



**WESTERN
MICHIGAN**
UNIVERSITY

The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare

Volume 21
Issue 3 *September*

Article 25

September 1994

Critical Theories of the State: Marxist, Neo-Marxist, Post-Marxist.
Clyde W. Barrow.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw>



Part of the Social Work Commons

Recommended Citation

(1994) "*Critical Theories of the State: Marxist, Neo-Marxist, Post-Marxist.* Clyde W. Barrow.," *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 21: Iss. 3, Article 25.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15453/0191-5096.2180>

Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol21/iss3/25>

This Book Note is brought to you by the Western Michigan University School of Social Work. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.



**WESTERN
MICHIGAN**
UNIVERSITY

Clyde W. Barrow. *Critical Theories of the State: Marxist, Neo-Marxist, Post-Marxist*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press. \$38.00 hardcover, \$15.95 papercover.

Academic inquiry into the role of government in society is hardly a new topic. Indeed, political theory from the time of the Greeks has dealt either directly or indirectly with the state as a phenomenon worthy of study. However, there has been a significant resurgence of interest in critical theories of the state in recent times. Derived primarily but not exclusively from Marxism, these theories examine the nature of the modern state and investigate its functions in society by considering how the state serves the interests of those in positions of power and influence.

Marx and Engel's own writings on the subject provide a starting point but it is surprising how their seminal ideas have been challenged, reformulated and transcended by critical theorists over the years. This book offers fascinating insights into what has conventionally been a perplexing field of inquiry marred by jargon and obscurantism. Barrow's well-written, scholarly and interesting account is essential reading for any social scientists wanting to know about the modern state and its role in society today.

United Nations Development Program. *Human Development Report 1993*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. \$29.95 hardcover, \$17.95 papercover.

This is the third of an annual series of reports on global social development. Published by Oxford University Press for the United Nations Development Program, this report follows the precedent of previous reports by focusing on a particular theme. In this report, the theme is the role of people's participation in development.

There is, of course, a huge literature on this subject but given the dominance of economists in the authorship of the report, much of this literature is ignored. In addition, the authors focus particularly on the economic aspects of popular participation, interpreting participation as a mechanism for integrating the population into the free market system. The report's naive