Non-fiction
The purpose of this chapter is to enumerate Rand’s ideas as expounded in her non-fiction works that were specifically written to formulate her philosophy that formed the core of her fiction. Ayn Rand’s novels are meant to display her philosophical speculations; in other words, she is a novelist of ‘ideas’. To insure that these ideas are not misinterpreted, she has also published several collections of essays, many of them gathered from *The Objectivist*, in which the principal premises of the novels are made explicit. In Ayn Rand’s lifetime, university professors regarded their students’ interest in her writings with a mixture of scorn and dismay. Two decades after her death, the iconoclastic novelist-philosopher is becoming a respectable subject of scholarship. Ayn Rand was one of the most intriguing and dynamic figures in 20th Century thought. While primarily a novelist, Ayn Rand constructed a philosophic system, which, although sketchy at times, is integrated and compelling. Ayn Rand’s ideas registered foremost in all encounters with her works.

There was a mixed response to the philosophy these works promoted. Rand also promoted her philosophy in non-fiction books, magazine articles, interviews and in 1947, in testimony before the House committee on Un-American Activities. In these and other instances, as in her fiction, Rand returns so often and so forcefully to her philosophy’s core percepts that the whole of it might faithfully be described as an ‘exultation
of the individual' and an abhorrence of the 'collective'. In America, the
definition of individual has not been so absolute. In particular, her
philosophy stands in helpful juxtaposition to a national consensual shift in
which a dominant notion of 'the individual' became grafted to a duplicitous
set of ideas that Americans had attached to the 'collective'.

In considering the philosophy of Ayn Rand, it is always important to
keep in mind the prevailing intellectual climate against which she wrote.
Though her absolutist vision of individualism may appear overly harsh and
dogmatic now, it may well have been a necessary counterweight to the
general acceptance of statism in the West in those times of the Great
Depression. At a time when European nations succumbed, disastrously, to
the various allures of fascism, communism, and socialism, and even the
United States experimented with the big government programs of the New
Deal and Great Society, maybe her rigid espousal of freedom was a
required response. The very extremity of her views made Ayn Rand,
sometimes an object of fun, but also inspired several generations of
conservative, libertarian activists, most famously Alan Greenspan, who
eventually saw these views vindicated with victory in the Cold War and the
return to smaller government and aggressive free market capitalism.

Her philosophical Credo is Objectivism, which holds that man is
primarily a rational creature, that his happiness lies in self fulfillment, that
his responsibility is toward himself and that those few individuals who
practice such a doctrine constitute an elite group whose function is to
realize fully the rational element in man's nature. Human weakness has no
place in her system, and any sympathetic regard for weakness in others is a
demonstration of the philosophical bane of the world, altruism, which,
under the guise of helping the less fortunate, has systematically eroded the
artistic, political, economic and social systems of the 20th century.
Altruism is non-productive; it takes from the producers and spreads their creativity among the non-producers like in the world of *Atlas Shrugged*. Altruism is the philosophy which leads to socialism, the ultimate non-creative form of government or, still worse, to anarchy, non-government, in which self-fulfilling creativity, be it in science, art, business, or politics results ironically in the good life which altruism promises but can’t deliver.

The difficulty with Rand’s philosophical analysis, of her applications of its results both in her fiction and in her treatment of social, artistic and political ills in her essays, is that she is drastically simplistic. In her series of essays on art, she gives what surely must be one of the most uniformed definitions of romanticism one is likely to meet.

There are many misinterpretations and misrepresentations of Ayn’s ideas in the media. She was a philosopher who taught that thinking is the highest virtue, who celebrated consciousness as the source of all meaning and glory, and whose fictional characters manifested the highest spiritual integrity – and she was denounced as a “materialist”, an apostle of “mindless greed”. She was a philosopher who taught the inviolability of individual rights and who argued for a world in which no one would be empowered to enforce his vision of the good on their human beings and she was accused of advocating a dog-eat-dog world. She was the most passionate and consistent champion in the twentieth century of the rights of the individual against the state – and she was smeared a “facist”. I was the only person I knew whose interest in ideas felt joyful, and apart from differences in our outlook, it was happiness far more than suffering that estranged me from other people. “The new intellectuals will change all this; by the philosophy which others have failed to provide. Indeed Miss Rand has already invented it. It is implicit in the novels.”

