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AYN RAND'S CONCEPT
OF
THE EDUCATED MAN

by

Raymond A. Nighan, Jr.

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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1974

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PREFACE

When reflecting on the sales of Ayn Rand's novels The Fountainhead and Atlas Shrugged, the former editor-in-chief of the New American Library (Signet Press), commented:

> Once or twice a year, we reissue these books . . . and I'm not talking about a printing of 10,000. These books are reprinted in runs of 50,000 and 100,000 copies. What this means is that every year, 100,000 new people read The Fountainhead. . . . Other than with Fitzgerald and Hemingway . . . this just doesn't happen.[1]

Bennett Cerf, long-time head of Random House, observed: "It's remarkable! In all my years of publishing, I've never seen anything like it."[2] The Nathaniel Branden Institute (NBI), official disseminating agency[3] for Objectivist materials, attracted about 5000 students and provided materials to 40,000 others throughout North America.[4]

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[1]Ed Kuhn as quoted in E. Ephron, "A Strange Kind of Simplicity," The New York Times Book Review, (May 5, 1968), p. 8. Unless otherwise indicated, all ellipses used in this study are mine.

[2]Bennett Cerf as quoted in Barbara Branden's biographical essay, "Who Is Ayn Rand?" in Nathaniel Branden, Who Is Ayn Rand? (New York: Paperback Library, 1968), pp. 189-91.

[3]Branden and Rand severed all personal and professional relationships in May of 1968, the NBI also ceasing operations then. Now, Dr. Leonard Peikoff offers taped lectures on the history of philosophy (including Objectivism) which are available on a rental basis. See: The Ayn Rand Letter, I, No. 7 (January 3, 1972), 4., and II, No. 8 (January 15, 1973), 6 for details.

[4]Nathaniel Branden, "A Report to Our Readers--1965," The Objectivist Newsletter, IV, No. 12 (December, 1965), 57.

The rather enthusiastic public acceptance of Objectivist philosophy suggests that it could (at least potentially) change the current of American intellectual thought. Objectivism examines and analyzes most aspects of American life including business and industry, government, the arts and, to be complete, formal education. This study will examine the educational implications of Objectivism.

Objectivism's consideration of formal education assumes two forms: (1) the construction of what the ideally educated man ought to be, and (2) a critique of current school practice insofar as it obstructs achievement of that ideal.

Because Rand is both novelist and philosopher, she often employs techniques of the former to develop the latter. Using the dramatic intricacies of plot and character, she postulates her concept of the educated man as one dedicated to rational self-interest, self-esteem and cognitive excellence. He is an ideal which ought to be achieved, ultimately suggesting that the school ought to promote the virtues he holds dear.

This study will consider as its primary end the following: to examine the Randian concept of the educated man including the nature of the value changes which ought to occur if he be truly educated. Such an investigation, of course, will be primarily a normative one. As a required corollary, the Objectivist critique of present-day school practice will receive attention since Rand regards current formal education as obstructing the actualization of her educated 'ideal.'

Structurally, the Introduction orientates the reader to Objectivism, providing biographical data significant to Rand's intellectual development. The model of her educated man will also be outlined, and objections to the model's structure will receive attention. The second chapter expands concepts outlined in the Introduction relating to the intellectual antecedents of Objectivism. Of primary importance is Aristotle's philosophy and Rand's own theory of art, to which she attaches significant educative value.

With the third chapter, the reader will study the metaphysics, epistemology and axiology of Objectivism. All three, but especially the ethics, kaleidoscope to form the educated man. Of special concern is the ethics, for in order to be formally educated as a morally responsible being, Rand's educated man exists as a practitioner of a specific code of values. Since many of these values conflict with accepted Christian ethics, attention will be devoted to their operation within Objectivist ethics.

Chapter four essentially consists of a critique of Objectivist philosophy, especially noting areas which might obstruct the actualization of her educated man. Since Objectivist ethics postulates as virtues concepts such as pride and selfishness, attention will be given to Rand's use of definition.

The next two chapters are specifically educational in nature. Throughout them, the word education should be taken to mean formal education, i.e., schooling on the elementary

and/or higher levels. Chapter five critiques American formal education, specifically noting how Rand believes it obstructs the graduation of her educated man. Issues such as student violence on the campus and the welfare state mentality of formal education receive consideration in the light of what principles of Objectivist ethics they interdict. Chapter six defines what Rand thinks the school ought to be doing to further Objectivism's normative ends. Throughout these chapters, attention is given to educators whom Rand endorses, including Aristotle and Montessori.

The final chapter assesses Objectivism's contribution to formal education in America and offers possible means of dealing with obstructions to its being utilized by schoolmen. Suggestions for further research will be provided.

Those attempting to study any phase of Objectivism are confronted with a variety of obstacles, all combining to make the task a difficult one. Perhaps the most significant hurdle to be overcome is the problem of source material.

Rand, perhaps because of her experience with Branden, generally refuses to grant interviews, especially with those who disagree with any of Objectivism's conclusions. Consequently, the researcher must rely exclusively on published materials. Fortunately, they contain sufficient references to educational matters to make an investigation worthwhile. Primary source materials often used in this study include the novels Atlas Shrugged (1957), and The Fountainhead (1968). Direct commentary on educational issues may be found in the

following books: For the New Intellectual (1961), containing excerpts from the major novels; Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal (1967), a moral defense of laissez-faire Capitalism; Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology (1969), explaining the Objectivist theory of concept formation, and The Romantic Manifesto (1971), explaining the Objectivist theory of art and its educational importance. Of special interest is The Virtue of Selfishness (1964), dealing with Objectivist ethics, and The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution (1971), consisting of extended commentary on American formal education.

Additionally, Rand's three journals (all published by the Objectivist), The Objectivist Newsletter (1962-1965), The Objectivist (1966-1971), and The Ayn Rand Letter (1971-date), contain frequent references to education, and are cited throughout this study when appropriate.

A problem exists with Nathaniel Branden's writings. His published materials, including frequent articles in The Objectivist Newsletter and The Objectivist, may be used without reservation. Following their separation in May of 1968,[5] Rand has categorically refused to endorse any of his published material. Consequently, one must proceed with extreme caution when citing such books as his The Psychology of Self-Esteem (1969). Material published by Branden after 1968 is used only when there can be no mistake as to its consistency with

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[5]For details of the separation, including Rand's reasons for initiating the break, see chapter one, p. 2.

Objectivist thought.[6] Since his book Who Is Ayn Rand? (co-authored with his wife) first appeared in 1962, it may be used without reservation.

In view of the above, enough primary source material exists to warrant the feasibility of an investigation of Objectivism and American education. Secondary source material cited in the text has been selected according to three conditions: (1) when Rand has specifically endorsed the figure in her writings—Aristotle and Montessori, for example, (2) when the writer is an established scholar whose material presents a mature and sophisticated evaluation of American schools —John Holt, Charles Silberman, and (3) when the material presents a critical analysis of Objectivism itself. Of importance here are two books: Is Objectivism a Religion? by Albert Ellis, and With Charity Toward None by William O'Neill. Both books begin with the premise that Objectivism is unsound philosophically, and then proceed to build a case, with varying degrees of success as will be established throughout this

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[6]For example, in The Psychology of Self-Esteem, Branden writes: "Although I am no longer associated with Miss Rand, I welcome this opportunity to acknowledge the invaluable contribution which her work as a philosopher has made to my own thinking in the field of psychology. I indicate, throughout the text, specific concepts and theories of Miss Rand's philosophy, Objectivism, which are crucially important to my own ideas. The Objectivist epistemology, metaphysics and ethics are the philosophical frame of reference in which I write as a psychologist." See: Nathaniel Branden, The Psychology of Self-Esteem (New York, Bantam Books edition, 1971), p. ix.

study.[7]

Even given a sufficient amount of primary source material, a researcher still treads on shaky grounds. Rand extends little sympathy to anyone discussing Objectivism unless he receives 'official' sanction to do so. Individuals who have written without it have faced litigation.[8] Rand's lawyer, Henry Mark Holzer specifies:

> . . . the specific formulations of Ayn Rand's discoveries, as well as her fictional creations, constitute her property and fall under the protection of the copyright laws . . . [which prohibit the] use of extensive quotations from someone else's work—even when credit is given—if they constitute the major part of the new work. . . . Thus, if in your own work you make a brief reference to the work of Ayn Rand, you must take scrupulous care to separate your own views from hers and to ascribe to her only those statements which she has actually made. In other words, do not paraphrase or summarize what you think amounts to Miss Rand's position in any given issue; set forth what that position <u>is</u>—just as she has stated it.[9]

Throughout this study, references to ideas specifically not the author's and pertaining to any aspect of Objectivism are

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[7]See: Albert Ellis, <u>Is Objectivism a Religion?</u> (New York: Lyle Stuart, 1968), pp. 9-13, and William O'Neill, <u>With Charity Toward None</u> (New York: Philosophical Library, 1971), pp. 3-4. Of the two, O'Neill's is the more scholarly and sophisticated work.

[8]See: "Court Upholds Use of Author's Name in Blurb," <u>Publishers' Weekly</u>, CLXXXXV (March, 1969), 35, and "But You Can Do That," <u>Publishers' Weekly</u>, CLXXXXV (May, 1969), 23-24. A <u>blurb</u> is a short quotation from a review which appears on the jacket of a book. When one appeared on <u>Chaos Below Heaven</u> by Eugene Vale containing Rand's name, the latter sued under the provisions of a New York Law, charging invasion of privacy. Rand won the case, but on March 18, 1969, the Appellate Division of the New York Supreme Court reversed the decision.

[9]Henry Mark Holzer, "A Statement of Policy," Part II, <u>The Objectivist</u>, VII, No. 7 (July, 1968), 14. My brackets. Italics in original.

carefully footnoted. Although the author has tried to present Objectivist philosophy as Rand defines it, he has—especially in chapter four—reserved the right to examine areas of it with which he disagrees. In so doing, care has been exercised not to inaccurately state Rand's position.

Finally, a word concerning documentation. Many of the books by Rand cited in this study contain articles which first appeared in some of her journals, chiefly The Objectivist Newsletter and The Objectivist. When such articles are used, the footnote refers the reader to the book in which they are reprinted. This policy has been adopted chiefly because the books are more readily available to the general public than the journals.

As a student of Objectivism, this writer believes the philosophy of Objectivism can sustain substantial contributions to American educational practice. The specifics of that belief follow.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

While a student at the University of Petrograd in Russia, Ayn Rand, a history major, studied ancient philosophy under Professor N. O. Lossky, an authority on Plato. During an oral examination, he discerned her dislike for Platonic Idealism. He asked, "You don't seem to agree with Plato, do you?"[1] She replied, "No I don't. . . . My philosophical views are not part of the history of philosophy yet. But they will be."[2]

Much later and in America, she realized her dream and today, her published works include the novels Anthem, We the Living, The Fountainhead, Atlas Shrugged and the philosophical publications The Romantic Manifesto, The Virtue of Selfishness, For the New Intellectual, Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal, Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology, and The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution. To date, they have sold over eight million copies. Unfortunately, as critic Dora Jane Hamblin observes,

> It has been far too easy, and too much fun, for everyone from book reviewers to philosophers to economists to poke

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[1]Barbara Branden, "Who Is Ayn Rand?," in Nathaniel Branden, Who Is Ayn Rand? (New York: Paperback Library, 1968), p. 132.

[2]Ibid.

> fun at her excesses. The general hilarity has obscured the issue, which is deadly serious.[3]

As the following pages will hopefully make clear, Ayn Rand should indeed be taken seriously.

Although it is not intended here to write a biography of Rand,[4] a knowledge of her childhood and academic career will provide data crucial to an understanding of Objectivism. Three significant developments helped to form her intellectual character: early academic interests, atheism, and the adoption of America as home.

Early Academic Interests

Ayn Rand was born on February 2, 1905 in St. Petersburg, Russia. Her biographer notes that mathematics first aroused her interest, because "in its rigorous, demanding clarity, she found a constant and exhilarating intellectual challenge."[5] Probably as a result of witnessing the Russian revolution which cost the family their business,[6] Rand de-

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[3]Dora Hamblin, "The Cult of Angry Ayn Rand," Life, LXII (April, 1967), 92.

[4]Interested readers should consult Barbara Branden's biographical essay, "Who Is Ayn Rand?," in Nathaniel Branden, Who Is Ayn Rand?, pp. 119-191. Rand broke with the Brandens in May, 1968 for their alleged philosophical inconsistencies. For details see: Ayn Rand, "To Whom It May Concern," The Objectivist, VII, No. 5 (May, 1968), 1-8. Her letter therein is dated, September 15, 1968.

[5]Barbara Branden, "Who Is Ayn Rand?," p. 121.

[6]Rand's parents were Jewish merchants, When the revolutionary forces confiscated the business, Rand and her family faced starvation for several years. Her novel, We The Living describes revolutionary Russia. Of it she wrote, "I want to say that We The Living is as near to an autobiog-

veloped a loathing for Communism and all forms of collectivism. "I knew it was evil," she said.[7] More significantly perhaps, she began to seek a type of man more worthy, more heroic than the thugs who murdered Czar Nicholas II and mutilated him and his family. Turning from mathematics, she found such men in the novels of Victor Hugo,[8] men heroic in stature, and dedicated to truth and justice:

> It was [for Rand] the discovery of a world of unprecedented scope and grandeur, of magnificently ingenious plots, of inexhaustible imaginativeness, of an exalted sense of life, of man seen as a hero. It was a world swept free of the commonplace, and the trite—a world dedicated to the exciting, the dramatic, the <u>important</u>.[9]

Thus Rand developed a taste in fiction for the heroic man, the moral crusader. This type of novel, referred to by literary historians as Romantic fiction, is characterized by "strong interest in action . . . often based on love, adventure, and combat."[10] As will be seen, her concept of adventure and combat is intellectual and philosophical. <u>Atlas</u>

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raphy as I will ever write. It is not an autobiography in the literal, but only in the intellectual sense. The plot is invented, the background is not." See: <u>We The Living</u> (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1959), p. ix. The novel contains vivid descriptions of the starvation and brutality of Communist Russia.

[7]John Kobler, "The Curious Cult of Ayn Rand," <u>The Saturday Evening Post</u>, CCXXXIV (November, 1961), 12.

[8]When the antecedents of Objectivism are discussed, attention will be given to Hugo's sense of the heroic as it influenced Rand.

[9]Branden, "Who Is Ayn Rand?," p. 126. My brackets. Italics in original.

[10]William Thrall, Addison Hibbard, and C. Hugh Holeman, <u>A Handbook to Literature</u> (New York: Odyssey Press, 1960), p. 425.

Shrugged has been described as an epistemological detective story, with heroic characters the protagonists.

In March of 1964, when interviewed by Playboy magazine, Rand spoke of her interest in Victor Hugo and a modern writer, Mickey Spillane:

> PLAYBOY: Are there any novelists whom you admire?
> RAND: Yes, Victor Hugo.
> PLAYBOY: What about modern novelists?
> RAND: No, there is no one that I could say I admire among the so-called serious writers. I prefer the popular literature of today, which is today's remnant of Romanticism. My favorite is Mickey Spillane.
> PLAYBOY: Why do you like him?
> RAND: Because he is primarily a moralist. In a primitive form, the form of the detective novel, he presents the conflict of good and evil, in terms of black and white. He does not permit a nasty gray mixture of indistinguishable scoundrels on both sides. He presents an uncompromising conflict.[11]

Rand's heroic ideal, her concept of an educated man, is primarily a moralist. Hank Rearden, Howard Roark, John Galt—all of her heroes are crusaders against moral depravity; what values they hold will be considered at length.

Ayn Rand entered the University of Petrograd in 1921, majoring in history. While there, she studied ancient philosophy under the Platonist, Professor N. O. Lossky,[12] but came to reject his idealistic orientation in favor of the realism of Aristotle. Rand recalls:

> In college I had taken history as my major subject, and philosophy as my special interest; the first—in order to

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[11]Alvin Toffler, (Interviewer), "Playboy's Interview with Ayn Rand," Playboy, XI (March, 1964), 40.

[12]Branden, "Who Is Ayn Rand?," pp. 131-32.

> have a factual knowledge of man's past, for my future writings; the second—in order to achieve an objective definition of my values. . . .
>
> I have held the same philosophy I now hold, for as far back as I can remember. . . . My philosophy, in essence, is the concept of man as a heroic being, with productive achievement as his noblest activity, and reason as his only absolute.
>
> The only philosophical debt I can acknowledge is to Aristotle.[13]

Aristotle remains the only philosopher whom she acknowledges as having any influence on her thinking. Rand combines the Romanticism of Hugo and Spillane with Aristotelian metaphysics, epistemology and axiology—the moral philosophy, however, more uniquely her own, but the two agreeing that happiness constitutes the legitimate end for man—to produce her concept of man as a heroic being.

Atheism

In addition to her interest in mathematics and admiration for Hugo and Spillane, another important idea contributed to Rand's intellectual development. Between 1918 and 1921 Rand concluded that God could not exist. She believed the concept of God degrading to man, forcing him to live up to a moral standard he could never possibly achieve, but at the same time incurring punishment for failure to do so.

Rand's atheistic position is a significant reason why Objectivist ethics have been criticized. Western civilization remains, at least in name, committed to the Christian

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[13]Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1957), p. 1085.

ethic, and consequently rejects anyone who proposes an ethical system counter to Christian moral philosophy.

In chapter four, when problems with Objectivism are discussed, space will be devoted to Objectivism and atheism. At first glance, few would be willing to commit their children to a philosophical-ethical system which rejects God as immoral.

America

In 1925, Rand's entire life changed when relatives offered the chance of coming to America:

> At nine-thirty one evening, early in 1926, she boarded her boat at Le Havre. . . . Eight days later, she stood on a pier at the Hudson River, tears running down her face, looking through the lightly falling snow at the sky-scrapers of New York City. . . .
>
> She arrived in New York with fifty dollars in her purse—and the outlines of seventeen plays and novels in her mind. She spent two days looking at the buildings and the glittering electric signs of the greatest city in the world, the city that was her symbol of everything she admired in life.[14]

For Rand, New York represented one of the greatest monuments to the mind of man. It is significant to note, therefore, that many of her heroes are businessmen, industrialists and architects--men who make such a city possible.

After an intense struggle—The Fountainhead, for example, was rejected by twelve publishers for being too 'intellectual'—her literary and philosophical fame caught hold. She became a United States' citizen and in 1921, married an actor Frank O'Connor, to whom she dedicated Atlas Shrugged.

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[14]Branden, "Who Is Ayn Rand?" p. 137.

They now reside in New York.

O'Connor's initial impression of his future wife's character is revealing:

> One of the most striking things about her . . . was her complete openness—the absence of any trace of deviousness. The total honesty. You knew that it would be inconceivable for her ever to act against her own principles. . . . She never wondered if she was going to succeed. The only question was how long it would take.[15]

This description not only reflects Rand's character, but could also describe Dagny Taggart, Hank Rearden or any of her fictional heroes. Honesty, devotion to one's principles, and love of productive work are three virtues she wishes any educated person to possess.

In summary, Ayn Rand's intellectual development resulted from the following positive and negative influences: positive—a love of mathematics, logic, Romantic fiction and Aristotle; negative—any form of collectivism including Communism and a disbelief in God's existence.

For Rand educational theory is a problem to be considered when constructing a comprehensive world view. Objectivism deals with most aspects of American life including government, economics, business, culture, and, to be complete, education. She relates her philosophy to education by direct commentary in her three journals,[16] her purely philosophical

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[15]Frank O'Connor quoted in Barbara Branden, Ibid., pp. 143-44.

[16]Rand's journals include the following: The Objectivist Newsletter which ran from 1962 to 1965, when it became a magazine called The Objectivist. This lasted until September, 1971 and was then replaced by The Ayn Rand Letter, the

works, and the novel. Using the dramatic intricacies of plot and character, she depicts the educated man as one dedicated to rational self-interest, reason, self-esteem, and cognitive excellence.

Before continuing, two objections to the Randian model of the educated man must be considered. Critics have argued that, (1) such men as envisioned by Rand could never exist and (2), her heroes are viciously cruel people who delight in hate and destruction. Obviously this study would terminate here if either charge remained unchallenged. Parents would hardly commit their children to a value change in the face of such objections.

The case for unbelievability perhaps is best stated in Is Objectivism a Religion? by Dr. Albert Ellis, who observes in this connection:

> Ayn Rand's heroes in her novels—such as Howard Roark and John Galt—are utterly impossible humans—or rather superhumans. They have no flaws, and they are literally out of this world. . . . It is even questionable whether it can be correctly claimed that Roark, Galt and the other Randian heroes and heroines are ideal figures, who obviously do not exist today, but who might come alive tomorrow. Could they? I doubt it: They are just not human. Moreover, if they did exist, it would perhaps be unfortunate; for some of their "ideal" characteristics consist of

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latter still in print. The first two publications, edited by Rand and Branden until May, 1968 when he left, contain articles written by Rand and others interested in Objectivism. The Ayn Rand Letter is written usually by Rand, with an occasional contributor. All three publications contain frequent references to education and will be cited throughout this study when appropriate. Additionally, Rand has written a play entitled Night of January 16th. Excepting the journals and Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology, all are available in paperback from Signet Press.

> stubbornness . . . and abysmal intolerance and dogmatism.[17]

When arguing that Roark and Galt do not exist today, Ellis is correct, but ignores the fact that they could (and ought) to exist given the educative value of Objectivist ethics. Significantly Ellis fails to cite Rand's "The Goal of My Writing," in his text. Importantly, it clarifies Rand's intent in creating characters such as Galt:

> This is the motive and purpose of my writing: the projection of an ideal man. The portrayal of a moral ideal, as my ultimate literary goal, as an end in itself—to which any didactic, intellectual, or philosophical values contained in a novel are only the means. . . . My basic test for any story is: "Would I want to meet these characters and observe these events in real life? . . . Is the pleasure of contemplating these characters an end in itself?"
>
> It's as simple as that. But that simplicity involves the total of man's existence. It involves such questions as: What kind of men do I want to see in real life—and why? What kind of events, that is human actions, do I want to see taking place—and why? . . .
>
> It is obvious to what field of human knowledge all these questions belong: to the field of ethics. What is the good? What are the right actions for man to take? What are man's proper values?
>
> Since my purpose is the presentation of an ideal man, I had to define and present the conditions which make him possible and which his existence requires. Since man's character is the product of his premises, I had to define and present the kind of premises and values that create the character of an ideal man and motivate his actions; which means that I had to define and present a rational code of ethics.[18]

When creating characters, she deals with heroic individuals (as the protagonists, of course) who act according to a

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[17]Albert Ellis, Is Objectivism a Religion? (New York: Lyle Stuart, Inc., 1968), p. 254. Italics and quotation marks in original.

[18]Ayn Rand, "The Goal of My Writing," Part I, The Objectivist Newsletter, II, No. 10 (October, 1963), 37. Italics in original.

specific code of values—Objectivist ethics. They are dedicated to "the glory of man."[19] She argues that a man is the product of what values he chooses to accept. Since her ideal man does not yet exist, her novels create him by showing the value changes that will have to occur if he is to exist.

Rand describes art as, "the indispensable medium for the communication of a moral ideal,"[20] which implies the existence of a specific one which characters either endorse or reject. Because the moral ideal here portrays man as heroic, her protagonists naturally will live according to a code of ethics necessary for the achievement of that ideal. Thus they may be believed insofar as they practice (in this case) Objectivist ethics. Rand's and Branden's own thoughts on characterization are important here, the former noting that,

> Characterization is the portrayal of those essential traits which form the unique, distinctive personality of an individual human being.
>
> Characterization requires an extreme degree of selectivity. A human being is the most complex entity on earth; a writer's task is to select the essentials out of that enormous complexity, then proceed to create an individual figure, endowing it with all the appropriate details down to the telling small touches needed to give it full reality. The figure has to be an abstraction, yet look like a concrete; [sic] it has to have the universality of an abstraction, and, simultaneously, the unrepeatable uniqueness of a person.[21]

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[19]Ayn Rand, "The Goal of My Writing," Part II, The Objectivist Newsletter, II, No. 11 (November, 1963), 42.

[20]Ayn Rand, "The Psycho-Epistemology of Art," in The Romantic Manifesto (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1971), p. 21.

[21]Rand, "Basic Principles of Literature," Ibid., p. 52.

Branden elaborates on what is meant by essentials:

> They [her heroes] are projections of man as he might and ought to be; they are projections of the human potential. . . . Ayn Rand does not ask: Do such men exist? She asks: Should such men exist? . . . [Her] principle of characterization is . . . to present a character by means of essentials, that is, to focus on the actions and attributes which reflect the character's basic values and premises—the values and premises that motivate him and direct his crucial choices. . . . To characterize by means of essentials is to focus on the universal—to omit the accidental, the irrelevant, the trivial, the contingent—and to present the fundamental motivational principles which are potentially applicable to all men.[22]

By selecting the essentials, the principles which govern a character's actions, Rand creates heroes or villains depending on whether or not they achieve moral excellence. Thus, critics who argue unbelievability ignore the criteria defined as essential for character creation.

John Galt, the principal hero in Atlas Shrugged, dominates the novel. The entire novel challenges the reader (and characters in the novel itself) to learn his identity and beliefs.[23] Its first words, "Who is John Galt?" launch a fascinating and brilliantly written epistemological mystery. Later in the novel, Galt himself, in a 35,000 word speech, provides the answer to his identity, as well as to the nature of the moral code he practices. As such, it

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[22]Branden, Who Is Ayn Rand?, p. 81. Brackets and italics in original.

[23]A careful reading of Atlas Shrugged reveals that its several protagonists are unable to discern the nature of Galt's mission and thus, at first, act to thwart it. The infallibility charge, therefore, cannot be sustained. It results from a misreading of the novel. What is significant, however, is that the protagonists continue to respect and seek the truth.

provides a valuable insight into Rand's concept of the educated man:

> My morality, the morality of reason, is contained in a single axiom: existence exists—and in a single choice: to live. The rest proceeds from these. To live, man must hold three things as the supreme and ruling values of his life: Reason—Purpose—Self-esteem. . . . These three values imply and require all of man's virtues, and all his virtues pertain to the relation of existence and consciousness: rationality, independence, integrity, honesty, justice, productiveness, pride. . . . Did you want to know who is John Galt? I am the first man of ability who refused to regard it as guilt. I am the first man who would not do penance for his virtues or let them be used as the tools of my destruction. I am the first man who would not suffer martyrdom at the hands of those who wished me to perish for the privilege of keeping them alive. I am the first man who told them that I did not need them, and until they learned to deal with me as traders, giving value for value, they would have to exist without me, as I would exist without them; then I would let them learn whose is the need and whose the ability--and if human survival is the standard, whose terms would set the way to survive. . . . I swear—by my life and my love of it—that I will never live for the sake of another man, nor ask another man to live for mine.[24]

In brief, that selection from Galt's speech describes the virtues, terms and conditions to which a rational man must adhere if he is to approach the Randian concept of the educated man.

Critics such as Ellis have argued that such men as John Galt could never exist; they are superhuman creatures who never err, never commit one act of immorality (according to their own code), and refuse to recognize that man will often choose the evil, even when trying to accomplish good.[25] But, the fact which Ellis refuses to recognize is that a man

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[24]Rand, Atlas Shrugged, pp. 944, 957, 993.

[25]Ellis, Is Objectivism a Religion?, pp. 179-96.

who aspires to live as a John Galt might indeed err, as some characters in Atlas Shrugged do. Infallibility is not a necessary condition here, but cognitive awareness is, meaning that "Since man must act, his survival requires that he apprehend[26] reality, so that he may regulate his behavior accordingly."[27] In other words, we may never be John Galts, but if we choose to think, to set proper values, to consciously remain aware of reality, and to recognize and correct any errors in our thinking, then we are living properly. So infallibility is not required; the willingness to think is.

Lastly, the charges of cruelty and hate require refutation. If these charges are true, then the Objectivist view of an educated man ought not to exist. Writing in Commonweal, Patricia Donegan states the case:

> Miss Rand's book [Atlas Shrugged] is hardly acceptable as a novel and her premise proceeds from hate. She deplores the idea of Original Sin and considers "pity" immoral. Nowhere does she use the word "compassion." She envisions reward completely on the basis of merit, and this merit is judged only by intelligence and ability. Charity and humility have no place in the author's scheme of things. The destruction of the weak to the advantage of the strong is applauded. It is dispiriting to think of an outpouring

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[26]Most realists choose to use the words correspond to, rather than apprehend. For example, Van Cleve Morris writes that the key to Realist epistemology is, " . . . seeing to it that our statements about the world we live in do in fact correspond to the way things really are." See: Philosophy and the American School (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961), pp. 145-46. N.B.: Morris, though an Existentialist by conviction, has written about other philosophies.

[27]Nathaniel Branden, The Psychology of Self-Esteem (New York: Bantam Books Inc., 1971), p. 97. Italics in original.

of hate on this scale on any audience.[28]

Objectivism indeed rejects the concept of Original Sin as immoral, but hardly out of hate. Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines Original Sin as follows: "hereditary sin or defect often held in Christian theology to be transmitted from one generation to the next and inherited by each person as a consequence of the original sinful choice made by the first man of the human race." John Galt speaks of the term in his speech:

> A sin without volition is a slap at morality and an insolent contradiction in terms: that which is outside the possibility of choice is outside the province of morality. If a man is evil by birth, he has no will, he can be neither good nor evil; a robot is amoral. To hold, as man's sin, a fact not open to his choice is a mockery of morality. To hold man's nature as his sin is a mockery of nature. To punish him for a crime he committed before he was born is a mockery of justice. To hold him guilty in a matter where no innocence exists is a mockery of reason. To destroy morality, nature, justice and reason by means of a single concept is a feat of evil hardly to be matched.[29]

Galt (and Rand) refuse to accept[30] any code which would divorce moral culpability from free choice, for how can one sin if he cannot choose? If men are guilty by nature, then no morality is possible to them. Thus, the rejection of

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[28]Patricia Donegan, "A Point of View: Atlas Shrugged," Commonweal, LXVII (November, 1957), 156. My brackets.

[29]Rand, Atlas Shrugged, p. 951.

[30]The following, from the Richmond Times-Dispatch and reprinted in The Objectivist, suggests that even children cannot accept Original Sin: "Mrs. A. T. Dinwiddie asked her Sunday school class what 'you must do before you obtain forgiveness of sin.' There was a pause. Finally one 6-year old timidly held up his hand and said: 'Sin.'" See: The Objectivist, VI, No. 3 (March, 1967), 14.

Original Sin probably stems from a love of man and his potential for the heroic.

Donegan next argues that Atlas Shrugged regards pity, compassion, and charity as immoral. A careful reading, however would reveal that what Objectivism rejects is altruism, defined by Webster as "uncalculated consideration of, regard for, or devotion to others' interests. . . ." Uncalculated consideration Rand totally eschews. More than once, she has cautioned readers not to confuse altruism with benevolence or ordinary human kindness:

> Many people believe that altruism means kindness, benevolence or respect for the rights of others. But it means the exact opposite: it teaches self-sacrifice, as well as the sacrifice of others, to any unspecified "public need"; it regards man as a sacrificial animal.[31]

That is what Objectivism rejects—that man must (uncalculated consideration) sacrifice his own self-interest as a moral obligation: "Do not hide behind such superficialities as whether you should or should not give a dime to a beggar," Rand writes. "That is not the issue. The issue is whether you do or do not have the right to exist without giving him that dime."[32] Altruism derives from the premise of need—that one's need constitutes a moral claim on any producer,

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[31]Ayn Rand, "Theory and Practice," in Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1967), p. 135.

[32]Ayn Rand, Faith and Force: The Destroyers of the Modern World, reprint of a lecture delivered at Yale University (February 17, 1960), Brooklyn College (April 4, 1960), and Columbia University (May 5, 1960). (New York: The Objectivist Inc., 1960), 5. Italics in original.

who then becomes bound to satisfy it. The moral issue involved is this:

> . . . that a man has no claim on others (i.e. that it is not their moral duty to help . . . and that he [one in need] cannot demand their help as his right) does not preclude or prohibit good will among men and does not make it immoral to offer or to accept voluntary, non-sacrificial assistance.[33]

One therefore remains free to provide whatever aid he wishes to give to those less fortunate, provided he is not forced to do so.[34] In With Charity Toward None, William O'Neill challenges the Objectivist definition of altruism noting, "It is, in essence, the type of self-gratification which is achieved by identifying oneself with, and subsequently participating in, the well-being of others on a psychological level."[35] But, O'Neill ignores an essential concept—volition. Of course one may derive gratification from helping another, thus boosting his self-esteem, but the pleasure soon dissipates if assistance becomes sustained obligation. In fact, the very reason a benevolent (not altruistic) individual may find helping another pleasurable is because he respects human dignity enough to want to voluntarily get involved.

Nathaniel Branden provides the philosophical distinc-

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[33]Ayn Rand, "The Question of Scholarships," The Objectivist, V, No. 6 (June, 1966), 11-12. My brackets. Parentheses in original.

[34]It is for this reason that Objectivists reject the welfare state. One is forced to help those in "need" indefinitely. Thus the virtue of productivity becomes a vice, for the more a man produces, the more is available to loot.

[35]O'Neill, With Charity Toward None, pp. 201-02.

tion between altruism and benevolence:

> The literal philosophical meaning of altruism is: placing others above self. As an ethical principle, altruism holds that man must make the welfare of others his primary concern. . . . A morality that tells man that he is to regard himself as a sacrificial animal, is not an expression of benevolence or good will. . . . Benevolence, good will and respect for the rights of others proceed from an opposite code of morality; from the principle that man the individual is not an object of sacrifice, but an entity of supreme value; that man exists for his own sake and is not a means to the ends of others. . . .[36]

Altruism, then, turns man into a sacrificial animal waiting helplessly for the first claimant in need to feed upon him by right. Benevolence, however, has as its foundation a profound regard for the right of man. Men help one another out of respect for the value of a human life (their own and the person being helped), and not because they are forced to do so. In an emergency situation, a man may properly risk his life, for example, to save children in a fire—this is benevolence. But, to have the victims of the fire then claim that their rescuer must support them indefinitely since they have no home is altruism.

Thus, Rand's heroes are not unfeeling brutes who take pleasure in destroying the weak as Donegan would have us believe, but people of self-esteem who respect the value of a human life enough to not turn that value into a vice. Whenever there is a sacrifice, there is usually a victim.

