

Communist community in working-class Montreal, then finding dazzling success on the British philosophical scene, and ultimately holding a prestigious chair in Oxford? The life-long socialist whose philosophy was the fruits of 'explicit political engagement' and conviction? The 'amazingly gifted political philosopher' with an 'intimate voice' who, 'though a master in his philosophical standards, could make up with strangers', who had a 'contagious tenderness' that 'could make people laugh to the point of tears'?

With such a rich background to draw upon, I chose to include much more of Cohen's personal narrative than is customary in books of this kind. Cohen himself made so many references to his family background and politics that incorporating this material seemed the obvious thing to do. I hope readers will agree that the personal supplies the way the 'personal is political' and makes for an illuminating read.

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