II

‘Reader’s digest’ was the first to publish Ayn’s article entitled, *The Only Path to Tomorrow*; long back in 1944. It was the beginning of
shaping up a philosophy, when, the war time was still unresolved and people were in need of some positive directions. Ayn took the opportunity to formulate the philosophy of her own.

Those were the times of USA-USSR comradeship. Her persistent emphasis on denouncement of collectivism cost her on personal and professional levels. Still, she told the readers that collectivism is always totalitarianism; and “horrors which no man would consider for his own selfish sake are perpetuated with a clear conscience by ‘altruists’ who justify themselves by – the common good.”2 The irony of the situation was that she was warning not about the enemy Nazism; but of communism the then supposed friend. She was warning Americans of that disaster through which she had gone through with agony.

In her writings, it was the beginning of putting forth juxtaposition of two paradoxical elements. The future Prime movers and Second handers were named in this essay as Active Man and Passive Man, Active man being her ideal man and Passive man, the second handers like Toohey and James Taggart. These people need collectivism because they are uncreative and unproductive so they have to depend upon centralized government protection. Ayn firmly believed that any society based on satisfying the needs of these parasites will destroy the Active man, the creator finally.

It took fourteen long years to properly formulate her ideas in a systematic philosophic mode. Meanwhile, Atlas Shrugged appeared with thunderous jolt. She made John Galt mouth piece of her philosophy. She was providing a philosophic platform for a generation of ‘new intellectuals’. The debut publication of For the New Intellectual: The philosophy of Ayn Rand appeared in 1961. Ayn dedicated this book to
‘those who wish to assume the responsibility of becoming the new intellectuals.’ The book contained the long essay *For the New Intellectual: The philosophy of Ayn Rand* and selected philosophic passages from Ayn’s novels. Her creative writing and her philosophy, which she named for the first time as Objectivism, are always complimentary. This was the reason, over the time; her novels became more overly didactic and lengthy. In *For the New Intellectual: The philosophy of Ayn Rand* she had chosen excerpts from her novels and prefaced them and explained the context of particular speech in the novel. She quotes from John Galt.

The tragic joke of human history is that on any of the altars men erected, it was always man whom they immolated and the animal whom they enshrined. It was always the animal’s attributes, not man’s that humanity worshipped: the idol of instinct and the idol of force – the mystics and the kings – the mystics, who longed for an irresponsible consciousness and ruled by means of the claim that their dark emotions were superior to reason, that knowledge came in blind, causeless fits, blindly to be followed, not doubted – and the kings, who ruled by means of claws and muscles, with conquest as their method and looting as their aim, with a club or a gun as sole sanction of their power. The defenders of man’s soul were concerned with his feelings, and the defenders of man’s body were concerned with his stomach – but both were united against his mind. 3

Like most of the thinkers, Ayn looked into history for instruction. In this essay she explained the background that underlies the necessity for a new group of intellectuals. Most importantly it compiled her speeches delivered during 1959 to 1961, at a number of college campuses. She was vigorously talking about her philosophy to youngsters. She was extensively talking about the satanic influence of Immanuel Kant. She denounced him for destroying the achievements of the Renaissance, and the positive moral benefits of the capitalism. Kant was the philosopher who saved the morality of altruism, and who knew that what it had to be saved form was – reason.
This is not a mere hypothesis. It is a known historical fact that Kant's interest and purpose in philosophy was to save the morality of altruism, which could not survive without a mystic base. His metaphysics and his epistemology were devised for that purpose. He did not, of course, announce himself as a mystic - few of them have, since the Renaissance. He announced himself as a champion of reason - of "pure" reason. There are two ways to destroy the power of a concept: one, by an open attack in open discussion - the other, by subversion, from the inside; that is: by subverting the meaning of the concept, setting up a straw-man and then refuting it. Kant did the second. He did not attack reason - he merely constructed such a version of what is reason that it made mysticism look like plain, rational common sense by comparison. He did not deny the validity of reason - he merely claimed that reason is "limited," that it leads us to impossible contradictions, that everything we perceive is an illusion and that we can never perceive is an illusion and that we can never perceive reality of "things as they are." He claimed, if effect, that the things we perceive are not real, because we perceive them.  