Finally, Donegan suggests that Rand bases reward only

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[36]Nathaniel Branden, "Benevolence versus Altruism," The Objectivist Newsletter, I, No. 7 (July, 1962), 27. Italics in original.

on the principle of merit or achievement. This observation distorts the principle of achievement as the foundation for human rights. Especially here, there is no excuse for misinterpretation because Rand herself has addressed the issue in clear, precise language when replying to a reader who asked about the connection between reward and achievement. She notes: "One loves a man's character, not his achievement; one loves that in his character which made him capable of achieving."[37] Thus, reward is contingent upon the type of character that makes productive achievement possible.

John Galt, Hank Rearden and Rand's other fictional heroes, then, are men and women dedicated to rational self-interest, self-esteem and cognitive excellence, virtues making productive achievement possible. They are, in Rand's words, the "new intellectuals," who are

> . . . willing to think. All those who know that man's life must be guided by reason, those who value their own life and are not willing to surrender it to the cult of despair in the modern jungle of cynical impotence. . . . He will be an integrated man, that is: a thinker who is a man of action. He will know that ideas divorced from consequent action are fraudulent, and that action divorced from ideas is suicidal. He will know that the conceptual level of psycho-epistemology[38]—the volitional level of reason and thought--is the basic necessity of man's survival and his greatest moral virtue. He will know that

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[37]Ayn Rand, "An Answer to Readers," The Objectivist, VI, No. 3 (March, 1967), 13. Italics in original.

[38]Psycho-epistemology is defined as: the study of man's cognitive processes from the aspect of the interaction between the conscious mind and the automatic functions of the subconscious." See: Ayn Rand, "The Psycho-Epistemology of Art," in The Romantic Manifesto, p. 18.

men need philosophy for the purpose of living on earth.[39] Her educated man is a philosopher, meaning one dedicated to reason, purpose, and self-esteem with their corresponding virtues of independence, rationality, integrity, honesty, justice, productiveness, and pride—all of which have special meanings for Objectivists. In stressing these virtues as necessary for her educated man to practice, Rand demands a change in human values, which ought to occur if his goal of living on earth is to be realized.

SUMMARY

Philosopher-novelist Ayn Rand's interests include Aristotle, Hugo's concept of the heroic, history, and mathematics. In repudiating all forms of collectivism and the moral evil of altruism, she has posited her concept of the educated man, a "new intellectual" dedicated to reason, purpose and self-esteem.

Characters such as Hank Rearden, Howard Roark and especially John Galt are profoundly moral men, men who Rand thinks ought to exist. Far from being inhuman or cruel, these men dedicate themselves to the glory of man as a heroic being.

This paper will deal with Rand's concept of the ideal man, her educated man, and his potential for existence. The

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[39]Ayn Rand, "Introduction," For the New Intellectual (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1961), pp. 50-51. Italics in original.

second chapter will discuss the intellectual antecedents of Objectivism, and the third will develop in more detail the metaphysics, epistemology and axiology of Objectivism.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ANTECEDENTS OF OBJECTIVISM

The first chapter suggests that Objectivism developed from ideas and concepts Rand formulated while a student. Chapter two examines the question of influence[1] in more detail by studying the effect of: Aristotle, Hugo, Spillane, and the Social Darwinists, Herbert Spencer and William Sumner, upon Rand's Objectivism.

Aristotle's influence may be considered as threefold: metaphysical and logical, educational, and aesthetic. The word Objectivism means that reality exists independently (i.e., is objective) of man's mind. In expressing his belief

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[1]The question of influence presents many problems, and is often extremely difficult to validate. First of all, influence should be taken to mean influence in a positive sense. The definition presumed throughout is Gottschalk's: "a persistent shaping effect upon the thought and behavior of human beings, singly or collectively." Similarity of ideas does not in itself constitute influence. Many factors such as tradition, similarity between two cultures, etc. could account for two writers expressing like ideas. "Proof must be provided that the later writer was in fact exposed to the ideas of the earlier one." See: Louis Gottschalk, Understanding History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1969), pp. 245-54. This chapter suggests that the above influences shaped Rand's thinking contingent on the following questions being successfully answered: Did Rand read the material concerned? Did she accept all or only part of what she read? If accepted, do the ideas appear in her own writings and if so, to what extent do they shape her thought? If these questions can be satisfactorily answered, then the probability of influence exists.

in an objective reality, Aristotle takes issue with Plato's dichotomy of shadows and forms, and suggests instead that what the senses perceive constitutes true reality:

> Now the view that neither the sensible qualities nor the sensations would exist is doubtless true (for they are affections of the perceiver), but that the substrata which cause the sensation should not exist even apart from the sensation is impossible. For sensation is surely not the sensation of itself, but there is something beyond the sensation; for that which moves is prior in nature to that which is moved. . . .[2]

Of the senses Aristotle writes, " . . . we do not regard any of the senses as Wisdom; yet surely these give the most authoritative knowledge of particulars."[3] Thus he concludes that particular objects exist in reality, comprehended by the mind through the senses. As will be discussed shortly, Rand accepts the same conclusions.

Aristotle believes that reality could be known through four causes: material, formal, efficient, and final,[4] since all men, when contemplating the nature of reality, seek " . . . to deal with the first causes and the principles of things."[5] Such for Aristotle constitutes wisdom. Rand speaks of this when dealing with a man's ability to form concepts:

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[2]Aristotle, Metaphysics, 1010b 32-37. Trans. W. D. Ross. Parentheses in original.

[3]Ibid., 981b 10-11.

[4]By way of example: If a man makes a coin, the material cause is the gold out of which it is made, the formal cause is the shape the coin takes, the efficient cause is the man, and the final cause is the purpose for which the coin is made.

[5]Aristotle, Metaphysics, 981b 29.

> Concepts of materials are formed by observing the differences in the constituent materials of entities. (Materials exist only in the form of specific entities, such as a nugget of gold. . . .) The concept of "gold," for instance is formed by isolating gold objects from all others, and then abstracting and retaining the material, the gold, and omitting the measurements of the objects . . . in which gold may exist. Thus, the material is the same in all the concrete instances subsumed under the concept, and differs only in quantity.[6]

The gold, then, exists independently of the mind and is perceived by the senses as Aristotle, likewise, would have it. The principle of concept formation has as its base an independent reality. The mind ignores specific (material) examples of gold, and abstracts the form. Without the concept of causality concept formation would be impossible in Randian epistemology.

Aristotle's conception of reality involves the following specifics: substance, form and matter, act and potency. In Book VII of the Metaphysics, he discusses the concept of substance defining it as a real entity, which actually exists: "that which 'is' primarily is the 'what'. . . . "[7] We may observe how the Objectivist theory of concept formation develops from this: a substance (gold) exists as an entity including its dimensions (accidents) which may be separated from it only by a process of cognitive abstraction, but may not exist apart from it. Of course, all of the above is contingent on the existence of an objective reality. Both

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[6]Ayn Rand, Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology (New York: The Objectivist Inc., 1969), p. 20. Italics in original. Parentheses in original.

[7]Aristotle, Metaphysics, 1028a 14.

philosophers, then, deny the concept of innate knowledge.

Aristotle divides substance into two categories: form and matter. The form of something, permanent and lasting, is that which makes it what it is. Form means type:

> . . . the artist makes, or the father begets, a 'such' out of a 'this'; and when it has been begotten, it is a 'this such'. . . . And when we have the whole, such and such a form in this flesh and in these bones, this is Callias or Socrates; and they are different in virtue of their matter (for that is different), but the same in form . . .[8]

Related to form is the principle of actuality or the existence of an object. Substance (form) is actuality; it is what an object actually is in reality.

Matter is that which assumes a given form and that which makes any change possible, i.e., the raw material (the gold) out of which is produced the coin. Related to matter is the principle of potentiality. That is, an object has the 'potential' to become 'actualized' by assuming a definite form; therefore change occurs when potency becomes actualized. Notes A. H. Armstrong:

> . . . whenever a potentiality is coming to be actual there is always an actual being existing in full actuality from the beginning of the process which can be recognized as its cause.[9]

Thus, potency is acted upon by an existing actuality, the efficient cause, thereby bringing about change.

Aristotle's contribution to philosophy rests in his directing " . . . attention to the world we actually experi-

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[8] Ibid., 1033b 22-24, 1034a 5-8.

[9] A. H. Armstrong, An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), p. 81.

ence, turning away from the tendency to concoct other worlds presumably more real than the one we wake up to every day."[10] Rand's contribution to philosophy is of like importance.

In accepting Aristotle's metaphysical position, Rand outlines several principles including the following:

> My philosophy, Objectivism, holds that:
> 1. Reality exists as an objective absolute—facts are facts independent of man's feelings, wishes, hopes or fears.
> 2. Reason (the faculty which identifies and integrates the material provided by man's senses) is man's only means of perceiving reality, his only source of knowledge, his only guide to action, his basic means of survival.[11]

In different words, Aristotle says the same thing: that reality is objective, not spiritual, and that entities exist which the mind, via the senses, may come to understand. Technically, however, Aristotle states that the mind consists of an active and potential power. The potential (or receptive) mind is only capable of synthesizing sense data (referred to, therefore, as the common sense), but the final act of synthesis (nous) must be performed by the active mind. This higher or active power is uniquely man's.

The Randian concept of metaphysics is related to her second point as follows:

> Existence exists—and the act of grasping that statement implies two corollary axioms: that something exists which one perceives and that one exists possessing consciousness. . . . Whatever the degree of your knowledge

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[10] Van Cleve Morris, Philosophy and the American School (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961), p. 56.

[11] Ayn Rand, "Introducing Objectivism," The Objectivist Newsletter, I, No. 8 (August, 1962), 35. Parentheses in original.

> these two—existence and consciousness—are axioms you cannot escape, these two are the irreducible primaries [i.e., metaphysical] implied in any action you undertake. . . . Whether you know the shape of a pebble or the structure of a solar system, the axioms remain the same: that it exists [independent of the mind] and that you know it [via the senses and reason].[12]

In other words, to survive on earth, one must know that an objective reality exists ("something exists which one perceives"—Rand; "but that the substrata which cause the sensation should not exist even apart from the sensation is impossible"—Aristotle), with survival contingent on the degree to which the mind corresponds to what is real. To evade reality is to define the wish or whim as the real, thereby leading to epistemological and metaphysical chaos. Although Objectivist metaphysics will be discussed later in more detail, suffice it to say that for now, Rand believes (as does Aristotle) that an objective reality exists, and that man must use his reason if he is to live as a man.

Objectivism derives intellectual ballast not only from Aristotle's metaphysics, but also from his Organon, the logical treatises. Specifically, the principle of identity (A = A) and its metaphysical implications are of vital significance to Rand:

> The Law of Identity (A is A) is a rational man's paramount consideration in the process of determining his interests. He knows that the contradictory is the impossible . . . he does not permit himself to hold contradictory values, to pursue contradictory goals. . . . The source of man's rights is . . . the law of identity.

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[12] Ayn Rand, "This Is John Galt Speaking," in For the New Intellectual (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1961), pp. 124-25. My brackets. Italics in original.

> A is A and man is man. Rights are conditions of existence required by man's nature for his proper survival.[13]

Because Objectivist ethics—the value system to which her educated man ought to aspire—is contingent on the principle of identity, it becomes necessary to determine Aristotle's use of the principle, and whether Rand correctly interprets its use.

Aristotle notes, " . . . it [substance] has no contrary. What could be the contrary of any primary substance, such as the individual man or animal? It has none."[14] In other words, A = A—the substance man is the substance man. Related to this principle is what Aristotle terms, "the most certain principle of all," the principle of contradiction, or the principle of identity in negative form. The principle of contradiction states, " . . . that the same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to the same subject and in the same respect."[15]

Rand has much to say about these principles. When addressing those who choose to evade reality by wishing something to be the real, John Galt comments:

> Whatever you choose to consider, be it an object, an attribute, or an action, the law of identity remains the same. A leaf cannot be a stone at the same time, it cannot be all red and all green at the same time, it cannot

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[13]Ayn Rand, "The 'Conflicts' of Men's Interests," in The Virtue of Selfishness (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1964), p. 51. Italics in original.

[14]Aristotle, Categories, 3b 24-26. Trans. E. M. Edghill. My brackets.

[15]Ibid., 1005b 18-20.

> freeze and burn at the same time. A is A. . . . The restriction they [those who seek to deny the law and thus evade reality] seek to escape is the law of identity. The freedom they seek is freedom from the fact that an A will remain an A, no matter what their tears and tantrums. . . . An honest man does not desire until he has identified the object of his desire. He says: 'It is, therefore I want it.' They [the evaders] say: 'I want it, therefore it is.'[16]

It becomes apparent that the Objectivist view of reality rests on the axiom: A is A—man is man and existence exists, regardless of the wish. In the context of Objectivism, then the law is a moral law and those who evade reality by substituting wishes (I want it, therefore it is) for what is, and act upon those suppositions as if they were real, deny reason as man's absolute and proceed to force others to conform to their private reality. For example, when students threaten to riot unless their demands are met, Rand argues that they wish the right to force the university to conform to their own private version of reality. But, just as a leaf cannot at the same time be a stone, so their personal versions of reality cannot at the same time constitute what is really real. The rebelling students thus violate the Principles of Identity and Contradiction. She writes:

> In order to live, man must act; in order to act, he must make choices; in order to make choices, he must define a code of values, he must know what he is [rational] and where he is [objective reality]—i.e., he must know his own nature (including his means of knowledge) and the nature of the universe in which he acts. . . . He needs

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[16]Rand, "This Is John Galt Speaking," in For the New Intellectual, pp. 125, 150, 155. My brackets.

philosophy.[17]

For now, the where is important. For Rand, man lives in an Aristotelian universe, which implies a definite epistemological construct—namely that man's mind is competent to understand and deal with the reality implied in the metaphysics. In so doing, a man makes choices which suggest a specific code of values. The educational implications are significant and will be discussed in future chapters.

One of Objectivism's critics, Albert Ellis, denies the validity of making the law of identity a moral concept, and suggests an improper application of the term:

> It is notable that where the objectivists are constantly quoting Aristotle's Law of Identity in an effort to prove that anyone who in any way lives with compromises and contradictions is horribly immoral . . . , Aristotle himself did not use the Law in this manner. On the contrary, in regard to human affairs, he constantly espoused what has come to be known as the Aristotelian mean—that is, conduct that is moderate and avoids extremes or excesses. . . . The Law of Identity was devised by Aristotle as a logical measure to demonstrate when two propositions are contradictory. It does not necessarily imply, however, that it is wrong or terrible for contradictions to exist.[18]

Again, Ellis is only partly correct for although Aristotle does indeed suggest the golden mean (Nicomachean Ethics, Book II, Chapter VI) as a guide for conduct, in the Metaphysics he speaks of the consequences of holding contradictions. First, stating the principle of contradiction (the

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[17]Ayn Rand, "Philosophy and Sense of Life," in The Romantic Manifesto (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1971), p. 30. My brackets. Italics in original.

[18]Albert Ellis, Is Objectivism a Religion? (New York: Lyle Stuart, 1968), pp. 192-93. Italics in original.

negative of the principle of identity),

> . . . the same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to the same subject and in the same respect . . . it is impossible for any one to believe the same thing to be and not to be . . . ,[19]

he next proceeds to identify the type of man who would deny it, and what consequences would result:

> But if all are alike both wrong and right one who is in this condition will not be able either to speak or to say anything intelligible . . . and if he makes no judgment but 'thinks' and 'does not think,' indifferently, what difference will there be between him and a vegetable?[20]

It would appear, according to Aristotle himself, that the principles of contradiction and identity have profound moral consequences, for to evade them is to evade judgment, which is to evade thinking, which is to cease to be a man. In accepting the metaphysical position of Aristotle and his law of identity, Rand has defined the premises to which her educated man ought to adhere. He is one who accepts the existence of objective reality which cannot be contradicted or evaded.

Aristotle's concept of the educated man should be examined to determine whether Rand accepts it. Because he did not write a specific educational document, it becomes necessary to determine his educational beliefs by consulting the Nicomachean Ethics and Politics. The discussion will be limited to the nature of happiness (the good) and education's role in helping man to achieve it.

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[19]Aristotle, Metaphysics, 1005b 18-20, 23-24.

[20]Ibid., 1008b 8-13.

In the Politics, Aristotle notes:

> No one will doubt that the legislator should direct his attention above all to the education of youth; for the neglect of education does harm to the constitution. . . . That education should be regulated by law and should be an affair of state is not to be denied.[21]

Rand does not completely endorse Aristotle's thinking, and here is an example of disagreement. Although she emphatically rejects state control of education,[22] opting instead for a privately operated and administered school system, she does believe along with Aristotle that politics as method of inquiry must not be divorced from ethics, and that both have a practical aim. Writes D. J. Allan:

> . . . namely the promotion and maintenance of human happiness . . . likewise the purpose of lecturer and student is not merely to learn the truth, but to improve men and make them happier.[23]

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[21]Aristotle, Politics, 1337a 11-14, 33-4. Trans. B. Jowett.

[22]This point, which runs counter to the American educational practice of common schooling for all, will be considered when Objectivism and American educational practice is discussed. The case for a private educational system is stated by Nathaniel Branden. See: "Intellectual Ammunition Department," The Objectivist Newsletter, II, No. 6 (June, 1963), 22.

[23]It is important to understand what Aristotle means by happiness. The Greek word is eudaimonia, meaning good demon. What Aristotle does is to change the concept from an external one (demon) to an internal one, thereby making man himself responsible for his own happiness; not some external force. The educational implications are significant: " . . . when heavy responsibility for the course of human affairs is shifted to its human origin, education takes upon itself enormous activities." See: Robert S. Brumbaugh and Nathaniel M. Lawrence, Philosophers on Education: Six Essays on the Foundation of Western Thought (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1963), pp. 54-55. Rand accepts this position, noting that man must create his own happiness through the exercise of reason, engaged in productive work. For selection

To this end Objectivism completely subscribes as the following, from Anthem, makes clear. A character speaks:

> I know not if this earth on which I stand is the core of the universe or if it is but a speck of dust lost in eternity. . . . For I know what happiness is possible to me on earth. And my happiness needs no higher aim to vindicate it. My happiness is not the means to any end. It is the end. It is its own goal. It is its own purpose.[24]

It remains to be determined whether Rand and Aristotle mean the same thing when speaking of happiness for both merely valuing happiness as man's end would not be enough grounds for suggesting influence. Aristotle attempts to discover the relationship man has to happiness by determining the function of man. He writes:

> What, then, can this function be? It is not life; for life is apparently something that man shares with plants; and we are looking for something peculiar to him. We must exclude therefore the life of nutrition and growth. There is next what may be called the life of sensation. But this, too, apparently is shared by man with horses, cattle and all other animals. There remains what I may call the active life of the rational part of man's being. . . . The function of man then is activity of soul in accordance with reason, or not apart from reason.[25]

Aristotle thus believes that man's function, unique to him as man, is rational activity. The active mind actualizes what potential man has for living as man, and further serves to control emotions.

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quoted above, see: D. J. Allan, The Philosophy of Aristotle (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 123-25.

[24]Ayn Rand, Anthem (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1946), pp. 123-25.

[25]Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, 1097b 33-35, 1098a 1-3, 6-7. Trans. James Welldon.

Proper activity for Aristotle must be learned through the educative process. Of particular concern here is the question: "What kind of education will produce the dispositions desired by a given individual? . . . "[26] Aristotle concludes that the best kind of education should have as its goal the aim of all men—happiness, the best and noblest activity in the world, namely the performance of intrinsically excellent activities. But what activities of the soul are intrinsically excellent? Aristotle speaks of arete, commonly translated as virtue, but meaning more accurately, excellence depending on knowledge. There are two virtues of the intellect: (1) theoretical wisdom (sophia) and (2) practical wisdom (phronesis).[27] These could be acquired, he believes, through education, chiefly the lecture method, but not without some activity on the learner's part. Sophia is concerned with permanent and objective moral truths which men must come to know by study. Sophia, however, must operate in conjunction with phronesis, an application of the former to a particular situation.

Although Rand does not use precisely these same words, she does consider cognitive development to be man's best and noblest activity:

Rationality is man's basic virtue, the source of all his

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[26]William Frankena, Three Historical Philosophies of Education (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1965), p. 19.

[27]Brumbaugh and Lawrence, Philosophers on Education, p. 54.

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> other virtues. Man's basic vice, the source of all his evils, is the act of unfocusing his mind, the suspension of his consciousness, which is not blindness, but the refusal to see, not ignorance, but the refusal to know. Irrationality is the rejection of man's means of survival. . . . The virtue of Productiveness is the recognition of the fact that productive work is the process by which man's mind sustains his life. . . .[28]

Thus, intellectually excellent activity consists of using one's reason by engaging in productive work. Rand believes that man needs both theoretical wisdom (philosophy) in order to live as a man, and practical wisdom (proper conduct) in order to live as a moral being. Both philosophers consider reason a virtue, and—as later chapters will suggest—Rand is extremely critical of American education for its failure to provide moral leadership for young people.

Aristotle also considers morally excellent activity, calling it virtues of character such as prudence and justice. These are contingent upon, and cannot operate without phronesis. The virtues hailed by Rand as proper to any educated man include: rationality, independence, integrity, honesty, justice, productiveness, and pride. These will be considered when Objectivist ethics are examined.

A clear relationship between intellectually and morally excellent activity is established by both Aristotle and Rand, the former noting:

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[28]Ayn Rand, "The Objectivist Ethics," in The Virtue of Selfishness, pp. 25-26. Italics in original. Other philosophers including Hegel and Kant would also identify cognitive development as man's noblest activity. Rand, however, rejects their interpretations as destructive. Interested readers should consult the introductory essay in For The New Intellectual, pp. 10-57.

> . . . that since moral virtue is a state of character concerned with choice, and choice is deliberate desire, therefore both the reasoning must be true and the desire right, if the choice is to be good, and the latter must pursue just what the former asserts. . . . This is why choice cannot exist either without reason and intellect or without a moral state. . . . [29]

Man, in acting to achieve happiness as his final end, must use his reason in the choice-making process. Since right choice implies some moral standard, the latter becomes a necessary condition in the life of a moral man. Both Rand and Aristotle require a rational evaluation of activity, with Rand also noting that the decision to be rational involves a value judgment, namely the worth of the mind. Writing in this connection, Nathaniel Branden observes:

> Objectivism locates man's free will in a single action of his consciousness, in a single basic choice: to focus his mind or to suspend it; to think or not to think . . . man has the power to regulate the action of his own consciousness. Man has the power to exercise his rational faculty—or to suspend it.[30]

One who chooses to evade thinking, to ignore his reason, ceases to engage in intellectually excellent activity and lives as a vegetable, to use Aristotle's metaphor. For Rand and Aristotle survival is far from automatic; a man must think to survive, and that requires consciously sustained choice.

Criteria determining morally excellent activity, thinks Aristotle, arise only in a social context, for

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[29]Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, 1139a 22-26, 32-33.

[30]Nathaniel Brandon, "Intellectual Ammunition Department," The Objectivist Newsletter, III, No. 1 (January, 1964), 3. Italics in original.

" . . . by doing the acts that we do in our transactions with other men we become just or unjust."[31] It is from social actions that moral states arise.[32] The principle developed by Aristotle to govern this activity is known as the golden mean.

For Aristotle, one must never[33] be disposed to act in either deficiency or excess, and it is the function of the educative process to cultivate behavior in accordance with the golden mean. D. H. Allan explains how:

> A good character is a whole set of . . . dispositions; in order to produce it, you must make your pupil take up the right attitude under your direction, until he can do so spontaneously and from knowledge.[34]

For example, we may observe that there exists a mean between the excesses of confidence and cowardice, namely bravery. A man may be confident and lacking in fear, therefore rash, or fearful and lacking in confidence, therefore a coward. Importantly, however, the learner must act to be moral. In

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[31]Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Book II, Chapter I, p. 953.

[32]Here is another instance where Rand and Aristotle disagree, the former not sharing the latter's enthusiasm for man as servant of the state. Branding such an anti-democratic attitude as collectivistic, she postulates instead the belief that morally excellent activity, while operative in a social context, derives from reason—the only ethical absolute Objectivism recognizes.

[33]Aristotle qualifies this noting: " . . . not every action nor every passion admits of a mean; for some have names that already imply badness, e.g., . . . adultery, theft, murder. . . . It is not possible then, ever to be right with regard to them; one must always be wrong." See: Nicomachean Ethics, Book II, Chapter IV.

[34]Allan, The Philosophy of Aristotle, p. 128.

other words,

> . . . moral virtue consists in observance of the Mean by instances of conduct actually approved or condemned according to prevailing standards.[35]

For Aristotle—and here again Rand disagrees—standards of behavior which the child learns as he intellectually matures are set by the state as a means of preserving its own institutions.[36] For the sake of clarification, we may briefly outline the Objectivist concept of a just state:

> The proper functions of a government fall into three broad categories, all of them involving the issues of physical force and protection of man's rights: the police, to protect men from criminals—the armed services, to protect men from foreign invaders—the law courts, to settle disputes among men according to objective laws.[37]

All other governmental activities, other than those specified above, are therefore immoral if the government chooses to engage in them, since so doing involves the violation of someone's rights.

It should be noted that Aristotle's use of the "golden mean" as man's proper guide to moral conduct conflicts with Randian ethics. Aristotle comments:

> Again, however much all things may be so 'and not so' still there is a more or less in the nature of things; for we should not say that two and three are equally even, nor is he who thinks four things are five equally

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[35] Ibid., p. 130.

[36] Thomas Davidson, Aristotle and Ancient Educational Ideals (New York: Burt Franklin, 1969), p. 179. See also: Aristotle, Politics, Book VIII.

[37] Ayn Rand, "The Nature of Government," in Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1967), p. 344. Italics in original.

> wrong with him who thinks they are a thousand. If then they are not equally wrong, obviously one is less wrong and therefore more right. If that which has more of any quality is nearer the norm, there must be some truth to which the more truer is near . . . and we shall have got rid of the unqualified doctrine which would prevent us from determining anything in our thought.[38]

Here, Aristotle argues that in human conduct, a man's actions may be "less wrong and therefore more right." In other words, in any given dispute, the parties concerned may each argue their actions to be morally justifiable. For example, one who steals rather than work certainly is more wrong than a man who steals a loaf of bread to feed his starving child.

But, concluding that A is A, good is good and bad is bad, Ayn Rand disagrees with her philosophical hero. In an article entitled "The Cult of Moral Grayness," she voices her conviction:

> One of the most eloquent symptoms of the moral bankruptcy of today's culture is a certain fashionable attitude toward moral issues best summarized as: "There are no blacks and whites, there are only grays." . . . Before one can identify anything as "gray," one has to know what is black and what is white. In the field of morality, this means that one must first identify what is good and what is evil. And when a man has ascertained that one alternative is good and the other evil, he has no justification for choosing a mixture . . . for choosing any part of that which one knows to be evil.[39]

Several factors are bothersome. Aristotle's doctrine of the mean, which he favors over the law of identity as a moral guide, appears more applicable to a broader range of ethical problems than the latter, which would be sufficient if all

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[38]Aristotle, Metaphysics, 1008b 32-37, 1009a 1-5.

[39]Ayn Rand, "The Cult of Moral Grayness," The Objectivist Newsletter, III, No. 6 (June, 1964), 21.

of man's moral dilemmas were clear cut. But, common sense and experience indicate that many decisions a man must make involve a certain amount of goodness on both sides. From Rand's own economic thinking comes an example. She favors laissez-faire Capitalism over the welfare state, since the former respects individual rights, while the latter implies stealing from those who produce. All well and good, until the question of orphans arises. Obviously they are too young to work; yet under laissez-faire Capitalism no public money may be spent to aid them, for A is A and socialism in any form is immoral.

Rand herself seems to sense this dilemma when arguing that voluntary charity violates no Objectivist ethical guideline. Yet, is not voluntary charity a mean between the extreme of laissez-faire Capitalism and the welfare state? To carry the example further, we might imagine the existence of orphans not wanted by anyone. What becomes of them? It would appear that some sort of public aid would have to be forthcoming. Relying on the golden mean, then, one may be an advocate of capitalism and totally anti-welfare state and therefore a laissez-faire Capitalist, or an advocate of the welfare state and therefore totally anti-capitalist, a socialist. But, the mean between the two is voluntary aid, with government aid one step closer to the welfare state.

We must remember, however, that Aristotle argues against some actions (murder etc.) as never admitting to a mean. In such cases, the principle of identity remains in

full operation, warning men that they cannot fake reality by substituting their own wishes for the real. At no time may they act as if their dreams were reality. In many cases, therefore, the principle of identity performs an invaluable function for man, warning him that contradictions ought not to exist, but there are occasions when the golden mean is clearly more rational, as Rand implies when advocating voluntary charity.

It should be noted that Aristotle considers morally excellent activities to be excellent because of their intrinsic qualities. We learn to act virtuously by seeking the good through contemplation and morally virtuous activity. This has important implications for the educative process as Aristotle notes in Book II of the Ethics:

> Actions then are called just and temperate when they are such as the just or the temperate man would do; but it is not the man who does these that is just and temperate, but the man who also does them as just and temperate men do them. It is well said, then, that by doing just acts that the just man is produced, and by doing temperate acts the temperate man; without doing these no one would have even a prospect of becoming good.[40]

John Burnet observes that the concept of performance lies at the heart of Aristotle's whole philosophy of education.[41] One acquires virtue by practicing the types of activity which produce virtue. In other words, a good man is one who acts morally, which is what Rand means when she says that a

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[40]Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, 1005b 5-12.

[41]John Burnet, (ed.), Aristotle on Education (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 46.

philosopher is an individual who acts.

The Poetics of Aristotle must also be examined to determine if influence exists. In The Romantic Manifesto, a book devoted to her theory of art and literature, Rand defines art as, " . . . a selective re-creation of reality according to an artist's metaphysical value judgments."[42] This relationship between art and metaphysics is interesting and significant.[43] Rand quotes the following which appears in the Poetics,

> . . . the distinction between historian and poet is not in the one writing prose and the other verse; . . . it consists really in this, that the one describes the thing that has been, and the other a kind of thing that might be.[44]

She then continues, noting that

The place of ethics in any given work of art depends on

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[42]Rand, "The Psycho-Epistemology of Art," in The Romantic Manifesto, p. 19. Italics in original.

[43]For additional evidence, see Ayn Rand: "The Goal of My Writing," The Objectivist Newsletter, II, No. 10 (October, 1963), 38-40. She notes therein: "There is a passage in The Fountainhead that deals with this issue: the passage in which Howard Roark explains to Steven Mallory why he chose to do a statue for the Stoddard Temple. In writing that passage, I was consciously and deliberately stating the essential goal of my own work: " . . . I think you're the best sculptor we've got. I think it, because your figures are not what men are, but what men could be—and should be. Because you've gone beyond the probable and made us see what is possible, . . . your figures are more devoid of contempt for humanity than any work I've ever seen . . . your figures are the heroic in man. . . . Your figures are not what men are, but what they could be—and should be." This line will make it clear whose great philosophical principle I had accepted. . . . " She means Aristotle, and goes on to cite the above passage from the Poetics.

[44]Aristotle, Poetics, 1451b 1-5. Trans. I. Bywater.

> the metaphysical views of the artist. If, consciously or subconsciously, an artist holds the premise that man possesses the power of volition, it will lead his work to a value orientation. . . . An art work may project the values man is to seek and hold up to him the concretized vision of the life he is to achieve.[45]

The relation of ethics to art as defined by Aristotle becomes the principle used by Ayn Rand in her novels. Believing that art's function is to select the essentials necessary for a given value change (Objectivist ethics) she proceeds to create an ideal man. Both philosophers, in harmony for the most part, see art's purpose as presenting an ideal man. This is the reason why she refers to herself as a Romantic Realist.

When G. E. R. Lloyd in his study of Aristotle comments: " . . . it is an important part of Aristotle's doctrine that the poet and the artist represent things not merely as they are, but as they might be and as they should be,"[46] one could substitute Rand for Aristotle without violating its spirit.

What then may be said of Aristotle and Ayn Rand? Were the latter's writings and beliefs influenced by the former? It is this writer's belief that Aristotle's influence is persistent and shaping. We have shown that Rand was exposed to Aristotle's thought; that she accepts him as the only philosopher who influenced the development of Objectivism. Beliefs accepted include: an objective reality,

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[45] Rand, "The Psycho-Epistemology of Art," p. 23.

[46] G. E. R. Lloyd, Aristotle: The Growth and Structure of His Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 274-75.

the principles of identity and contradiction, rationality as man's essential characteristic, man's end on earth should be happiness, and the concept of morally oriented art. Therefore, despite the fact that Rand rejects Aristotle's belief that the state should control the educative process, reasonable evidence does exist that Rand's knowledge of Aristotle influenced the development of Objectivism.

The second area of investigation is the Romantic movement in literature. Although evidence seems to support influence, the matter requires further consideration.

As a distinct and recognizable movement, the origins of Romanticism remain difficult to trace. However, literary historians usually mark the 1790's as the beginnings of the Romantic movement in English,[47] for in 1798, Coleridge and Wordsworth published their Lyrical Ballads, the preface to which set down characteristics of the new verse.[48]

Because a denotative definition of Romanticism seldom satisfies anyone, the term may be best described by suggesting several characteristics, the chief of which is individualism.[49]

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[47]For evidence which justifies the 1790's as the beginnings of Romanticism in English literature, consult David Perkins, (ed.), English Romantic Writers (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1967), pp. 1-24.

[48]The preface appeared in the 1800 edition.

[49]These include: individualism, worship of nature, exoticism, nationalism, and disillusionment. When all or most are present, the literature is usually said to be Romantic. See Rod W. Horton and Vincent Hopper, Backgrounds of European Literature (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1954), pp. 361-64.

> The Romantics regarded the welfare of the individual, not of the state or group, as the primary object for consideration and sought a society which would allow the most complete freedom of action, both political and social.[50]

Individualism best appeals to Rand, who argues that Romanticism derives its essence from the concept of volitional consciousness, which allows man to choose his own values. In order to keep them, he must act properly.[51]

But, a serious problem arises for anyone familiar with Romantic literature. Objectivism has been discussed in terms of its fidelity to Aristotelian Realism. Most literary historians, however, see Romanticism as essentially an emotional reaction against the rigid rationalism of Classicism. Discontent found expression in anti-rational, anti-industrial moods characterized by one critic as a lack of concern,

> . . . with portraying a rational or external world; it is very much concerned with portraying the world from the vantage point of the personality of the writer . . . it is largely this power to set forth one's individual emotions, personal ideas . . . which distinguishes this temper from the classical and from the realistic.[52]

Moody, emotional and imaginative[53] reactions hardly seem consistent with Objectivism's strictly realistic temper, espe-

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[50] Ibid., p. 361.

[51] Ayn Rand, "What Is Romanticism?," in The Romantic Manifesto, pp. 64-65.

[52] Addison Hibbard and Horst Frenz, (eds.), Writers of the Western World (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1967), p. 395.

