Chapter V
Capitalism and other related issues:
An Analysis of Ayn Rand’s non-fictional works

Ayn Rand’s fiction brought her to the attention of many young intellectuals starved for alternative philosophies other than the prevailing existential, relativistic and Marxist philosophies. As her fame grew, she moved from being a novelist to being a philosopher. She began to see herself not just ‘as a philosopher of aesthetics or personal ethics but of public reality’ (65), as stated by James Baker.

Ayn Rand’s career as a philosopher began with Atlas Shrugged, as she wrote, rewrote, and condensed to 30,000 words John Galt’s radio address. Ayn Rand considered it her duty to provide a philosophic platform for a generation of ‘new intellectuals’, at a time when, as she thought, the world was facing a ‘moral crisis’ and had to choose between freedom (capitalism) and collectivism (communism/socialism). For her the new intellectuals must ‘volunteer to live the rational life’, and this was only to be found in her philosophy of ‘Objectivism’, narrated in the Atlas Shrugged and delivered by John Galt in his radio message.

Atlas Shrugged brought Ayn Rand widespread and large-scale publicity which none of her other works had brought. Its philosophic contents were reviewed and were either praised or damned for their literary merits and demerits. From the late 1950s to the mid 1970s, Ayn Rand was much in demand as a public speaker, publishing and editing her own journal and she turned collections of her articles and speeches into best selling paperback books. These books are For The New Intellectual, The Virtue of Selfishness, Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal, Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology, The Romantic Manifesto and The New Left: An Anti Industrial Revolution.
The books far from presenting any systematic philosophy were in reality scattered collections of articles which she wrote for her journal *The Objectivist* and passages from her novels, either in defense of her views or expanding upon her ‘philosophy of Objectivism’. Her philosophy contained many themes and theories other than her anti-feminism which she unambiguously and in unequivocal terms declared to Edwin Newman: ‘women who want to be equal or superior to men go against women’s true nature, which is to look up to man’ (Baker 79) and which this study has endeavored to analyze. In this chapter we will have a brief discussion on other themes and theories in her works, which will be followed by a brief analysis of her fictional books.

Ayn Rand called her philosophy ‘Objectivism’, as she considered ‘objective reality’ to be the central theme of her thought. In a more definitive statement on the foundations of Objectivism in *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*, she explained that her school of thought alone in modern times considered universal concepts to be neither received by mystical revelation nor invented by the mind of man. For Ayn Rand, man’s mind is supreme and capable of perceiving and interpreting these universal concepts of objective reality.

In an interview to Alvin Toffler of *Playboy* in 1964, Ayn Rand explained the relationship of man’s rational interpretation of reality to the objective ethic of rational self-interest. For Ayn Rand ‘man exists for his own sake’, and that ‘the pursuit of his own happiness is his highest moral purpose, and a rational man should not sacrifice himself to others, nor sacrifice others to himself’ (Ibid Toffler). Ayn Rand believed that a rational man knows that the politico-economic system that offers him the best chance to realize his potential is laissez-faire capitalism. Feminists were outraged at the implications of her philosophy and the treatment of her female protagonists in her fictional works at the hands of Ayn Rand’s rational hero-men. In the pages that follow is attempted a caption-wise
discussion of some of the important philosophical concepts with which Ayn Rand occupied herself.

**Capitalism**: It may sound commonplace that Ayn Rand was an unashamed votary of capitalism. Ayn Rand viewed capitalism as the creation and in turn the creator of heroic individualism. It was for her the only economic and social system under which an individualist, the Ayn Rand ideal-hero, thrives. Ayn Rand’s watchword was the French merchant’s request to Louis XIV’s finance minister Colbert, ‘Laissez nous faire’ – the resounding ‘Leave us alone’. Ayn Rand prided herself as ‘a radical for capitalism’, the only rational philosophy of economics.

Ayn Rand believed capitalism to be the only economic system ‘geared to the life of a rational being’. It is not only history’s most practical system but the most moral as well (Capt. vii-viii). For Ayn Rand capitalism gave the American North in the nineteenth century, progress, equality, and economic and political liberty in contrast to the feudal South where ignorance, poverty, and racism dominated. Capitalism was the difference (TVS 129-30).

