

# Wars Of Ideas Determine Man's Future

By Margaret Koch  
Sentinel Staff Writer

All the world's wars are not fought on the battle field.

Wars of ideas are fought with words, both spoken and written. And some of the most important of these skirmishes take place in quiet armchair encounters with the staccato peck of the typewriter replacing the thunder of heavy artillery.

But the outcome of these un-sung conflicts will, perhaps, de-



## Men

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termine the future fortunes of men, mice — and every living creature.

This struggle of ideas and words is known as philosophy. Philosophy is one great big question mark. It is concerned with the structure and laws of all reality. The philosopher is a person who thinks harder, deeper and longer than other people do. And if he is truly a philosopher he will never stop asking "What?" and "Why?" and "How?"

Foremost in the ranks of these thinkers at University of California at Santa Cruz is Dr. Maurice Natanson, professor of philosophy. He and his family have just arrived in Santa Cruz after a year at UC Berkeley where he served as visiting professor of philosophy. Prior to that year the family lived in Chapel Hill, N. C., where he served as professor of philosophy at University of North Carolina.

According to Dr. Natanson, there are several powerful revolutionary forces at work today in the field of philosophy. They are: 1. Existentialism and Phenomenology in Europe. 2. An Anglo-American philosophy sometimes also called "language analysis." 3. Marxism or Neo-Marxism in Russia and countries dominated by Russia.

"In England and the United States it is felt that philosophy has failed in its traditional mission," he explained. "That feeling has come about because of confusion or subtly misleading terms in the English language. Clear questions and clear answers depend on a fundamental language which is clear."

As an example of the confusion which may exist concerning one word he submitted two sentences: "Christ arose from the dead" and "Christ arose from the bed."

"It is clearly shown by those sentences that the single word 'arose' can have several interpretations," he added.

Professor Natanson feels that the most revolutionary of the philosophic forces at work today is the European movement.

"Existentialism and phenomenology are closely related," he said. "In turn, they are having enormous impact on almost every aspect of life. Their effect may be seen most delicately and neatly in the arts."

To see clearly; to analyze and describe experiences directly: that is what phenomenology attempts to do. To better illustrate this definition, Dr. Natanson turned to a picture on his study wall — a copy of Van Gogh's famed self portrait.

"This painting is phenomenological," he pointed out, "because it is not merely a representation of Van Gogh's facial features. In addition to depicting Van Gogh, the painting

shows the artist's torture, self-doubt and agony. The person viewing the picture relates it to the world, other human beings and to himself.

"Phenomenology suggests that the world is an integrity; that there is continuity in all things."

Existentialism is an attempt to comprehend the existence of man in the world by turning to the nature of the human self. The self is approached through fundamental categories which are thought to illuminate man's being.

Dr. Natanson listed fear, dread, suffering, choice, loneliness and death. He also mentioned "I-Thou" relations, "We" relationships, dialogue and religious salvation.

Existentialists are divided into two camps: the atheistic or belligerent, and the religious. Existentialism has had its greatest impact on psychology, acting as "an antidote to mechanistic Freudism," he said.

"You might also tell the newspaper readers that not all Existentialists are anarchists or are fighting traditional values," he suggested.

Since the days of Plato, Socrates and Aristotle, certain centuries have been noted for definite philosophical trends. The 1600s featured appeal to reason, the 1700s appeal to experience, the 1800s appeal to humanism and the 1900s appeal to adjustment.

This last appeal—that everyone should be well-adjusted—is a present-day value which Dr. Natanson questions: "Adjusted to what?" he asked. Then he answered his own question: "Adjusted to the majority position." He paused then went on again. "But is the majority position meaningful? Too often we adjust to mediocrity. This can mean a denial of original independence."

That is how this bearded philosopher's mind works—questioning, doubting, hunting, searching like a bloodhound.

One of the greatest philosophical problems of our time is the split between mind and matter, according to Dr. Natanson.

"We arrange our existence neatly into compartments. There is a department for thought, another for physical action. We separate the two instead of recognizing the continuity of consciousness — the continuity of all things," he said.

In spite of the things that are wrong with the world today, the doctor is an optimist. He revealed this quality when questioned as to how the man on the street feels about a subject as abstract as philosophy.

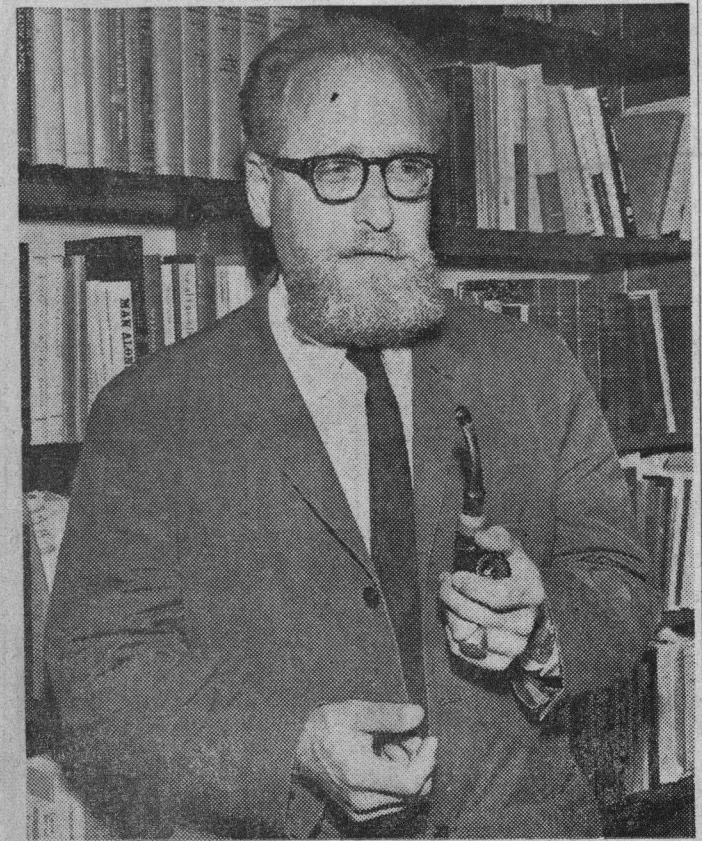
"Don't underestimate the man on the street," he answered.

## Army Survey: Can Rifle Firing Posture Change?

Ft. Gordon, Ga. (AP). — The army has asked Ft. Gordon to determine whether soldiers should continue to fire rifles from sitting, squatting and kneeling positions in basic marksmanship training.

The basic training given at all army training centers requires recruits to fire from eight different positions. The army wants to know if any of the firing positions can be eliminated.

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Philosopher, pipe smoker, chess player, family man—that's Dr. Maurice Natanson, professor of philosophy at University of California at Santa Cruz. His distinguished

career has included a professorship at University of North Carolina and fellowship grants for study and research in Europe.

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Meet the Natansons — Dr. Maurice and his wife, Lois, are seated by Kathy, 8. The

boys are Charles, 15, and Nicholas, 9. Mrs. Natanson is a former English instructor at University of Nebraska.

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