[53] The classic study of the Romantic mind and the faculty of imagination, complete with supernatural and emotional trappings, is: John L. Lowes, The Road to Xanadu (Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press, 1927). The subject of the book is Coleridge's imagination as it influenced his composition.

cially when they often conflict, even when describing the same event.[54]

Still another characteristic of Romanticism which appears to conflict with Objectivist principles is the desire of the poet or novelist to escape the harshness of present reality, longing instead for a more utopian existence, either with Nature or in the past. Thus, Coleridge could write of pleasure domes and scared rivers.[55] As if in validation, many of the major English Romantic poets left England, seeking adventure in foreign lands. Lord Byron, for example, died in Greece, fighting for that country's independence. For a philosophy which prides itself on the principle that one must face reality and never evade it, Objectivism seems strangely inconsistent with the Romanticism of Byron, Wordsworth and Coleridge.

F. L. Lucas even attempts to define Romanticism in an Aristotelian context, and concludes much the same, at least

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[54]For example, in September 1802, Wordsworth wrote of London: "Earth has not anything to show more fair: / Dull would he be of soul who could pass by / A sight so touching in its majesty: . . . " In the same month and of the same subject: "Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour: / England hath need of thee; she is a fen / Of stagnant waters; altar, sword, and pen, / Fireside, the heroic wealth of all and bower, / Of inward happiness. . . . "

It matters little to Wordsworth that the reactions to London in the same month conflict; rather what is significant is that the poet feels different emotions each time he looks at the city, and expresses himself accordingly. Another sign of conflict appears in the first poem. Usually, the Romantic poets scorned city life, seeking escape to the wilds of nature. Thus, Wordsworth's praise seems out of place.

[55]The poem is "Kubla Khan."

by implication: "Romantic literature," he writes, "is a dream-picture of life; providing sustenance and fulfillment for impulses cramped by society or reality."[56] Now if Aristotle indeed would have defined Romanticism that way, it appears that when Rand classifies herself as a Romantic, she cannot at the same time logically support Aristotelian philosophy. Emotionalism as a basis for individuality, subjectivism, and evasion of reality do not even appear to be Objectivistic, much less Aristotelian.

Rand, however, appears to be aware of the traditional characteristics of Romanticism, and counters the contradiction in two ways. First, she defines herself as a Romantic Realist, and secondly completely disagrees with the literary historians' description of Romantic art.

What is a Romantic Realist? At first glance, the terms appear contradictory, but all one need do to resolve the apparent illogic is read her novels and writings on the nature of art. As suggested above, she believes Romantic literature recognizes the principle that man possesses the faculty of volition, this " . . . a function of man's rational faculty."[57] Because the Romantics failed to identify the relationship between volition and reason, they linked it to emotionalism, thus (according to Rand's analysis) perpetrating their own decline and fall headlong into Naturalism,

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[56]F. L. Lucas, The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal (New York: Macmillan Co., 1937), pp. 35-36.

[57]Rand, "What Is Romanticism?" p. 71.

which she regards as presenting a degrading view of man as a creature without volition. Romanticism therefore should not be thought of exclusively in terms of emotional responses and the supernatural, but rather as a literary movement designed to reveal the heroic potential of man.

Although most literary historians such as Baugh and Lowes would probably disagree with this interpretation, a few of them do not rule it out entirely. Lucas, for instance points out that it is dangerous and often misleading to think of Romanticism in terms of rank opposition to Classicism.[58] And John Lowes, in his masterful study of Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," a poem complete with ghosts, ghost ships, and supernatural horrors, notes that behind the horror a foundation of logic appears: the mariner sins, as punishment the Albatross is hung about his neck, the ship's crew suffers as a result of the killing of the bird, and the mariner is finally redeemed, but forced to tell his story as punishment. Lowes observes:

> But the train of cause and consequence is more than a consolidating factor of the poem. It happens to be life, as every human being knows it. You do a foolish and evil deed, and its results come home to you. And they are apt to fall on others too. You repent, and the load is lifted from your soul. But you have not thereby escaped your deed. You attain forgiveness, but cause and effect work on unmoved, and life to the end may be the continued reaping of the repented deed's results. . . .[59]

Many convicts in prison will validate that statement. Even

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[58]Lucas, The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal, pp. 47-8.

[59]Lowes, The Road to Xanadu, pp. 270-73.

after his release with the so-called "debt to society" paid, the ex-convict cannot very often find a good job.[60]

Thus, although Rand does not employ all the conventions or characteristics of supernaturalism, her novels may be classified as Romantic in that they depict heroic individualism and freedom, but in a rational context. This context must be understood if we are to appreciate her admiration for Victor Hugo. Of his characters, she writes:

> Do not look for familiar landmarks—you won't find them; you are not entering the backyard of "the folks next door," but a universe you did not know existed. . . . You are about to meet a race of giants, who might have and ought to have been your neighbors.
>
> Do not say these giants are "unreal" because you have never seen them before. . . . It was not his [Hugo's] purpose to show you what you had seen a thousand times before. Do not say that the actions of these giants are "impossible" because they are heroic, noble, intelligent, beautiful—remember that the cowardly, the depraved, the mindless, the ugly are not all that is possible to man.[61]

For these reasons the argument that Romantic fiction courts the unrealistic is dismissed as not being the issue. What is, however, is that such men ought to exist. Literature

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[60]Coleridge himself, in Chapter XIV of the Biographia Literaria, comments in this connection: " . . . it was agreed, that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment. . . . With this view, I wrote "The Ancient Mariner." See: S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, Chapter XIV in David Perkins, (ed.), English Romantic Writers, p. 452. The Romantics, then, often use the supernatural, the emotional or the bizarre to convey some truth about the nature of man. It is too much an oversimplification to conclude that Romanticism means emotionalism which means irrationality.

[61]Ayn Rand, "Introduction to Ninety-Three," in The Romantic Manifesto, pp. 119-20. As the title suggests, Rand wrote the introduction to Hugo's novel.

need not consist in merely presenting man as he is, but indeed can present him as he ought to be, and such a presentation implies no metaphysical violation.

Barbara Branden reports that the character Rand most admires in her favorite Hugo movel, Les Miserables, is Enjolras, " . . . the young leader of the insurrectionists, who dies fighting on the barricades. . . . "[62] Hugo tells us his thoughts as he and an outnumbered band continue to fight:

> They are positive. . . . For, and this is beautiful, it is always for the ideal, and for the ideal alone, that those who devote themselves do devote themselves. An insurrection is an enthusiasm. Enthusiasm may become anger; hence, an uptaking of arms. . . . And men sacrifice themselves for these visions, which for the sacrificed, are nearly always illusions, but illusions with which, after all, the whole of human certainty is mingled. . . . Who knows? They will perhaps succeed. They are the minority; they have against them an entire army; but they are defending the right, the natural law, the sovereignty of each over himself, which allows of no possible abdication. . . .[63]

"The sovereignty of each over himself." This essential captures the significance of Hugo for Ayn Rand. Although Enjolras meets death, it becomes a magnificant thing, a symbol of the heroic. Her John Galt or Dagny Taggart could do no less, for they too recognize the primacy of the individual: his mind, his creative powers, and his potential for greatness.

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[62]Barbara Branden, "Who Is Ayn Rand?," in Who Is Ayn Rand? (New York: Paperback Library, 1968), p. 126.

[63]Victor Hugo, Les Miserables, trans. by M. Jules Gray, Part V, Volume V, Book I (Philadelphia: George Barrie and Son, 1893), pp. 144-45.

Rand believes that in contemporary literature all traces of Romanticism have vanished, her admiration extending only to Mickey Sillane, creator of the detective Mike Hammer. Speaking of detective fiction as practiced by Spillane, she comments:

> Detective fiction presents, in simple primitive essentials, the conflict of good and evil; that is the root of its appeal. Mickey Spillane is a moral absolutist. His characterizations are excellent and drawn in black-and-whites; there are no slippery half-tones, no cowardly evasions, no cynicism—and no forgiveness; there are no doubts about the evil of evil. . . . His hero, Mike Hammer, is a moral avenger, passionately dedicated to justice, to the defense of the wronged, and to the destruction of evil.[64]

In reading his <u>One Lonely Night</u>[65] one may readily observe Hammer in his role of moral crusader. Briefly, the novel concerns the detective's attempt to retrieve top secret documents stolen by a Communist spy network operating clandestinely in America. In so doing, Hammer encounters an assortment of Russian agents, all cast as totally vile, about whom he makes his intentions quite clear:

> Gladow spoke. The aides spoke. Then the general spoke. [all Red agents]. He pulled his tux jacket down when he rose and glared at the audience. I [Hammer] had to sit there and listen to it. It was propaganda right off the latest Moscow cable and it turned me inside out. I wanted to feel the butt of an M-1 against my shoulder pointing at those . . . up there on the rostrum and feel the pleasant impact as it spit slugs. . . .
>
> Sure, you can sit down at night and read about the hogwash they hand out. Maybe you're fairly intelligent

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[64]Ayn Rand, "Review of <u>The Girl Hunters</u>," <u>The Objectivist Newsletter</u>, I, No. 10 (October, 1962), pp. 42, 46.

[65]Rand considers this novel one of his best, especially in light of Spillane's uncompromising stand against Communism.

> and can laugh at it. Believe me, it isn't funny. They use the very thing we build up, our own government and our own laws, to undermine the very things we want.[66]

Later, Mike actualizes his feelings by machine-gunning several Reds and watching them die in agony. Hammer believes he has a moral obligation to kill them:

> There's no shame or sin in killing a killer. David did it when he knocked off Goliath. Saul did it when he slew his tens of thousands. There's no shame to killing an evil thing.[67]

Hammer, in killing the Communists, recognizes that evil is evil and can be given no mercy, and thus wins the admiration of Rand. It should be recalled here what was observed concerning the relationship between the law of identity and the "golden mean." Hammer considers Communism to be completely and totally a moral abomination, treating " . . . man as a sacrificial animal to be immolated for the benefit of the group, the tribe, the society, the state."[68] Here, the law of identity remains in full operation—evil being evil.

Rand's heroes show as little toleration for the evil in this world as Hammer, although expressing their dissatisfaction, for the most part,[69] in intellectual terms, which lead to action, but not with machine guns. The detective

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[66]Mickey Spillane, One Lonely Night (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1951), p. 79. My brackets.

[67]Ibid., p. 110.

[68]Rand, "Conservatism: An Obituary," in Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal, p. 195.

[69]The qualification is included for reasons which will be made clear in chapter four.

novel, of course, is less intellectually sophisticated than, for example, Atlas Shrugged, but the moral zeal in both is unmistakable. An example of this zeal from The Fountainhead finds Howard Roark (the protagonist) accosting those who would have the welfare state:

> Man cannot survive except through his mind. He comes on earth unarmed. His brain is his only weapon. . . . But the mind is an attribute of the individual. There is no such thing as a collective brain. There is no such thing as a collective thought. An agreement reached by a group of men is only a compromise or an average drawn upon many individual thoughts. It is a secondary consequence. The primary act—the process of reason—must be performed by each man alone. . . . No man can live for another. He cannot share his spirit just as he cannot share his body. . . . The man who attempts to live for others is a dependent. He is a parasite in motive and makes parasites of those he serves. The relationship produces nothing but mutual corruption.[70]

Rand's heroes wage a philosophical war against corruption and—in this case—socialism and altruism. But, the dedication to an ideal is just as pronounced as Mike Hammer's hatred for the Communists.

In their respective novels, there exists some evil which must be overcome: Communism, altruism, sacrifice, etc., and against these evils their heroes never waver until victory is achieved. For Rand, this is the essence of Romantic literature. Her heroes are men who ought to exist, who ought to fight to rid the world of moral evil and in so doing, advance their own conception of the good.[71]

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[70]Ayn Rand, The Fountainhead (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1968), pp. 680-81.

[71]Namely, Objectivist philosophy.

In sum, we may observe that when Rand defines Romanticism, she means (at least) the following: (1) Man as individual, a being of volitional consciousness, is the basis for Romantic art, (2) Freedom and individualism are predicated not on emotionalism, but on reason, and (3) Heroes are larger than life and ought to exist.

Are there sufficient grounds, therefore, to claim influence? For the affirmative we may argue that Rand has read the Romantics (for her Hugo and Spillane) and has written a book, The Romantic Manifesto, which outlines her theory of literature along Romantic lines. She views man in a heroic capacity, but bases his heroism on rational individualism; not emotionalism or subjective reaction. Finally, we have shown that although Romantic literature often favors emotionalism and the supernatural, Romantic writers such as Coleridge often have a rational message to convey using the Romantic motif as a vehicle. Romantic poetry, then, may not be as alien to reason, logic and order as a first reading might suggest.

But, serious difficulties do exist which challenge influence, especially if the above named characteristics of Romanticism are considered essential. Rand's definition of Romanticism and her analysis of Romantic individualism would probably not be accepted by most literary critics. Those such as Horton, Lowes and the Romantics themselves consider emotions to be a major characteristic, a view which Rand considerably modifies when presenting her definition. Al-

though Lowes argues that logic may be at the foundation of Coleridge's poetry, he attaches supreme significance to the poet's use of the supernatural and the emotional reactions used in the creative process. In her novels, however, Rand tends to reverse the emphasis. Too, her heroes are not skeptics, but the Romantics often are. "Pleasure domes" often evaporate when confronted with the harshness of reality.

Today, Spillane is characterized as a popular writer; not a Romantic, but Rand still prefers the Romantic classification. Now as literary critic, she is of course entitled to so classify Spillane, provided substantiating evidence can be found.

Lastly, her position that Romantic writers miscalculated by not identifying the relationship between volition and reason, turning as if through ignorance to emotionalism, is not generally accepted. Indeed, the "turning" often was a matter of conscious and deliberate choice.

Thus, we may conclude—except for Hugo where definite influence exists—that Rand was influenced by the Romantic school—provided, and this is essential, we recognize that her conception of Romanticism is often at odds with established critics.

We may observe in this context that Rand's use of definitions creates headaches for any researcher. In fact, Ellis is quite critical of what he calls her " . . . highly tautological thinking,"[72] which he believes invalidates much

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[72]Ellis, Is Objectivism A Religion?, p. 217.

of Objectivism. For example, merely because Rand calls herself a Romantic according to her own definition of Romanticism, does not necessarily mean she is one. Obviously the question of definitional use requires careful attention and will therefore be considered in chapter four.

Finally, Rand's relationship to the Social Darwinists must be considered. At first glance, men such as Herbert Spencer and William Sumner seem to have much in common with Rand. All three accept laissez-faire Capitalism, oppose the welfare state, and defend the concept of negative government. But, as commonality itself does not prove influence, we must examine the case for possible influence in more detail.

Herbert Spencer, an Englishman, achieved his greatest popularity in the decades following the Civil War. His ideas found considerable acceptance across the Atlantic, for it was during this period that America began to transform herself into an industrial democracy. Great factories in the north had produced the weapons of war needed to defeat the agrarian south. In such a setting, Spencer's philosophy fit quite well: "Spencer's was a system conceived in and dedicated to an age of steel and steam engines, competition, exploitation, and struggle."[73]

According to Spencer, evolutionary progress characterizes the development of societies, with primitive ones soon (as a result of internal conflict) acquiring military

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[73]Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), p. 35.

sophistication. This military society, still unstable however, eventually evolves into an advanced industrial state, founded on laissez-faire Capitalism. Although virtual perfection exists at this stage, Spencer reasons that altruism will mark the culmination: then society will be as nearly perfect as humanly possible. The evolutionary principle behind his theory states that,

> Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from a (relatively) indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a (relatively) definite, coherent heterogeneity. . . .[74]

Implicit in this important principle are the following concepts with which Rand would agree: (1) individual rights—homogeneity to heterogeneity, (2) private ownership of property—socialism implies homogeneity, (3) negative role of government—laissez-faire outlook.

For Spencer, such a society cannot be achieved easily, for it requires the competitive restructuring of the environment. When defining the nature of competition, Spencer notes that a member of society cannot exclusively devote himself to a special activity " . . . unless those for whose benefit he carries on his special activity in excess, give him in return the benefits of their special ac-

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[74]Herbert Spencer, First Principles (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1910), p. 367. The definition includes the word 'relatively' twice. Spencer added this qualification to make it clear that " . . . Evolution must be regarded as falling between two ideal limits, neither of which is reached." He believed that "relativity" characterizes all our knowledge. See "Appendix A" to First Principles, pp. 513-16.

tivities.[75] Competition, the heart of laissez-faire Capitalism, must be ruthless, to the extreme that the unfit be eliminated, for:

> . . . the forces at work will exterminate such sections of mankind as stand in the way, with the same sternness that they exterminate . . . herds of useless ruminants.[76]

Although he did not oppose voluntary aid for the poor, Spencer thinks that if government, through the welfare state, tries to help those in need, then nature's laws will be thwarted, thereby creating catastrophe. Further, the existence of the unfit can only serve to lower the moral and intellectual tone of society since they limit productive achievement and thwart competition.

America's most significant Social Darwinist was William Sumner, whose contribution to social thought results from a synthesis of three concepts: (1) the Protestant ethic, (2) laissez-faire Capitalism, and (3) natural selection.

Strongest in New England, the Puritan ethic proves quite compatible with capitalism in that they both stress hard work and dedication to material prosperity which, for the Puritan, was a sign of inward holiness. This relationship, Rand completely ignores.

Laissez-faire Capitalism, believes Sumner, is the

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[75]Herbert Spencer, The Study of Sociology (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1910), p. 303.

[76]Herbert Spencer, Social Statistics (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1910), p. 238.

most sophisticated economic system because it alone rests on the principle of survival of the fittest. He writes that competition invariably results in " . . . courage, good training, intelligence, perseverance,"[77] qualities operative only in a society based on the contract relationship:

> A society based on contract is a society of free and independent men, who form ties without favor or obligation, and cooperate without cringing or intrigue. A society based on contract, therefore, gives the utmost room and chance for individual development, and for all the self-reliance and dignity of a free man.[78]

Rand would totally endorse that statement, believing that the contract relationship is one in which men are treated as free agents; not slaves of the welfare state, which thwarts those of ability. Believing in social determinism, Sumner concludes that the evolutionary process is a slow one; therefore man cannot force change which can only occur according to nature's plan over a period of centuries. Such a position tends to lessen the power of the mind to institute change.

In an important essay entitled "The Forgotten Man," Sumner discusses the true intent of socialistic reformers:

> As soon as A observes something which seems to him to be wrong, from which X is suffering, A talks it over with B, and A and B then propose to get a law passed to remedy the evil and help X. Their law always proposes to deter-

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[77]William Sumner, "The Challenge of Facts," in The Challenge of Facts and Other Essays (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1914), p. 67.

[78]William Sumner, What Social Classes Owe to Each Other (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925), p. 26.

mine what C shall do for X. . . .[79]

The true intent of course, is to practice altruism, which as we have seen, involves the suffering of the innocent, here man C. To quote Rand, A and B " . . . assume a halo of virtue by giving away goods . . . by making others [C] pay for the luxury of [their] pity."[80]

Finally, we must consider Sumner as an ethical relativist. In Folkways, his major sociological work, he outlines the belief that when men first act in consort to survive, they find that certain activities or ideas work more successfully than others:

> The struggle to maintain existence was carried on, not individually, but in groups. Each profited by the other's experience; hence there was concurrence towards that which proved to be the most expedient. All at last adopted the same way for the same purpose. Hence, the ways turned into customs and became mass phenomena.[81]

With the passage of time, these customs or folkways acquire moral validity, the violation of which by any member of the group incurs punishment. Thus folkways become mores--that is, morally binding on the group.

Sumner argues that because societies differ from country to country, so also do the folkways and mores produced by them. Thus, " . . . the real process in great bodies of men is not one of deduction from any great prin-

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[79]William Sumner, "The Forgotten Man," in The Forgotten Man and Other Essays (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), p. 466.

[80]Rand, Atlas Shrugged, p. 540.

[81]William Sumner, Folkways (New York: Mentor Books, 1940), p. 18.

ciple or philosophy or ethics, . . . but one of minute efforts to live well under existing conditions. . . ."[82] Because the mores vary according to the survival needs of the given society, then human conduct cannot be contingent on objective moral principles.

As suggested, there is much in Sumner and Spencer which seems compatible with Objectivism including: (1) laissez-faire Capitalism, (2) the negative role of government, (3) individual ownership of property, (4) the contract system, (5) opposition to socialism and (6) sympathy for the "forgotten man." Indeed, the sympathy is great enough to prompt one critic to observe:

> All in all, she [Rand] is probably the most thoroughgoing advocate of laissez-faire capitalism ever to set pen to paper. . . . If you could multiply Herbert Spencer by William Graham Sumner, you would get Ayn Rand.[83]

If an accountant could check the multiplication, however, he would find an error. Although they and Rand are similar in the areas mentioned above, their reasons for support are quite different. Writes Rand:

> Herbert Spencer, another champion of capitalism, chose to decide that the theory of evolution and of adaptation to environment was the key to man's morality--and declared that the moral justification of capitalism was the survival of the species, of the human race; that whoever was of no value to the race had to perish; that man's morality consisted of adapting oneself to one's social environment, and seeking one's own happiness in the welfare of society; and that the automatic process of evolution would eventu-

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[82] Ibid., p. 49.

[83] M. Stanton Evans, "The Gospel According to Ayn Rand," National Review, XIX (October, 1967), 1059. My brackets.

> ally obliterate the distinction between selfishness and unselfishness.[84]

Of course, Objectivism rejects the belief that altruism could eventually replace capitalism in the evolutionary development of the race. However, the major distinction made between Rand's justification of capitalism and Spencer's is that Rand's is moral, while Spencer's, biological. The title of her book, Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal, means that laissez-faire Capitalism is a moral ideal yet to be achieved. In "What Is Capitalism?," she defends her thesis:

> Capitalism is a social system based on the recognition of individual rights, including property rights, in which all property is privately owned. . . . The moral justification of capitalism does not lie in the altruist claim that it represents the best way to achieve "the common good." It is true that capitalism does . . . but this is merely a secondary consequence. The moral justification of capitalism lies in the fact that it is the only system consonant with man's rational nature, that it protects man's survival qua man, and that its ruling principle is justice.[85]

Rand sees capitalism as consistent with man's moral right to function as a rational individual, a moral being and not merely a biological unit in the race. In this connection, Objectivism would also reject Spencer's belief that the unfit should be eliminated, arguing that individual men have no moral obligation to support them but certainly no right to exterminate them.

The concepts survival of the fittest and social deter-

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[84]Rand, "Introduction," For The New Intellectual, p. 37. Italics in original.

[85]Rand, "What Is Capitalism?," in Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal, pp. 19-20. Italics in original.

minism need qualification from an Objectivist point of view. Survival of the fittest could be interpreted to mean might makes right with the implication of death to the weak. Objectivism, however, sees the fittest as those who choose to be rational by engaging in productive work to achieve happiness. Further, since the concept implies the aggressive use of force, Objectivism would reject the term and any of its implications.

Rand and Sumner are compatible in wishing to resurrect the forgotten man, but certainly disagree regarding his nature. Specifically, she rejects the concept of social determinism, which Sumner uses to imply that man's mind is incapable of altering nature's evolutionary laws.[86] Rand, as we have often noted, sees man as a rational creature very capable of molding the environment to suit his needs. Of course, the method for so doing implies, for Objectivism, individual rational achievement and not any form of socialism.

Lastly, Objectivism rejects Sumner's belief that morality is relative. Although recognizing that customs or folkways might vary from nation to nation, Rand would also assert that man's nature does not vary. His potential for rational achievement is contingent only on volitional choice, regardless of national origin.

On the basis of this evidence, we may conclude that,

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[86]William Sumner, "The Absurd Effort to Make the World Over," in War and Other Essays (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 209-10.

despite the similarities between Sumner, Spencer, and Rand, that Rand was not influenced by the formers' writings. Similarity of ideas does not constitute influence.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, we have attempted to validate the suggestion that Rand was influenced by Aristotle, the Romantics, and the Social Darwinists.

Investigation substantiates that Objectivism is influenced to a large degree by Aristotle's philosophy. This influence, persistent and shaping, places Aristotelian philosophy and Objectivism in firm intellectual contact. It is further suggested that they fail to agree on some points, including man and his relationship to the state, the doctrine of the golden mean as it relates to the principle of identity, and the nature of government. Rand's acceptance of his theory of art is also demonstrated.

Although Rand has read certain Romantic writers and has a book on the theory of Romantic composition, we can only determine tentative influence as her definition of Romantic art is often at odds with established critics. Her admiration for Hugo has been documented, but her classification of Spillane as a Romantic is at best an idiosyncratic classification. Rand and the Romantics at least agree, however, on the point that art should reflect the heroic in man. A problem regarding Rand's use of definition arises here, which will be examined in chapter four.

Lastly, it was established that Objectivism was not influenced by the Social Darwinists. In fact, Rand rejects these thinkers for their failure to defend capitalism in moral terms. Although she and the Social Darwinists speak in terms of loyalty to capitalism, opposition to the welfare state, and the negative role of government, similarity in intellectual content does not prove influence.

It is hoped that this background will provide a clearer understanding of Objectivism by placing it in intellectual perspective. The next chapter will consider the philosophy of Objectivism, and it is that to which we now turn.

CHAPTER THREE

THE METAPHYSICS, EPISTEMOLOGY AND AXIOLOGY OF OBJECTIVISM

This chapter will discuss the philosophy of Objectivism thereby providing the background necessary to effectively understand Rand's educational position. Attention will be devoted to the metaphysics, epistemology, and especially the axiology of Objectivism. The axiology merits special consideration because Rand's educated man must subscribe to an ethical code which at times counters Christian morality.

Included in this chapter will be a discussion of the concept, sense of life. It requires special consideration prior to an analysis of the metaphysics, for the metaphysics cannot be fully understood without discerning how Rand integrates sense of life into her philosophical system.

Sense of life is defined as:

> A sense of life is a pre-conceptual equivalent of metaphysics, an emotional, subsconsciously integrated appraisal of man's relationship to existence. It sets the nature of a man's emotional responses and the essence of his character.[1]

Sense of life then precedes a philosophy of life, and constitutes an emotional, pre-conceptual estimate of one's view

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[1]Ayn Rand, "Philosophy and Sense of Life," in The Romantic Manifesto (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1971), p. 25.

of himself and the world.

Rand notes that an individual, prior to understanding what metaphysics means, " . . . makes choices, forms value-judgments, experiences emotions and acquires a certain implicit view of life."[2] The result of such activities is that one's,

> . . . subconscious mechanism sums up his psychological activities, integrating his conclusions, reactions, or evasions into an emotional sum that establishes an habitual pattern and becomes his automatic response to the world around him. What begins as a series of single, discreet conclusions . . . becomes a generalized feeling about existence, an implicit metaphysics with the compelling motivational power of a constant, basic emotion—an emotion which is part of all his other emotions and underlies all his experiences. This is a sense of life.[3]

The nature of the emotions evoked is contingent on the individual's view of himself.[4] In other words, what conclusions one reaches depends on "'that which is important to me,' or: 'that kind of universe which is right for me, in which I would feel at home.'"[5]

Essentially, then, "the key concept, in the formation of a sense of life, is the term 'important,'"[6] because important,

> . . . pertains to that aspect of metaphysics which serves as a bridge between metaphysics and ethics: to a fundamental view of man's nature. That view involves the answers to such questions as whether the universe is knowable or not, whether man has the power of choice or not, whether he can achieve his goals in life or not. The answers to such questions are "metaphysical value-

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[2] Ibid., p. 26. [3] Ibid. Italics in original.

[4] Ibid., p. 27. Italics in original.

[5] Ibid., p. 28. Italics in original. [6] Ibid.

judgments," since they form the base of ethics.[7]

The concept sense of life is vital to any consideration of Rand's educational position. The school must assume the responsibility of providing a secure environment, thereby helping the child develop emotionally sound reactions which are crucial to making proper value judgments. In other words, the learner should feel that he is in a secure and predictable universe.

Sense of life perhaps may be best described in terms of art. The artistic process is controlled by the artist's sense of life:

> . . . what an art work expresses, fundamentally, under all of its lesser aspects is: "This is life as I see it." The essential meaning of a viewer's or reader's response, under all of its lesser elements is: "This is (or is not) life as I see it."[8]

In other words, the artist presents his view of man and of existence as developed from his sense of life, now fully matured into a philosophy of life.[9]

In order to live as a man one must, according to Rand, be able to smoothly make the transition from being guided by a sense of life to being guided by a philosophy of life. She writes:

> By the time he reaches adolescence, man's knowledge is sufficient to deal with broad fundamentals; this is the period when he becomes aware of the need to translate

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[7]Ibid.

[8]Rand, "Art and Sense of Life," in The Romantic Manifesto, p. 35. Italics in original.

[9]Ibid., p. 36.

> his incoherent sense of life into conscious terms. This is the period when he gropes for such things as the meaning of life, for principles, ideas, values and, desperately, for self-assertion. And—since nothing is done . . . the result is the frantic, hysterical irrationality of most adolescents, particularly today. Theirs is the agony of the unborn—of minds going through a process of atrophy at a time set by nature for their growth.[10]

Rand thus believes that our present society ignores the means required to actualize the transition. She argues that education should help the child become an adult by assisting in the transition from sense of life to philosophy of life. One of the reasons Rand speaks so harshly of contemporary American education is because of its failure to carry out that important task. As the transition ought to occur in elementary school, it should come as no surprise to learn that Objectivism focuses attention on the elementary educative process, especially endorsing Montessori.

We may now turn our attention to a treatment of Objectivism. In Who Is Ayn Rand?, Nathaniel Branden outlines, in brief, the philosophy's essentials:

> In metaphysics, it is the principle that reality is objective and absolute, that it exists independent of anyone's consciousness, perceptions, beliefs, wishes, hopes or fears—that which is, is what it is—that "existence is identity"—that A is A. In epistemology, it is the principle that man's mind is competent to achieve objectively valid knowledge of that which exists. In ethics, it is the principle that values proper to man are objectively demonstrable.[11]

The philosophy of Objectivism assigns man a unique place in

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[10]Rand, "Philosophy and Sense of Life," p. 29.

[11]Nathaniel Branden, Who Is Ayn Rand? (New York: Paperback Library, 1968), p. 49.

the universe because of his capacity for rational thought. Animals, of course, are incapable of the capacity for non-instinctual perception which only man enjoys. But man's consciousness is not automatic. He often acts as his own worst enemy because he " . . . is the only living entity born without any guarantee of remaining conscious at all.[12] Objectivism rests on the basic premise that the most fundamental choice which man makes is "the choice of life or death."[13] Thus, man can either think or suspend thought.

Rand's metaphysical system is based on the so-called Laws of Thought as advanced by Aristotle. Specifically, the principle of identity, the law of contradiction, and the law of causality require comment.

The principle of identity stipulates that an entity is itself and remains itself. It cannot therefore change in a given context. In other words, A is A, man is man and chair is chair. Related to this principle is the law of contradiction (the negative of the principle of identity). Aristotle regards this law as " . . . the most certain principle of all . . . that regarding which it is impossible to be mistaken."[14] He defines it as follows: " . . . the same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to

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[12]Ayn Rand, "The Objectivist Ethics," in The Virtue of Selfishness (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1964), p. 19.

[13]Ibid., p. 21.

[14]Aristotle, Metaphysics, 1005b 11-12.

the same subject and in the same respect."[15] Thus, one cannot logically believe the same thing to be and not to be, for A is not not-A.

The principle of identity and law of contradiction form the metaphysical base of Rand's philosophy. Her protagonist John Galt, when addressing the American people, condemns them for their failure to grasp the meaning of the principle of identity and law of contradiction:

> A leaf cannot be a stone at the same time, it cannot be all red and all green at the same time. . . .
> Are you seeking to know what is wrong with the world? All the disasters that have wrecked your world came from your leaders' attempt to evade the fact that A is A. . . . A contradiction cannot exist. An axiom is itself, and so is the universe. . . .[16]

Galt's speech is intended to be a philosophical summary of Atlas Shrugged's dramatic activity. Thus, the "disasters" result from the failure of individual characters to respect the Aristotelian laws mentioned by Galt.

An example will illustrate Galt's meaning. The United States as portrayed in Atlas Shrugged faces economic (and moral) collapse. Too long abused, scorned and exploited by the advocates of welfare socialism who control the government, a group of competent industrialists strike, withdraw from society, leaving the country to the mercy of those who claim the right to dominate their minds.[17] Dagny Taggart—

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[15] Ibid., 1005b 18-20.

[16] Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1957), pp. 940-43.

[17] The strike device is a metaphor. Atlas Shrugged illustrates what faces America in the future if the country

an industrialist and Rand's central female protagonist—at the time of the following conversation, fails to grasp the moral necessity for the strike. Attempting to persuade industrialist Ken Danagger not to abandon his business, she asks,

> "You have decided to retire? To give up your business?"
> "Yes."
> "Does it mean nothing to you now?"
> "It means more to me now than it ever did before."
> "But you're going to abandon it?"
> "Yes. . . ."
> "Do you realize what your retirement will do to . . . all the rest of us, whoever is left?"
> "Yes I realize it more fully than you do at present."[18]

From Dagny's perspective, Danagger appears to be violating the law of contradiction: A is not not-A, love is not not-love. In other words, how could Danagger, who loves his business wish to abandon it—an action certainly implying non-love?[19] But, as Galt explains throughout his speech, contradictions cannot exist. Dagny's error is her failure to understand Danagger's reasons for retiring. In the context of the entire novel, his actions are quite logical, as

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continues to drift toward socialism. For a summary of the ethical principles involved in the decision to strike, the reader should consult Atlas Shrugged, pp. 616-27. Therein is explained the moral evil implicit in the welfare state advocate's basic conviction: from each according to his ability, to each according to his need.

[18] Ibid., p. 419.

[19] It is important to note that no one forces Danagger, or any of the industrialists to retire. Danagger's decision is absolutely non-coerced. It is a freely made, voluntary decision.

Dagny, herself, will discover.[20]

The law of causality argues that no finite being can exist without a sufficient cause or reason. Aristotle speaks of four causes: material, formal, efficient, and final.[21] Here, the efficient cause is important. Speaking of it, Aristotle notes:

> . . . it is not likely that either fire or earth or any such element should be the reason why things manifest goodness and beauty . . . nor again could it be right to intrust so great a matter to spontaneity and chance. When one man[22] said, then, that reason was present . . . as the cause and order of all arrangement, he seemed like a sober man. . . .[23]

Thus, man's reason constitutes the efficient cause. John Galt comments in a similar manner:

> We are the cause of all the values that you covet, we who perform the process of thinking, which is the process of defining identity and discovering causal connections. We taught you to know, to speak, to produce. . . .[24]

In Atlas Shrugged, the following definitions of man, as offered by leading antagonists, represent violations of the law of causality:

> "Man? What is man? He's just a collection of chemicals with delusions of grandeur." "A miserable bit of protoplasm, full of ugly little concepts and mean little emotions . . . "
>
> Dr. Pritchett

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[20]For details which explain the nature of Dagny's discovery by resolving the contradiction, see Galt's speech in Atlas Shrugged, pp. 963-80.