Ayn Rand has her own version of the history of Western Civilization where Aristotle and his descendants, chose reason over mysticism, freedom and opportunity over religious and political controls, which ultimately led the way toward capitalism and progress. Plato on the other hand according to Ayn Rand, preached mysticism and controlling of the individual, if need be through force, and thus was anti-capitalist and anti-progress. She saw ‘the Middle Ages as a time of Platonic mysticism and the Renaissance and industrial revolution times of Aristotelian rationalism, when intellectuals and businessmen combined to create a climate for progress’ (FNI 23-30).

Ayn Rand was particularly incensed by the unreasonable notion
that love of money is the root of all evil. In *Atlas Shrugged* Francisco d’Anconia insists that ‘money is the barometer of a society’s virtue’ (FNI 108) and the paradise in the novel is a place where men of rational self-interest stay calling it Utopia of Greed and its symbol is a gold dollar sign.

Ayn Rand conceived as impossible the idea that capitalism dehumanizes workers. For, according to her, the great capitalists are men of rational self-interest and because of their profits, will never harm their workers. It was not the capitalists but government controls and socialism with its concessions, subsidies and mixed economy, that rendered the capitalists ineffective.

The good guys of history, for her, were the capitalists while the bad guys were the second-handers who looted in the name of ‘the common good.’ For Ayn Rand capitalism was the ‘symbol of a free society...’ (Cap. 62) and money its health, which capitalists bring to a nation.

**Collectivism**: For Ayn Rand collectivism was the blackest vice and in all her fictional works the main theme was the conflict between ‘individualism (capitalism) and collectivism’. Ayn Rand viewed collectivism, irrationality and lethargy as related ideas. Thus in *Anthem*, she speaks that in a collectivist system, ‘what is not done collectively cannot be good (A 81). In *Atlas Shrugged*, she captured what in her views was the essence of collectivist philosophy: ‘From Each According to His Ability – To Each According to His Need’ (AS 668).

This altruistic, ‘collectivist statism’, which makes man dependent, inactive, and inefficient and forbids enterprise, was, for Ayn Rand, not only impractical and ineffective but also patently evil. Ayn Rand never missed an opportunity to run down collectivism. *We The Living* describes the collectivist Soviet state, while *Anthem* describes a collectivist state of the future where men have been stripped of all identity. *The*
Fountainhead is the tale of an individual against the collectivist tastes and values of a society unafraid to think for itself. Atlas Shrugged describes how the men of rational self-interest refuse to collaborate with the collectivist economic planners and thereby defeat the system. For Ayn Rand collectivism is the exact opposite of ‘rational capitalist individualism’.

Rationalism: Ayn Rand fancied herself as some sort of intellectual inheritor and literary executor of Aristotle in the twentieth century and called herself ‘an Aristotelian’ in her Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology. She credited Aristotle with establishing the value of rationalism. For a man to be rational, he must utilize his faculty of reason, which for Ayn Rand stood as the foundation of all human achievement. A man of reason is egoistically individualistic, which fosters productivity and which creates and sustains capitalism for the benefit of all.

One of her most intriguing metaphors for rationality and irrationality is to be found in her essay ‘Apollo and Dionysus’ where she compares the Apollo II moon voyage to the Woodstock rock festival, both coming in the sultry summer of 1969. ‘The man of reason reaches to the stars through technology while the man without reason descends to the mud in a drunken mystical stupor, choking on his own irrationality. The choice is Apollo, god of light, or Dionysus, god of wine (TNL 57-81).

Thus, we observe in all of Ayn Rand’s writings, fictional and philosophical, how the theme of rationalism is closely linked with that of individualism. The man of reason is always an individualist, shunning society and its values following only the urging of his own mind, a supreme egoist like Equality 7-2521 in Anthem, Howard Roark in The Foundationhead, John Galt, Francisco D’ Anconia and Ragnar Danneskjold in Atlas Shrugged.
The Hero: The man of rational self-interest, the man who refused to live for the sake of another man, was a hero for Ayn Rand. The first ideal man Ayn Rand created was Equality 7-2521: ‘I am a man, this miracle of me is mine to own and keep, and mine to guard, and mine to use, and mine to kneel before’ (A110). This spirit was later to be found in all her male protagonists.

For some critics, the hero is probably Ayn Rand’s central theme and theory. The Ayn Rand hero was ‘the active man’ who is independent, individualistic, selfish, rational and all of this in order to be creative and productive. Her rational individual, the man of ego, is by nature a selfish being, a man of supreme self-confidence and ruthlessly pursuing self-interest. The negative connotations of selfishness, Ayn blamed, were due to altruism. Selfishness was not only a virtue, but also the foundation for a code of ethics which she called ‘the morality of rational self-interest’ (Cap.150).

