and romance whilst the object of harassment and persecution. The gypsy is a free spirit, close to nature, and the gypsy woman sexually alluring but unobtainable. The reality is that travelling people refuse to be proletarianized, reject wage labour and threaten to pollute 'respectable' society. The views held by gypsies of Gorgios mirror the views held of them. Non-gypsy society is threatening and hostile, non-gypsy women are promiscuous and polluting. Each society ascribes the other's women with uncontrolled sexuality.

Okely's study shows how the travellers' need to survive upon the fringes and within the interstices of capitalist society defines the need not only to travel but to maintain the ethnic group. Discussions of 'true romany' origins are steeped in myth-making and invented history. The gypsy-gorgio boundary is a real one, and there is a material base for the maintenance of cultural identity. Okely's discussion of the social construction of ethnicity is especially provocative: Gorgio society tries to find 'racial' origins for gypsies: mainly to identify and stigmatize the supposedly inauthentic. The gypsies themselves maintain *ethnic* identity in the face of, or because of, threats deriving from the need constantly to move in 'hostile territory' and to interact with a hostile majority.

The dominant society restricts the land and stopping places available to travellers and subjects them to constant pressure to assimilate. In these circumstances boundary maintenance is of paramount importance. Okely's analysis of pollution beliefs and the fundamental importance of the separation of inner and outer body is convincing. This enables her to interpret examples of pollution avoidance, attitudes to the human body, to food and to animals in a coherent way and as 'rational' behaviour. These parts of Okely's text are a powerful demonstration of the distinctive interpretive skills that social anthropologists bring to the understanding of human society.

Okely's short chapter on gypsy mortuary rites is especially powerful. Increasingly the chosen place of death is the NHS hospital, where Gorgios handle the intensely polluting activities surrounding death. At death the traveller is at last sedentarized and passes out of gypsy society – and must be seen to do so and must *stay* outside gypsy society. Motifs in wreaths, the furnishing of the grave and the unambiguous naming of the occupant stress the separation from living travellers. This is reinforced by the destruction of the property and possessions of the deceased. In mortuary rites the gypsies express their 'separation from Gorgios, and their fear of becoming one of them'.

There are allusions to the origins of the study in policy-related research which, according to Okely, restricts what needs to be learnt. Readers will be tantalized by such comments. Similarly problems in the anthropologist's personal survival in the field are hinted at. These must be acute for most anthropologists and especially in circumstances where the researcher is potentially extremely threatening. Our students often think field-work will be easy and entirely pleasurable, even 'fun'. I suspect Okely has much to say to disabuse them.

These are minor criticisms of a book that is a success at the intellectual level, not least in showing how the ideas and practices of gypsies 'make sense' of their ways of coping with minority status in a largely hostile society upon which they are nonetheless economically dependent. *The Traveller-Gypsies* is not simply a work of scholarship however. It invites the public to understand in matters where prejudice and hostility have ruled. It deserves a wide readership.

University of Aberdeen ROBERT MOORE

Geoffrey Pearson, *Hooligan: A History of Respectable Fears,* London: Macmillan, 1983, £15.00 (£5.95 paperback), xi + 283 pp.

History is not usually written backwards; that is, unless you are trying to locate the 'golden age' of 'merrie England', an age untroubled by deviant youth in which discipline and absolute moral standards upheld the 'British way of life'. Pearson attempts, and fails, to trace such a time. He accuses writers, politicians and social commentators of a 'nostalgic amnesia' through which they romanticize the past and place the blame for the 'current' degeneration of youth

and the wider collapse of social order and moral standards on a plethora of social customs and institutions.

In a detailed and stimulating narrative Pearson seeks to question whether things were really so much better 'twenty years ago'. Jumping back twenty or thirty years at a time – from the black muggers of today, through the Teds of the '50s, the bag-snatchers of the 1930s, the Hooligan of the 1890s, garrotters, street-arabs and so on, right back to the 1600s – he examines the basis of respectable fears to do with law and disorder. At each moment such factors as youth unemployment (and, ironically, the affluence of youth), debasing amusements, the breakdown of family life and community controls, leisure provision (accessible through greater freedom, mobility and affluence), a permissive education system, and the demon drink, were feared to be the cause of greater working-class hostility towards authority in general and the police in particular, growing moral degeneration, rapidly increasing juvenile delinquency and, of course, hooliganism. These, in turn, it was feared, signalled the more general erosion of social discipline and the breakdown of the national character. Yet, as Pearson demonstrates convincingly, such fears have existed for more than three hundred years.

Through the use of numerous interesting and often amusing quotations, Pearson records the articulation of these respectable fears of, and the proposed solutions to, this apparent breakdown in the moral fabric. We discover that the same prescriptions and remedies are trotted out time and again as the means of curtailing these successive waves of 'unprecedented' hooligan behaviour: birching, military service, more regulated education, firmer policing (and, thanks to their nostalgic amnesia, the advocates of such measures conveniently forget that they have never worked before).