[21]Aristotle, Metaphysics, 981b-984b.

[22]The man is Anaxagoras, an Ionian philosopher who settled in Athens in 450 B.C.

[23]Aristotle, Metaphysics, 984b 11-17.

[24]Rand, Atlas Shrugged, p. 963. Italics in original.

"The purpose of philosophy is not to seek knowledge but to prove that knowledge is impossible to man."

Dr. Pritchett

"Man is not open to truth or reason. They cannot be reached by rational argument. The mind is powerless against them."

Dr. Stadler

" . . . what's a human being?" "A weak, ugly, sinful creature born that way . . . so humility is the one virtue he ought to practice. . . . Pride is the worst of all sins."

Mr. Taggart

"People don't want to think."

Dr. Ferris[25]

These are the leaders whom Galt castigates for their failure to respect the law of causality. By refusing to recognize that reason is the efficient cause responsible for man's creative achievements, they bring about the eventual decline and fall of America. Atlas Shrugged vividly portrays that decline, and offers man an ethical alternative--Objectivist ethics.

Rand's interpretation of the Laws of Thought forms the metaphysical basis of Objectivism. As such, the laws have significant ethical as well as metaphysical implications. Because of their application to ethics, the philosophy has been criticized. Albert Ellis and William O'Neill both object to Rand's use of the Laws of Thought. O'Neill charges that she ignores the fact that "logic relates to the formal context of discourse, and not to the specific values

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[25]Ibid., pp. 129, 130, 183, 252, 328.

attached to the particular terms involved."[26] Ellis' objection is similar:

> Aristotelian logic is merely a system of consistent labeling; it is not descriptive of nor does it say anything about external reality. . . . Miss Rand unfortunately keeps jumping from label to reality, and unthinkingly confuses the two.[27]

Rand replies by questioning the need for a logic that bears no relationship to reality and that cannot be used by man to further his survival. Defining value as "that which one acts to gain and/or keep,"[28] and logic as "the art of non-contradictory identification,"[29] she proceeds to relate them in a decisional context:

> Nobody "decides." Nature does not decide—it merely is; man does not decide, in issues of knowledge, he merely observes that which is. When it comes to applying his knowledge, man decides what he chooses to do, according to what he has learned, remembering that the basic principle of rational action in all aspects of human existence, is: "Nature to be commanded, must be obeyed."[30] This means that man does not create reality and can

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[26]William O'Neill, With Charity Toward None (New York: Philosophical Library, 1971), p. 132.

[27]Albert Ellis, Is Objectivism a Religion? (New York: Lyle Stuart, Inc., 1968), pp. 229-30.

[28]Rand, "The Objectivist Ethics," p. 15.

[29]Ayn Rand, "This Is John Galt Speaking," in For The New Intellectual (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1961), p. 126.

[30]This phrase is Francis Bacon's. See his: Novum Organum: "Aphorisms Concerning the Interpretation of Nature and the Kingdom of Man," iii: "Human knowledge and human power meet in one; for where the cause is not known the effect cannot be produced. Nature to be commanded must be obeyed; and which in contemplation is as the cause, is in operation as the rule." E. Burtt, ed., The English Philosophers From Bacon to Mill (New York: Modern Library, 1939), p. 28.

> achieve his values only by making his decisions consonant with the facts of reality. Who "decides"? . . . Any man who cares to acquire the appropriate knowledge and to judge, at and for his own risk and sake. What is his criterion of judgment? Reason. What is his ultimate frame of reference? Reality. If he errs or evades, who penalizes him? Reality.[31]

In using his reason to make value judgments, man must have some operational means at his disposal. For Rand, such means are the Laws of Thought. Operationally contingent upon an objective reality, they function as man's guidelines.

By implication, any form of subjectivism—the attempt to force upon reality whims or desires which do not correspond to what is—inevitably leads to chaos and violates the law of contradiction. Noting that one's wish or emotional whim contradicts reality. Rand argues that the ultimate end of subjectivism is illogic: "It [subjectivism] is the doctrine which holds that man . . . can, somehow, live, act and achieve his goals apart from and/or in contradiction to the facts of reality, i.e., apart from and/or in contradiction to his own nature and the nature of the universe."[32] The facts of reality are what a man must examine (using the Laws of Thought as his means) in order to determine the proper action (s) in any given situation. To assert that such and such is so when it really is not, and then to act as if it were so is to assert and deny the same thing at the same time in the same context. Man examines (or ought to) the

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[31]Ayn Rand, "Intellectual Ammunition Department," The Objectivist Newsletter, IV, No. 2 (February, 1965), 7. Italics in original.

[32]Ibid. My brackets.

facts of reality, using his reason if he desires to live as a man.

We may conclude that the following reflects Objectivism's metaphysical position: Reality is that which exists independent of man's mind, the mind being capable of comprehending it. Two important corollaries follow: (1) the key to man's understanding reality is his reason, and (2) man survives by conscious goal directed actions and choices using the Laws of Thought to determine what is.

Because Objectivism is a highly coherent philosophy, a definite relationship exists between its metaphysical and epistemological orientation. It is to the epistemology that we now turn. Realist philosopher K. F. Reinhardt, although not speaking of Objectivism, identifies a relationship between metaphysics and epistemology with which Rand would agree. He writes:

> The intellect, confronted with a multitude of sensible objects, distinguishes between substances and accidents, causes and effects, means and ends. Applying the immanent first principles . . . [i.e. Laws of Thought] the intellect proceeds, by means of abstraction, analysis, synthesis, and analogy to the formation of concepts, judgments and conclusions. . . .[33]

For Rand, the first principles or Laws of Thought are used in precisely the way Reinhardt suggests. One of the functions of the intellect which makes it distinctly human is its capacity to formulate concepts. Her book, Introduction

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[33]K. F. Reinhardt, A Realistic Philosophy (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1944), pp. 95-96. By first principles, Reinhardt means the principles of identity, contradiction and causality. My brackets.

to Objectivist Epistemology, deals exclusively with the nature of concepts, how they are formed, and to what use they are put by man.

The epistemology of Objectivism states that the mind is capable of achieving objectively validated knowledge of reality. By formal definition epistemology " . . . is a science devoted to the discovery of the proper methods of acquiring and validating knowledge."[34] Turning to its specifics, Rand believes that man's consciousness matures in three states: the sensory, the perceptual, and the conceptual.[35] Of the three, the level proper to man is the conceptual and as such, has a special relationship to "something that exists" (i.e. existent), "the building-block of man's knowledge."[36] As with consciousness, the concept "existent" develops in three states: entity (" . . . a child's awareness of objects,") identity ("awareness of specific, particular things which he can recognize and distinguish from the rest of his perceptual field . . . ") and unit (" . . . grasping relationships among these entities by grasping the similarities and differences of their identities.")[37] "Man's distinctive method of cognition is the ability to regard entities as units."[38] A concept, Rand defines as " . . . a mental integration of two or more units possessing the same distinguishing characteristic (s), with

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[34]Ayn Rand, Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology (New York: The Objectivist Inc., 1969), p. 36.

[35]Ibid., p. 11. [36]Ibid. [37]Ibid., p. 12. [38]Ibid.

their particular measurements omitted."[39] To be conscious requires choice, and now the significance of that may be observed. If one fails to be conscious, his entire epistemological framework collapses because he can only remain conscious by being conceptually aware. In so doing, he (first as a child) senses and then perceives that "existents" exist in reality. The perception of entities (the first level), which at first appear in bewildering confusion, gradually becomes more sophisticated, leading to awareness of specifics or particulars (i.e. identities), and finally culminating in the ability to grasp relationships between entities. This ability, to regard entities as units, is the basis of concept formation. Essentially, through a process of classification, man begins to organize and integrate units into wider and wider concepts, and is thus able to learn.

Conceptual development involves a process of abstraction and utilization of language. For example in his home environment, a child gradually comes to recognize that different entities have unlike and/or similar characteristics such as sitting, cooking, supporting etc. (identities). As time passes, he forms a concept general enough to include all or most of these and gives them a name: furniture. Importantly, though, is that "the process of forming a concept is not complete until its constituent units have

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[39] Ibid., p. 17. Italics in original.

been integrated into a single mental unit by means of a specific word."[40] Thus, in Objectivist epistemology a necessary condition for the existence of a concept is that it be named.

Two significant corollaries of concept formation, implicit in the above, may now be discussed. Beginning with conceptual development, the process of cognition " . . . moves toward more extensive knowledge, toward wider integration and more precise differentiations."[41] For example when an entity with four legs and a top is identified as a table, and then regarded, along with other entities as integrated into a single unit, we may observe that vast amounts of material have been condensed to one or two essential characteristics which " . . . stands or falls with the truth or falsehood of these observations."[42]

Secondly, concepts are "open-ended,"[43] meaning that they allow man to advance, correct, modify and improve existing knowledge and to retain and properly integrate vast amounts of material. This is essentially their cognitive role. If concepts were closed (i.e., that no new knowledge could be added when discovered), then human knowledge would remain static.

We mentioned in chapter two[44] that Rand's metaphysical position reflects Aristotle's. However, an important difference exists, related to epistemology—Objectivism

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[40] Ibid., p. 23. [41] Ibid. [42] Ibid., p. 46.
[43] Ibid., p. 61. [44] Page 25.

regards the concept essence as epistemological; not metaphysical. As Rand explains:

> Objectivism holds that the essence of a concept is that fundamental characteristic (s) of its units on which the greatest number of other characteristics depend, and which distinguishes these units from all other existents within the field of man's knowledge. Thus the essence of a concept is determined contextually and may be altered with the growth of man's knowledge.[45]

Rand appears to use essence in two ways: epistemologically and metaphysically. Epistemologically, man comes to know the meaning of a concept by defining its essential characteristic which separates it from all others. Knowledge, therefore, is operative and may be valid only in a particular moment of history and is thus contextual. If more knowledge of reality is discovered (e.g.: the world is round; not flat), then the new knowledge modifies or replaces the old. Reality, however, does not change. The world was always round, even when men believed it to be flat. Thus, if the essential characteristic of the concept "world" were flatness, that characteristic changed when added knowledge revealed to man the world was round. Essence is also used metaphysically, meaning that the essence of an entity is what makes it what it is.

When Objectivism states that the concept essence also has an epistemological function, what follows is that an essential characteristic could change (i.e., become non-essential or accidental). For Rand, therefore, the use of

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[45] Ibid., pp. 49-50. Italics in original.

essence epistemologically could create metaphysical chaos. If in the future, for example, man's essential defining characteristic were found not to be reason—and if concepts are open-ended, we must allow for the possibility—much of Objectivism could be jeopardized, since it rests on the foundation of man as a rational creature.[46]

Lastly, we must consider Objectivist ethics, for our purpose the most important part, since Rand's educational position reflects a code of values man ought to accept if he be really educated. Writes one critic: " . . . what Miss Rand is really playing is axiology . . . isn't she really trying to give us a justification for a new standard of values?"[47] The answer, of course, is yes. In defining a new ethics based on reason, she contemplates several value changes man ought to make if he is to act as a man.

Rand defines ethics as, " . . . a science devoted to

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[46]Before leaving Objectivist epistemology, the reader should be aware of a special class of concepts termed by Rand "axiomatic." Their purpose is " . . . the identification of a primary fact of reality, which is implicit in all facts and in all knowledge." They are: existence, identity, and consciousness. She notes: " . . . although they designate a fundamental metaphysical fact, axiomatic concepts are the products of an epistemological need—the need of a volitional conceptual consciousness which is capable of error and doubt. . . . Axiomatic concepts are epistemological guidelines. They sum up the essence of all human cognition: something exists of which I am conscious; I must discover its identity." Cognition would not be possible without them, for in order to think, we must be conscious of X existing, and willing to discover what it is." Rand, Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology, pp. 52-56.

[47]E. Cain, They'd Rather Be Right (New York: Macmillan Co., 1963), p. 45.

the discovery of the proper methods of living one's life."[48] Immediately a question must be disposed of concerning the relationship between ethics and metaphysics. Critics have attempted to destroy the validity of Objectivist ethics by invoking a distinction between metaphysics and ethics. Donald Emmons, in an article entitled "Refuting the Egoist," charges that egoism can only be refuted in moral, not intellectual terms. He writes: " . . . pure reason is impotent to undermine (or establish) any normative ethical code. . . . The heart has its reasons that pure reason does not know . . . "[49]

Such a position certainly undermines the ethics of Objectivism, since Rand regards metaphysics and ethics as definitely related:

> Does an arbitrary human convention, a mere custom, decree that man must guide his actions by a set of principles—or is there a fact of reality that demands it? Is ethics the province of whims . . . or is it the province of reason?[50]

We may recall that Objectivism rejects Social Darwinism for basing ethics on custom and social convention.[51] Nathaniel

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[48]Rand, Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology, p. 36.

[49]Donald Emmons, "Refuting the Egoist," Personalist, L (Summer, 1969), 309-19.

[50]Rand, "The Objectivist Ethics," 14. Italics in original.

[51]For additional evidence regarding the relationship between ethics and metaphysics, see: Keith Ward, "Moral Seriousness," Philosophy, XLV (April, 1970), 125-26. Ward suggests that before one can determine what he ought to do, he must first discover the nature of reality, " . . . which is to say that morality and metaphysics cannot be divorced by any clear set of distinctions. . . . Moral seriousness does involve, in a sense, commitment to what the facts are, what human life is. . . . "

Branden expresses the meta-ethical concept somewhat more directly:

> It is the nature of living entities—the fact that they must sustain their life by self-generated action—that makes the existence of values possible and necessary. For each living species, the course of action required is specific; what an entity is determines what it ought to do.[52]

It is not intended here to present a defense of whether or not an *is* can imply an *ought* beyond what Objectivist ethics state: namely, the ethics regards the relationship between *is* and *ought* as crucial. If man's essential characteristic is rationality, then Rand maintains he ought to behave according to a rational code of ethics. It is left now to determine what Objectivism says a man ought to do given his nature as a rational being.

Objectivist ethics begins not with what values man ought to accept, but more fundamentally: "Does man need values at all—and why?"[53] We have already discussed value in terms of its relationship to logic, noting that Rand defines value as " . . . that which one acts to gain and/or keep."[54] Crucial to the concept of value is choice. Values

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[52]Nathaniel Branden, "Rational Egoism: A Reply to Professor Emmons," *Personalist*, LI (Spring, 1970), 201. Italics in original. It should be recalled that Rand's break with Branden occurred in May of 1968. As this article was published in 1970, Rand does not strictly endorse its contents. However, he opens the article by noting, "I am an advocate of the Objectivist ethics. . . . " and further acknowledges his intellectual debt to Rand as the founder of Objectivism. For these reasons, the article is used.

[53]Rand, "The Objectivist Ethics," p. 13.

[54]*Ibid.*, p. 15. See above page 74.

qua values are meaningless if the entity valuing cannot choose; if one finds himself in such a situation, then morality ceases. Something has value when it sustains life (gives pleasure) and the conditions necessary for the maintenance of life, and ceases to have value if it negates life (gives death): " . . . the ultimate value which, to be kept, must be gained through its every moment, is the organism's life."[55]

It should be recalled that man has no automatic code for survival. His consciousness is volitional, i.e., he as an individual must choose for himself those values which will best sustain life. Therefore, the fundamental choice which a man must make is to think or not to think. Implications of this are metaphysical as well as ethical. Notes Rand: "Metaphysically, the choice 'to be conscious' is then the choice of life or death."[56] If, in other words, man is rational, then he ought to engage a value system which sustains rationality. This is the context in which she sees a

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[55]It is important to note precisely what Rand means by life. Critics have argued that she speaks of life only in a physical sense. Rand's reply should be sufficient refutation: "It [man's survival on earth] does not mean a momentary or a merely physical survival. It does not mean the momentary physical survival of a mindless brute. . . . It does not mean the momentary physical survival of a crawling aggregate of muscles who is willing to accept any terms, obey any thug and surrender any values. . . . "Man's survival qua man" means the terms, methods, conditions and goals required for the survival of a rational being through the whole of his lifespan--in all those aspects of existence which are open to his choice." See: Rand, "The Objectivist Ethics," pp. 17-24. Italics in original.

[56]Ibid., p. 21.

relationship between *is* and *ought* statements. In fact, another way in which Objectivist ethics may be defined is "Ethics is an *objective, metaphysical necessity of man's survival*. . . . "[57] Given the nature of Objectivist metaphysics, an important relationship emerges between it, life, values and survival. Man *qua* man cannot survive without a code of ethics, one consisting of values proper to his life as a rational being.

The question to be presented now is: "What values ought man to choose in order to best insure his survival, given the kind of being he is?" Rand answers:

> . . . the three values which, together, are the means to and the realization of one's ultimate value, one's own life—are: Reason, Purpose, Self-Esteem, with their three corresponding virtues: Rationality, Productiveness, Pride.[58]

Objectivist ethics is above all a rational system. Defining reason as " . . . the faculty that identifies and integrates the material provided by man's senses,"[59] she notes that man's happiness and self-esteem is proportionate to his fidelity to rational thought.[60] Irrationality, in fact, explains, for Rand, the problem of evil. Rejecting the Christian concept of Original Sin, Objectivism regards evil as the refusal to think, to be rational:

> . . . some men do not choose to think, but survive by imitating and repeating, like trained animals, the routine

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[57] *Ibid.*, p. 23. [58] *Ibid.*, p. 25. [59] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[60] For another view of the role of reason in human affairs, see: Errol Harris, "The Power of Reason," *Review of Metaphysics*, XXII (June, 1969), 630.

> of sounds and emotions they learned from others, never making an effort to understand their own work. . . . Such looters are parasites incapable of survival, who exist by destroying those who are capable, those who are pursuing a course of action proper to man.[61]

Rand is very critical of American schoolmen for allowing the foregoing type of learning to exist in schools, because it is the antithesis of rational productivity.[62] Formal education fails to stress rational development of the young. By graduating students who behave irrationally and emotionally, schools help to weaken the moral fabric of society.

Reason, purpose and self-esteem are the three values proper to a rational man, for they,

> . . . imply and require all of man's virtues and all his virtues pertain to the relation of existence and consciousness: rationality, independence, integrity, honesty, justice, productiveness, pride.[63]

These characterize the ideal man Rand creates in her novels; her educated man would live up to and practice these in his daily life.

Before discussing each virtue specifically, we shall classify Objectivism's ethics. Enough has been said to suggest some type of egoism. Of the generally recognized types: universal ethical, individual ethical, personal ethical,

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[61]Rand, "The Objectivist Ethics," p. 23. Italics in original.

[62]Nathaniel Branden explains the nature of evil somewhat more succinctly: "Evasion, the refusal to think, the willful rejection of reason, the willful suspension of consciousness, the willful defiance of reality is man's basic vice—the source of all his evils." See: "Rational Egoism: A Reply to Professor Emmons," p. 200.

[63]Rand, "This Is John Galt Speaking," p. 128.

megalomania, group, and analytic egoism, none seems to best characterize Objectivism.[64] Her position has been called constrained egoism, that is: "egoism subject to the constraint of not violating certain conditions (which are other persons' rights)."[65] While constrained egoism describes an important characteristic of Objectivist ethics, it remains incomplete. Probably the best classification would be cognitive egoism, or to use Nathaniel Branden's phrase, rational egoism. Objectivist ethics presents a rational morality; one based on the specific nature of man,[66] which, as we have seen, is his rationality.

Objectivist ethics holds reason, purpose and self-esteem as the three supreme values for a rational man. Comments John Galt:

> To live, man must hold three things as the supreme and ruling values of his life: Reason—Purpose—Self-esteem. Reason, as his only tool of knowledge—Purpose, as his

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[64]For a discussion explaining why Objectivism is not consistent with the recognized types of ethical egoism, see: Nathaniel Branden, "Rational Egoism: A Reply to Professor Emmons," and Donald Emmons, "Refuting the Egoist," pp. 313-17. See also: Paul W. Taylor, (ed.), Problems of Moral Philosophy (Belmont, Calif.: Dickenson Publishing Co., Inc., 1967), pp. 88-89. The latter explains some of the types of ethical egoism.

[65]Robert Nozick, "On the Randian Argument," Personalist, LII (Spring, 1971), 295.

[66]Rand comments: "Man cannot survive as anything but man. He can abandon his means of survival, his mind . . . but he cannot succeed . . . in achieving anything but the subhuman. . . . Man has to be man by choice—and it is the task of ethics to teach him how to live like man. The Objectivist ethics holds man's life as the standard of value—and his own life as the ethical purpose of every individual man." See: "The Objectivist Ethics," pp. 24-25.

> choice of the happiness which that tool must proceed to achieve—Self-esteem, as his inviolate certainty that his mind is competent to think and his person is worthy of happiness, which means: is worthy of living.[67]

These values imply seven virtues which a man needs to live as a rational being: rationality, independence, integrity, honesty, justice, productiveness, and pride. Each of these seven virtues will now be examined:

Rationality " . . . is man's basic virtue, the source of all his other virtues. . . . It means a commitment to reason, not in sporadic fits or on selected issues or in special emergencies, but as a permanent way of life."[68] Rand states:

> It means one's total commitment to a state of full, conscious awareness in all choices, in all of one's waking hours. It means a commitment to the fullest perception of reality within one's power and to the constant, active expansion of one's perception, i.e., of one's knowledge.[69]

If one commits himself to a rational life according to the foregoing he must, of necessity, reject any form of mysticism or faith, described as an " . . . alleged short-cut to knowledge . . . which is only a short-circuit destroying the mind."[70] The issue of faith versus reason will be considered in the next chapter when problems in Objectivism are considered.

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[67]Rand, "This Is John Galt Speaking," p. 128. Also see pp. 81-82, above.

[68]Rand, "The Objectivist Ethics," pp. 25-26.

[69]Ibid., p. 25.

[70]Rand, "This Is John Galt Speaking," p. 128.

Independence " . . . is the recognition of the fact that yours is the responsibility of judgment and nothing can help you escape it—that no substitute can do your thinking . . . "[71] Objectivism regards anyone as evil who allows another to assume his responsibility for thinking. Independence requires the courage to express one's views (rationally derived) regardless of whether they violate a norm held by the group. Rand's critique of Progressive education suggests it violates this virtue.

Integrity " . . . is the recognition of the fact that you cannot fake your consciousness . . . that man . . . may not sacrifice his convictions to the wishes of others. . . . "[72] Integrity is closely related to independence and honesty. One must never abandon his convictions, regardless of the pressure.

Honesty " . . . is the recognition of the fact that the unreal is unreal and can have no value, that neither love nor fame nor cash is a value if obtained by fraud . . . "[73] Honesty is man's most selfish virtue in that an honest man refuses to " . . . sacrifice the reality of his own existence to the deluded consciousness of others."[74] Fraud means two things: (1) metaphysical subjectivism which destroys the real by imposing on it one's whims or desires as if they were real, and (2) social metaphysics,

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[71] Ibid. [72] Ibid., pp. 128-29.

[73] Ibid., p. 129. [74] Ibid.

a belief which makes truth what a given group or society deem it to be at the moment. Objectivism regards Progressive educators as social metaphysicians, destroying young minds by imposing group norms on individual learners.

Justice " . . . is the recognition of the fact that you cannot fake the character of men as you cannot fake the character of nature, that you must judge all men as conscientiously as you judge inanimate objects, with the same respect for truth, with the same incorruptible vision, by as pure and as rational a process of identification—that every man must be judged for what he is and treated accordingly. . . . "[75] The Objectivist concept of justice counters accepted Christian beliefs. Whereas the Bible warns, "Judge not, lest you be judged," Objectivism argues, "Judge, and be prepared to be judged."[76] One must stand ready to accept the consequences of his own actions. Importantly though, one must never take the responsibility lightly; judging must not be confused with the random accusing of people with whom we may disagree. One must "Never fail to pronounce moral judgment,"[77] for one who sees evil and fails to proclaim it as evil is himself guilty.

Productiveness is

> . . . your acceptance of morality, your recognition of

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Ayn Rand, "Intellectual Ammunition Department," The Objectivist Newsletter," I, No. 4 (April, 1962), 15.

[77] Ibid.

> the fact that you choose to live—that productive work is the process by which man's consciousness controls his existence, a constant process of acquiring knowledge and shaping matter to fit one's purpose, of translating an idea into physical form, of remaking the earth in the image of one's values—that all work is creative work if done by a thinking mind . . . [78]

The highest activity to which a man can aspire is to use his reason by engaging in productive work. Rand notes, "Productive work is the road of man's unlimited achievement and calls upon the highest attributes of his character: his creative ability, his ambitiousness, his self-assertiveness. . . ."[79] We may consider this as a re-interpretation of Aristotle. Intellectually excellent activity consists, then, in actualizing not only what potentially exists in the universe, but also in actualizing the mind's potential through productive work.

Pride is

> . . . the recognition of the fact you are your own highest value, and, like all of man's values, it has to be earned—that of any achievement open to you, the one that makes all others possible is the creation of your own character—that your character, your actions, desires, your emotions are the products of the premises held by your mind—that as a man must produce the physical values he needs to sustain his life, so he must acquire the values of character that make his life worth sustaining . . . that to live requires a sense of self-value. . . . [80]

Terming pride a virtue clashes with Christian morality. Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines pride

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[78]Rand, "This Is John Galt Speaking," p. 130.

[79]Rand, "The Objectivist Ethics," p. 26.

[80]Rand, "This Is John Galt Speaking," pp. 130-31.

as, "inordinate self-esteem: an unreasonable conceit of superiority." This definition, used in the Christian sense, is not what Objectivism means; rather pride is equated with "moral ambitiousness." In other words,

> . . . one must earn the right to hold oneself as one's own highest value by achieving one's own moral perfection —which one achieves by never accepting any code of irrational values impossible to practice and by never failing to practice the virtues one knows to be rational—by never accepting an unearned guilt and never earning any, or, if one has earned it, never leaving it uncorrected —by never resigning oneself passively to any flaws in one's character—by never placing any concern . . . above the reality of one's own self-esteem. And, above all, it means one's rejection of any doctrine that preaches self-immolation as a moral virtue or duty.[81]

In this sense, pride becomes an important virtue, one a rational man must have for living on earth. However, its legitimacy is contingent on one's engaging in productive work, and thus should not be confused with arrogance as this constitutes the wise (in defiance of reality) to be given credit for the unearned.

Objectivism brands American education for its failure to teach these virtues. In essence they are needed if one is to live up to Rand's concept of the educated man.

Given a man who practices Objectivist ethics, what then ought to be the result? There can be but one—happiness:

> . . . the achievement of his own happiness is man's highest moral purpose. . . . Happiness is that state of consciousness which proceeds from the achievement of one's values. If a man values productive work, his happiness is the measure of his success in the service of his life. . . . Happiness is possible only to a rational man,

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[81]Rand, "The Objectivist Ethics," p. 27. Italics in original.

> the man who desires nothing but rational goals, seeks nothing but rational values and finds his joy in nothing but rational actions.[82]

This is the heart of Objectivist ethics—the (rationally derived) happiness of man achieved by fidelity to (rational) values.

We must now consider the role of emotions in a rational man's life. They have already been discussed when examining the concept sense of life, but now their philosophical role needs treatment.

In addition to being the agent man needs to engage in productive work, reason performs another valuable function, that of evaluating entities which affect the self. Nathaniel Branden defines emotion as, " . . . the psychosomatic form in which man experiences the beneficial or harmful relationship of some aspect of reality to himself."[83] The sequence is from perception to evaluation to emotional response to some action.[84] So often, emotional responses occur with such rapidity that the subject fails to realize that an evaluation takes place, but because it does, reason is involved. Emotions are the result of a value judgment made by a man and are " . . . not tools of cognition . . . what one feels in regard to any fact or issue is irrelevant to the question of whether one's judgment is true or false.

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[82] Ibid., pp. 27-29. Italics in original.

[83] Nathaniel Branden, "Emotions and Values," The Objectivist, V, No. 5 (May, 1966), 5. Italics in original.

[84] Ibid.

It is not by means of one's emotions that one perceives reality."[85] Emotions and reason, then, are not incompatible except functionally. One cannot perform the task of another. Evaluations occur prior to emotional reactions, and it is reason that controls evaluations. Emotions occur because man has a rational nature; not in spite of it.[86] For a healthy, rational man, an emotion is the conscious product of his values as formed by reason; emotions reflect rational value judgments.[87]

One issue needs consideration before closing this chapter. When someone advocates selfishness as a virtue, replies often take the form of questions such as: "You mean you wouldn't help the victims of a flood?" or "Wouldn't you

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[85] Ibid.

[86] R. S. Peters in The Logic of Education also argues that a definite relationship exists between emotions and cognition. He notes that emotions themselves have a cognitive core, which he calls an appraisal. In other words, a man who experiences the emotion of anger cognitively "appraises" the situation which gives rise to the emotion. For example, a man cognitively appraising that a convicted murderer escaped jail may experience anger. Consequently, "the separation of intellectual from affective development is as untenable as the study of emotional development without stress on the role of cognition." See: R. S. Peters and P. H. Hurst, The Logic of Education (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), pp. 49-50.

[87] Knowledge of the proper role of emotions refutes the charge that Objectivism is a form of hedonism. Objectivism denies the premise that whatever emotions, wishes or whims one has at the moment constitute the good. Notes Rand: " . . . 'Happiness' can properly be the purpose of ethics, but not the standard. . . . When a desire . . . is taken as an ethical primary, and the gratification of any and all desires is taken as an ethical goal . . . men have no choice but to hate, fear and fight one another, because their desires and their interests will necessarily clash." See: "The Objectivist Ethics," pp. 29-30. Italics in original.

help a little child hurt in a car accident?" For Objectivism, however, selfishness does not imply any moral consideration or "does not tell us whether concern with one's own interests is good or evil . . . it means only concern with one's own interests."[88] Rand argues that while her definition of selfishness is not the Christian one, it does conform to what the dictionary states. Of the four examined however, including Webster's unabridged three-volume dictionary (Webster's International), only one (The Random House Dictionary) defines selfishness the way Rand does.[89] Although Rand's belief that her definition of selfishness conforms to the dictionary is thus weakened, this does not absolutely rule out the concept of selfishness without violating the rights of others. Rand

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[88]Rand, "Introduction" to The Virtue of Selfishness, p. vii.

[89]These dictionaries define selfishness as follows: (In all cases, the first or primary meaning is cited).

Webster's New World Dictionary (School and Office Edition): Overly concerned with one's own interest and advantage so that the welfare of others is neglected."

Webster's New World Dictionary (College Edition): "Having such regard for one's own interests and advantage that the happiness and welfare of others becomes of less concern than is considered right or just."

The Random House Dictionary (College Edition): "Devoted to or caring only for oneself; concerned only with one's own interests."

Webster's Third New International Dictionary (Unabridged): "Concerned excessively or exclusively with oneself; seeking or concentrating on one's own advantage, pleasure, or well-being without regard for others."

Webster's College Edition especially does violence to Rand's definition of selfishness.

clarifies the meaning of selfishness:

> If it is true that what I mean by "selfishness" is not what is meant conventionally, then this is one of the worst indictments of altruism: it means that altruism permits no concept of a self-respecting, self-supporting man—a man who supports his life by his own effort. . . . The Objectivist ethics holds that the actor must always be the beneficiary of his actions and that man must act for his own rational self-interest. . . . It is not a license "to do as he pleases" and it is not applicable to the altruists' image of a "selfish" brute nor to any man motivated by irrational emotions, feelings, urges, wishes or whims.[90]

We have already examined under what terms and conditions a man may act in his own (rational) self-interest and what values and virtues make this possible. Selfishness, in an Objectivist context, then does not mean the violation of the rights of others. Further, the concept in no way forbids one from providing help in emergency situations:

> It is only in emergency situations that one should volunteer to help strangers, if it is in one's power. For instance, a man who values human life and is caught in a shipwreck, should help to save his fellow passengers (though not at the expense of his own life). But this does not mean that after they all reach shore, he should devote his efforts to saving his fellow passengers from poverty, ignorance. . . .[91]

More is expected when those needing help are friends or loved ones: " . . . if one's friend is starving, it is not a sacrifice, but an act of integrity to give him money for food . . . because his welfare is important in the scale of one's personal values."[92]

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[90]Rand, "Introduction," to The Virtue of Selfishness, pp. ix-x. Italics in original.

[91]Ayn Rand, "The Ethics of Emergencies," in The Virtue of Selfishness, p. 48. Parentheses in original.

[92]Ibid., p. 46.

The only qualification attached stipulates that non-sacrificial means should be used. Acting against one's own rational self-interest, for example helping an accident victim at the expense of one's own child, would be rejected as irrational. Further, Rand believes it immoral to help save the life of a horribly immoral person—a dying Hitler, for instance—since such a being ought to be allowed to die for his crimes.

Thus, one who gives money to help a flood victim or saves a child hurt in a car accident is not, according to the Objectivist ethics, sacrificing anything and may therefore help. A rational man does not live for the purpose of only serving others. He helps in emergencies if they occur, but this is hardly the same situation as being morally obliged to provide help whenever asked, and to the detriment of himself and his family.

The only exception to the above would be the men who serve as police officers and firemen. To them falls the task of saving life at the risk of their own, but these are risks they agree to accept as necessary conditions of their duties.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide the reader with an understanding of Objectivist metaphysics, epistemology and axiology and some related issues as a necessary prelude to a proper appreciation of Rand's educational

position.

As an introduction to Objectivism, the concept sense of life was examined. This pre-conceptual equivalent of metaphysics helps shape man's relationship to reality, and later develops into a philosophy of life. Education's task is to help the learner make the transition from a sense of life to a philosophy of life.

Metaphysically, Rand's orientation is Aristotelian. Based on the Laws of Thought, it posits the belief that reality exists independent of the mind. One cannot properly dismiss these Laws as having no relationship to what actually is, for they constitute the tools needed by man to probe reality. Of course, Objectivist metaphysics rejects most forms of subjectivism, especially the attempt to shape reality to one's personal whims or wishes.

Epistemologically, Objectivism considers the nature of concepts and how they help man to understand reality. Without concepts which allow one to classify and integrate vast amounts of knowledge, intellectual growth could never occur. But, Rand differs from Aristotle in one important respect. While the latter regards "essence" as metaphysical, the former regards it as epistemological in nature, implying that concepts are open-ended thereby allowing for the addition of newly discovered knowledge.