The selfish person, she believed, is concerned with his own productive labor and his hard work is like entrepreneurs and captains of industry. The ‘altruist’s’ are ‘metaphysical killers’ waiting for a chance to be physical ones (TVS, 50-56).

Ayn Rand believed that altruism entails self – sacrifice, self-immolation, self-abnegation, which the man of reason must avoid. For Ayn Rand, altruism was a primitive phenomenon in modern currency through the ‘second-handers’ who cannot compete with an individualist. This may explain why Ayn Rand called the valley where all the capitalists and men of reason have escaped to in Atlas Shrugged as a ‘Utopia of Greed’. Out here the men of undiluted selfishness lived with gold as their currency and the dollar sign as the symbol of their society. Ayn Rand would continue to delineate the principles of this utopia in her non-fictional works.
It is easy to see that Ayn Rand’s heroes are all in business of one type or another — creating buildings, establishing factories, founding banks; making capital through entrepreneurship.

Her heroes suffer at the hands of jealous enemies, who are all ‘second-handers’. In the beginning the heroes temporarily suffer defeat by the machinations of lesser men, only to rise to the occasion at the end. Her hero’s victory at the end vindicates her philosophy of objectivism to be truly rational and practical.

Libertarianism, Atheism and Mysticism: Ayn Rand has been called a libertarian though she was never a member of any party or political movement. As a writer-philosopher, her task was only to formulate a philosophic base on which capitalists and individualists could reestablish a golden age, just as they had in eighteenth century Europe and nineteenth century American North.

It can be observed that among her ‘libertarian’ themes and theories was the idea that all taxes should be voluntary. In her interview to Alvin Toffler of Playboy in 1964, published as ‘A Candid Interview’, Ayn Rand observed that taxes were illegal and the government should raise revenues through a lottery, which she considered a self-imposed tax and in case further revenues were needed, then citizens should be persuaded to give taxes voluntarily.

In the same interview, Ayn Rand considered the military draft of the 1960s unconstitutional and opposed public ownership of radio frequencies and television channels. For her capitalism only flourished in a free atmosphere and any loss of individualism would materially affect the progress and prosperity of society.

Essential to her philosophic base of ‘Objectivism’ was atheism and for Ayn Rand a mystic was anyone who places another being or cause
above the self or man. Religion to her was simply incompatible with self-interest, the keystone of individualism and capitalism. In her Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology, Ayn Rand observed the affinity between communism and Judeo-Christian mysticism, for ‘both listed selflessness, not selfishness as the highest virtue’ (IOE 108).

Objectivism demanded atheism and Ayn Rand’s major complaint against American conservatism was its ties with religion. The colonization of North America was a direct consequence of the religious conflict between the Puritans and the monarchists in England. After the collapse of the Protectorate of Cromwell in 1666 and the reinstallation of Charles I, the Puritans fearing persecution immigrated to North America with the intention of establishing a country under God’s law. The American Declaration of Independence and the national anthem stand testimony to this religious fervor with ‘God Save America’ encrypted in them. The Founding Fathers also brought along with them, apart from their religiosity, the famed Protestant work ethic. According to this work ethic six days were meant for the pursuit of their happiness and other worldly engagements while the seventh, the Sabbath, for remembering and praising God. Ayn Rand being a Russian émigré, with Jewish heritage, seems to have failed to appreciate this raison d’etre of the American psyche.

Thus Ayn Rand’s natural allies in America were estranged from her for they viewed capitalism and religious belief as mutually complementary to each another.

Philosophy and Fiction : one will be justified in saying that her ‘sense of life’ took time to mature. Her second phase of writing, where she expostulates what her fictional works were all about, is her philosophic phase. For Ayn Rand, all novelists are philosophers because their fiction inevitably reflects their interpretation of human existence or ‘sense of life’. While some borrow this ‘sense of life’, Ayn Rand created her own out of
personal convictions and she boasted of it in the preface to her *For The New Intellectual*.

We notice that in Ayn Rand’s fictional works her characters are born out of this ‘sense of life’ where heroes are without flaws and villains without redeeming virtues. Her characters do not appear real life because they are abstract who capture the essence of moral virtue and vice and their purpose is to narrate the conflict between good and evil, just like in a sixteenth century morality play. Her characters were personifications of evil or truth, each following his particular sense of life.

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These various themes and theories listed above are always to be found in the works of Ayn Rand. Her ‘sense of life’ was Objectivism and an objectivist was dedicated to the restoration of individualism and the reconstruction of capitalism which communism had taken away.