There were times during the narrative when I wondered whether the implications of this wealth of information were ever going to be discussed. Surely Pearson planned to do more than destroy the myth of a lawful and ordered past? Furthermore, there were times when his obsession with the fine detail of working-class culture proved to be an irritating diversion from the thrust of his argument and this was made worse by the occasional unnecessary facetious comment. However, when the theoretical substance of the book is finally reached, in the final chapter, it is worth waiting for. The author maintains that his history of respectable fears raises both theoretical and policy-related questions about the issues of crime and violence, and law enforcement in contemporary British society.

It is argued forcefully that the facts of crime and disorder must be removed from the historical idiom of change, decline and discontinuity, and 're-allocated within the idiom of *continuity*' (pp. 212). Crime and hooliganism, Pearson maintains, are in fact the stable features of a changing society. The frequent use of criminal statistics to illustrate the 'imminent' collapse of law'n'order is, as is patently obvious to any criminologist, hardly a valid measuring stick; changes in policing and recording practices and in the legal and administrative framework, preclude any watertight conclusions from such 'evidence'. Pearson's history also demonstrates how the idiom of change and the romanticization of the golden past is manipulated ideologically across the spectrum of the political arena. Preoccupations with mounting social disorder (especially amongst youth) have crystallized at moments of more general anxiety about moral decay. They have served as 'a convenient metaphor for wider social tensions which attend the advance of democratization' (p. 230) and have provided successive governments with a rationale for pulling in the reins on the pretext of avoiding plummeting into the moral abyss. Pearson identifies the sometimes bizarre contradictions underpinning such processes, but which have usually remained hidden behind an ideological cloud. How is it, for example, that both poverty and affluence have been held as the cause of lawlessness?

At a policy level, it is argued that the prevailing nostalgia for the mythical, peaceful past – and the ease with which such nostalgic inferences can be dismissed (particularly after Pearson) – conceal the degree to which real fears of crime and violence are felt by the common people. Indeed, one danger involved in a quick

reading of this book is that it might encourage a complacency about street crime and violence. After all, Pearson shows comprehensively that things have been much worse in the past. But he is attentive to this problem and recognizes that such behaviour today still generates very real fears. His point is that we should not be misled by the view that things were so much better 'twenty years ago' (whenever that was). And he insists that to focus on hooliganism and the hooligan-free days of yore is to trivialize the real social issues of today – unemployment, shabby entertainment, racism and poor housing, for example, should be considered in their own right, not simply in so far as they are thought to cause crime and disorder. Moreover, he maintains that such a focus patently fails to grasp the fundamental nature of the problem, which is the long-standing social difficulties and disputes between the materially disadvantaged and the privileged moral centre of society. Pearson argues that many contemporary social aspirations which are usually held to have belonged to a crime-free age – such as community policing (romanticized through the 'friendly bobby') or the ability of women to walk the streets at night without harassment (articulated in the feminist slogan 'Reclaim the night') – should be relocated in their proper context: they never did exist in the past, but they should be valued prospects for the future.

Fears and anxieties about social ruin have, according to Pearson, been recruited and harnessed specifically for ideological purposes. They have served as the base from which the reconstruction of the (illusive) harmony of the past can take place. Pearson has tried, successfully in my view, to question some of the humbug that has surrounded respectable fears of 'hooliganism' and the glorification of the past, while remaining attentive to the ordinary fears associated with crime and violence.

It has become something of a preoccupation amongst sociologists in recent years to seek to dispel various myths and assumptions concerning the emergence 'in the post-war years' (Pearson would ask 'which war?') of troublesome youth. Now Geoff Pearson has produced a book tracing the origins, continuities and fractures in the development of hooligan behaviour which effectively counters the view that somehow such activity is contrary to the 'British way of life'. Certainly such behaviour has historically been viewed as un-British, and non-British scapegoats – particularly blacks and Irish (the very word 'Hooligan' is of Irish origin) – have been identified as the source of this disruption to the tranquil and accommodative British life-style. However, in his usual fluent, interesting and readable style, Pearson uses a range of literary, historical and sociological material to locate hooligan behaviour firmly within the mainstream of working-class life and primarily, though not exclusively, amongst young working-class men.

University College, Cardiff HOWARD WILLIAMSON

Valdo Pons and Ray Francis (eds.), *Urban Social Research: Problems and Prospects* (Sociological Review Monograph No 30), London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983, £8.95, ix + 194 pp.

In recent years urban sociology has lost its disciplinary identity within the multi-disciplinary field of urban studies. The stated aim of this volume of essays is to assess work in urban studies and ask whether urban sociology has a distinctive role to play. The seven essays are unevenly addressed to this aim and vary considerably in their attitude to recent trends.

The most clearly favourable article to these trends is Elizabeth Lebas's essay on the absorption of French Marxist state theory in Britain, and on recent developments therein. In brief she argues that state theory has been 'narrowly and apolitically appropriated' (p. 10) since the state monopoly capitalism theory which underlies it (and which she expounds) has been largely neglected, and British writers have failed to comprehend the political context in which French state theory was produced. I agree with these observations but would disagree that they are criticisms. The crude instrumentalism of the SMC thesis seems to me a good reason to neglect it, and I would see the political debates from which a theory emerged as relevant to a