The author writes well of irony, and recognises the scope of irony inherent in his subject matter — if not in his own work or recent events — in his final paragraph:

> As for the erosion of basic human liberties that export controls have allowed in order to preserve the West from a regime that does not respect such liberties; as for the damage to the Western alliance and to relations with friendly countries that export controls have wrought in order to unify the West and its friends against the communist aggressor; as for the affront to national sovereignty caused by the extraterritorial enforcement of export controls in order to encourage greater sovereign responsibility in export control enforcement: the irony speaks most eloquently for itself. The supreme irony of export controls, though, is that they are justified in terms of insuring the West's military strength through technological supremacy: it is difficult to imagine any artifice more likely to undermine the West's capacity for technological innovation than the current systems of national security export controls (pp. 200-1).

This passage is a fair sample of the clarity of Macdonald's prose, the scope of his analysis, and the nature of his views on export controls. He supports the views with extensive research and argument. For individuals or institutions interested in expanding their resources on export controls, particularly the worldwide debate on US export control initiatives and practices in the 1980s, this is a fine, thoughful, and provoking book. For those interested in ongoing issues of governmental regulation in the international context, the book has continuing significance.

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Economics and Sociology. Redefining their boundaries: conversations with economists and sociologists *by Richard Swedberg*
(Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1990) , pp. viii + 361, $US12.95, ISBN 0-691-00376-9 (pbk.).

The format of the book is unusual. Richard Swedberg has interviewed 16 prominent or up-and-coming sociologists and economists who are or have been concerned about the interface between the two disciplines. Gary Becker, James Coleman, Kenneth Arrow, Neil Smelser, Daniel Bell are just a few of the names I pick at random.

What Swedberg wants to do (as he indicates in his sub-title) is to tease out from his sample germane and forward-looking ideas about the association of the disciplines, based on an identification of problems that have to be solved. What he gets instead are snippets of intellectual history, the considered but somewhat random thoughts of his stable of scholars about the influences on the early direction of their thought, and ideas about where matters stand now, mostly in response to pre-prepared thematic questions. Even in the thematic questions, the past dominates the discussion of the present and the future.

The format and the limited time allowed for the actual interviews imposes severe restrictions. The history of the respondents' thought has fascinating asides and data presented largely as anecdote. The discussion of present-day problems is surprisingly 'off-the-cuff', rather like intelligent academic journalism. I did

not get the impression that the respondents had given much time or attention to preparing responses that really presented their ideas of what absolutely had to be done now, what a keen-bladed cutting edge of intellectual excitement might be. While the issues they deal with are indeed present, I found the discussion bland and the almost total lack of new ideas disappointing. And some seemed downright old-fashioned.

In short, the book to me is an interesting piece of intellectual history. It will not excite any lively student to take up arms and join a battle. There is a lack of enthusiasm, of daringness. Where there is substance, anyone looking into the field already knows the position — perhaps, however, not associated with the name of the scholar who is speaking. There are few surprises.

The older scholars refer frequently to Talcott Parsons, finding in him (except for his significant disciple Neil Smelser) obfuscation and frustration. Is it part of the history of the association between economics and sociology that Parsons may have set the clock back for a generation? Those who made headway in the meantime had to strike their own independent paths, and such was Parson's undoubted influence, that was not easy.

Given the supreme importance of modelling in the discussions, I find it quite surprising that there are no extended references whatsoever to Peter Blau, and only one small entry in the index. I don't know what this means.

As a once-upon-a-time anthropologist, I have to remember that the discussion is about sociology. Yet as several participants indicate indirectly, anthropology is far from absent from the discussion. I should, I suppose, hail that. But the treatment is indicative of the source of my disappointment.

I find it a strange inheritance from Parsons, reinforced by what to me is a slippage in modern economics, that Mark Granovetter can pose the question of the embeddedness of *economic* action as major, rather than posing the old-fashioned question, perhaps to be rediscovered — since all action involves objectives and choices and resources, and since all action can thus be considered to be economic — how can one create equations that recognise this? (Paradoxically, some of the contributors have been pioneers in thinking about this.)

And Schelling finds it necessary to set aside the abandonment of rationality as too troubling, and to go looking for answers in brain science, to enlarge or enrich it. But once upon a time rationality as a concept could encompass, and be neutral between, differing values and estimates as to what constitutes cost. The problem can be identified as not that, but rather how does one build attention to such values into the analysis, how to estimate and measure the valuation of, say, ritual or sex? (Daniel Bell cries in some frustration on p. 229 — how do you value what people do?) There are many, though not enough references to such issues in the literature, but even a perspicacious and open-minded participant such as Kenneth Arrow expresses puzzlement (in reference to ethnicity), as if a literature is not there. It is there. It needs to be addressed, brought into an appropriate analytic order.

The bibliography and the glossary of names are quite generous in their inclusion of anthropologists. But, surprise, surprise, they are all just about as old as I am, even older.If this is what anthropology means to the participants, no wonder it can be misunderstood. I do not believe there is a single reference to the diverse, creative, and challenging ideas coming out of the mostly youthful membership of the Society for Economic Athropology. Now of course that is not necessary for a book dealing with sociology — but if scholars *do* use anthropology, they might as well use that of the 1990s . . .

To me this is important. For it is in this comparative context that different approaches to systems, preference schedules, values, modelling in an empirical context, the use of quantification when counting is not feasible, utility, risk, potential demand, embeddedness, get their strongest challenges and deepest confrontations.

So, to me, this interesting book is a source of biographical intellectual history, rather than a springboard for a flight into the future.

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British Technology and European Industrialisation. The Norwegian Textile Industry in the Mid Nineteenth Century *by Kristine Bruland*
(Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989), pp. x + 193, $76.50, ISBN 0 521 35083 2.

The temptation to launch into a diatribe on why academic theses should not be turned into books is irresistible. There is. though, an important caveat in this case: the result is actually a very good book. Unfortunately, despite severe editing, it is also still a Ph.D. thesis. The author treats the reader as her examiner, explaining carefully how she has built on the existing literature — "The idea that the technological dynamism of Europe is the effect of capitalism *qua* new social system has a long history . . ." — what further steps each section is to take, and what contribution she claims to make to the total sum of human knowledge. She is nothing if not forthright: "I have examined every single extant invoice to these firms, plus all correspondence referring to invoices or definite acquisitions and am thus able to trace the numbers and precise types of equipment purchased by these firms to 1870". Unseemly perhaps, but this is a detailed and careful study and the pride is justified. It is also a valuable contribution to the literature on the diffusion of technology. Pride is understandable in the student who would be scholar. For scholars wise enough to remain students, humility is more becoming.

Until 1843, the export of much machinery from the UK was prohibited to prevent foreigners using British technology to erode British competitive advantage. No doubt the law was often flouted, but its removal marks a change in policy towards the diffusion of technology — basically, there was thought to be more profit in selling the technology than in keeping it secret — and provides a convenient starting point for Bruland's examination of the export of textile machinery from the UK to Norway. Why Norway? Why not? the author is Norwegian. Norway was a small and open economy whose textile firms left good and unexplored records, but anywhere else would probably have done just as well. The book is about the diffusion of textile technology, not especially about Norway, nor even about Britain. And although there is enough mention of billies and Doffing plates, scribblers and slubbing frames to placate the enthusiast, the book reveals much more about the diffusion of technology in general than about textile technology in particular.

Bruland is dissatisfied with explaining the development of technology in terms of series of prerequisites, and with only case studies to expose the importance