By 1957, with the publication of *Atlas Shrugged*, her first phase as a fiction writer came to an end. In her second phase as a philosopher she dedicated herself to save America and the world from ‘collectivist statism’ and for this the New Intellectuals had to be provided with a philosophic base to subscribe to. As noted earlier John Galt’s speech in *Atlas Shrugged* provided for this philosophic platform of Objectivism and in the rest of her writing career she would explain this message and its philosophy through six books. These books, far from presenting any ‘systematic philosophy’, are composed of articles, public addresses and passages from her novels. We shall very briefly try to gather the central meaning of each of these six books in the following part of the chapter.

*For The New Intellectual (1961)*: Ayn Rand’s debut as a public philosopher was with the publication in 1961 of her book *For The New Intellectual*:
The Philosophy of Ayn Rand. The book is a good place to start with for all those who are interested in ‘capsualized versions’ (Gladstein 73) of the major themes in her fiction. Atlas Shrugged soaks up a major portion of the book and it is in this book that Ayn Rand first publicly names her philosophy ‘Objectivitism’.

The long opening essay of the book explains the background for Ayn Rand’s urgency to create a new group of intellectuals and it represents her first step from fiction to public philosophy. Her major premises are that the historical culprits – spiritual in the forms of the church or other institutions of faith and whom she calls ‘the witch-doctor’ (FNI 15), along with the physical culprits in the forms of chiefs, kings or Governments and whom she calls ‘the Attila’s’ (FNI 15) have combined to undermine the progress of individuals.

As against these two forces, she identifies a third force in the person of ‘the producer’, the thinker. She views this third force as representative of the best in humanity, both having been born of the industrial revolution and nourished by capitalism.

In Ayn Rand’s reading of Western civilization, there are two golden periods. The first was the Renaissance, when Thomas Aquinas rediscovered Aristotle, and that ended the reign of ‘the witch-doctor’. The second golden period was the industrial revolution; produced by man’s liberated ‘renaissance mind’ and this ended the tyranny of ‘Attila’. The Founding Fathers of America were both intellectuals and businessmen and they established the first truly capitalist state. In a capitalist society the key figures are the intellectual and the businessmen and she concludes:

‘intellectual freedom cannot exist without political freedom; political freedom cannot exist with economic freedom; a free mind and a free market are corollaries’ (FNI 23).
However, this golden age was tragically brief and Ayn Rand indicts philosophers who veered away from Aristotelian epistemology and reintroduced new modes and creeds: the witch-doctor’s fatal ethic of self-sacrifice, medieval altruism and moral uncertainty. Ayn Rand begins with René Descartes and journeys through David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Hegel, Comte and Marx. These philosophers legitimized ‘altruistic morality’ which was to result in ‘communist humanism’ what according to her was essentially detrimental to the ‘rational man’.

Ayn Rand ends this essay by calling for the rise of a ‘new intellectual’. This new intellectual will be guided by reason and reason alone, will be an individual valuing his ‘self’ and never surrender to mystics and brutes. He must be ‘an atheist’. She calls upon the new intellectuals to supply capitalism with a firm ethical foundation, which she identifies as her philosophy of ‘Objectivism’, the most practical and moral system on earth. She ends her essay with, ‘The intellectuals are dead – long live the intellectuals!’(FNI 67).

The Virtue of Selfishness (1964): By 1961, Ayn Rand decided to publish a journal dedicated to the propagation of Objectivism. The journal was to be called: Objectivist Newsletter, Objectivist and finally the Ayn Rand Letter. In 1964 Ayn Rand published a compilation of her essays in a book form, which was provocatively titled, The Virtue of Selfishness. Ayn Rand wrote these essays with the purpose of clarifying from a variety of perspectives the basic standards and values of Objectivism.

The introductory essay delivered at the University of Wisconsin symposium on ‘Ethics in our Time’ (1961), outlines the rationale of Ayn Rand’s ethics. Explaining that life is the standard by which good is judged, therefore one’s own life should be one’s ethical purpose. Ayn Rand tries to connect ‘objectivism’ and its ethics of reason, purpose, self-esteem, rationality, productivity and pride as corresponding to one’s ethical values and purpose.
‘Objectivism can save modern man from the altruists’ (TVS 14-33).

