

Editorial

As an experiment, this issue of the Bulletin has been typed on a word-processor. Norbert Waszek's article was submitted in that form, and it seemed a good idea to treat the rest of the material in the same way. Differences in quoting conventions, etc., between his article and the rest of the issue are due to Mr. Waszek's text being a part of a forthcoming larger work.

The Editor apologises for delay in producing this issue, caused by an unusual accumulation of work and heavy other commitments. He will be away from Oxford on sabbatical leave between September 1983 and May 1984 and Professor Raymond Plant has kindly agreed to edit the next issue. Raymond Plant will be on sabbatical leave at Nuffield College, Oxford, next academic year. Correspondence concerning no. 8 of the Bulletin should be addressed to him there after October 15.

There is some problem in finding enough reviewers for books published in German and Italian, and volunteers are asked to get in touch with the Editor, mentioning their special interests.

Announcements and Reports

Essex Kant Conference

On February 26 and 27 the Philosophy Department of the University of Essex hosted a conference on Kant's Critical Philosophy. The conference opened with a paper by Michael Rosen on freedom and determination in Kant; this was followed by an elegant paper by Susan Mendus on Kant's moral psychology. The afternoon programme began with a paper by Howard Williams on Kant's political philosophy; this paper elicited an intriguing response from Ronald Beiner, who claimed that Kant's conception of an ethical commonwealth involved an essentially anti-political bias. The most noteworthy papers of the conference were equally those which were of most direct interest to students of Hegel; Onora O'Neill's defence of Kant against Alasdair MacIntyre's probing critique in his After Virtue, and John Sallis' analysis of the interplay between reason and history in the Critique of Pure Reason.

In 'Kant After Virtue' O'Neill argued that Alasdair MacIntyre's critique of Kantian ethics could not be sustained. What was most interesting about O'Neill's paper was that while she acutely reconstructed the Kantian enterprise in response to MacIntyre's call for a return to an Aristotelian ethics of virtue, she simultaneously left dangling the question of what such a restructuring might mean or signify in the face of MacIntyre's neo-Hegelian, historical critique of modernity.

O'Neill began by noting how MacIntyre's critique of Kant reiterated the four most venerable criticisms of his ethics. First, that Kant makes rules the primary concepts of moral life; secondly, that Kant's system, by attempting to provide universal rules applicable to all men irrespective of circumstances and conditions, suffers from rigourism; thirdly, that Kant's ethics is overly formalistic; and finally, that Kant's ethical procedure, because formal, is not truly action guiding.

O'Neill's reply to these criticisms involved an ingenious and important reinterpretation of the object of moral legislation. Traditionally, the