

## **AHE Annual Conference 2001**

### **2001 Report: Association for Heterodox Economics 3rd Annual Conference**

The 2001 conference again took place over two days at The Open University Conference Centre in London. Following a tremendous response to the Call for Papers, we expanded to four parallel sessions from last year's three, a total of 96 speakers. Participants discussed a host of topics, ranging across various schools of economic thought - Post Keynesian, Marxist, Institutional and Austrian - and across the social sciences.

The keynote speaker, Bob Coats, provided a revealing insight into the history of heterodox economics, pointing out that ideas quickly switch in status from orthodox to heterodox and vice versa. This was followed by a discussion panel, consisting of Ben Fine, Tony Lawson, Alan Freeman and Malcolm Sawyer. It was disputed whether the heterodoxy could make an impact in challenging mainstream economics in the years AHEad. Are mainstream economists going from strength to strength in their dance with mathematics, or is there a crisis in economics that provides an opportunity for intervention? There was some agreement, however, that there are many opportunities for the engagement of interdisciplinary economics with policymakers and other social scientists. After a fine meal - very well organized by Geoff Tily - our after dinner speaker, John King, delighted his audience with spicy anecdotes and derisive tales of journal editors from hell.

Of course the future of heterodox economics depends critically on the next generation of economists that emerges from academia and beyond. In addition to the very youthful organizing committee, which did an excellent job in making the conference happen, it was encouraging to see 20 postgraduate students attending the conference, as participants and speakers. A plenary session was also held with student representatives from the Post Autistic Economics Movement and the Cambridge Proposal for Opening Up Economics. To assist in the support of postgraduate students, the AHE has secured funding from the Economic and Social Research Council to organize a Advanced Training Workshop in heterodox research methodologies. This will be a three-day session held at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, 23-25 November 2001.

Andrew Trigg  
AHE co-ordinator