Socialism

I was a little shocked to find John Mathews' and David McKnight's articles side by side in ALR 105. John Mathews seemed to be arguing that socialism had become irrelevant, and proceeded to replace it with something sounding remarkably like Australia Reconstructed writ large. To me, socialism means a bit more than that.

David McKnight, meanwhile, seemed to be saying that blue collar workers are no longer of any interest to the left, and that our only hope is in persuading well-intentioned young middle-class people to become a bit more radical.

Both of these points of view are counsels of despair, and neither of them offers anything useful to the left in what you call its "rethinking". It would be more helpful if ALR concentrated on some of the radical implications suggested in Caroline King's and Pat Ranald's articles in the same issue, and left pessimistic navel-gazing to the right.

Faith Richmond, Fitzroy, Vic.

Not All Conflict?

A few days ago a friend showed me a copy of your June/July issue. This gave me a chance to look back at a movement to which I was once committed, but to which I am committed no longer.

For me, the most revealing article was Rosalind Brunt's review of Shere Hite's latest book. After some twenty years of supposedly profound analysis of relations between the genders, Australia's far left is just beginning to acknowledge women's desire "to love and be loved by men". Even this acknowledgment comes only in an article reprinted from Britain.

Dear former comrades, it's true. Women love men. Men also love women — but perhaps it will take you another twenty years to figure this out? Life is not all conflict.

Colin Robinson, Sydney.

The Future for the Left

Jade is astral travelling this issue, but will return in a different format for ALR 107.

Reading survivor

As a recent subscriber to your magazine, I was informed and entertained by the standard and scope of articles in your June/July issue.

I read with interest "The Mob of Women", a review of Finola Moorhead's novel Remember the Tarantella, having read the book and, like Kate Grenville, partly enjoyed and partly felt excluded from the subject matter. As a service to those members of the shrinking reading public who are still interested in the practice rather than the theory of reading, how about extending the same courtesy to the subject of your review as you do to the reviewer and printing full name, publisher and price of the book reviewed?

Amanda Reid-Young, Faulconbridge, NSW.

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