The composition of her essays is very heterogeneous and at least three articles in this book deal with government policies and human rights. Ayn Rand was drawn increasingly to questions of man as a political and social being. In the article ‘Man’s Rights’, Ayn Rand asserts that only a free, capitalist society, built on individual rights can guarantee human rights to its citizens. States who guarantee a job, a home, and a decent standard of living are actually calling for a ‘collective right’ (TVS 92-109).

The greater part of these essays first appeared in the Objectivist Newsletter under the section called ‘Intellectual Ammunition Department’ where Ayn Rand answered questions sent in by readers. The early 1960s was a time of racial unrest and Ayn Rand dedicated several articles to racism. Her position failed to enthuse either liberals or conservatives. For her the panacea to all problems was a capitalist system, where all are treated as ‘individuals’ and not members of a race. Condemning the segregationists and the champions of affirmative action in the government alike, Ayn Rand pleased none with her views on racism (TVS 126-134).

The book concludes with an article entitled ‘The Argument from Intimidation’ (TVS 139-43), which clearly shows her frustration with not being understood. Critical of the education system and academic ethics, this essay is tense and defensive, showing ‘the kind of determination born of numerous battles on college campuses’ (Baker 78). For many observers and critics The Virtue of Selfishness has been one of Ayn Rand’s best selling non-fiction works.

Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal (1966): In this, the third of Ayn Rand’s nonfiction books, Ayn Rand devoted herself to the current state of affairs of the nation. The book is dedicated to the memory of that brief shining moment, when America came close to establishing a true capitalist society.
The book is a collection of essays ‘on the moral aspects of capitalism’.

Ayn Rand sees capitalism as the only moral politico-economic system in history, which has been a great boon to mankind. She views capitalism as the only social system based on the recognition of human rights and particularly property rights. Ayn Rand had set much of her novel *Atlas Shrugged* along capitalism’s interest of property and intellectual rights which ‘altruistic socialism’ tried to subvert. She uses the term ‘legal piracy’ to dismiss the interference of the government in the means of production.

Ayn Rand calls businessmen ‘the symbol of a free society...’ (Cap. 44), and she blames on tribal instinct any attempt to destroy these capitalists. Criticizing mystical notions of ‘common good’ or ‘public interest’, both of which for her are rooted in primitive tribal notions, Ayn Rand lays the blame for wars at the doorstep of altruists. ‘Wars’, Ayn Rand says, ‘are rooted in the tribal notions of nationalism, and in a world of capitalistic systems would disappear’ (Cap. 35-40). However, history does not justify Ayn Rand’s basic supposition. The two World Wars and the centuries of conflict Europe faced can be blamed on capitalism and the profit motive that inspired the savagery that followed.

Some other essays in this book are on the gold standard, the airwaves, and the student’s rebellion of the day. For her, students are rebelling without any moral ground and only Objectivist inspired capitalism will save them and the country (Cap. 214-46).

**Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology (1967)**: A theory of knowledge is basic to philosophy and this thin volume represented her first and only concerted attempt to begin a systematic presentation of Objectivism. This book is in the form of a series of essays and Ayn Rand begins with the definition of ‘universal concepts and their epistemological premises’. She
summarizes the four schools of epistemology from which one may choose his epistemology: extreme realism as represented by Plato, moderate realism as represented by Aristotle, nominalism and conceptualism.

Ayn Rand explains that Objectivism accepts Aristotle’s moderate realism and she begins with the axiom: ‘Existence Exists’. She explains by saying that there is a reality independent of anyone’s ability to perceive it and which cannot be broken down into smaller parts. Existence, identity and consciousness are concepts, which identify a primary fact of life and therefore need no proof. Hence, ‘Existence exists’. Since Objectivism is founded upon ‘universal concepts’, which are neither revealed nor invented, ‘America must learn Objectivism or be lost in confusion’ (IOE 27-33).

For Ayn Rand, recognition and description is the work of man, which a rational creature produces by his ‘consciousness in accordance with the facts of reality’, and which helps him work in accordance with ‘the dictates of objective reality’ (IOE 71). The solution to every human problem can be solved through the parameters of objective reality, which according to her can only be accessed through Objectivism.

The Romantic Manifesto (1971): Published in 1971, this book is composed of articles dealing with aesthetics, the connection between art and a ‘sense of life’, the basic principles of literature, Ayn Rand’s definition of Romanticism and the goal of her writing. The title ‘The Romantic Manifesto’ was probably a conscious challenge to Karl Marx and his seminal work ‘The Communist Manifesto’. A fiery, aggressive and at times challenging book, it represents the essence of Objectivist aesthetics.

