



# Young Sidney Hook: Marxist and Pragmatist

*Christopher Phelps*

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## **Young Sidney Hook: Marxist and Pragmatist** Christopher Phelps

"This is a provocative, elegantly crafted piece of our intellectual history. Phelps's rediscovery of Hook's radical philosophy is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the fate of the American left."--Michael Kazin, author of *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*

"Like other famous rebels who eventually came home to patriotism and conservatism, Hook's life is one of breathtaking intellectual twists and turns. He occupied, at one time or another, almost every intellectual position available on the left: Leninist, Trotskyist, right-wing Socialist plus several nuances between them. . . . Christopher Phelps, in his persuasive new biography of young Sidney Hook, . . . strives . . . to uncover the young philosopher and activist at the height of his powers. What he discovers is not just a brilliant interpreter of Marx and the Russian Revolution, but a remarkable advocate and practitioner of the Americanization of Marxism."--Jim Gilbert, *In These Times*

"Sidney Hook's critics and admirers have long held that his pragmatism was incompatible with his early Marxist politics. In this fine book, Christopher Phelps shows why they are wrong and, in the process, offers the first major study of Hook's intellectual development and political activism."--Casey Blake, Washington University (Department of History) or identify as author of *Beloved Community: The Cultural Criticism of Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank, and Lewis Mumford*

"The very best kind of intellectual biography sheds light not only on the life and ideas of its subject but on a whole tradition of thought and a historical epoch. This deeply intelligent and elegantly written book does all those things admirably, and has the added--and rare--virtue of making its own original contribution to the clarification of some thorny issues in social theory, and Marxist theory in particular."--Ellen Meiksins Wood, author of *Democracy against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism*

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