no doubt, a great work by a prominent historian; the scope is broad and the treatment of each issue is even-handed. It simply provides an amusing read, and it will serve as another authoritative example for an economist's biography, as it perfectly deserves to do.

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Frederic S. Lee and Marc Lavoie, eds., *In Defense of Post-Keynesian and Heterodox Economics: Responses to Their Critics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. x, 263, \$135 (cloth). ISBN 978-0-415-69436-0.

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Would it not be a sad state of affairs if, in a discipline we like to think of as a science, there were a debate about *whether* (not just how) scholars of different perspectives can benefit by simply communicating with one another? It certainly would be. And yet, that is just the state of affairs in economics, according to the contributors to *In Defense of Post-Keynesian and Heterodox Economics*, edited by Frederic Lee and Marc Lavoie.

The book is a collection of responses from heterodox economists to an issue raised in articles by David Colander, Richard Holt, and Barkley Rosser (2010, 2007–08, 2004); the issue is how heterodox economists can better advance their ideas among mainstream economists.

The impetus for the Colander, Holt, and Rosser articles: "The economics profession would be far better off if it took heterodox ideas more seriously, and our interest in shaking up heterodoxy is grounded in our belief that what they have to say is important and should be considered by the mainstream. Our concern is that heterodox ideas are not getting the hearing they should" (Colander, Holt, Rosser 2010, p. 308). The advice to heterodox economists: "worry less about methodology, focus on being economists first and heterodox economists second, and prepare ideas to leave the incubator of heterodoxy to enter the mainstream economic debate" (ibid., p. 303 [in abstract]).

The advice touched a raw nerve. The contributors to *In Defense* unanimously believe that if anything needs shaking up in order to give heterodox ideas a better hearing, it is mainstream economics. The contributors contend, and with some bitterness,