Ayn Rand considers herself the champion of ‘romanticism’, and the future for her is that of ‘Objective romanticism’. She sees herself as ‘the bridge of that kind— between the aesthetic achievements of the
nineteenth century and the minds that choose to discover them…’ (TRM viii).

For Ayn Rand the essence of ‘romanticism’ is its recognition of man’s faculty of volition as against ‘naturalism’, which portrayed man as incapable of individualism, happiness and virtue. While the Romantics fought for a heroic vision of man, larger than life figures, ‘naturalism’ made literature pessimistic by writing about perverts, addicts and psychotics; art primitive, and music as irrational as the jungle (TRM 123-128). Ayn Rand indicts Zola, Balzac and Tolstoy on this count.

Ayn Rand sees this surrender of romanticism to naturalism due to the resurgence of mysticism in the nineteenth century. The Romantics, according to her, surrendered their belief in reason and free will to the naturalists who saw all life as ‘tragedy’. While they defended instinct, condemned industrialism, admired mysticism, despised capitalism and rejected reality, ‘the romantics’ thereby fully incorporated ‘altruistic morality’ and fell prey to naturalism (TRM 103-20).

For Ayn Rand, ‘naturalism’ is the antithesis of ‘romanticism’. Contemporary readers have been made so skeptical of heroism, according to her, that they cannot understand heroes, calling them simplistic, unrealistic, and escapist. Ayn Rand advocates a repeal of this ‘Joyce–Kafka amendment ’ to literature (TRM 133-41).

At the end of the book is a short story, ‘The Simplest Thing in the World’, which was originally written in 1940, and which narrates a story of artistic integrity. For Henry Dorn, the protagonist, ‘the simplest thing in the world’ would be to give the public what it wants. However, he cannot compromise on his ideals just like any other Ayn Rand hero. The message Ayn Rand is trying to convey here is that art, which includes literature, is ‘the indispensable medium for the communication of a moral ideal’. ‘It reflects the artist’s ‘sense of life’ and Ayn Rand would always
make heroes who will demonstrate man’s true nature: rational self-interest, his view of himself as an end in itself and thereby a projection of ‘the ideal man’ (TRM 162).

The New Left: The anti-Industrial Revolution (1971): This book primarily attacks the American education system and the anti-intellectual biases that Ayn Rand saw in the system.

The New Left was intended for college students in the heydays of the ‘student revolutions’ and her basic argument is that the students are restive because they have not been taught to think rationally (TNL 21-25).

Ayn Rand lays the blame for this ignorance at the doorstep of the American education policy and she applauds the students for rejecting this ‘smorgasbord education’ (Gladstein 77) they have been forced to swallow.

However, she also mourns how the students are rejecting the positive accomplishments of their fathers: modern technology. Taking the Apollo mission to the moon and the Woodstock rock festival as analogies, both of which took place in the summer of 1969, she explains how Apollo demonstrated the accomplishment of rational men, contrasting with the ‘tribal mysticism ‘of the rock festival. It is man’s irrational emotions that bring him down to the mud; it is man’s reason that lifts him to the stars’ (TNL 57-81).

Everywhere she looks she sees evidence of ‘a new anti-industrial conspiracy’ among the young. ‘The ecology movement’ to save the environment is to her a part of an anti-industrial movement that is out to destroy industry and capitalism, the economic hope of the world (TNL 127-51). She sees these anti-industrial protests as envious leitmotivs of our age, propounded by people who hate progress and individualism and
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Her most vitriolic words are reserved for the educators and the American education system. Reading Victor Hugo’s story ‘The Man Who Laughs’ for allegorical purpose, where children are monstrously stunted and deformed for the amusement of others, she contends that the education system in America is also a process where the emphasis on ‘conformity and socialization’ has produced ‘misfits’ and ‘maladjusted’ children, bereft of the capacity to be individualists and rational human beings (TNL 187-239).

An intriguing feature of this book is the fact that she begins by condemning the student unrest of the late 1960s and early 1970s by calling them a ‘Dionysian rabble’ but concludes by saying that in their capacity to rebel lies America’s hope.

To conclude this chapter it can be said that Ayn Rand, through her six non-fiction books, attempted to proclaim the ‘philosophy of Objectivism’ as the only route to a ‘rational life’. Her call to Americans and other people at large was to ‘relearn individualism, have admiration for capitalism and productivity and evince belief in rational self-interest’. This for her was the only authentic ‘sense of life’.