Ethically, Objectivism postulates the 'ideal man,' in effect the Randian concept of the educated man. Objectivist axiology postulates objective moral truths, validated

by reference to reality. The criteria used for determining what values a man ought to accept is man's life as a rational being. Objectivist ethics argue that reason, purpose and self-esteem together with the virtues of rationality, independence, integrity, honesty, justice, productiveness, and pride constitute the values one ought to accept if he wishes to live a rational life. Objectivist ethics can best be classified as cognitive or rational egoism.

Advocating selfishness as a virtue does not imply violation of the rights of others, but allows one to help another only in an emergency situation, the aid terminating when the emergency does. Problems relating to this will be discussed in the next chapter.

Thus far, this study has largely been uncritical in presenting Objectivism in order that the reader may study it as it actually is. The next chapter, however, will deal with "problems" Objectivism presents. These could possibly stand in the way of Rand's educational views being implemented, and thus require consideration.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROBLEMS WITH OBJECTIVISM

As a philosophy of education, Objectivism presents parents, teachers and learners with several difficulties which might, if left unexamined, hinder acceptance. The following shortcomings will be discussed: (1) definitional thinking, (2) atheism, (3) religion and reason versus faith, (4) religion and capitalism, (5) the ethics of emergencies, (6) internal contradictions (The Fountainhead), theory of compromise, and (7) intolerance.

Definitional Thinking

Objectivism stands or falls on its use of definitions, objections to which have been raised by Albert Ellis:

> Objectivist philosophy bases most of its basic premises on highly tautological thinking . . . it is . . . ultimately faith in the power of analytic definitional propositions that nullifies practically all the good things that are included in Objectivism.[1]

He argues that Objectivism uses analytic statements which although logically true, may not necessarily be true in reality. The distinction made concerns the so-called analytic/synthetic dichotomy. According to Robert Ennis in

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[1]Albert Ellis, Is Objectivism a Religion? (New York: Lyle Stuart, 1968), pp. 217 ff.

Logic in Teaching, analytic statements " . . . are those which are in a given context correctly taken as true simply as a result of the meanings of the words appearing in the statement. . . . no conceivable test could exist for them. . . . "[2] Synthetic statements, on the other hand, constitute any non-analytic ones, ones for which a counter-example could be conceived. The distinction is made since synthetic statements must be validated. For example to say "A bachelor is an unmarried man" is to speak analytically; to deny it would be a contradiction, but to say "Bachelors are happier than married men" may of course be contradicted. Thus it must be validated in the context in which it appears.

Ellis accuses Rand of making statements which appear to be analytic but fail to meet the criteria for such and therefore are invalidly used. For example, he cites the following from Atlas Shrugged,

> There is a morality of reason, a morality proper to man, and Man's life is its standard of value. All that which is proper to the life of a rational man is good; all that which destroys it is the evil,[3]

and comments:

> . . . life is defined as being good; and it is assumed that reason necessarily sustains life and that therefore a morality based on reason must be absolutely valid. Actually, human life can be defined as bad. . . .[4]

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[2]Robert Ennis, Logic in Teaching (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1969), pp. 300-01.

[3]Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1957), p. 940. Italics in original.

[4]Ellis, Is Objectivism a Religion?, p. 219. Italics in original.

Ellis suggests that merely because Objectivism defines reason as life sustaining (morally good), does not necessarily make it so.

There are several ways to respond. Quoting a statement out of context and then charging insufficient data to justify conclusions reached does Objectivism an injustice. Ellis of course is free to critique Objectivist ethics, but must himself consider supporting data offered by Rand. The purpose of chapter three was to provide such data for the reader.

Secondly, one may (as does Rand) deny the distinction between analytic and synthetic statements. In order to understand why she denies other distinctions we must briefly return to the Objectivist theory of concept formation as it relates to the present question. Rand defines a concept as

> . . . a mental integration of two or more units possessing the same distinguishing characteristic (s), with their particular measurements omitted,[5]

and argues that concepts intrinsically relate to language, specifically definition. Definition is defined as " . . . a statement that identifies the nature of the units subsumed under a concept. The purpose of a definition is to distinguish a concept from all other concepts. . . . "[6] Importantly, "the nature of the units subsumed" means all units, and not just the essential or distinguishing characteristic (s) which usually constitute reported definitions. She writes:

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[5]Ayn Rand, Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology (New York: The Objectivist Inc., 1969), p. 17. Italics in original.

[6]Ibid., p. 40.

> . . . the error lies in assuming that a concept consists of nothing but its distinguishing characteristic. But the fact is that in the process of abstracting from abstractions, one cannot know what is a distinguishing characteristic unless one has observed other characteristics of the units involved.[7]

In forming definitions one naturally selects a distinguishing characteristic (e.g., rationality), but this should not imply that other non-essential characteristics be ignored. One must be aware of all the characteristics in order to determine the essential ones.

Rand argues that man needs logic as a tool for comprehending reality, so to weaken logic by means of a dichotomy denies man his means of survival. Rand suggests that the proposing of a counter-example in no way sanctions an artificial split. By way of proof, she offers the following examples: All swans are white—synthetic since one may imagine a black swan, and a being from Mars with rationality, but a spider's body—synthetic, since one may imagine a creature other than man which has reason, and comments:

> What these . . . do demonstrate is the failure to grasp the cognitive role of concepts—i.e., the fact that the requirements of cognition determine the objective criteria of concept-formation. The conceptual classification of newly discovered existents depends on the nature and extent of their differences from and similarities to the previously known existents. In the case of black swans, it is objectively mandatory to classify them as "swans," because virtually all their characteristics are similar to the characteristics of white swans, and the difference in color is of no cognitive significance. (Concepts are not to be multiplied beyond necessity). In the case of the rational spider from Mars (if such a creature were possible), the differences between him and man would be so great that the study of one would scarcely

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[7] Ibid., p. 29. Italics in original.

> apply to the other and, therefore, the formation of a new concept to designate the Martians would be objectively mandatory. (Concepts are not to be integrated in disregard of necessity.)[8]

She reasons, therefore, that the discovery of additional knowledge does not sanction the analytic-synthetic dichotomy. If possible the new knowledge must either be integrated into an already existing concept, or a new concept must be formed. Man, in other words, holds the power to logically validate synthetic statements (thereby rendering the distinction useless) by reference to objective reality, but " . . . it is man who has to identify the facts; objectivity requires discovery by man. . . . Man cannot know more than he has discovered."[9] Thus Rand argues that merely because the proposition "All swans are white" admits to counter-examples—that such does not justify its being given a special category. Therefore, what man ought to do to determine if black swans exist, or if bachelors are happier than married men, is to examine the facts of reality to discover the truth. The propositions are (or are not) logically true according to what evidence is uncovered.

In Objectivist epistemology, the facts of experience are involved in all propositions, and are governed by the (logical) laws of thought. Thus, " . . . a word has no meaning other than that of the concept it symbolizes, and the meaning of a concept consists of its units. It is not

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[8]Rand, Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology, pp. 65-66. Parentheses in original.

[9]Ibid., pp. 44-45. Italics in original.

words, but concepts that man defines—by specifying their referents."[10] The referents, however, are what exist in reality and what man seeks to understand through the knowledge provided by his senses. To remove the "referents" would make words themselves meaningless.

We may conclude this section by noting that when Rand deals with the accuracy of propositions, she does so exclusive of any dichotomy, the truth or falsity of which can only be determined by reference to reality. It has not been the purpose of the foregoing to refute the analytic-synthetic dichotomy, but to discuss Rand's objections to it.

Regarding Objectivism and definitional thinking, then, we must be careful to note the context in which words are used. As mentioned in the last chapter, Objectivism regards all definitions as contextual; thus selfishness or Romanticism cannot be understood unless studied in the context of Objectivism. Strictly speaking, many of Rand's definitions are stipulative and readers may properly demand she remain internally consistent when using them. Importantly for the chapters on education which follow this one, all definitions should be understood in the context of Objectivist metaphysics, epistemology and axiology.

Atheism

Rand's classification of religion is not flattering.

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[10] Ibid., p. 40.

Regarding it as a primitive form of philosophy, she responds in the Playboy Interview to whether religion has ever "offered anything of constructive value to human life":

> Qua religion, no—in the sense of blind belief, belief unsupported by, or contrary to, the facts of reality and the conclusions of reason. Faith, as such, is extremely detrimental to human life: it is the negation of reason. But you must remember that religion is an early form of philosophy, that the first attempts to explain the universe, to give a coherent frame of reference to man's life and a code of moral values, were made by religion, before men graduated or developed enough to have philosophy. And, as philosophies, some religions have very valuable moral points . . . but in a very contradictory context, and on a very—how should I say it?—dangerous or malevolent base: on the ground of faith.[11]

Whether or not faith is the negation of reason will be discussed shortly. Presently, however, we should note that in the Randian scheme of things, religion serves as a crutch to be discarded when an individual becomes sophisticated enough to embrace a philosophy of life. Her dislike of Christianity is even more blatantly expressed:

> . . . according to the Christian mythology he [Christ] died on the cross not for his own sins but for the sins of nonideal people. In other words, a man of perfect virtue was sacrificed for men who are vicious and who are expected or supposed to accept that sacrifice. If I were a Christian, nothing could make me more indignant than that: the notion of sacrificing the ideal to the nonideal, or virtue to vice. And it is in the name of that symbol that men are asked to sacrifice themselves for their inferiors. That is precisely how the symbolism is used. That is torture.[12]

Here, it would appear that she not only rejects Christian morality, but also the concept of God, linking it to sacri-

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[11]Alvin Toffler, (Interviewer), "Playboy's Interview with Ayn Rand," Playboy XI (March, 1964), 40.

[12]Ibid. My brackets.

fice and (as we saw earlier) the forcing of man to live up to an unattainable moral ideal.

Rand's militant stand against God and all forms of faith is apparently not shared quite so strongly by all of her followers. When still associated with Objectivism, Nathaniel Branden, in The Objectivist Newsletter (December, 1965) warns that a frank and open admission of atheism certainly might not serve the advancement of Objectivism in a Christian democratic society. In "A Report to Our Readers—1965," in which he lauds the spread of Objectivism in America, Branden notes:

> As uncompromising advocates of reason, Objectivists are, of course, atheists. We are intransigent atheists, not militant ones. We are for reason; therefore, as a consequence, we are opposed to any form of mysticism; therefore, we do not grant any validity to the notion of a supernatural being. But atheism is scarcely the center of our philosophical position. To be known as crusaders for atheism would be acutely embarrassing to us; the adversary is too unworthy.[13]

Although it is not the purpose of this chapter to offer a defense for God's existence (for this writer it needs none), it would be worthwhile to examine the error in Objectivist thinking.

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[13]Nathaniel Branden, "A Report to Our Readers—1965," The Objectivist Newsletter, IV, No. 12 (December, 1965), 58. Italics in original. Branden's remarks suggest a serious violation of Objectivist ethics, as defined by Rand. If one must never be afraid to proclaim rationally derived principles, (and if Objectivism holds atheism as such), then by virtue of fidelity to integrity, Branden ought not to be afraid to "crusade" for atheism, regardless of the consequences. His reason (the adversary is too unworthy) appears as a thinly veiled attempt to hide one of two truths: rejection by the American people, or lack of conviction regarding the merit of atheism itself.

First of all, the relationship between religion and philosophy is somewhat confusing. Philosophy, for example, may serve as a testing ground for the religious experience by clarifying and/or refining its commandments, adding so to speak intellectual ballast. Perhaps one reason why the Christian faith has endured centuries of persecution is because its foundations were strengthened by the philosophical systems of both Plato and Aristotle. J. Donald Butler comments on the philosophical-religious experience in this context:

> Many times . . . there are serious inconsistencies in religious thought. This is because the rational implications of beliefs are not followed through logically. Accordingly, the culling of truth from the religious heritage, and the resolving of inconsistencies in religious doctrine, are two of the important refinements of religion to which philosophy can contribute much. . . . Also religion may readily become the appropriate field of practical endeavor in which a given philosophy may find expression.[14]

Thus both philosophy and religion, far from being antagonistic, tend to define the commitment a man makes to lead a good life. Butler's final sentence suggests still another relationship between religion and philosophy. It will be recalled that Rand considers a philosopher who refuses to practically augment his convictions as leading less than a full life. Might not religion be the ideal means through which this might be accomplished? Although Rand would disagree, religion can serve as the vehicle through which a man

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[14]J. Donald Butler, Four Philosophies and their Practice in Education and Religion (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), pp. 9-10.

actualizes his philosophical potential.

Religion and Faith Versus Reason

When Rand speaks of religion, she generally refers to it as mystical jargon beyond rational comprehension and thus absolutely non-contingent on rational thought. For example, in an essay entitled Faith and Force: The Destroyers of the Modern World, she writes:

> Mysticism is the acceptance of allegations without evidence of proof, either apart from or against the evidence of one's senses and one's reason. Mysticism is the claim to some non-sensory, non-rational, non-definable means of knowledge such as "instinct," "intuition," "revelation," or any form of "just knowing." . . . in the light of what followed [i.e., the Renaissance] . . . nobody can now take faith, or religion, or revelation or any form of mysticism as his basic and exclusive guide to existence, not the way it was taken in the Middle Ages.[15]

Here, Rand seems to be accepting the philosophical position that man's senses provide the data necessary to allow reason to form proper judgments. But since the time of Plato, philosophers have argued that sense data can be extremely inaccurate, often therefore misleading reason. So from the standpoint of accurate reporting, sense data has its share of risks too, just as faith. Ironically, Rand places so much "faith" in reason that she regards it as man's exclusive guide to knowledge and refuses to recognize that it, too, may deceive man, especially if data fed to it by the senses are

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[15]Ayn Rand, Faith and Force: The Destroyers of the Modern World, reprint of a lecture delivered at Yale University (February 17, 1960), Brooklyn College (April 4, 1960), and Columbia University (May 5, 1960). (New York: The Objectivist Inc., 1960), 11. My brackets.

not accurate.

Further, the use of the word "exclusive" (basic and exclusive guide to existence) is at best misleading. Today, few Christians would advocate a return to the Middle Ages. Not many religions base the conduct of their affairs totally on revelation, suspending all rational operations in the process. As the author of life, God gave man a mind which He expects him to use in order to survive. Love of and dependence on God does not in any way imply the abandoning of rational thought to mystical whim. Indeed the New Testament tells us that Jesus was quite severe with the man who had failed to use his "talent" productively (Matt. 15:14-30).

The dichotomy made between reason and faith is not accurate. When postulating such a distinction, Rand seems to be saying that those who have faith must, as a necessary condition, either abandon reason entirely, or regard it as inferior to faith. But, to have faith is not to do either. Faith may be viewed on two levels: human and divine. Faith in our fellow man is a matter of necessity, since human knowledge would stagnate without it. No one person could ever hope to personally verify the data he must use to live, even if he possessed the necessary skills to do so, which is unlikely. When an executive of a large corporation issues an order, all he can logically expect is that his subordinates will execute it. Likewise, a man wishing to purchase a television set or visit a doctor must place his faith in the reputation of the manufacturer's or doctor's

ability, especially if he lacks the education necessary to understand and evaluate the complex electronic systems built into a television or the medical knowledge of the doctor. Of course, reason plays a crucial role in helping one to do this, but the fact remains that

> [the] largest percentage of our knowledge comes to each of us through our habitual trust in the reports, research, and opinions of others whom we take (perhaps by an additional application of faith) to be in a position to know. And we do not require that in order to be in a position to know one must in every case be able to find out for himself. It would be a rare person who could claim to have found out or to have checked (or even have partially verified) any significant proportion of the things he counts among his knowledge.[16]

Without "faith," then, there could be little human knowledge. Direct and personal validation occupies but a small place in man's means of acquiring knowledge.

Religious faith or "faith in God" does not render a man irrational. What gives rise to religious faith is often contingent upon the experiential environment:

> What you can see depends upon the kinds of experience you can have; that depends upon the significance you assign to the elements of your experience and that depends upon your perceptual sets; and <u>that</u> in turn depends very often upon whether you are lucky enough to have met the right disclosure situations. This holds for life generally. . . .[17]

Put in these terms, then, what Rand chooses to do is assign little significance to the type of human experience which

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[16] James Ross, <u>Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion</u> (London: The Macmillan Company, 1969), p. 79. My brackets. Parentheses in original.

[17] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 109. Italics in original.

gives rise to faith in God.[18] But, reason and faith may be looked upon as two related types of human knowledge. To deny the former would destroy human knowledge by negating the role of the mind in acquiring and validating knowledge. To deny the latter would, in effect, accomplish the same thing by refusing to man an infinite variety of experiences just as essential to his survival. Faith in God can be a beautiful and personally fulfilling experience for man. Objectivism's rejection of a creator leads to many difficulties, not the least of which is the philosophy's rejection by American schoolmen.

Religion and Capitalism

Objectivists argue that it is irrational to speak of capitalism and religion in the same context; the case against religion as an influence on the growth of capitalism in

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[18]Perhaps Rand's background explains why. Barbara Branden, her biographer, tells us that her parents, " . . . who were Jewish, were not particularly religious, and had given her no formal religious training." Additionally we must not forget that as a child, she experienced the horror of the Russian revolution experiencing many horrible incidents including confiscation of her father's store, lack of food, little money, and unemployment. Under such circumstances, Rand's lack of belief in God's existence may appear understandable. Living in a world which ignored religious training and fostered brutality as a way of life, she obviously lacked the experiential elements necessary to a development of strong religious faith. Further, her almost faith-like allegiance to the power of reason as man's only reliable guide to knowledge could possibly stem from the irrationalism of the revolution which perpetrated so many degradations. For details see: Barbara Branden, "Who Is Ayn Rand?," in Nathaniel Branden, Who Is Ayn Rand? (New York: Paperback Library, 1968), pp. 125-29, and Ayn Rand, We the Living (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1959), passim.

America is stated by Barbara Branden:

> To rest one's advocacy of capitalism on faith, is to concede that reason is on the side of one's enemies. Such implies that a free society cannot be rationally justified. . . . To claim that capitalism rests on religious faith is to contradict the fundamental principles of the United States; in America religion is a private matter which must not be brought into political issues.[19]

Unfortunately, for her argument, the "fundamental principles of the United States" as they relate to economic issues are indeed inclusive of religious issues. Objectivists, when advocating the opposite, ignore the tremendous impetus given capitalism by the Puritan ethic. The latter, by stressing hard work, productiveness, and self-help as signs of the elect and by condemning non-productiveness and laziness as vices, provided an atmosphere conducive to economic competition. Writing in this connection, R. H. Tawney observes of the Puritan:

> . . . he sees in the poverty of those who fall by the way, not a misfortune to be pitied and relieved, but a moral failing to be condemned, and in riches, not an object of suspicion—though like other gifts they may be abused—but the blessing which rewards the triumph of energy and will. Tempered by self-examination, self-discipline, self-control, he is the practical ascetic, whose victories are won not in the cloister, but on the battlefield, in the counting-house, and in the market.[20]

The failure of Objectivists to note the relationship between capitalism and the Puritan ethic leads them to distort history. In attempting to select only the non-religious factors

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[19]Barbara Branden, "Intellectual Ammunition Department," The Objectivist Newsletter, I, No. 3 (March, 1962), 11. Italics in original.

[20]R. H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (New York: Mentor Books, 1954), pp. 191-92.

which gave rise to free enterprise in America, they arbitrarily censor an important element in political and economic development of this country. Although it is quite true that religion in the United States is a private matter, all the privacy implies is that according to the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights, the Federal government may not institute a state religion, or lend support to any individual religion. It says nothing about the influence of religion in shaping American values and institutions. Objectivists fail to realize that the economic and political freedoms enjoyed by Americans today might not have occurred were it not for the religious influence.[21]

Further, the concept of individual rights as opposed to man in service to the state has its roots not just in the Renaissance (as Objectivism suggests), but also in the "theocratic" Middle Ages, the era Rand deplores. Writes one critic of her historiography:

> . . . the idea of representative government we owe to the Christian notion of personality and the medieval conception of mutually binding covenants . . . the cornerstone of English and by extension American constitutionalism is the most medieval and feudal of documents, the Magna Carta.[22]

Although it may be argued whether the Magna Carta exercised as much influence as suggested, it remains defensible to suggest that Christianity helped to displace the notion,

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[21]Samuel Eliot Morison, The Oxford History of the American People (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 69-74.

[22]M. Stanton Evans, "The Gospel According to Ayn Rand," National Review, XIX (October, 1967), 1063.

common to Plato and Aristotle, that man must exist for the state. Paramount to the Christian ethic is respect for the individual dignity of all men. Just as an undue emphasis on faith can warp one's judgment, the converse is likewise true. One who fails to grasp the role religion has played in the formation and growth of America commits the cardinal sin against which Objectivists constantly warn: that of evading reality and substituting whims or desires for what actually is (or was).

The Ethics of Emergencies

As we have noted above, Rand rejects the source of human rights as coming from the Christian ethic. Rather, she suggests that " . . . the source of man's rights is not divine law or congressional law, but the law of identity."[23] Such a belief tends to depreciate the value of an individual's dignity. In the last chapter, we discussed the Objectivist belief that it would be morally justifiable to allow an Adolf Hitler to die. If one judged his actions as morally abominable but then saved his life, he would in effect be perpetuating a moral evil. Whether such a moral norm becomes operative depends on who authors human life. If rights originate from anyone or anything other than God, then one would indeed be justified in allowing Adolf Hitler

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[23]Ayn Rand, "Man's Rights," in The Virtue of Selfishness (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1964), p. 94.

to die since his life per se is of no importance. Saving his life does not prevent us from judging his actions as evil, even to the point of prescribing death had he survived the war, but only through due process. Therefore, Rand's position that we must know the facts before condemning is not consistent with her position on the Hitler issue.

Nathaniel Branden identifies the issue involved when discussing why capital punishment constitutes a danger to human freedom. Noting that the moral issue involved does authorize the state to execute a convicted felon through due process, he goes on to attach the following legal stipulation:

> . . . men are not infallible; juries make mistakes; that is the problem. There have been instances recorded where all the available evidence pointed overwhelmingly to a man's guilt, and the man was convicted, and then subsequently discovered to be innocent. It is the possibility of executing an innocent man that raises doubts about the legal advisability of capital punishment.[24]

The issue, however, is precisely a moral one for the very reason Branden suggests—infallibility. Suppose we argue, as it has been, that Hitler was insane at the time he issued orders leading to the extermination of five million Jews. If so, can he be held completely morally responsible for his actions and therefore be allowed to die at the discretion of a single individual? The point is that when God is divorced from human affairs, the moral commitment to preserve life fades. Probably the first restraint to disappear would be

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[24]Nathaniel Branden, "Intellectual Ammunition Department," The Objectivist Newsletter, II, No. 1 (January, 1963), 3. Italics in original.

due process, resulting in death sentences being pronounced on the whims or mistaken judgments of accusers.

Rand is quite correct when demanding that men not evade the responsibility to denounce evil, but to do so in a context which also denies the source of all good allows for too many errors. If a jury which has listened to overwhelming evidence of guilt for months can err, then the risk of one person doing the same is that much greater. Plato suggests that belief is not the same as knowing; if it were, Branden's argument against capital punishment would not exist, but men are fallible.

We can thus condemn the actions of a Hitler and urge that he be held accountable for his perversions of the moral law, but to judge, condemn, and then execute is not the prerogative of any one individual in a free society.

Internal Contradictions

Objectivism is not without internal contradictions. Inconsistencies, for example, are found in her novel, The Fountainhead. In an earlier chapter, we referred to Rand's heroes and their intensive struggle against evil, noting that the war usually consists of intellectual refutations, coupled when necessary with appropriate action.[25] The nature of "appropriate" concerns us now. The Fountainhead's hero Howard Roark, an architect, undertakes to design a low-rent housing project, free of charge, for an inefficient colleague

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[25]See p. 51 above.

provided he, Roark, retains sole autonomy regarding design. However, when completed, implemented structural changes—made without Roark's authorization—results in a hybrid design. He responds by dynamiting the project,[26] and offers the following defense at his trial:

> "I designed Cortlandt. I gave it to you. I destroyed it. I destroyed it because I did not choose to let it exist. It was a double monster. In form and in implication. I had to blast both. The form was mutilated by two second-handers who assumed the right to improve upon that which they had not made and could not equal. They were permitted to do it by the general implication that the altruistic purpose of the building superseded all rights that I had no claim to stand against it.
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> "I agreed to design Cortlandt for the purpose of seeing it erected as I designed it and for no other reason. That was the price I set for my work. I was not paid. . . .
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> "It is said that I have destroyed the home of the destitute. It is forgotten that but for me the destitute could not have had this particular home. Those who were concerned with the poor had to come to me, who has never been concerned, in order to help the poor. It is believed that the poverty of the future tenants gave them a right to my work. That their need constituted a claim on my life. That it was my duty to contribute anything demanded of me. This is the second-hander's credo now swallowing the world."[27]

It is difficult to reconcile Roark's actions with Objectivist ethics on several counts. First it would appear that although Roark considers his rights violated, the response

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[26]Interestingly enough, The New York Times reported that when The Fountainhead was being made into a movie (1949) the producer, Henry Blanke, recalled: "She [Rand] told me she would blow up the Warner Brothers lot if we changed one word of her beautiful dialogue. . . . And we believed her. Even Jack Warner believed her. He gave her a cigar." See: E. Ephron, "A Strange Kind of Simplicity," The New York Times Book Review, (May 1, 1968), p. 43.

[27]Ayn Rand, The Fountainhead (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1968), p. 685.

constitutes the aggressive use of force—that which Objectivist ethics supposedly rejects. Further, Roark's actions certainly set a dangerous social precedent. Society would obviously collapse if individuals were allowed to express personal dissatisfaction by using bombs. Ironically, Rand speaks quite harshly of those who resort to such tactics in the colleges to foster social change. If Roark's defense speech suggests a possible justification, then we must ask Rand to provide specific moral criteria which permit one to toss a bomb into a building. In any event, his actions certainly are not consistent with Objectivist ethics.

Secondly, Roark's acceptance of the contract itself to design the housing project for low-income families ought—for an Objectivist—to constitute a moral evil, for such a project is certainly socialism in action. If Roark honestly believes in the moral evil of the welfare state, then he certainly has no business associating himself with actions designed to perpetuate its very existence. The project is ostensibly paid for by looting the productive workers to provide homes for those who, on the basis of their need, require them.

Another significant contradiction found in Objectivism concerns Rand's view of morality and her theory of compromise. We have already touched on the issue when discussing Aristotle's doctrine of the golden mean. Objectivism operates in a black/white context, refusing to allow for any moral compromise. Permitting compromise regarding

"concretes or particulars,"[28] but not where moral principles are concerned, she notes:

> The next time you are tempted to ask: "Doesn't life require compromise?" translate that question into its actual meaning: "Doesn't life require the surrender of that which is true and good to that which is false and evil?" The answer is that that precisely is what life forbids—if one wishes to achieve anything but a stretch of tortured years spent in progressive self-destruction.[29]

In another publication, The Ayn Rand Letter, we find endorsed the fairness doctrine for education, i.e., allowing students exposure to ideas and concepts beyond those advocated by a particular (and by implication, as we shall see, non-rational) university department. For example, she notes that

> [if] student minorities have succeeded in demanding that they be given courses on such subjects as Zen Buddhism, guerrilla warfare . . . then an intellectual student minority can succeed in demanding courses on, for instance, Aristotle in philosophy, von Mises in economics, Montessori in education, Hugo in literature. At the very least, such courses would save the students' mind; [sic] potentially they would save the culture.[30]

The educational significance of such a policy will be discussed later, but importantly for the present purpose is what Rand actually thinks of its application by government:

> The "Fairness Doctrine" is a messy little makeshift of the mixed economy, and a poor substitute for freedom of speech. It has, however, served as a minimal retarder of the collectivist trend: it has prevented the Establishment's total takeover of the airways. . . . The doctrine is a typical product of the socialist senti-

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[28]Ayn Rand, "Doesn't Life Require Compromise?" in The Virtue of Selfishness, p. 68.

[29]Ibid., p. 70. Italics in original.

[30]Ayn Rand, "Fairness Doctrine for Education," The Ayn Rand Letter, II, No. 19 (June 19, 1972), 4. My brackets.

> mentality that dreams of combining government ownership with intellectual freedom. . . . The trouble with the fairness doctrine is that it cannot be applied fairly. Like any ideological product of the mixed economy, it is a vague, indefinable approximation and, therefore, an instrument of pressure-group warfare.[31]

The fact that Rand can endorse the fairness doctrine, even as a temporary stop-gap measure, suggests she is willing to compromise a very significant moral issue: the refusal to deal with, or accept any doctrine which advances the welfare/socialist state at the expense of moral integrity. We are not quarreling with the ends—as will be argued later, students do indeed require exposure to Aristotle—but with the means to achieve it which, according to Objectivist ethics, should also be moral.

Additionally, by Rand's own admission, the fairness doctrine cannot be applied fairly as presently used, so what guarantee is there that it will work for education? Other means need to be found to achieve the same (legitimate) goal—freedom of thought on the campus. Rand is quite correct when arguing that the principle must remain inviolate.

Intolerance

Finally, Ellis charges that Objectivism provides little tolerance for opposing philosophies. Parenthetically, one wonders if Rand would allow the fairness doctrine to be

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[31]Ayn Rand, "Fairness Doctrine for Education," The Ayn Rand Letter, I, No. 18 (June 5, 1972), 1.

applied to Objectivism itself?[32] Ellis notes:

> . . . objectivists frequently resort to accusing them [their intellectual opponents] of many views to which they clearly do not subscribe. Then the objectivist writers enthusiastically proceed to knock down the straw-men which they have constructed—while deluding themselves that they have actually demolished their opponents' views.[33]

Unfortunately, this is true. Perhaps the most glaring instance would be Rand's treatment of philosophical history. Excepting Aristotle, her catalog of philosophers and their mis-contributions to man's intellectual development reads like a tour through Dante's Inferno. Everyone since Aristotle, according to Objectivist historiography, has consistently and deliberately set out to destroy what Aristotle had accomplished. For philosophical crimes, post-Aristotelian philosophers are placed in two categories: Attilas and Witch Doctors, imagery suggested by Branden. She comments:

> The essential characteristics of these two remain the same in all ages: Attila, the man who rules by brute force, acts on the range of the moment, is concerned with nothing but the physical reality immediately before him, respects nothing but man's muscles, and regards a fist, a club, or a gun as the only answer to any problem —and the Witch Doctor, the man who dreads physical reality, dreads the necessity of practical action, and escapes into his emotions, into visions of some mystic

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[32]Apparently not, for Ellis reports: "The objectivists themselves consistently attack writers, painters . . . and I have never noticed that they give the persons they attack equal space in their publications." See: Ellis, Is Objectivism a Religion?, p. 290. This is correct; only those who agree with Objectivism may publish in any of Rand's journals. As owner and publisher, she may, of course, refuse to grant anyone space, but that does not change the fact that intolerance exists.

[33]Ibid., p. 244. My brackets.

> realm where his wishes enjoy a supernatural power unlimited by the absolute of nature.[34]

An examination of the introductory essay in For the New Intellectual reveals the following classification of ages and individuals: Witch Doctors—Plato, the Middles Ages, Augustine, Descartes and Hegel; Attilas—Greco-Roman (political) civilization, Hume, and Marx, and both—Kant, Logical Positivists, Twentieth Century Philosophers.[35]

One example will illustrate how the classification operates. Writing that the Renaissance freed philosophy from theology, Rand continues to say that the future seemed bright until Descartes who

> . . . began with the basic epistemological premise of every Witch Doctor . . . "the prior certainty of consciousness," the belief that the existence of an external world is not self-evident but must be proved by deduction from the contents of one's consciousness—which means: the concept of consciousness as some faculty other than the faculty of perception—which means: the indiscriminate contents of one's consciousness as the irreducible primary and absolute, to which reality has to conform. What followed was the grotesquely tragic spectacle of philosophers struggling to prove the existence of an external reality by staring, with the Witch Doctor's blind, inward stare, at the random twists of their conceptions—then of perceptions—then of sensations.[36]

This is what Ellis means by setting up a strawman for the purpose of destroying it. Rand ignores the fact that Descartes does not attempt to destroy the certainty of

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[34]Ayn Rand, "Introduction" to For the New Intellectual (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1961), p. 14. Italics in original.

[35]Ibid., pp. 10-57.

[36]Ibid., p. 28. Italics in original.

external reality, but temporarily doubted its existence in order to find criteria for determining and establishing reliable guidelines for human knowledge.[37] Descartes realized what was concluded earlier, that sense data can be inaccurate, providing therefore incorrect knowledge.

Further, she ignores the reasons which prompted philosophers and scientists such as Descartes and Bacon to demand new methods of investigation. Scholasticism had become so corrupted and decadent that human knowledge faced the prospect of extinction if attention were not paid to the environmental stimuli of the day. Ironically, a contributing factor to the decline of scholasticism was Aristotle's logic. The use of deductive science, it was reasoned, provided convenient means for classifying knowledge, but not expanding it. The insisting on new methods which supplemented Aristotle resulted in the Renaissance which Rand so highly values.

Thus, Rand's iconoclastic classifications are at best most misleading and hardly reflect a mature approach to the study of philosophy. Of course, she is free to disagree with conclusions reached by philosophers and scientists, but one would expect that as a philosopher (lover of wisdom), she would at least respect the contributions made by Plato, Kant and others to Western thought.

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[37]René Descartes, "Meditation I," Meditations on First Philosophy, trans. by Norman Smith in Monroe C. Beardsley, ed., European Philosophers from Descartes to Nietzsche (New York: Modern Library, 1960), pp. 28-32.

Critic James Collins suggests that Rand's tactics stem from the difficulties she encounters when switching from novelist to philosopher:

> Metaphors are useful in philosophy, but only as directives of the mind toward the particular evidences by which to test and qualify the hypotheses using the metaphors. What makes it difficult for Ayn Rand to make the transition from novelist to philosopher is that her personifications tend to take possession of the discussion and to lead a life of their own, beyond our possibility of checking them.[38]

Collins goes on to suggest that using imagery has a certain shock value, which jars the reader's complacency, but fails to contribute anything of substance to philosophical thought. Name-calling belongs to propaganda; not philosophy.

Rand's over-use of metaphor in philosophy often results in a reader dismissing Objectivism as being of little worth. Her neglect by the academic community constitutes an example. Objectivism can make a significant contribution to educational thought, as the following chapters will hopefully make clear, but readers are cautioned to read beyond the shock tactics used.

SUMMARY

This chapter has attempted to balance the previous ones by providing the reader with evidence suggesting irregularities in Objectivism. These include misleading or inaccurate assumptions regarding religion, faith, laissez-faire Capitalism, and non-Objectivist philosophies. Of

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[38]James Collins, "Ayn Rand's Talents for Getting Headlines," America, CV (July, 1961), 569.

special importance to education is the conduct of her character Howard Roark, whose actions seem to imitate the very student radicals she repudiates.

