

Theodor Adorno and Heinrich Böll (1964)

Abstract

Theodor Adorno, Jürgen Habermas, and Herbert Marcuse (who had been teaching at Berkeley since 1965) were the leading representatives of the neo-Marxist school of Critical Theory founded by Max Horkheimer at the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt (also known as the Frankfurt School). They were also regarded as the intellectual fathers of the extra-parliamentary opposition movement. For students pushing for action, however, the discrepancy between Critical Theory and moderate practice was troubling, particularly after the death of student demonstrator Benno Ohnesorg on June 2, 1967. On January 31, 1969, seventy-five students under the leadership of Hans-Jürgen Krahl, one of Adorno's doctoral students, tried to force their way into the Institute for Social Research. In response, professors Adorno and Ludwig von Friedeburg called the police. In the eyes of the student movement, the representatives of Critical Theory discredited themselves with their actions. During Adorno's lectures, students distributed flyers that read "Adorno as an institution is dead."

This photograph shows Adorno with author Heinrich Böll (1917–1985), who was the featured lecturer in the "Lectures in Poetics" series at the University of Frankfurt in the spring of 1964. Böll was one of the most important German writers of the postwar period, and his works were required reading in German classes. Böll cast a critical eye on German Catholicism, the legacy of National Socialism and Germans' (in)ability to come to terms with the past, and the collapse of bourgeois society. In 1972, Böll was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. In the 1980s, he became active in the peace movement.

Source



Source: Theodor W. Adorno (left) and Heinrich Böll on the occasion of the latter's "Poetics Lecture" at Johann Wolfgang Goethe University. Date: May 1964. Location: Frankfurt am Main. Photo: Abisag

Tüllmann.

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