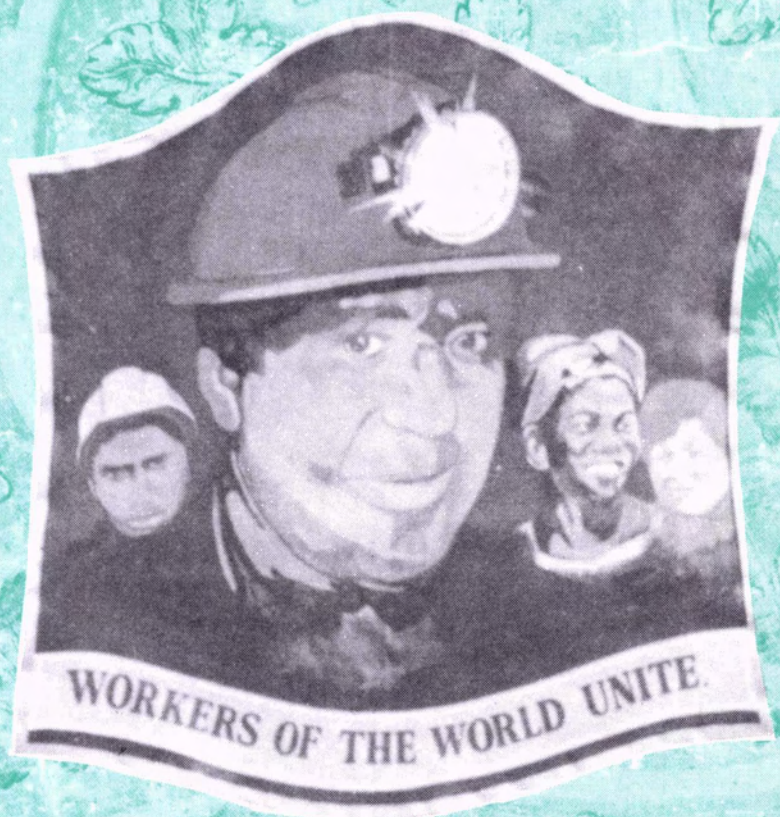


COMMON SENSE

Journal of Edinburgh Conference of Socialist Economists



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11

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The tree of life

A 19th century wood carving by W. Fortey. c.1860, depicting 'moral' life. In the bottom righthand corner "Babylon Mother of Harlots" stands at the entrance to a "Bottomless Pit", whilst "Chambering & Wantonness" occurs in the other bottom corner. As we're always being told "one has to start at the bottom" - and, of course, some of us never make our way up. - (Eds)

Editorial

The ten issues of *Common Sense* which have appeared since its foundation in 1987 confirm the value of its initial project: we said our aim was to overcome the grip of academic specialism on the life of the mind. Publication of articles on politics and philosophy, of poems and short stories and of reviews and topical commentary has met with a response which demonstrates the liveliness of debate once it ceases to take place just within (or indeed just outside of) academic walls. Walls can come down in more ways than one.

Beginning with issue 10 *Common Sense*, hitherto a wholly informal journal, has allied its forces with the Conference of Socialist Economists (CSE). *Common Sense* is currently the journal of the Edinburgh CSE. A statement of the aims and objects of the CSE is supplied at the back of this issue. This alliance sustains our original project in that a symbiotic practice ties breadth of coverage to a political project. This project is one of maintaining debate within a world where, notwithstanding media enthusiasm, the shutters on the life of the mind seem more and more to close. Everyone (whether or not she or he has a career) is a careerist now.

As in previous issues, *Common Sense* 11 presents a blend of literary genres and a juxtaposition (or constellation) of international and Edinburgh-participatory ideas. Additionally, in this issue you can find an explanation of our title. Read on, contribute and help us to ensure that the social division of labour which separates theory from practice continues to break down. *Common Sense* is less a journal destined for the shelves of libraries - although you can find it there! - than a relay station for the exchange of ideas.

Finally, in this issue we introduce a new section for works of a speculative and topical kind - *Beyond The News* - which will ensure the journal always has a lively start. This time its a play about the political goings on inside the Kremlin, but who knows what it could be next issue? If you have any ideas for this section you are more than welcome to make a contribution.