The following chapters will consider Objectivism as it evaluates American education. In so doing, however, we must keep in mind that the above characteristics will have to be either dismissed outright or modified if the philosophy is to make any contribution to American educational thought.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE OBJECTIVIST CRITIQUE OF AMERICAN FORMAL EDUCATION

Rand's educational position reflects a code of values a man ought to accept if he be really educated. Thus, her critique of contemporary American formal education isolates practices which deviate from Objectivist ethics. The following summary indicates five areas of educational practice Rand finds most objectionable. When practiced by schoolmen, these procedures prevent the child from acquiring the virtues listed in the second column. Rationality is common to the five categories, since Rand regards it as man's basic virtue—the foundation for the remaining virtues.

Educational procedure:	Virtues:
1. Inadequate development of sense of life.	1. Rationality, integrity.
2. Inadequate development of self-esteem and cognitive self-reliance.	2. Rationality, self-esteem, pride, productiveness.
3. Confusion of the roles of reason and emotion in childhood growth.	3. Rationality, honesty, justice.
4. Student activism, especially violence.	4. Rationality, justice.
5. The "welfare state" mentality of formal education.	5. Rationality, honesty, integrity, justice, productiveness.

Rand condemns American educators for failing to practice virtues which are essential to the realization of her concept of the educated man. In essence they are the virtues which she wishes the educated man to possess. Any system of education which negates one or all of them falls under her critical scan. Each of the five issues will in turn be considered.

Inadequate Development of Sense of Life

In chapter three, the concept sense of life was examined in reference to its importance for education. Rand relates it to education when discussing the learning situation in the context of Objectivist epistemology:

> The integrated sum of a man's basic values is his sense of life. A sense of life represents a man's early value-integrations, which remain in a fluid, plastic, easily amendable state, while he gathers knowledge to reach full conceptual control and thus to drive his inner mechanism. . . . The transition from guidance by a sense of life to guidance by a conscious philosophy takes many forms. For the rare exception, the fully rational child, it is a natural, absorbing, if difficult process—the process of validating and, if necessary, correcting in conceptual terms what he had merely sensed about the nature of man's existence. ... . The result is a fully integrated personality, a man whose mind and emotions are in harmony, whose sense of life matches his conscious convictions.[1]

The educative process, then, begins with values regarded by an individual as significant—significant in terms of a personal evaluation of his universe, be it the home, the

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[1]Any Rand, "Philosophy and Sense of Life," in The Romantic Manifesto (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1971), p. 29. Italics in original.

school or the community in which he resides. The adult community, by the way it structures the child's environment, can advance or retard a healthy and viable sense of life, for a sense of life " . . . is formed by every individual child's early impression of the world around him: of the ideas he is taught . . . and of the way of acting he observes and evaluates. . . . "[2] Education plays a significant role in helping the child convert his sense of life to a rational philosophy of life. It is at this juncture in the child's life that Objectivism begins its critique of American education.

Rand advises that sense of life becomes operative when the child confronts his earliest and most fundamental choice:

> Does a child conclude that the world is intelligible, and proceed to expand his understanding by the effort

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[2]Ayn Rand, "Don't Let It Go," The Ayn Rand Letter, I, No. 4 (November 22, 1971), 2. In Atlas Shrugged, Rand describes what a proper sense of life ought to be, when speaking of two children: "They seem to face life as she [Dagny Taggart, Rand's heroine in the novel] had faced it. They did not have the look . . . of fear, half-secretive, half-sneering, the look of a child's defense against an adult, the look of a being in the process of discovering that he is hearing lies and of learning to feel hatred. The two boys had the open, joyous, friendly confidence of kittens who do not expect to get hurt, they had an innocently natural, non-boastful sense of their own value and as innocent a trust in any stranger's ability to recognize it, they had the eager curiosity that would venture anywhere with the certainty that life had nothing unworthy of or closed to discovery, and they looked as if, should they encounter malevolence, they would reject it contemptuously, not as dangerous, but as stupid, they would not accept it in bruised resignation as the law of existence." See: Atlas Shrugged (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1957), p. 730. My brackets.

> of conceptualizing on an ever-wider scale, with growing success and enjoyment? Or does he conclude that the world is a bewildering chaos, where the fact he grasped today is reversed tomorrow, where the more he sees the more helpless he becomes—and, consequently, does he retreat into the cellar of his own mind, locking its door.[3]

Unfortunately for the child, today's schooling usually leads to the latter—chaos. Objectivism offers several examples of educational decay, but perhaps the most important one concerns the destruction of a child's sense of the heroic. Young children tend to project their own activities in terms of heroes: Superman, The Lone Ranger, Batman—all of whom emerge victorious over evil. Why? In pre-conceptual sense of life terms, the child does not recognize that such heroes represent concepts he values as vital to healthy self-esteem: courage, integrity, honor, etc. What parents ought to do, suggests Rand, is to cultivate this hero worship by aiding the child in his attempts to transform his sense of life estimate of them to proper conceptual (philosophical) terms. However, she warns:

> It is easy to convince a child, and particularly an adolescent, that his desire to emulate Buck Rogers is ridiculous: he knows that it isn't exactly Buck Rogers he has in mind and yet, simultaneously, it is—he feels caught in an inner contradiction—and this confirms his desolately embarrassing feeling that he is being ridiculous.[4]

Of course the Lone Ranger and Buck Rogers do not exist, but

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[3]Ayn Rand, "The Comprachicos," in The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1971), p. 159.

[4]Ayn Rand, "Art and Moral Treason," in The Romantic Manifesto, p. 114.

that is not the point. When parents and teachers ridicule the child for admiring them or casting himself in their roles, he will eventually not only reject them, but also the values they represent. The hero himself may soon fade in the older child's memory, but the values ought not to fade. The hero and his values are so closely linked in the child's mind that a rejection of the former usually implies rejection of the latter with tragic results for his moral/intellectual development. The inner contradiction, in other words, impedes the proper integration of data later needed for concept formation, and for the formation of morally proper principles. The damage inflicted upon self-esteem is enormous and often irrevocable as the next section of this chapter will indicate.

The child's sense of life and its potential for transition to an integrated conceptual framework become further frustrated, suggests Rand, when formal education begins, especially if the child is subjected to the Progressive educational influence. Her critique of John Dewey's philosophy of education[5] charges that it lacks proper cognitive and moral foundations. Rand critiques Dewey's evaluation of the learning process. Writing in

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[5]Rand erroneously equates Dewey with Progressive education; for her, criticism of one implies criticism of the other. In reality, Dewey himself was quite critical of the excesses in the Progressive educational movement. See: Experience and Education (New York: Collier Books, 1971), passim. For a scholarly treatment of the Progressive education movement and Dewey's role in it, see: Lawrence Cremin, The Transformation of the Schools (New York: Vintage Press, 1964), especially pages 237-39.

Democracy and Education regarding alleged deficiencies in the Montessori method, Dewey observes:

> Even the kindergarten and Montessori techniques are so anxious to get at intellectual distinctions, without "waste of time," that they tend to ignore—or reduce—the immediate crude handling of the familiar material of experience, and to introduce pupils at once to material which expresses the intellectual distinctions which adults have made.[6]

Rand of course takes exception to any philosophy of education which suggests that cognitive operations be forestalled for whatever reason. This is especially true regarding intellectual distinctions since the ability to recognize distinctions cognitively constitutes an essential part of the process of concept formation. The child, she warns, can never become conceptually aware if intellectual operations are not involved at the earliest possible moment. Objectivism not only faults Dewey's attempt to postpone intellectual development, but further objects to the context in which this occurs: namely, the group.

Dewey believes that the " . . . reconstruction or reorganization of experience, . . . "[7] his definition of the learning process, may best occur if the learner interacts with the environment in an active sense as part of a group engaged in problem solving.[8] The group, when solving problems, is guided by its own interests and should, therefore, be self-motivating. Education for Dewey stresses the

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[6]John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Free Press, 1968), pp. 153-54.

[7]Ibid., p. 76. [8]Ibid., pp. 10-22.

need for social cooperation as a means for survival in a democracy. He writes:

> . . . the social environment forms the mental and emotional disposition of behavior in individuals by engaging them in activities that arouse and strengthen certain impulses, that have certain purposes and entail certain consequences.[9]

Rand counters the learning by doing method in a group context, noting its effect on young children:

> He [the child] has acquired no incentive, no motive to develop his intellect. Of what importance can reality be to him if his fate depends on the pack? . . . Reality, to him, is no longer an exciting challenge, but a dark unknowable threat, which evokes a feeling he did not have when he started: a feeling not of ignorance, but of failure, not of helplessness, but of impotence—a sense of his own malfunctioning mind. The pack is the only realm he knows where he feels at home; he needs its protection and reassurance; the art of human manipulation is the only skill he had acquired.[10]

Without incentive or motivation, then, the transition spoken of earlier can not occur. This is especially true, according to Rand, since Dewey " . . . opposed the teaching of theoretical (i.e. conceptual) knowledge, and demanded that it be replaced by concrete, "practical" action, in the form of "class projects" which would develop the students' social spirit.[11] As we shall have occasion to note later, Objec-

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[9] Ibid., p. 16.

[10] Rand, "The Comprachicos," p. 167. My brackets.

[11] Ibid., p. 172. Parentheses in original. An advocate of Dewey's philosophy might here argue that Rand sets up a "straw man." Specifically, according to Dewey, motivation emanates from the learning situation itself (i.e., the problem), and that his opposition to "theoretical" knowledge means opposing "verbalism" introduced too early in the child's education. Dewey himself, for example, "lectured" when teaching at Chicago.

tivism accepts the Montessori method because it regards the child as individual as the primary unit (not the group) in the educative process.

The moral effects of Progressive education are worse, according to Rand. Progressive techniques (it is not clear whether Rand means Dewey or Progressive education, but in the context of her article, "The Comprachicos," probably both) systematically destroy the virtues of rationality and integrity. As man's basic virtue, rationality demands a full and continuous commitment to reason, for only in this way will man's life on earth be happy. Specifically, Objectivism charges that the virtue of rationality is turned against the child by forcing him to conform to the will of the group.

The child who regards Buck Rogers as a hero senses a moral worth in his hero's behavior, the same moral worth Rand's characters exhibit—they exist as morally responsible individuals concerned with the continuous and sustained development of the mind through engaging in productive work.

Likewise several characters, Jim Taggart, Lillian Rearden, and especially Ellsworth Toohey represent the anti-hero, the individuals wishing to destroy the moral code practiced by the John Galts and Dagny Taggarts. As such, they represent the Randian concept of mis-educated people. Characteristically, they practice a code of values consistent with graduates of Progressive schools. For example, prizing like-mindedness and group directedness, Toohey

comments (in a selection Rand entitles "The Soul of a Collectivist"):

> Everything I said is contained in a single word—collectivism. And isn't that the god of our century? To act together. To think—together. To feel—together. To unite, to agree, to obey. . . . Kill the individual. Kill man's soul. The rest will follow automatically.[12]

Such is the philosophy of the man educated to serve the group. Existing only insofar as the group will permit, he fears independent cognitive action, which begins, according to the Objectivists, when the child is simply told by a teacher that his personal ambitions or thoughts mean little if the group wishes to pursue a conflicting problem. Notes Rand:

> One of the most evil aspects of modern schools is the spectacle of a thinking child trying to "adjust" to the pack, trying to hide his intelligence (and his scholastic grades) and to act like "one of the boys." He never succeeds, and is left wondering helplessly: "What is wrong with me? What do I lack? What do they want?"[13]

Related to the groping for a sense of self-worth and self-identity is the virtue of integrity, defined as " . . . the recognition of the fact that you cannot fake your consciousness . . . that man , , . may not sacrifice his convictions to the wishes of others. . . . "[14] But the Objectivists warn that Progressive education demands such sacrifice (by

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[12]Ayn Rand, "The Soul of a Collectivist," in For The New Intellectual (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1961), p. 76.

[13]Rand, "The Comprachicos," p. 179. Italics and parentheses in original.

[14]Rand, "This Is John Galt Speaking," in For The New Intellectual, pp. 128-29.

creating the anti-hero) and lauds it as proper classroom practice.

Another way of examining the so-called amorality of Progressive educational methodology is to think in terms of the means-ends relationship in the educative process. Rand defines man in terms of the end he ought to seek if he desires to live as a man. Her ethical system adheres to the principle that man ought to exist as a heroic being, responsible and happy—in Aristotelian terms.

Dewey, however, does not recognize ends in the Randian sense, but focuses attention on means, or methodological procedures (i.e. the scientific method). In Experience and Education, he writes:

> The educational system must move one way or another, either backward to the intellectual and moral standards of a pre-scientific age or forward to ever greater utilization of scientific method in the development of the possibilities of growing, expanding experience.[15]

In this context, ends achieved immediately become means utilized again to achieve other ends, and so on. Thus Dewey rejects the means/ends dichotomy, really seeing the two as one. Such a process fulfills an important criteria for an educative experience, that it be continuous. Objectivism charges, however, that the concept growth implies direction—growth toward what? Dewey rejects all objective absolutes as too confining and restrictive, thereby preventing man from seeking (growing to) the truth. It would appear, then,

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[15]John Dewey, Experience and Education (New York: Collier Books, 1971), p. 89.

that a given problem becomes only a temporary end, providing experience needed for further growth. By ignoring a final end toward which the educative process must lead, Rand argues that Dewey divorces morality from education. If values are determined by the use and the satisfaction gained from employment, then ethics simply becomes a matter of plugging in proper methods to solve problems without regard to their moral worth.

Rand's charge is serious, and deserves examination in light of Dewey's own thinking. In Democracy and Education, he speaks of moral worth as arising from an activity oriented social context:

> The something for which a man must be good is capacity to live as a social member so that what he gets from living with others balances with what he contributes. . . . All education which develops power to share effectively in social life is moral. It forms a character which not only does the particular deed socially necessary but one which is interested in that continuous readjustment which is essential to growth. Interest in learning from all the contacts of life is the essential moral interest.[16]

Objectivism would ask, continuous readjustment toward what? The group? The society? The nation? While it is essential to Dewey's philosophy that growth consists of solving problems (thereby building the experiential fund) in the group context, such is not essential for Objectivism. When Dewey denies objective moral principles, Rand charges that he delivers ethics to the whims of what the given group determines as good.

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[16]Dewey, Democracy and Education, pp. 359-60.

Growth for Objectivism constitutes growth toward a specific moral end—the concept of the educated man. Once achieved, conscious and continuous action by the individual is required to insure proper ethical conduct. The concept serves the moral purpose of reminding man of the values he must constantly practice if he desires to remain a man. While Dewey is correct when suggesting that mere verbal information alone and divorced from action will not result in proper moral conduct, he errs (according to Rand) when refusing to assign to growth a specific direction leading to a specific (moral) end.[17] For these reasons, Objectivism maintains the position that the scientific method of inquiry alone (i.e., without a final moral end) is not sufficient to bind ethics to educational pursuits.

Objectivism's critique of Dewey's philosophy of education is to a large degree contingent upon Rand's interpretation of it. Dewey himself, as we have noted, criticized Progressive educational excesses, including its failure to come to grips with subject matter. Indeed, he warned that method can never be divorced from substantive content. If Rand wishes to critique the excesses of Progressive education, she of course may do so, keeping in mind, however, that Dewey himself is not synonymous with the movement, especially in its later stages.

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[17]This position, of course, reflects Objectivism's Aristotelian base. The latter argues that it is illogical to speak in terms of an infinity of means/ends. There must, he maintains, be a final end or cause.

Objectivism warns, however, that Dewey's philosophy frustrates the child's sense of life, resulting in fear, a blinding fear that the universe is malevolent, unintelligible, and without direction. One reason Rand endorses Montessori is because that method presents reality as ordered and structured, therefore capable of being understood by the child.

Fear does constitute a clear and present danger. John Holt, who studies the concept in How Children Fail, outlines his belief that fear is the principal cause for academic failure:

> It is not just a matter of not knowing this fact or that fact; it is a matter of living in a universe like the one lived in by very young children, a universe which is utterly whimsical and unpredictable, where nothing has anything to do with anything else. . . .[18]

The demand for "the right answer" and "memorization versus understanding" (which Dewey deplores also) as learning techniques contribute to the child's sense of fear and ultimately damage self-esteem. Objectivism posits that if education is to succeed then it must seek to dissipate fear and present a view of the universe as a place the child can, to the limits of his ability, understand. Holt in fact calls attention to the reality that intelligent children seldom regard the universe as hostile:

> They check their answers and their thoughts against common sense. . . . It seems as if what we call intelligent children feel that the universe can be trusted

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[18]John Holt, How Children Fail (New York: Dolta Books, 1964), p. 93.

> even when it does not seem to make any sense, that even when you don't understand it you can be fairly sure that it is not going to play dirty tricks on you.[19]

But how can a child come to recognize his own intelligence when the school so often shatters self-esteem and self-confidence? Objectivism's critique of Progressive education essentially denounces its placing children in group situations, arguing that such practices cripple self-confidence. The next section of this chapter considers the concept self-esteem in more detail.

Inadequate Development of Self-Esteem and Cognitive Self-Reliance

Very few adults seem capable of realizing that many children are terrified of school. The fear mentioned above grows and grows until the adolescent begs to be set free. Anyone who has observed the speed and joy of most children leaving school at the day's end knows, or should know, that what goes on inside cannot but damage young minds. In this section we are concerned with Rand's position that such damage results from the school's destruction of cognitive self-reliance and self-esteem.

Educators including John Holt and Charles Silberman have recognized the fact that a healthy self-esteem is necessary for successful learning. It is significant that Silberman, for example, in a chapter entitled "Education for Docility," argues that

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[19] Ibid., p. 46.

> far from helping students to develop into mature, self-reliant, self-motivated individuals, schools seem to do everything they can to keep youngsters in a state of chronic, almost infantile, dependency. The pervasive atmosphere of distrust, together with rules covering the most minute aspects of existence, teach students every day that they are not people of worth, and certainly not individuals capable of regulating their own behavior.[20]

Objectivist educational philosophy stresses that the destruction of the self-esteem concept utterly thwarts the learning process. To determine why, we must first define self-esteem. Arguing that it is a basic need of man, Nathaniel Branden comments:

> From the time that a child acquires the capacity for conceptual functioning, he becomes increasingly aware—implicitly and sub-verbally—of his responsibility for regulating his mind's activity. To maintain the conceptual level of awareness, he must generate directed mental effort.[21]

When the mind employs proper mental efforts to sustain awareness, it is said to be "self-confident."[22] Self-confidence implies the fact that a man knows he is capable of dealing rationally with the facts of reality. Related to self-confidence is "self-respect"—the knowledge " . . . that he is right as a person, right in his characteristic manner of acting—that he is good."[23] These two conditions constitute a healthy self-esteem, which " . . . entails and requires cognitive self-assertiveness, which is expressed

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[20]Charles Silberman, Crisis in the Classroom (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 134.

[21]Nathaniel Branden, "Self-Esteem," Part I, The Objectivist, VI, No. 3 (March, 1967), 2. Italics in original.

[22]Ibid. [23]Ibid., p. 4. Italics in original.

through the policy of thinking, of judging, and of governing action accordingly."[24] If the above conditions are operative, then the young child will experience a healthy and viable self-esteem. It must be emphasized, however, that a child's self-esteem remains, while he is young, delicate and fragile; therefore capable of either growth or suffocation contingent upon what the child estimates the state of reality to be. At a young age, this estimate is largely determined by what the child observes in his limited environment: the home and the school. If a child, for example, discovers the world to be hostile, contradictory and oppressive, Branden warns that, " . . . after a number of unsuccessful attempts to understand their [irrational adults] policies and behavior, the child gives up—and takes the blame."[25] The result is fear, a fear often reinforced by both home and school. Branden continues,

> In the life of a young child, a certain amount of fear is to be expected, since the child knows so little and the world around him is unfamiliar and strange. Normally and healthily, with the growth of his knowledge and abilities, these fears are overcome and left behind, so that, with the transition to adulthood, fewer and fewer things have the power to invoke fear in him. The extent to which a child follows this course to full maturity, depends on the policy he adopts for dealing with his fears.[26]

In this connection, Objectivism argues that modern schooling,

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[24]Nathaniel Branden, "Self-Esteem," Part II, The Objectivist, IV, No. 4 (April, 1967), 6. Italics in original.

[25]Ibid., Part I, p. 5. My brackets. Italics in original.

[26]Ibid., Part II, p. 8.

instead of showing the child how to deal with his fears, reinforces them through irrational behavior. For example, when young children (individual children) are forced to conform to group standards, live in constant fear of supplying the wrong answer, and are never quite sure what the teacher "wants," then self-esteem becomes impaired and learning ceases. Children so victimized often become sullen or hostile, attempting to strike out at a world they never made and cannot control. As we shall have occasion to note later, they grow into the "hippies" who drop out in a bewildering stupor of drug addiction. Their pathetic state represents to a large degree the failure of education to help them develop self-esteem. Significantly, they—in both dress and action—seem to derive perverse pleasure in self-degradation.

Sadly, in the school establishment today, the teacher often acts as the agent for destruction of self-esteem, and cognitive assertiveness. For example both Holt and Silberman[27] report instances in which teacher action generated a lack of self-esteem in students. The following, from Crisis in the Classroom, is typical:

> ITEM: A fourth-grade math teacher writes a half-dozen problems on the board for the class to do. "I think I can pick at least four children who can't do them," she tells the class, and proceeds to call four youngsters to the board to demonstrate, for all to see, how correct the teacher's judgment is. Needless to say, the children

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[27]For additional examples, see: Silberman, Crisis in the Classroom, Chapter IV, and Holt, How Children Fail, Part II.

fulfill the prophecy.[28]

Such activity negates the virtues needed for a healthy self-esteem: rationality, independence, pride, and productiveness.

Independence means that one is solely responsible for his own thinking, and cannot allow anyone to assume that task. But, when one is forced to abrogate this responsibility, self-esteem suffers. Teachers such as the one Silberman describes above seem to take a strange pride in destroying self-esteem. Holt notes how they destroy self-esteem and independence by using the learner's self-image destructively:

> Note the danger of using a child's concept of himself to get him to do good work. We say "You are the kind of sensible, smart, good, etc., etc. boy or girl who can easily do this problem if you try." But if the work fails, so does the concept. If he can't do the problem, no matter how hard he tries, then, clearly, he is not sensible, smart or good.[29]

The learner soon equates the fear of failure with his own self-concept, and tragically grows to hate learning itself. Forming the mental equation, learning = failure = lack of self-esteem, the learner, to preserve self-esteem as best he can and wishing not to be called "stupid" rejects learning. Branden identifies the nature of the error when he notes:

> If, in spite of his best efforts, a man fails in a particular undertaking, he does not experience the same

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[28]Silberman, Crisis in the Classroom, p. 139.

[29]Holt, How Children Fail, pp. 43-44.

> emotion of pride that he would feel if he had succeeded; but, if he is rational, his self-esteem is unaffected and unimpaired. His self-esteem is not—or should not be—dependent on particular successes or failures, since these are not necessarily in a man's direct, volitional control and/or not in his exclusive control.[30]

The concept of control is essential. At a young age, when the learner is struggling to master a given problem and fails to do so, his lack of intellectual maturity causes him to equate failure in one specific area (i.e. not knowing that 8 + 2 = 10) with lack of self-esteem. At such times, the teacher must assume the responsibility of convincing him that failure in one area ought not to diminish his self-worth. But, as Holt observes, teachers not only fail to provide such assurances, but rather reinforce the child's sense of his own self-degradation.

Such is the result of a school system which rewards the ability to memorize often unrelated data. In The Tyranny of Testing Banesh Hoffman observes that the common multiple choice (guess) test reinforces the need to memorize answers, while penalizing brighter students:

> It is obvious from the nature of the tests [multiple choice] that they do not give the candidate a significant opportunity to express himself. If he is subtle in his choice of answers it will go against him; and yet there is no other way for him to show any individuality. If he is strong-minded, non-conformist, unusual, original, or creative . . . he must stifle his impulses and conform. . . . The more profoundly gifted the candidate is, the more his resentment will rise against the mental strait jacket into which the testers would force his mind.[31]

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[30]Nathaniel Branden, "Self-Esteem," Part III, The Objectivist, VI, No. 5 (May, 1967), 10. Italics in original.

[31]Banesh Hoffman, The Tyranny of Testing (New York: Collier Books, 1962), pp. 91-92. My brackets.

Again we may observe the common themes—lack of respect for the individual's ability, conformity—which Rand decries in contemporary education. Such testing practices do little to allow brighter, more sophisticated students to function at maximum efficiency. Rather, they cater to those who equate memorization with understanding and guessing with sustained understanding of concepts. Self-esteem and its corollaries pride and productiveness suffer.

The virtue of pride bears an important relationship to self-esteem as Nathaniel Branden observes:

> Self-esteem pertains to a man's convictions of his fundamental efficacy and worth. Pride pertains to the pleasure a man takes in himself on the basis of and in response to specific achievements or actions. . . . Self-esteem is "I can," Pride is "I have."[32]

Productiveness is likewise essential:

> The scope of a person's productive ambition reflects, not only the range of his intelligence, but, most crucially, the degree of his self-esteem. The higher the level of a man's self-esteem, the higher the goals he sets for himself and the more demanding the challenge he tends to seek.[33]

Educators have noted the profound sense of pleasure experienced by a student who, on his own, has accomplished a difficult task or solved a significant (to him) problem. But pride and productiveness are destroyed when the child is denied the atmosphere conducive to the development of self-esteem upon which pride and productiveness are contingent.

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[32]Branden, "Self-Esteem," Part III, p. 9. Italics in original.

[33]Nathaniel Branden, "Self-Esteem," Part IV, The Objectivist, VI, No. 6 (June, 1967), 3.

As mentioned above, many children dislike school, and perhaps one reason why they do rests with the inability of adults to recognize that all children crave an ordered environment in which they, as individuals, can develop their own cognitive powers. As we shall see, Rand admires Montessori for the latter's scaling the environment to children's capabilities, and for allowing them to pursue problem-solving on their own.

Educators have long argued that the school ought not to exist apart from life, but integral to it. College students or adults who drop out of society have never learned to cope with life's challenges as individuals. Thus, in recent years, communes have become popular. The schools must assume the responsibility for failing to prepare children to function in life as independent agents. More will be said concerning Rand's position regarding what the school can do to foster self-esteem in the next chapter.

The Roles of Reason and Emotion in Childhood Growth

To insure healthy self-esteem, educators must not only break free from the inimical effects of ineffective teaching but (on the positive side) must cultivate rational development of the child so that he will be competent to survive as a man. Rand sees schooling engulfed in a quagmire of emotionalism which retards rational development.

The decline of the intellect as a significant factor

in education may be traced to the influence of Rousseau. Decrying the corruptive influence of man-made society, Rousseau suggests that the child be raised apart from it, according to the dictates of nature. Bluntly advocating that education ignore cognitive growth, Rousseau—through the persona of the tutor to Emile—never really teaches Emile to read, suggesting he will learn when interested. Rousseau argues for the primacy of instincts and emotions as the only significant vehicles capable of producing an educated (natural) man. Condemning this influence as having infectious consequences for education, William J. McGucken, S.J. argues:

> Back of every change will be found a man and a theory. Many of the significant innovations in American schools are derived from Jean Jacques Rousseau. . . . The cult of sentimentalism and utilitarianism in American education is due in large part to Rousseau's Emile . . . which has become the Koran of the American school with its cry of "back to nature." The child is to be allowed to develop according to nature. Common sense indicates that the logical following of this maxim would lead to savagery . . . John Dewey, with his theory of freedom and his abhorrence of discipline, is a direct inheritor of the Rousseau tradition.[34]

Rand too terms such educational philosophy "savage." As we have noted, she believes that reason is man's only means for survival; so to attempt to deliver the concept to instinct and emotions courts disaster. Warning that emotions are not cognitive operators, Branden comments:

> What one feels in regard to any fact or issue is irrelevant to the question of whether one's judgment of it is

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[34]William McGucken, S.J., The Catholic Way in Education (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1962), pp. 6-7.

> true or false, right or wrong. It is not by means of one's feelings that one perceives reality.[35]

Rand notes that the educative process raises a false dichotomy between reason and emotion very early in the child's life. She observes of the young learner:

> His rationality is turned against him by means of a . . . dichotomy: reason versus emotion. His Romantic sense of life is only a sense, an incoherent emotion. . . . It is an intense, yet fragile emotion, painfully vulnerable to any sarcastic allegation. . . . While the child is thus driven to fear, mistrust and repress his own emotions, he cannot avoid observing the hysterical violence of the adults' emotions unleashed against him. . . . He concludes, subconsciously, that all emotions as such are dangerous, that they are the irrational, unpredictably destructive element in people, which can descend upon him at any moment. . . .[36]

The moral damage is great. At a young age a child does not yet understand that value judgments are contingent upon rational processes. Rather he sees his likes and dislikes solely in terms of emotional stimuli. When, therefore, a child represses emotions, he soon concludes that making value judgments is likewise inimical to survival and consequently, he never implements an important principle of Objectivist ethics: pronouncing moral judgments. As we have noted earlier, such pronouncements serve as the foundation of the virtue of justice.

When the proper relationship between emotions and

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[35]Nathaniel Branden, "Intellectual Ammunition Department," The Objectivist Newsletter, I, No. 1 (January, 1962), 3. Italics in original.

[36]Rand, "Art and Moral Treason," pp. 113-15. Italics in original. For additional comments regarding the need for a remolding of formal education along rational lines see: Robert Hutchins, The Higher Learning in America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 63.

reason is not taught, educational standards decline since educators are either afraid or incapable of judging.[37] If quality education cannot exist without standards, then standards themselves cannot exist unless someone capable of judging judges. Yet, warns Rand, by either ignoring the distinction between reason and emotion or construing reason inferior to emotion, educators destroy the child's potential to develop as a moral being and sacrifice standards for whims.

The standards Objectivism seeks, of course, are those intellectual virtues outlined in chapter three. Another way of describing the importance of reason as the means of fostering and maintaining educational standards is to speak in terms of the need for objective first principles which, as we have noted, Rand requires in any moral operation.

We shall conclude this section with additional comments regarding the effects of fear on young learners. The psychological and philosophical consequences are enormous, in producing what Objectivists call social metaphysical fear, meaning that what a given group, society or mob deems

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[37]Writing in this connection Harry S. Broudy observes: "Quality education without standards is a meaningless and mischievous notion. Somewhere the standards of truth, goodness, and beauty must be made explicit. . . . Such norms are available in the living tradition of each of the great domains of knowledge and the arts, and the school can be judged in terms of quality if these standards are accepted and used." See: The Real World of the Public Schools (New York: Harcourt Brace, and Jovanovich, Inc., 1972), pp. 84-85.

true be true, regardless of the facts of reality.

Termed by Branden as "a parasitism of consciousness," social metaphysical fear " . . . consists of rebelling against the responsibility of rational judgment, of resenting the 'burden' of cognitive self-reliance of seeking to exist as a parasite on the consciousness of others."[38] Refusing to think and always living in fear of what someone will say or how they will react to independent thought first develops in an educational context. Rand describes the epistemological consequences:

> They [graduates of Progressive schools] are expected to acquire some sort of formal knowledge, to pass exams, to achieve acceptable grades, i.e., to comply with some minimal factual norms—but, to them, it is a metaphysical betrayal. Facts are what they have been trained to ignore; facts cannot be learned by the kind of mental processes they have automatized: by an animal-like method of catching the emotional cues emitted by the pack. The pack is still there, but it cannot help them at examination time—which they have to face in a state they have been taught to regard as evil: alone.[39]

Thus the epistemological contradiction in Progressive education is that although it demands fidelity to group norms (and thus presents a metaphysically false reality), the child—as an individual—will eventually have to function on his own: alone. When that time arrives, however, he will be incapable of any independent cognitive operations. Rather, the student will begin a desperate search for someone to tell him what to do; how to think. This is the real

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[38]Nathaniel Branden, "Social Metaphysical Fear," The Objectivist Newsletter, III, No. 7 (July, 1964), 27.

[39]Rand, "The Comprachicos," p. 177. My brackets.

evil of Progressive education as Rand sees it. If the child is prevented from thinking, then the man is left incapable of independent rational judgment not only of his own worth, but also of the world about him. One cannot function rationally while chronically fearful.

Fear of course has many manifestations, not the least of which is hate and a desire to destroy. Rand argues therefore that the graduate of a Progressive elementary school is the college student anarchist of tomorrow. It is to the problem of student violence that we now turn.

Student Violence

Perhaps the most horrifying and dangerous spectacle American education has had to endure in the last decade concerns attempts by so-called "protestors" or "idealistic" students to subvert the formal educative process by engaging in violence and brutality. To Rand the causes of such activity emerge from philosophical nihilism. To determine why, we shall discuss the student "protest" movement as viewed by Objectivism.

Prior to 1964, American university life had been quiet, almost apathetic, but events were soon to change. In that year, students at Berkeley formed what they called the Free Speech Movement and proceeded to present the university with a list of "demands" regarding academic freedom. Specifically they objected to a university regulation forbidding the use of school property for off-campus polit-

ical activity. Comments one observer:

> The Free Speech movement showed how the campus itself might become a front line. Students now saw that what happens on campus could really matter politically, and that a local campus uprising could have national and international importance.[40]

And that is the important lesson. The issues, as will be shown later, are not important. What does matter, however, is that students found a vehicle they could readily utilize to forward any given "demands." Rand comments on the Berkeley rebellion, deploring how quickly and easily the administration surrendered to the students:

> To the astonishment of the naive . . . the more demands were granted, the more were made. As the administration intensified its efforts to appease the F.S.M., the F.S.M. intensified its provocations. The unrestricted freedom of speech took the form of a "Filthy Language Movement" which consisted of students carrying placards with four-letter words, and broadcasting obscenities over the University loudspeakers.[41]

And William Peterson, Professor of sociology at Berkeley, summarizes what he considers the students' real purpose to be. He is quoted by Rand:

> The first fact one must know about the Free Speech Movement is that it has little or nothing to do with free speech. . . . If not free speech, what then is the issue? In fact, preposterous as this may seem, the real issue is the seizure of power. . . .[42]

But perhaps the issue of power may not be so preposterous if the facts are examined. Tracing the evolution of the

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[40]Jerome H. Skolnick, The Politics of Protest (New York: Ballantine Books, 1969), p. 93.

[41]Ayn Rand, "The Cashing-In: The Student 'Rebellion'," in The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution, p. 15.

