

Preface to the Paperback Edition

Sidney Hook refused throughout his life to allow his first and best book on Karl Marx to be reprinted. Whether it is because I am still sufficiently young and foolish, or because my opposition to social injustice only deepens over time rather than receding, I am pleased to see that enough interest exists in *Young Sidney Hook* to warrant its republication in paperback. In the belief that books reflect their moment of production, I have not altered the text in the slightest. I wish, however, to acknowledge the wisdom of two criticisms.

The first came from a few professional philosophers who thought the book ought to include more on the technical aspects of pragmatism. Initially I resisted this point, feeling that pragmatism was already at the center of the argument, interwoven throughout. I thought of the book as standing adjacent to a number of other intellectual histories of American pragmatism, and did not see any need to replicate them. However, I now believe the criticism warranted. To remedy it, I have appended an article of mine—"Pragmatism and Its Critics," originally for Scribner's *Encyclopedia of American Cultural and Intellectual History*—to provide readers with an overview of the pragmatist tradition.

The second criticism was made by my friend, the late Daniel Singer, European correspondent for *The Nation*. On finishing *Young Sidney Hook*, Daniel told me he understood my reluctance to condemn Hook for heresy,

but he wished I had drawn a difference between a heretic and a renegade, so as to more sharply criticize Hook for turning into the latter. This useful distinction, which Daniel drew from a classic essay by his mentor Isaac Deutscher, I have since thought might have lent greater clarity to my analysis in the concluding chapter.

In recent years, I have defended and extended my thinking about Hook. I wrote the historical introduction to Hook's 1933 book *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx* when it was reprinted by Prometheus Books in 2002, as well as several essays on Hook's philosophy and politics: "Left Hook, Right Hook: The Rules of Engagement," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (12 July 2002); "The Rise and Fall of Sidney Hook," *New Politics*, no. 34 (winter 2003); "Why Wouldn't Sidney Hook Permit the Republication of His Best Book?" *Historical Materialism* 11:4 (2004); and "Flexibility and Revolution," in *Sidney Hook Reconsidered*, ed. Matthew Cotter (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 2004). Readers who seek to acquire supplementary detail on Hook may wish to locate these writings. I can attest, however, that their interpretation of Marxism and pragmatism in Hook's early thought does not differ fundamentally from that provided in the following pages, by which I stand.

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