[42]William Peterson as quoted in "The Cashing-In: The Student 'Rebellion'," Ibid., p. 17.

student activist movement reveals several phases. Following the Berkeley incident and to about 1964, Civil Rights occupied student attention. As the war in Asia gathered impetus, anti-war protests grew, as well as "police/university" brutality charges. Anti-war protests and demonstrations lasted until the 1970's, when the ecology issue attracted attention.

Such cause-jumping (from Civil Rights, to the war, to university affairs, to ecology) might be interpreted in terms of a means-ends continuum. It becomes very difficult to speak of these phases in terms of ends for if the phases were ends, then the rapidity with which students switched allegiances should not have occurred. For example, many argue that the black man in America has yet to fully win the civil rights struggle, but today student involvement on a scale comparable to the 1960's is lacking. Why? Might the answer not rest with the fact that Negro leaders began taking their case to the courts rather than to the streets? It seems apparent that the various causes are only means, only devices which can be used to further the central aim which remains unchanged: the pursuit of power. The current lull in the student "protest" movement is really no lull at all. Since ecology is accepted by most citizens as a worthwhile goal, and since most states have taken legal measures via legislation to prevent corruption of the environment, students were forced to look for another cause which of late escapes them. When and if it is found,

however, we may well expect violence to reoccur.

By way of example which will serve as a transition to an analysis of tactics, let us consider the case of a small university in the East attended by this writer in the mid-1960's. In the month of November, 1968 the following student activity was witnessed:

> Nov. 5: Eight university students (including the student body president) were found drinking in the offices of the school newspaper in direct violation of a school ban, for which they were found guilty by the student court.
>
> Nov. 22: A "massive student demonstration" opposed the convictions. During the demonstration, various spokesmen warned of "various methods of confrontation."[43]
>
> Nov. 25: The President of the university reversed the student court, dismissing the charges in order " . . . to set an example of charity, hoping that others will imitate it."[44]

Although the incident received little publicity except in the local press and police intervention on a massive scale was not needed, the events reveal the tactics of those seeking power. The following five steps may be discerned, characterizing this and most student protests:

1. An incident (real or conjured) is student sparked; the university is accused of violating student rights.
2. The university responds with appropriate action or does nothing.
3. Regardless, outraged students scream "repression" and "police brutality" (if the latter are involved); they demand that their rights be respected, or aggressive means might be utilized.
4. The university surrenders.
5. Students then press for greater freedom and fewer

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[43]"U of S Violators Receive 'Break'," The Scranton Times, November 25, 1968, 3.

[44]Ibid.

university controls.[45]

The toll such activities take on American formal education is tragic. Between 1969 and 1970 alone, about 1000 demonstrations involving over 200 colleges, with property damage in the millions of dollars, were witnessed by the American people.[46] The time lost to serious students, those devoted to acquiring an education, can never be redeemed.

Ironically, many seem to be deceived or unable to recognize the true intent of violent students. Witness, for example, the testimony of an undercover agent who joined the SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) and won the confidence of the Black Panthers:

> I stayed in a mountain cabin with Mark Rudd and other SDS leaders. The emphasis was on fiery revolution, on the necessity of ambushing "pigs," [policemen] of bombing government buildings, of violence for its own sake.

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[45]Students of Hitler's rise to power will recognize how successfully the Fuhrer used these same tactics to get power. In the definitive biography of Hitler, author Alan Bullock comments: "One of Hitler's most habitual devices was to place himself on the defensive, to accuse those who opposed or obstructed him of aggression and malice, and to pass rapidly from a tone of outraged innocence to the full thunders of moral indignation. It was always the other sido who were to blame. . . . " See: Hitler, A Study in Tyranny (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964), p. 376, Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1943), passim., and Norman Hill, (ed.), The Black Panther Menace: America's Neo-Nazis (New York: Popular Library, 1971), passim. The essence of the comparison is also stated by Jerry Della Femina: "There's very little difference between the SDS punks who foment revolution in college and the Hitler Youth. Both were fighting for power from the establishment. . . . You have the power they want. You are the establishment they want to overthrow." See: "The Lost Generation," Marketing/Communications, CCXCVII (June, 1969), 32.

[46]"What's Going On Inside America," U.S. News and World Report, LXVIII (May, 1970), 18.

> Hard drugs and wild sexual orgies were stressed as important because they serve to break down any links with the "straight" world.[47]

Apparently, the radical left does not hesitate to employ whatever means they deem appropriate to achieve power. Since any government in its right mind has a legal and moral mandate to curb violence threatening the prevailing social order and usually does so via the police, the latter have become the targets of unbelievable vilification and hate. Between 1962 and 1972 the number of police officers killed in the line of duty rose from 48 to 126. In December, 1962 alone, thirteen policemen were murdered while attempting to perform their duty.[48]

Attacks on policemen form a significant part of the tactics used by student revolutionaries for they know that one way to destroy a free society is to render law enforcement ineffective. Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, one of the few university Presidents courageous enough to confront student violence, defines the tactic. After describing how students first find a cause and then use it to provoke a crisis, he continues:

> Once this has occurred—justified or not, orderly or not—yell, "Police brutality!" If it does not happen, provoke it by foul language, physical abuse, whatever, and then count on a larger measure of sympathy from the up-to-now apathetic or passive members of the community. . . . Must universities be subjected, willy-nilly, to

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[47] T. Edward Mosher, "Inside the Revolutionary Left," Reader's Digest, IC (September, 1971), 53-57. My brackets.

[48] "A New Drive Against Killers of Police," U.S. News and World Report, LXXIV (January, 1973), 26-27.

such intimidation and victimization? . . .[49]

Often the naive are fooled and indeed extend sympathy, the classic case perhaps being those who accused the Chicago Police of "brutality" at the 1968 Democratic Convention. Neglecting the fact that officers were assaulted with rocks, bricks, bottles, chunks of asphalt, lye, balls studded with spikes and even human excrement, members of the community and the press played into the hands of the "demonstrators" by blaming the police.[50]

The students who demand no police intervention in university affairs fail to comprehend a serious flaw in their reasoning. Usually the radicals attempt to justify violence by pointing out that the university must be jolted out of its apathy and assume responsibility for correcting social and political abuses in the community. This of course implies a bond between the two, but when they reject community intervention on campus (even to abort a serious threat to life and property), they sever the bond, implying that the university ought to exist as an isolated unit, apart from the community. Either the university is an integral part of the community or not. When students support the former position, then logically they ought to

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[49]"Dealing with Campus Chaos," U.S. News and World Report, LXVI (March, 1969), 34.

[50]For accounts of Chicago, 1968 which report injuries suffered by police and identify radical tactics see: Alan Stang, "Democrats," American Opinion, XI (October, 1968), 1-8, and P. J. Emerson, (ed.), Crisis in Chicago: 1968 (New York: Bee Line Books, 1968), passim.

recognize that such a bond implies community involvement.

Rand maintains, of course, that civil authority be allowed to intervene regardless of the university's relationship to the community as defined by students, if its existence poses a threat to public order. The ethical issue involved is that no organization be allowed to employ the aggressive use of force to solve any social problem—especially in a free society.

A few educators have recognized that moral principle and enforced it. Among them, S. I. Hayakawa and Father Herburgh have exhibited exceptional courage. The latter, President of Notre Dame University, had taken one of the strongest stands against campus violence. His directive to faculty and students is therefore worthy of extended citation:

> Anyone or any group that substitutes force for rational persuasion—be it violent or nonviolent—will be given 15 minutes of meditation to cease and desist.
>
> They will be told that they are, by their actions, going counter to the overwhelming conviction of this community as to what is proper here. If they do not within that time period cease and desist, they will be asked for their identity cards.
>
> Those who produce these will be suspended from this community as not understanding what this community is. Those who do not have or will not produce identity cards will be assumed not to be members of this community and will be charged with trespassing and disturbing the peace on private property and treated according to the law. . . .
>
> After notification of suspension or trespass in the case of noncommunity members, if there is not then within five minutes a movement to cease and desist, students will be notified of expulsion from this community, and the law will deal with them as nonstudents. . . .
>
> There seems to be a current myth that university members are not responsible to the law, and that somehow the law is the enemy—particularly those whom society has constituted to uphold and enforce the law. I would

> like to insist here that all of us are responsible to the duly constituted laws of this university community and to all the laws of the land. There is no other guarantee of civilization versus the jungle or mob rule, here or elsewhere.
>
> If someone invades your home, do you dialogue with him or call the law?
>
> Without the law, the university is a sitting duck for any small group from outside or inside that wishes to destroy it, to incapacitate it, to terrorize it at whim.[51]

Several important themes emerge from this statement, with which Rand would agree: (1) the aggressive use of force is morally wrong, (2) man is man because he has law, without which he becomes an animal, (3) one cannot appease brute force, and (4) the imposing by force of a minority's viewpoint on the majority constitutes tyranny. The significant point of agreement, however is that both recognize that a rational man does not need force to live as a man. Thus the issue is ultimately philosophical, specifically epistemological in that the mind is man's only tool for survival; ethical in that the aggressive use of force is wrong, and metaphysical in that whims and desires for power cannot reshape reality. Rand comments on Father Hesburgh's decision:

> This, of course, is the stand—and the only morally permissible stand—that a civilized person must take in the present college crisis. (And more: this is the stand to take in any issue and against any group that initiates the use of force. One does not "negotiate" with brutality, nor give it the benefit of the doubt. . . .) Father Hesburgh's was the first voice of reason, dignity, and moral courage. . . . Observe that contemporary events are slowly bringing men's minds to the acceptance of an abstract principle which Objectivism has been

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[51] "Dealing with Campus Chaos," U.S. News and World Report, p. 34.

> advocating for many years: the moral supremacy of reason over physical force.[52]

Cries of alleged repression and violation of rights do not justify the aggressive use of force by any member of the university community. Only in a rationally moral atmosphere can the university function as an institution dedicated to the pursuit of truth and knowledge.

A justification often cited by students for their conduct centers on the charge that they are rarely given the opportunity to articulate their own views. If we pay tuition, then we have the right to be heard, they argue. Several errors, however, exist in their thinking. First of all, students tend to confuse articulation with compliance. There can be little doubt but that students are heard. What they really seek, however, is instant implementation of stated demands. To equate the articulation of a position with its implementation is absurd and illogical. Indeed, such reflects serious doubts as to the administrative ability of those students claiming the right to formulate policy. Secondly, when demanding the right to formulate policy, students rest their case on the erroneous assumption that the university is a political institution.[53]

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[52] Ayn Rand, "Brief Comments," The Objectivist, VIII, No. 3 (March, 1969), 1-2. Italics in original.

[53] In this connection Robert Hutchins comments: " . . . one shudders to note that every citizen entertains the conviction that he is an educational expert of the most significant variety." See: The Higher Learning in America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 20.

Students who seek a four year college education at least tacitly admit that they lack the necessary intellectual sophistication for survival in society. If this be the case, then by what rule of reason or logic can they possibly equate their competence with that of experienced faculty or administrators?

As long as students act as civilized human beings who are willing to learn and abide by university regulations, then they have the right to pursue the degree, but that right can and should be revoked if reasoned debate gives place to unreasonable demands and violent activity. Freedom to govern one's life and especially the lives of others cannot be granted by any administration unless the individuals involved first prove they are mature and responsible enough to do so. One way to do this might be to devote serious attention to their course work.

Ayn Rand observes that the SDS radicals of today were the graduates of Progressive schools when children. While there, they learned that values are subjective and contingent only on immediate circumstances surrounding a given problem, that one should never judge, and that all one need do to solve a problem is implement whatever means deemed appropriate. She notes:

> . . . they went obediently along every step of the way, never challenging the basic premises inculcated in the Progressive nursery schools. They act in packs, with the will of the pack as their only guide. The scramble for power among the pack leaders and among different packs does not make them question their premises: they are incapable of questioning anything. So they cling to the belief that mankind can be united into one happily,

> harmoniously unanimous pack—by force. Brute, physical force is, to them, a natural form of action. Philosophically, it is clear that when men abandon reason, physical force becomes their only means of dealing with one another and of settling disagreements. The activists are the living demonstration of this principle.
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> The activists' claim that they have no way of "attracting attention" to their demands and of getting what they want except by force—violent demonstrations, obstruction and destruction—is a pure throwback to the Progressive nursery school, where a tantrum was the only thing required to achieve their wishes. Their hysterical screaming still carries a touch of pouting astonishment at a world that does not respond to an absolute such as: "I want it!" The three-year-old whim-worshiper becomes the twenty-year old thug.[54]

This is why Rand entitles her article on student violence "The Cashing-In. . . . " Educators, she feels, are reaping the whirlwind of their own doctrines, with students merely "cashing-in" what they were taught as children. From the very second an objective code of ethics is denied, then literally anything goes.

Violent student conduct and crime in America in general proves Rand's mandate that a rational code of morality is urgently needed if America wishes to survive. Writes Rand: "If the universities—the supposed citadels of reason, knowledge, scholarship, civilization—can be made to surrender to the rule of brute force, the rest of the country is cooked."[55]

According to Objectivist ethics, one must "never fail

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[54]Rand, "The Comprachicos," pp. 199-200. Italics in original.

[55]Rand, "The Cashing-In: The Student Rebellion," p. 39.

to pronounce moral judgments."[56] University administrators who fail to punish students who violently disrupt academic life are themselves guilty of moral cowardice.

In concluding this section, it might be wise to ponder the words of realist philosopher, Harry S. Broudy:

> All are against cruelty, pain and domination by others, but some of them [students] do not mind, on occasion, lacerating the hearts of their parents, the scalps of the cops, and the feelings of those not yet on the road to liberation.[57]

The students, and fortunately they are a minority, who consider violent tactics as moral means to achieve their goals should remember that they must afford the same respect for the rights and opinions of others that they wish for themselves.

The final section of this chapter will consider the effects of the "welfare state" influence on American schooling.

The Welfare State Mentality of Formal Education

Earlier chapters have suggested that as an advocate of laissez-faire Capitalism, Rand rejects the concept of positive government, specifically socialism. Morally, she argues that the welfare state negates the Objectivist principle that the aggressive use of force is always wrong, for once postulated a producer must provide money and/or services for the unearned benefit of others. Rand relates

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[57] Broudy, The Real World of the Public Schools, p. 74. My brackets.

the issue to Objectivist ethics in Atlas Shrugged:

> There it was: the punishment that required the victim's own virtue as the fuel to make it work. . . . Such was the code that the world had accepted and such was the key to the code: that it hooked man's love of existence to a circuit of torture . . . so that the virtues which made life possible and the values which gave it meaning became the agents of its destruction, so that one's best became the tool of one's agony. . . . The need of some men is the knife of a guillotine hanging over others—that all of us must live with our work . . . at the mercy of the moment when that knife will descend upon us . . . that need, not achievement, is the source of rights, that we don't have to produce, only to want, that the earned does not belong to us, but the unearned does.[58]

Hence, the more one values the virtue of productivity, the more he will incur punishment insofar as those in need will have more to claim. Rand does not regard need as the basis for rights, but insists rather that achievement be the standard; that one be allowed to keep what he rationally and honestly earns.

The concept "right" is important here, and must be defined. According to Objectivist ethics a right is

> . . . a moral principle defining and sanctioning a man's freedom of action in a social context. There is only one fundamental right . . . a man's right to his own life . . . for every individual, a right is the moral sanction of a positive—of his freedom to act on his own judgment, for his own goals, by his own voluntary, uncoerced choice. As to his neighbors, his rights impose no obligation on them except of a negative kind: to abstain from violating his rights.[59]

For Objectivists, the concept of a welfare state directly

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[58]Rand, Atlas Shrugged, pp. 526, 540.

[59]Ayn Rand, "Man's Rights," in The Virtue of Selfishness (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1964), pp. 93-94. Italics in original.

violates the rights of producers since choice becomes involuntary and coerced. The implications for education are significant and will now be discussed.

In its economic manifestation, the welfare state is familiar to most Americans, but its effects on other areas (including education) have not been fully recognized. Jacques Barzun comments:

> . . . the university is the last outpost of help, like the government of a welfare state. Whatever the individual and the society cannot do for themselves is intrusted to the likeliest existing agency. Faith in education and faith in the integrity and good will of those called educators have accordingly wished upon the mid-century university a variety of tasks formerly done by others or not done at all.[60]

Recent developments suggest that the university in its role of "welfare state" may be suffering under the weight of increasing demands such as having to provide hotel, restaurant, employment services, and psychological rehabilitation etc. There are two ways in which this influence has affected American education: governmental intervention and student attitudes.

Three forms of governmental intervention which Objectivists dislike as violating someone's rights are: the maintenance of tax supported schools, busing, and the alleged quota system regarding faculty hiring and admission policies.

In American educational history, the belief that all citizens have a right to a formal education supported by

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[60] Jacques Barzun, The American University (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 10.

the state may be traced to the proponents of the common school: Horace Mann and Henry Barnard.[61] Arguing for the essentiality of informed moral citizens as necessary conditions for the survival of democracy, Mann called for the establishing of common (elementary) schools. In so doing he appealed to various vested interests: organized religion, business and industry, workers etc., promising each their own utopia if they would only support public education.

Mann's efforts created a panacea-like atmosphere in formal education which has prevailed to the present. Be it problems of race, drugs, crime or health, Americans look to their schools as the agencies responsible for and capable of correcting them. In the present century, as noted above, the university has inherited this tradition and is therefore expected to solve the problems of community and government.

Rand believes that the trend toward welfare statism in education poses a serious threat to quality. Arguing that the state has no legal right (or moral commandment) to set up and maintain, through public funds, a school system, her (then) associate Nathaniel Branden asks:

> Should the government be permitted to remove children forcibly from their homes, with or without the parents' consent, and subject the children to educational training and procedures of which the parents may or may not approve? Should citizens have their wealth expropriated to support an educational system which they may or may not sanction, and to pay for the education of children

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[61] Gerald Gutek, An Historical Introduction to American Education (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1970), pp. 49-53.

who are not their own?[62]

Such a policy he maintains is consistent only with Nazi or Communist states in which education was and is regulated by the authorities for the purpose of promulgating political doctrine. Why state control invites danger is explained in three reasons:

> (a) most parents are effectively compelled to send their children to State schools and cannot afford to pay the additional fees required to send their children to private schools; (b) the standards of education, controlling all schools are prescribed by the state; (c) the growing trend in American education is for the government to exert wider and wider control over every aspect of education.[63]

As will be argued in the next chapter, one reason Objectivists favor tax credits is that they allow parents to send children to schools of their own choosing. Regarding control, the danger seen by Rand is that in the past, when a government assumed control of the educational establishment, it sooner or later began to prescribe curricula. For example, the law denying the teaching of evolution in Tennessee was not declared unconstitutional until 1968. The famous Scopes trial, however, had occurred in 1925.

Point (c) above has come true today, believes Rand, in the form of compulsory busing to achieve racial integration. Objectivists reject such official encroachment as being unethical and inimical to educational quality.

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[62]Nathaniel Branden, "Intellectual Ammunition Department," The Objectivist Newsletter, II, No. 6 (June, 1963), 22.

[63]Ibid. Italics in original.

To determine why, we must briefly examine the government's role in American education in recent years, with regard to equal opportunity.

In 1954, the United States Supreme Court, in "Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka," struck down the doctrine of 'separate but equal.' Ten years later the Civil Rights Act authorized the Commissioner of Education

> . . . upon the application of any school board, State, municipality, school district, or other governmental unit legally responsible for operating a public school or schools, to render technical assistance to such applicant in the preparation, adoption, and implementation of plans for the desegregation of public schools.[64]

Initiative here obviously rests with the schools; Title VII of the Act, banning discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, and national origin, did not apply to educational institutions. In 1972, the Equal Employment Opportunities Enforcement Act amended Title VII to include schools (with the exception of religious corporations, i.e., seminaries etc.) and directed that

> [if] the court finds that the respondent has engaged in or is engaging in an unlawful employment practice charged in the complaint, the court may enjoin the respondent from engaging in such unlawful employment practice, and order such affirmative action as may be appropriate. . . .[65]

As we shall see, the phrase "order such affirmative action"

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[64] Civil Rights Act of 1964, (2000 C-2), United States Code, Title 42—The Public Health and Welfare, IX (Washington, D.C.: The United States Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 10289.

[65] House Resolution 1746. Equal Employment Opportunities Enforcement Act of 1972 (2) (Washington: The United States Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 19. My brackets.

as the key to subsequent legislation. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court speeded the process of school integration. On April 20, 1971 in a nine to nothing decision, in "Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education, N.C.," the high court directed that "Local school authorities may properly be required by a Federal District Court to employ bus transportation as a tool of school desegregation."[66] Other recommended means of enforcing desegregation included requiring school districts to prove their own innocence and altering school attendance zones.

Since 1971, busing has become the principal means utilized by the courts to enforce school desegregation. Objectivists argue that the busing problem results in a mixture of politics and government with serious effects for educational quality. Ethically, Rand rejects the concept of busing on the grounds that it leads to quota systems (which will be discussed below) and promotes government-enforced racism:

> It is true that the Federal government has used the racial issue to enlarge its own power and to set a precedent of encroachment upon the legitimate rights of states,[67] in an unnecessary and unconstitutional manner.

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[66] United States Supreme Court Reports, "Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education," Lawyer's edition, Book 28 (New York: The Lawyers Co-operative Publishing Co., 1971), p. 560.

[67] The Tenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution states that, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution nor prohibited to it by the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people." Although the Constitution does not mention education, this "reserved powers" clause has been interpreted to mean that education is essentially a local matter.

> . . . Instead of fighting for equal rights, they [Negro leaders] are demanding special race privileges.[68]

As mentioned above, the concept of "rights" pertains to the individual citizen, and not to the race. Consequently, Objectivists charge that such practices as busing cannot be morally sanctioned. The black man in America, Rand argues, must base his case on his right as an individual citizen to equal protection under the law, for any other solution implies the violation of someone else's rights.[69]

Pedagogically, busing confronts educators with a serious problem. We have noted that a child needs a secure environment if his view of the universe is to be ordered and coherent. But, stability may be jeopardized when friendships are broken, roots dislodged, and students forced to travel several miles per day to school.[70] A student, especially a young one, finds it difficult to learn if his emotional stability is threatened. Under such conditions, he may mature thinking that existence is, of necessity, unpredictable and intrinsically harmful. Although presumably well-intentioned, lawmakers and judges may lack the educational competence to realize that their decisions produce unwelcome consequences in terms of child growth and

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[68]Ayn Rand, "Racism," The Objectivist Newsletter, II, No. 9 (September, 1963), 35.

[69]Ibid., pp. 35-36. My brackets.

[70]In "Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education," the Supreme Court stipulated that the distance travelled should not exceed seven miles or take longer than thirty-five minutes.

development.[71]

The "quota" issue must now be considered. Between 1964 and 1972, the President's office issued a series of Executive Orders to be enforced by the Department of Labor and HEW. Designed to further prevent racial segregation, Order 11246 required "all government contracting agencies" to include in every government contract the following: "The contractor will take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed . . . without regard to their race, creed, color or national origin."[72] Because affirmative action remained vague, the Labor Department, in Revised Order No. 4, specified that "non-construction contractors" must develop a "written affirmative action," defined as, " . . . a set of specific and result-oriented procedures to which a contractor commits himself to apply every good faith effort."[73] Throughout the Order, "good faith" is the established norm for compliance. But it may be asked what constitutes good faith? How can the concept be defined in relation to plans proposed by schools?

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[71]For evidence suggesting that busing produces harmful educational consequences, see: "What Happened to One 'Model School'," U.S. News and World Report, LXVIII (April, 1970), 37.

[72]Executive Order 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity (Washington, D.C.: The United States Government Printing Office, Office of Federal Contract Compliance, 1965), p. 2.

[73]Public Contracts and Property Management—Title 41, U.S. Department of Labor (Washington, D.C.: The United States Government Printing Office, Office of Federal Contract Compliance, 1971), p. 2.

When discussing the nature of law, Rand specifies an important and necessary condition for a valid one:

> The retaliatory use of force requires objective rules of evidence that a crime has been committed and to prove who committed it, as well as objective rules to define punishment and enforcement procedures . . . men need an institution charged with the task of protecting their rights under an objective code of laws.[74]

How then may we objectively define good faith? If a school's definition conflicts with HEW's, whose judgment prevails? J. Stanley Pottinger, director of the Office of Civil Rights in HEW comments: "We have a whale of a lot of power, and we're prepared to use it if necessary."[75] It would appear, then, that Mr. Pottinger's definition of good faith will prevail. When objective law gives place to subjective evaluation, then law becomes a matter of the enforcer's personal desire. The point is that non-objective law places citizens at the mercy of "a whale of a lot of power" against which they have no recourse.

The implications of these laws for education are serious. Dr. George C. Roche III, President of Hillsdale College in Michigan, when delivering an address before the American Association of Presidents of Independent Colleges and Universities on December 4, 1972, spoke of the effects

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[74]Ayn Rand, "The Nature of Government," in Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1967), p. 331. Italics in original.

[75]J. Stanley Pottinger quoted in George Roche III, "Government Intervention in Private Education," in "On Campus: 'An Iceburg of Government Intervention'?," U.S. News and World Report, LXXIV (January, 1973), 50.

of "good faith" on educational quality:

> Today, admission procedures in many schools are governed by a quota system which sets its own special double standard, unwritten but exercising great force in the lives of individual students. Such admissions policies also have their effect on campus standards, compelling steadily lower requirements as the original applicants, often unqualified for admissions, are retained on campus despite their poor performance.[76]

Although Revised Order No. 4 specifically denies that quotas be established, the result of "good faith" seems to suggest they are the logical result. If qualified minority group students are lacking and the university must demonstrate "good faith," then quotas would have to be established.

One might inquire of HEW as to the criteria which constitute a minority, discrimination, or lack of good faith. For example, if a student receives a D grade in a course, may he claim discrimination on the grounds that the instructor lacked good faith? Should an administrator reserve the right to change the grade to demonstrate good faith?

When the basis of human rights becomes "need" or "color" or any form of the unearned, then the virtues of integrity and especially productiveness as defined by Objectivist ethics are compromised. Laws must be based on objective criteria if those obeying them are to know when and how to obey.

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[76] Ibid., p. 48.

The welfare state concept also effects the performance of students, who observe that "need" and not achievement is rewarded. In a special section of The Objectivist called "The Horror File," Rand has compiled information reflecting specific violations of Objectivist ethics. The following represent incidents related to the present context:

> A recent survey taken to ascertain "What's In Among College Students" has divulged a surprising fact: the most popular new activity among the hope of the future is . . . academic goldbricking. . . . According to the poll, on hundreds of campuses around the country, there is actually hot competition to see who can get away with doing the least by using the most credible excuses.[77]

and,

> Student power demands appear to have reached the ridiculous extreme in India. The London Observer reports that students there have demanded that they be allowed to cheat on tests. It says some Indian students have refused to finish a test unless they are permitted to use 'unfair means.'[78]

The second example, regarding the right to cheat, is especially revealing in terms of what Rand argues in Atlas Shrugged regarding the amorality of those advocating the welfare state: "As they feed on stolen wealth in body, so they feed on stolen concepts in mind, and proclaim that honesty consists of refusing to know that one is stealing."[79]

Cheating of course counters the Objectivist virtues

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[77]"From the Horror File," The Objectivist, VI, No. 1 (January, 1967), 15.

[78]"From the Horror File," The Objectivist, VIII, No. 7 (July, 1969), 16.

[79]Rand, Atlas Shrugged, p. 964.

of honesty, rationality, justice, and productiveness. In a study published in 1960, Jerome Ellison isolates the moral issue involved: "The principle involved is that someone . . . possesses valid information and transmits it—because of fraternal bonds or just to be obliging—to the needy."[80] Again, we are confronted with "need" as moral justification for immoral acts.

The study includes several "justifications" offered by students for cheating, including pressure from family to do well, the willingness to help someone less academically fortunate, and the fact that everyone cheats.[81]

If the justifications are considered, however, the following moral errors (in terms of Objectivist ethics) become apparent: The end does not justify the means. Rationality requires integrity—namely, fidelity to moral means, regardless of social or family pressure. Likewise, independence requires that there be no substitute for one's own thinking. Finally, morality is not contingent on numbers involved. Justice demands that if it is immoral for a single individual to cheat, then even an infinite number of cheaters cannot abort the principle involved.

Rights are conditions which must be earned; they cannot be predicated on any other condition. An individual in society has a moral right to follow his own designs, but

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[80]Jerome Ellison, "American Disgrace: College Cheating," The Saturday Evening Post, CCXXXII (January, 1960), 58.

[81]Ibid.

not at the expense of others. No one citizen is under moral sanction to make another happy if he does not choose to do so, and most certainly not if his rights are violated in the process. An educational institution which sanctions quota systems or cheating violates the rights of rational men and women dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and truth.

SUMMARY

The intent of this chapter has been to examine five important flaws Objectivism sees in American formal education and to specify how they negate the Randian concept of the educated man. The five issues discussed all represent interdictions of Objectivist ethics.

By depriving the learner of a proper sense of life, of self-esteem, by tolerating student violence, by misconstruing the roles of emotions and reason, and by permitting the "welfare state" concept to dominate the educative process, schoolmen have gravely damaged the learner's chances to develop into a rational and well adjusted individual. The negation of rationality, independence, honesty, justice, integrity, productiveness, and pride retards the learning process, replacing healthy growth with fear and hostility to moral worth.

The following chapter will consider what alternatives Rand postulates, and how they could roverse the trends of current school practice. Accordingly, the imple-

mentation of her views on education ought to culminate in the Objectivist concept of the educated man.

CHAPTER SIX

OBJECTIVISM: AN ALTERNATIVE

Rand regards modern educators as "Comprachicos"[1] of the mind. When summing up the effects of contemporary education on a child's intellectual development, she notes:

> The Progressive nurseries pleaded for a delay of the process of education, asserting that cognitive training is premature for a young child—and conditioned his mind to an anti-cognitive method of functioning. The grade and high schools reinforced the conditioning: struggling helplessly with the random snatches of knowledge, the student learned to associate a sense of dread, resentment, and self-doubt with the process of learning. College completes the job, declaring explicitly—to a receptive audience—that there is nothing to learn, that reality is unknowable, certainty is unattainable, the mind is an instrument of self-deception, and the sole function of reason is to find conclusive proof of its own impotence.[2]

Obviously, Objectivism warns that American formal education needs serious and sustained restructuring if the "Comprachico" syndrome is to be negated. The purpose of this chapter will be to examine suggestions for improvement, with special emphasis on elementary and higher education—

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[1]The "Comprachicos" were Seventeenth Century nomads who bought, sold, traded, and tortured children for the amusement of the population. Rand notes: "They were educators. They took a man and turned him into a miscarriage. . . . They stunted growth; they mangled features. . . . " See: "The Comprachicos," in The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1951), pp. 152 ff.

[2]Ibid., pp. 188-89.

the two areas most frequently subjected to criticism.

Generally speaking, any educational reform must begin with a philosophical revolution. The entire thrust of Rand's criticism of American life, including the educational establishment, points fundamentally to an abandonment by society of philosophical principles. Countering the anti-philosophical trend, she comments:

> In order to live, man must act; in order to act, he must make choices; in order to make choices, he must define a code of values; in order to define a code of values, he must know what he is and where he is—i.e., he must know his own nature (including his means of knowledge) and the nature of the universe in which he acts—i.e., he needs metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, which means: philosophy.[3]

Of course, philosophy in this context means Objectivism. Without philosophy, man cannot survive on earth, much less achieve the happiness seen as his end. To be a useful instrument for human growth and development, education must provide for the child's philosophical maturation, meaning (in terms of epistemology) the process of concept formation.

The young child needs to grasp the means men employ to acquire and extend knowledge. As discussed earlier, the process of concept formation is, for Objectivists, the only means one can use to sustain consciousness. As a child matures, he notes differences in objects, actions etc. at first in his immediate environment, and later in

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[3]Ayn Rand, "Philosophy and Sense of Life," in The Romantic Manifesto (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1971), p. 30. Italics and parentheses in original.

the world at large. The ability (which must be learned) to do such constitutes the first steps of classification which eventually will lead to concept formation. Rand describes the significance of this ability in an educational context:

> Since concepts represent a system of cognitive classification, a given concept serves (speaking metaphorically) as a file folder in which man's mind files his knowledge of the existents it subsumes. The content of such folders varies from individual to individual, according to the degree of his knowledge—it ranges from the primitive, generalized information in the mind of a child or an illiterate to the enormously detailed sum in the mind of a scientist—but it pertains to the same referents, to the same kind of existents, and is subsumed under the same concept. This filing system makes possible such activities as learning, education, research . . .[4]

Elementary education's task, then, ought to consist primarily in teaching the child how to form concepts. Specifically, Objectivism holds that two " . . . interrelated but different chains of abstractions, two hierarchical structures of concepts must be considered: the cognitive and the normative.[5]

Cognitive means a philosophical awareness of the nature of reality. Importantly, the child must be taught that he is capable of understanding (within the limits of his ability) the nature of the universe. On the elementary level, Rand has recommended the Montessori Method as being conducive to proper cognitive development.

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[4]Ayn Rand, Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology (New York: The Objectivist Inc., 1969), p. 60. Parentheses in original.

[5]Rand, "Art and Moral Treason," in The Romantic Manifesto, p. 110. Italics in original.

The Montessori Method first attracted attention in the United States in 1911 when McClures Magazine published an article by Josephine Tozier entitled "An Educational Wonder-Worker, The Methods of Maria Montessori." Dealing with her method in general, the article lauds Montessori's use of didactic materials, her psychological insights, her use of sensory training materials, and her ability to spark explosions into reading and writing. Contrasting Montessori's beliefs with those of earlier educators, Tozier reports that,

> In Maria Montessori's view, all education worth having is auto-education. One of the difficulties experienced in the training of teachers is that of preventing them from rushing to the aid of a child who appears to be . . . puzzled. . . . The policy of non-intervention applies, as a matter of course, no less to the moral than to the intellectual domain. Rewards and punishments are rigorously banished. . . . The idea of "discipline for liberty" is aimed at and attained. . . . The child, in her conception, ought to be free, within the limits imposed, not by scholastic convention, but by social amenity; that is to say, he must not use his freedom to hurt or incommode others.[6]

This brief passage contains several contributions of Montessori, notably teacher non-intervention, intellectual and moral self-discipline, and the moral/intellectual basis for rights (i.e., in negative terms). In contrast to the Progressives who wrongly believe (according to Rand) that the child can best function in a group context, Montessorians stress the role of the learner as individual. Indeed, the very foundation of her method is the liberty

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[6]Josephine Tozier, "An Educational Wonder-Worker, The Methods of Maria Montessori," McClure's Magazine, XXXVII (May, 1911), 8-9.

of the individual child. On the nature of liberty in its pedagogical context, Montessori explains:

> The fundamental principle of scientific pedagogy must be, indeed, the liberty of the pupil;—such liberty as shall permit a development of individual, spontaneous manifestations of the child's nature. If a new and scientific pedagogy is to arise from the study of the individual, such study must occupy itself with the observation of free children.[7]

She reasons that educational reform must begin with child study. Consequently, Montessori stresses that the first duty of an educator must be to recognize the distinct personality of the young and to respect it.[8] Education which forces the child to conform to adult standards gravely harms the young spirit.

The Montessorian concept of freedom also wins Rand's sympathy. The former defines freedom in terms of the active child who disciplines himself, as opposed to being artificially restrained from without. In other words, discipline can only be viable when emanating from child activity:

> And this freedom is not only an external sign of liberty, but a means of education. If by an awkward movement a child upsets a chair . . . he will have an evident proof of his own incapacity. . . . Thus the child has some means by which he can correct himself. . . . It is plainly seen that the child has learned to command his movements.[9]

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[7]Maria Montessori, The Montessori Method Trans. Anne E. George (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), p. 28. Italics in original.

[8]Maria Montessori, The Child in the Family Trans. Nancy Cirillo (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1970), p. 35.

[9]Montessori, The Montessori Method, p. 84. Italics in original.

Thus discipline arises not from the teacher (or group), but from the children themselves who, attempting to bring order to their own environment, will learn the value of discipline and order. Montessori describes a well-disciplined individual as one who leads his own life as a free man, limited only by the respect paid to the rights of others. In this way, individual differences are allowed to emerge, and " . . . the child, conscious and free, reveals himself."[10] We may recall at this point how similar to the Montessorian concept of rights is the Randian concept. Both suggest that the rights of an individual child must be respected, and are limited only insofar as the rights of others are not violated.

Montessori devised two sets of exercises to achieve the above goals: the exercises of practical life and the didactic materials—both to be used in a structured environment, i.e. one scaled to the child's physical abilities (small chairs, coat hooks within reach etc.), thereby allowing him to do for himself as much as possible.

The practical life exercises consist of various activities (washing the hands, hanging up a coat, serving lunch etc.), all designed to foster independence and self-reliance, but above all intelligent growth. Rand comments:

> Intelligence is the ability to deal with a broad range of abstractions. Whatever a child's natural endowment, the use of intelligence is an acquired skill. It has to

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[10] Ibid., p. 95. Italics in original.

> be acquired by a child's own effort and automatized by his own mind, but adults can help or hinder him in this crucial process. They can place him in an environment that provides him with evidence of a stable, consistent, intelligible world which challenges and rewards his efforts to understand . . . [11]

To Rand, the Montessori school provides that kind of environment: one ordered, structured, and secure, thereby permitting the young child to master the skills necessary for proper concept formation.

The didactic materials consist for the most part of self-corrective and graded stimuli designed to facilitate sensory awareness of reality and concept formation. The cylinders, for example, include sets of cylinders of varying diameters which must be placed in their proper corresponding containers. These materials help the child make comparisons between objects, to form judgments, to reason, and to reach decisions.[12] Such abilities Rand regards as essential to concept formation. Writing in The Objectivist, Beatrice Hessen discusses the importance of the didactic materials to concept formation:

> The didactic materials aid the child in the process of concept-formation (of abstraction and integration) by means of eliminating nonessentials. The materials are designed in such a way that all their characteristics are the same except the one attribute on which the child is to concentrate. This allows him to focus on one difference at a time and to form a clear concept of a particular attribute, such as length, height, thickness, weight, sound or color. . . . The child is able to work by himself with the didactic materials, without constant

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[11] Rand, "The Comprachicos," p. 160.

[12] Maria Montessori, Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook Trans. Nancy Rambusch (New York: Schocken Books, 1965), p. 71.

> directions from an adult . . . if he places a cylinder in a hole too large for it, he finds at the end that he has at least one cylinder left which does not fit in the remaining hole; he has to backtrack and discover his error and, in the process, he sharpens his capacity to observe and discriminate, which would not occur if his mistake were merely pointed out to him by the teacher.[13]

The didactic materials become the basis for the conceptual thinking of an adult. By aiding in the development of discriminatory judgment, they perform a significant philosophical function: they lay the foundation for proper epistemological development. In other words, the child comes to learn that the universe is not beyond his cognitive grasp.

Another reason Rand endorses Montessori concerns the latter's philosophical base: Aristotle. Montessori's biographer, E. M. Standing, relates the use of the didactic materials to Aristotelian philosophy when he observes:

> What is most interesting, and most significant is that Aristotle described the whole process [the use of didactic materials in the process of abstraction and concept formation] in terms of a gradual discarding of matter, until only the abstract ideal is left, which is purely <u>immaterial</u> . . .[14]

He continues, by way of example, noting that when a material object such as a cup is removed from sight, we retain a mental image of its physical properties. Finally, after observing a sufficient number of cups, we arrive at the essence cupness, an intellectual concept, which is removed

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[13]Beatrice Hessen, "The Montessori Method," Part II, <u>The Objectivist</u>, IX, No. 6 (June, 1970), 10. Parentheses in original.

[14]E. M. Standing, <u>Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work</u> (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1962), p. 163. Italics in original. My brackets.

from matter. Rand, of course, bases her epistemological position on this process.

Unfortunately, Montessori's reception in America was short-lived. The primary agent of refutation was a book by William Kilpatrick, published in 1914, entitled The Montessori System Examined. Comparing Dewey to Montessori, he argues that while both contributed to the new education, Montessori's plan was too narrow, less comprehensive than Dewey's, and based on inadequate assumptions. He argues: " . . . she belongs essentially to the mid-nineteenth century, some fifty years behind the present development of educational theory. . . . We owe no large point of view to Madam Montessori."[15] Although the method remained, as a result of Kilpatrick's charges, dormant for some forty years, recent interest in Montessori has sparked a revival. Of course, Rand sees the Montessori revival as vital to American education.

In her defense of Montessori, Rand responds to the Kilpatrick charge that the didactic materials are too rigid, thereby frustrating creativity.[16] She notes:

> Since the purpose of the Montessori materials is to help the child in his cognitive development, i.e., to help him grasp the nature of reality and learn to deal with it, the 'rigidity' of the problems he has to solve pro-

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[15]William Kilpatrick, The Montessori System Examined (New York: Arno Press Reprint and the New York Times, 1971), pp. 63, 67.

[16]Ibid., pp. 42-52.

> vides him with the most important lesson he will ever learn: it teaches him the Law of Identity. It teaches him that reality is an absolute not to be altered by his whims, and if he wants to deal with it successfully, he must find the one right answer. He learns that a problem does have a solution and that he does have the ability to solve it, but he must look for the answer in the nature of things he deals with, not in his feelings.[17]

Rand's position is contingent upon two principles discussed earlier: (1) the successful dealing with an ordered reality fosters a healthy self-esteem, and (2) that all issues a man confronts can be solved in terms of one correct answer. Although the latter was critiqued when discussing Objectivist ethics and Aristotle's golden mean, the former does have significant educational implications. Specifically, the use of the didactic materials teaches the child that his whims or emotions cannot erase the fact that reality will not magically alter itself to suit those whims or desires.

Creativity and cognitive efficacy cannot arise out of chaos and disorder. If students would learn this lesson while young, then Rand argues that college radicals—demanding that reality conform to their whims, or else—would not exist. When storming university buildings, they deny the epistemological base needed for any learning situation: that emotions and whims are not tools of cognition.

It should be mentioned that if Rand is to be consistent with her own philosophical position, she cannot

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[17]Ayn Rand as cited in Beatrice Hessen, "The Montessori Method," Part III, The Objectivist, IX, No. 7 (July, 1970), 7. Italics in original.

accept all of Montessori. The area of disagreement concerns Montessori's emphasis on religious education. Montessori speaks of the "spiritual embryo,"[18] implying that the child needs religious education to acquire Christian virtues. As we have noted, Rand rejects the Christian religions, and a Montessori school under her aegis would of necessity have to delete religious training, but in so doing, the potential exists that the method would suffer. Rand, therefore, may be viewed as accepting Montessori epistemologically, but not spiritually.

Normatively, Objectivists note that current education fails to teach the child the importance of ethics—specifically, her sense of the heroic. Rand's educated man, as stressed before, is a moral being, one practicing Objectivist virtues, and thus potentially capable of the heroic. She comments in this connection:

> Apart from its many other evils, conventional morality is not concerned with the formation of a child's character. It does not teach or show him what kind of a man he ought to be and why; it is concerned only with imposing a set of rules upon him—concrete, arbitrary, contradictory and, more often than not, incomprehensible rules, which are mainly prohibitions and duties.[19]

We have noted in the last chapter that such dictating causes grave damage to self-esteem. Rand argues that education must assume the responsibility of proper moral development,

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[18]Maria Montessori, The Absorbant Mind Trans. Claude A. Claremont (New York: Delta Books, 1967), pp. 60-82.

[19]Rand, "Art and Moral Treason," p. 110. Italics in original.

which can best be accomplished through the teaching of Romantic art. Chapter two, when discussing the antecedents of Objectivism, argues that a clear relationship exists between art and ethics. Believing that art's function is to select the essentials necessary for a given value change, Rand proceeds to create, in her novels, the concept of the educated man as one profoundly moral. Regarding Romantic art as the means necessary to instill proper values, she comments:

> The major source and demonstration of moral values available to a child is Romantic art (particularly Romantic literature). What Romantic art offers him is not moral rules, not an explicit didactic message, but the image of a moral person—i.e., the concretized abstraction of a moral ideal. It offers a concrete, directly perceivable answer to the very abstract question which a child senses, but cannot yet conceptualize: What kind of person is moral and what kind of life does he lead?[20]

In other words, a study of Romantic literature which portrays man as morally heroic, helps to develop in the child a sense of moral ambition, a desire to engage in productive work and to be proud of any rational achievement.

Rand believes Romantic literature recognizes the principle that man has or possesses volitional consciousness which must operate if he is to be moral. By studying Romantic literature, Rand suggests that the child will learn what is required for existence as a moral being because

> . . . Romantic art offers him a clear, luminous impersonal abstraction—and thus a clear, objective test of

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[20] Ibid., p. 111. Italics and parentheses in original.

> his inner state, a clue available to his conscious mind. . . . Romantic art is the fuel and the spark plug of a man's soul; its task is to set a soul on fire and never let it go out. The task of providing that life with a motor and a direction belongs to philosophy.[21]

In the context of higher education, Objectivists regard philosophical training as the logical extension of Romantic art. For Rand, who terms herself a Romantic realist, Aristotle's philosophy provides the only meaningful philosophical experience the college student should seek.

A child's sense of life may tell him that Buck Rogers or The Lone Ranger are heroes worthy of admiration but as he matures, this Romantic sense must acquire philosophical foundations. A sense of life cannot provide the epistemological, metaphysical and axiological premises he needs to survive. Conscious goal-directed action requires philosophy. Specifically, the Aristotelian goal of intellectually excellent activity (the use of reason) ought to be the student's goal for therein lies the only means to happiness. Believing the source of moral evil to be irrational man, Objectivism suggests that if education were to postualte as its goal the happiness of man (i.e., rational activity in conformity to moral principles) then the moral chaos of higher education would be eliminated.

Objectivists believe that the primary mission of education is to aid in the development of man as a rationally thinking creature with reason as his only absolute. In the

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[21] Ibid., p. 117.

novels, Rand provides the reader with models of ideal social institutions. Educationally, the ideal university (named in Atlas Shrugged Patrick Henry University) is one in which her concept of the educated man might best be realized. The school's outstanding scholar a philosophy professor named Hugh Askton serves as spokesman, and describes the university as " . . . a monument to unenslaved thought."[22] His words are the key which unlocks the door to Randian educational philosophy. An educational institution for her must be totally and exclusively devoted to the pursuit of truth by means of rational inquiry, and the learners therein must likewise dedicate themselves.

Dr. Askton summarizes the ideal learner when recalling three of his former students:

> They never spoke of what they wished they might do in the future, they never wondered whether some mysterious omnipotence had favored them with some unknowable talent to achieve the things they wanted—they spoke of what they would do. . . . Every man builds his world in his own image. . . . He has the power to choose, but not the power to escape the necessity of choice. If he abdicates his power, he abdicates the status of man . . . [23]

In essence, this defines the Objectivist concept of the educated man. He exists as a goal orientated moral being—two characteristics vital to both Rand's and Aristotle's thinking. He must be willing to value productive work because he knows it is the only way in which human life will

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[22]Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged (New York: The New American Library, Signet Press, 1957), p. 733.

[23]Ibid., pp. 732-35. Italics in original.

ever become something of value. He does not ask for the unearned, but he does request as a man the right to use his mind to pursue the truth. Parenthetically, it is interesting to note how Rand's concept of art prevails in Atlas Shrugged. Believing in the educative value of Romantic literature, she presents in that novel examples of the ideal learner or institution so that the reader may observe moral values operative in the concrete.

The Objectivist model of a good teacher, of course, is personified by Dr. Askton, a man whose " . . . intransigent devotion to the pursuit of truth . . . "[24] separates him from the incompetency of his colleagues. To be a good teacher, in other words, one must be dedicated to respect for the truth and to the belief that students' minds, properly guided, are sufficient to locate and explore it. A teacher must impress upon his students that there are no other means, save the mind, to survive.[25]

Examining the state of current educational practice, Rand decries the flight from the ideal which such an examination reveals. She notes that teachers have failed in

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[24] Ibid., p. 728.

[25] It should be recalled here that Objectivists reject faith as a valid means to knowledge. This position might have serious consequences for education. Formal education would be impossible if students had to personally verify every comment a professor made. This is not to deny the learner's right to rationally investigate and question his teacher's conclusions but unless proof to the contrary exists, the learner usually places his trust in the teacher's authority as an expert in his field.

their duty, observing professors,

> who refuse to answer questions—the professors who answer by evasion and ridicule—the professors who turn their classes into bull-sessions on the premise that "we're here to mull things over together"—the professors who do lecture, but, in the name of "antidogmatism," take no stand, express no viewpoint, and leave the student in a maze of contradictions with no lead to a solution—the professors who do take a stand and invite students' comments, and then penalize dissenters by means of lower grades . . . [26]

Believing that many students desire more of a college education than 'relevant discussions' and refusals to uphold moral principles in order to be flexible, Rand indicts the faculty for failing to correct such abuses. The lack of a sound educational philosophy usually results in such classroom conduct. For example, Objectivism traces moral flexibility to the Progressive schools in which future teachers learned that the moral rigidity of objective principles only stifles the search for truth.[27]

Unfortunately for the young minds being so conditioned,

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[26]Ayn Rand, "The Cashing-In: The Student 'Rebellion'," in The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution, p. 32. Italics in original.

[27]Dr. S. I. Hayakawa comments on one effect of this: "Now, professors tend . . . to give A's in their courses to students that [sic] are alienated. And as the students get A's they get appointed graduate assistants. Then they soon become professors themselves. And then they pass on this alienation to another generation of students, and college generations of students come fast, after all. And before you know it, you have whole departments which are basically sources of resistence to the culture as a whole." See: S. I. Hayakawa's testimony before the San Francisco State College Study Team in William Orrick, Jr. (director), Shut it Down! A College in Crisis (San Francisco State College, October, 1968-April, 1969) A Staff Report to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence (Washington, D.C.: The United States Government Printing Office, June, 1969), p. 57.

the failure to respect morally binding absolutes leads to ethical nihilism in which anything goes if it works. For this reason, students who riot or cheat when taking examinations simply are practicing a moral code they learned as children.[28]

This chapter will conclude with two educational proposals of a procedural nature which Rand advocates: the "fairness doctrine" for education and "tax credits."

The fairness doctrine has already been considered and critiqued when discussing the Randian notion of compromise, but now its educational specifics must be considered. The doctrine, borrowed from the Federal Government's regulation regarding broadcasting, might serve higher education by exposing students to ideas different from what a given department presents. Rand notes:

> There are philosophy majors who graduate without having taken a single course on Aristotle (except as part of a general survey). There are economics majors who have no idea of what capitalism is or was, theoretically or historically, and not the faintest notion of the mechanism of a free market. There are literature majors who have never heard of Victor Hugo . . .[29]

In order to avert domination of ideas which Objectivism considers inimical to student growth, the fairness doctrine

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[28]This writer once asked a college class how they complete term papers. Immediate answers included asking a friend for one he had done in a previous semester, or copying from books. No consideration was paid to the moral issue involved.

[29]Ayn Rand, "Fairness Doctrine for Education," The Ayn Rand Letter, I, No. 18 (June 5, 1972), 3. Parentheses in original.

would permit student (intellectual) minorities to demand courses on Aristotle and capitalism. These subjects, Rand believes, are currently being neglected by universities, resulting in the various educational ills discussed in the previous chapters.[30] Further, it would demand that faculty be hired on the basis of scholarly achievement; not because of ethnic origin. Rand notes: "If the rights of various physiological minorities are so loudly claimed, what about the right of intellectual minorities?"[31]

Rand states that the implementation of the doctrine would be contingent upon " . . . subjective interpretation, which would often be arbitrary and, at best, approximate."[32] If this appears vague, the reason probably is that for the most part she has not bothered with specific pedagogical techniques, choosing instead to emphasize educational reform in a philosophical context. But the problem of implementa-

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[30]Rand is not the only observer to express alarm. An article published in Nation's Business suggests that students lack correct knowledge of capitalism. The author, Jeffrey St. John, comments: "Does the rejection of business as a career by some students stem from the unbalanced, often biased, view they receive in the classroom on the moral meaning of capitalism?" St. John continues, praising Rand for providing a moral defense of capitalism: "She maintains that young people today have no idea of what capitalism is. . . . She charges that capitalism and businessmen have been the willing victims of smears and distortions that have part of their origins in the classrooms of the nation's colleges and universities." For Rand, the fairness doctrine might help to correct these abuses. See: Jeffrey St. John, "Are America's Students Flunking Capitalism?," Nation's Business, LV (July, 1967), 90.

[31]Ayn Rand, "Fairness Doctrine for Education," The Ayn Rand Letter, I, No. 19 (June 19, 1972), 4.

[32]Ibid., p. 1.

tion remains. As Rand herself admits, arbitrary and subjective criteria govern the fairness doctrine's operation. Who, then, for example, determines what is fair—students, faculty, department chairman, or perhaps a combination of these? What subjects fall under the fairness doctrine classification, and to what degree ought they to be integrated with existing courses? The list of difficulties appears endless, and such a policy might result in a continuous proliferation of administrative directives, further complicating the already bureaucratically orientated structure of the university.

While the philosophical construct implicit in the fairness doctrine (i.e., exposing students to Aristotle, Montessori, capitalism etc.) is valid, the very subjectiveness of its nature would make enforcement impossible. Other, more suitable means, such as requiring philosophy majors to take courses on Aristotle, are needed. The fairness doctrine is consistent in principle with the Objectivist belief that the university provide courses designed to reflect and develop man's rational nature.

Tax credits are intended to remedy an educational problem discussed earlier: whether or not the state has the moral and legal right to require compulsory education at the taxpayer's expense. To break this government monopoly on schooling, Rand (among others) argues that quality education can only be achieved if private schools are allowed to flourish.

For example, economist Milton Friedman suggests a voucher system, designed to operate in much the same way as tax credits. Essentially, he posits (as do Objectivists) a definite relationship between economics and individual freedom, noting that capitalism ("free private enterprise exchange economy . . . competitive capitalism") is the only economic system conducive to freedom and individual growth.[33]

Educationally, he argues that the only justification for governmental control of schools (that of Americanizing diverse ethnic groups) has long since dissipated, and that the decentralization of the educational establishment might enhance quality and raise teachers' salaries. Specifically, his plan requires the issuance of vouchers by the government to individual citizens who could redeem them

> . . . for a specified maximum sum per child per year if spent on "approved" educational services. Parents would then be free to spend this sum and any additional sum they themselves provided on purchasing educational services from an "approved" institution of their own choice. . . . The role of government would be limited to insuring that the schools met certain minimum standards, such as the inclusion of a minimum common content in their programs . . .[34]

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[33]Milton Friedman and Rose Friedman, Capitalism and Freedom (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), p. 13. Italics in original. Friedman argues that while monopoly practices are generally exaggerated and arise because of government action, the government's intervention may be required to preserve free competition. Objectivists, of course, disagree with Friedman, opting instead for total separation between the government and the economy.

[34]Ibid., p. 89.

Although Objectivists reject government interference of any type, they no doubt would agree with Friedman's contention that a voucher system, " . . . would meet the just complaints of parents that if they send their children to private, non-subsidized schools they are required to pay twice for education . . . it would permit competition to develop. . . . The development and improvement of all schools would thus be stimulated."[35]

Such a plan might have a desirable effect on higher education as well. In The Report of the President's Task Force on Higher Education, entitled "Priorities in Higher Education," John A. Howard, President of Rockford College, argues:

> Suppose legislation were enacted which permitted each taxpayer the option of paying the first $100 of his federal taxes directly to the college of his choice, so that his payment to the Internal Revenue Service would be the amount of his total tax bill less the $100 which he donated to a college.[36]

Howard continues, suggesting that the advantages of the plan include allowing the universities to use the money as they see fit, and permitting smaller colleges to survive, thereby protecting " . . . the diversity and the autonomy of the educational institutions."[37]

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[35] Ibid., p. 93.

[36] James M. Hester, (Chairman), The Report of the President's Task Force on Higher Education, ("Priorities in Higher Education") (Washington, D.C.: The United States Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 21.

[37] Ibid., pp. 21-22. Opposition to tax credits is voiced by James C. Fletcher, President of the University of Utah, who critiqued the Howard proposal: "This proposal,

In arguing for the acceptance of tax credits, Rand calls attention to the plight of the poor but talented student who tries to work his way through school:

> While millions of dollars are being spent by the government on attempts to educate young people most of whom have no ability and/or no desire to get an education, what happens to the young man who has both? If he is poor, he has to work his way through school. . . . Yet, out of his meagre income, he has to pay taxes—not only the hidden ones in the cost of everything he buys, but income taxes as well. Thus while he is allowed no deductions for the costs of his own education, he is paying for the free education of youths enrolled in government projects.[38]

If education were decentralized, then students of superior ability would have the financial means to attend private schools, which are presently beyond their reach. She reasons that the brighter learners would avoid having to attend public schools, which have " . . . failed so disastrously. . . . "[39]

Rand cites three examples of the failure—drug addiction of youth, functional illiteracy and student violence[40]—and goes on to suggest that the remedy for such abuses would consist in giving a citizen,

. . . tax credits for the money he spends on education,

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along with most tax credit proposals, has the very great difficulty that it represents the support of the middle and upper class groups of our society and therefore will tend to promote institutions which are primarily associated with these two groups of people," p. 25. The Task Force did not endorse President Howard's tax credit proposal.

[38]Ayn Rand, "Tax-Credits for Education," The Ayn Rand Letter, I, No. 12 (March 13, 1972), 4. Italics in original.

[39]Ibid., p. 2. [40]Ibid.

> whether his own education, his children's, or any person's he wants to put through a bona-fide school of his own choice (including primary, secondary, and higher education).[41]

If tax credits were implemented, Rand argues that those sincerely interested in acquiring an education might be given the opportunity to attend quality schools. At least it would grant them the basic right of every citizen in a free society—freedom of choice.

The Nixon administration has voiced support for tax credits. On April 30, 1973 President Nixon introduced tax credit legislation to Congress,[42] but opposition to the plan has come from Federal Courts which regard the measure as violating the First Amendment. At present, therefore, the future of tax credits remains in doubt.

Before closing this chapter, an apparent contradiction in Rand's thinking must be considered. Previous chapters have suggested that she does not advocate religious training. If this be true, then it might be rightly asked how she can favor tax credits for private schools, many of which are religiously affiliated? Rand comments:

> . . . I am not an advocate of religion or of religious education; but the double burden of a forced necessity to pay for the support of secular schools is a violation of the parents' right to religious freedom. The parochial schools are collapsing financially . . . it is unjust that the children of religious taxpayers are denied the special advantages granted to the children of

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[41] Ibid. Parentheses in original.

[42] Edward Rohrbach, "End Tax Shelters, Nixon Bill Urges," The Chicago Tribune (May 1, 1973), p. 1.

nonreligious ones.[43]

Despite the fact that Rand disfavors religious education, she remains philosophically consistent. Her regard for the rights of individual citizens includes granting them the choice to educate their children in religious schools if they so desire. The point to remember is that Objectivism disclaims as immoral the "double burden" which parents must assume who wish to exercise their choice.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter has been to develop the Objectivist view of what education ought to do if its concept of the educated man is to be realized. When discussing means, we have shown that Rand favors Aristotle and Montessori as the only figures devoted to preserving cognitive and ethical concepts needed by man to live as man. Romantic literature for moral guidance provides the necessary means to achieve her end. A study of Aristotle's philosophy as an extension, and philosophical foundation of Romantic literary concepts will lead—she believes—to happy men, men who pursue intellectually excellent activity, thereby allowing for the growth of self-esteem, productive work and pride.

If students confronted with the cognitive and moral anarchy of contemporary schooling were only given the proper

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[43] Ibid., p. 5. Italics in original.

guidance, notes Rand, then the new intellectual could become a reality. Practicing the virtues of rationality, independence, integrity, honesty, justice, productiveness, and pride, the new intellectual would achieve the happiness proper to a man living on earth. Contingent upon the realization of happiness, of course, is the existence of objective moral principles which man must recognize and use to guide his actions. It cannot be repeated often enough that Rand's educated man is above all a profoundly moral being, devoted to the preservation of his own happiness in a rational way.

It would be well to conclude with the words of John Galt, the central protagonist in Atlas Shrugged who, in this context, speaks of the ideal man Rand hopes education will produce:

> My morality, the morality of reason, is contained in a single axiom: existence exists—and in a single choice: to live. The rest proceeds from these. To live, man must hold three things as the supreme and ruling values of his life: Reason—Purpose—Self-esteem. Reason, as his only tool of knowledge—Purpose, as his choice of the happiness which that tool must proceed to achieve—Self-esteem, as his inviolate certainty that his mind is competent to think and his person is worthy of happiness, which means: is worthy of living. These three values imply and require all of man's virtues, and all his virtues pertain to the relation of existence and consciousness: rationality, independence, integrity, honesty, justice, productiveness, pride.[43]

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[43]Rand, Atlas Shrugged, p. 944.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

What may be said of Objectivism and American formal education? At first, there appears to exist a number of obstacles sufficiently damaging as to prevent acceptance of the philosophy by American schoolmen.

Objectivist ethics present a formidable instance. As often suggested throughout this study, few parents would be willing to commit their children to a school governed by a philosophical code advocating the "virtue of selfishness," much less "atheism."[1] By comparison, the former presents the lesser difficulty. We have shown that within the context of Objectivist ethics, selfishness means not a ruthless or arrogant violation of someone's rights, but rather a rational concern with one's self-interest. Such becomes a necessary condition for healthy self-esteem, which is so crucial to the learning process. This explains why Rand's definitional thinking must be understood if one wishes to accurately grasp her moral philosophy. Once understood, opposition might diminish.

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[1]Two comments, both coming from Roman Catholics, crystallize the issue. On learning that Rand advocates atheism one commented, "She can't be intelligent if she's an atheist." The second responded, "How could any educated person favor selfishness?" Significantly, both individuals never read any of Rand's materials.

Atheism, however, is not so easily dismissed. Rand's antireligious stand could very well forestall any national acceptance of Objectivism. Traditionally, Americans have been religious people, incorporating religious sentiments and references to God in the basic documents of the land: The Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. Indeed, one of the first political documents in our nation's history, the Mayflower Compact (1620), begins with the words, "In the name of God, Amen."[2]

The question to be resolved then centers on the possibility of Objectivism without atheism and religious hostility. Rand's position, of course, is quite clear. When asked if Objectivism could possibly become dogma, she replied:

> No. A dogma is a set of beliefs accepted on faith; that is, without rational justification or against rational evidence. A dogma is a matter of blind faith. Objectivism is the exact opposite. Objectivism tells you that you must not accept any idea or conviction unless you can demonstrate its truth by means of reason. . . . [Do you believe in God?] . . . Certainly not.[3]

But, in the opinion of this writer, if Objectivism desires acceptance by Americans, its antireligious position will require modification and/or dismissal. As argued earlier,

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[2]Milton Viorst, (ed.), The Great Documents of Western Civilization (New York: Bantam Books, Matrix edition, 1967), pp. 160-61.

[3]Alvin Toffler, (Interviewer), "Playboy's Interview with Ayn Rand," Playboy, XI (March, 1964), 39. My brackets. [Ironically, it is the thesis of Albert Ellis' Is Objectivism a Religion? that Objectivism is dogma in that it postulates a set of principles which must be accepted in toto, if one is to be a faithful practitioner.]

there exists no epistemological hostility between reason and faith. One needs both in order to survive as a man. Exclusive reliance on faith or reason would destroy human learning.

Objectivism is internally consistent when, as advocating laissez-faire Capitalism, it argues against the concept of state supported schools. Again, Rand's position is unequivocal: "My position is fully consistent. Not only the post office, but streets, roads, and above all, schools should all be privately owned and privately run."[4] Unfortunately, historical evidence weighs against the concept of non-public education. By the end of the Nineteenth Century, American schools were fairly well established at the primary and higher levels. Prior to about 1874 (the Kalamazoo Case), a yawning gap existed between the two. A laissez-faire system of private academies attempted to fill the need for adequate secondary education, but their very diversity produced graduates of such uneven academic quality that standards set by universities for admission were in grave danger. College administrators had no idea of a student's background or his intellectual competency. According to one historian of American education,

> . . . the academies' energies were diffused . . . the lack of any common standards applied to education inevitably produced several patent weaknesses. There was chaotic proliferation without organization in course offerings, including numerous short courses in subjects sometimes taught for only a few weeks. There was no established system of accreditation for either teachers

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[4] Ibid., p. 12.

or schools.[5]

Thus, the very laissez-faire fabric of the academies ultimately undermined their existence, being replaced by the High School.

Even if the merits of a laissez-faire educational system were not in doubt, the chances of such a system being implemented today are at best slim. As with religion, Americans remain firmly committed to public schools, locally controlled and financed, as the means of introducing the young to the culture. Although often pitifully weak and ineffective, and plagued with the naive faith endowed them by the culture, few citizens would opt for the absolute dismantling of the system. At least for the foreseeable future, any reforms such as tax credits will probably have to occur within the framework of the public school system.

Returning to the original question, then, "What may be said of Objectivism and American education?" Despite the foregoing limitations, it remains the author's firm conviction that Objectivism offers substantial and qualitative contributions to American formal education.

Man is a rational being, but schools by their slaughtering of self-esteem, cognitive development, and individual effort seem to dishonor his rationality more than encourage its fruition. Here Objectivism's potential for good is enormous. By postulating a heroic and moral

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[5]Gerald Gutek, An Historical Introduction to American Education (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1970), pp. 74-75.

individual as its concept of the educated man, Objectivism offers much. Specifically, the following summary of educational aims, including the teacher, learner, and institution is offered as evidence:

The teacher:

1. A teacher must be dedicated to the pursuit of truth and knowledge.
2. Academic freedom (freedom from violence, especially), is most essential if the learning process is to operate.
3. Teachers must allow their students to develop self-esteem, and cognitive self-reliance. They must aid in the process.
4. The teacher must be a man of moral conviction, willing to state and defend his convictions but not force them on others.
5. The teacher must cultivate the mind by stressing the role of reason and concept formation in the educative process.

The learner:

1. The learner has a right to an education, but not to a formal education unless that right is earned and sustained by productive work.
2. The learner must value cognitive excellence and productive work.
3. The learner must abhor the use of violence in the academic community, realizing that force may be a threat to rational inquiry.

4. The learner must rely on his own efforts to acquire a formal education, seeking help only after sustained effort on his own.
5. The learner must be a moral being, dedicated to the concepts of reason, purpose and self-esteem with their corresponding virtues of rationality, pride, honesty, integrity, justice, productiveness, and independence.

The institution:

1. It must foster rationality.
2. It must devote itself to the free pursuit of truth.
3. It must not fall prey to violence and brute force as means of persuasion.
4. It may allow the learner freedom of choice, provided he has proven himself responsible to make decisions.
5. It must not fall prey to government intervention, which tends to substitute race or "welfare socialism" as the basis for evaluation.

It is the author's belief that unless formal education in America first stipulates and then implements these principles consistent with Objectivism, little hope remains for any viable educational reform. If the above concepts could be summarized in one sentence, it might read—man has a mind; allow him the opportunity to cultivate and sustain it. It is a plea educators dare not ignore any longer.

This study will conclude by offering suggestions for further research. Since Objectivism is just gaining the recognition it deserves, many areas of investigation await

the potential researcher. A few of the more important ones include the following: a study of Objectivist epistemology, especially the process of concept formation. Rand has severely critiqued the behaviorism school, specifically B. F. Skinner.[6] A comparison between the two approaches might prove fruitful. In this context, Nathaniel Branden's writings, especially The Psychology of Self-Esteem, would be very useful as he has formulated a psychology based on Objectivist philosophy.

Rand's approach to formal logic and the Laws of Thought could also be investigated. Her refutation of the "analytic-synthetic" dichotomy plus deriving ethical postulates from the laws has, as we have seen, resulted in much criticism. The entire role of logic in Objectivist philosophy deserves treatment.

Of course, Objectivist ethics might also be examined in a separate study. Comparisons with Christian moral beliefs might help to lessen the attacks leveled against the former. Contingent upon such an investigation would be an examination of the definitional thinking implicit in so much of Objectivist moral philosophy.

Objectivism can no longer be ignored by the academic community. Students are discovering its championing of

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[6]See: Ayn Rand, "The Stimulus . . . ," The Ayn Rand Letter, Parts I-II, Nos. 8-9 (January 17, 31, 1972), 1-4, 1-6, and " . . . And the Response," The Ayn Rand Letter, Parts I-II, I, Nos. 10-11 (February 14, 28, 1972), 1-4, 1-4. The attack centers on Skinner's Beyond Freedom and Dignity (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971).

rational self-interest and individualism to be a refreshing change from current intellectual practice which may be described as an odd mixture of existentialism, Rousseau's naturalism and anarchy. For example, students at Rice University, in 1965, voted overwhelmingly to read The Virtue of Selfishness as their "Book of the Semester," despite opposition from the campus liberals.[7] It is hoped that this study will serve to introduce students and faculty to Objectivism and thus serve as a springboard for further discussion and investigation.

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[7]Nathaniel Branden, "A Report to Our Readers—1965," The Objectivist Newsletter, IV, No. 12 (December, 1965), 57.

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