She presented the then American's situation. The new sense of life of America caused a decline in morality leading to a cultural bankruptcy. She resented the idea that the human mind is impotent and cannot know ultimate reality; and that reason is no better than mysticism. She firmly expressed the belief that the reason for this unwanted situation is due to the fact that intellectuals have withdrawn their services. She suggested that professional intellectuals and professional businessman should come together, as they were the products of industrial revolution. They must safeguard capitalism. A combination of capitalist and intellectual is her constant hero. 

Capitalism demands the best of every man—his rationality—and rewards him accordingly. It leaves every man free to choose the work he likes, to specialize in it, to trade his product for the products of others, and to go as far on the road of achievement as his ability and ambition will carry him.
The business man and the intellectual once worked together, in Dark Age; the businessman replaced the king and intellectuals replacing the mystic. She identifies the influence of the mind-mystic. She identifies the influence of the mind-body dichotomy throughout history. Her Attila represents the materialists; the witch doctor the spiritualist.

These two figures are philosophical archetypes, psychological symbols and historical reality.

As philosophical archetypes, they embody two variants of a certain view of man and of existence. As psychological symbols, they represent the basic motivation of a great many men who exist in any era, culture or society. As historical reality, they are the actual rulers of most of mankind’s societies, who rise to power whenever men abandon reason.6

Ayn suggested the union of mind and body in the producer.

With the rediscovery of Aristotle man was made free from bondage to faith, and the industrial revolution provided a liberated mind, that ended the tyranny of Attila. The first nation built by the new breed of men, the producers, was the United States. She Says, “Intellectual freedom cannot exist without political freedom; political freedom cannot exist without economic freedom; a free mind and a free market are corollaries”7

After Aristotle, she gives importance to American Founding Fathers, who established the United States the first society in history which was created and dominated by men of the mind. They heralded the free economic society which was close to laissez-faire capitalism. For Ayn, the key figures in a capitalistic society are the intellectuals and the businessman. The intellectual’s job is to give the businessman a rational base for operation. The businessman was to act upon the thought of intellectual men; theme of Atlas Shrugged is dealt with this theme. For her
businessmen are great liberators who freed the masses, through their efforts. They raise the standard of living of the society by making latest scientific and technological discoveries reachable to common man. Her novels, right from *Anthem*, serve as good examples to her thematic philosophy. The main cause of many problems of current day is that businessman has accepted unearned guilt preached by intellectual altruists.

The Attilas prey on people’s bodies and witch Doctors prey on their sows. Their alliance is based on mutual fear and mutual contempt. As a result of this, the intellectuals grew mystic and they could only give pragmatism to businessmen. She very disappointedly observes that the major advocates of capitalism like Bentham and Spencer failed to create a rational society with a code of rational morality. For Bentham it is to provide the greatest happiness to the greatest number of the people Spencer viewed it for the survival of the human race and stressed the superiority of cooperation to individualism; Ayn feared that Marx would interpret this altruism into communist humanism, in order to enslave the people. “Rand’s harsh and polemical tone, coupled with her caricaturing of many philosophers, led Sidney Hook to denounce the book for its sloganeering: “This is the way philosophy is written in the Soviet Union. In a free culture there must always be room for vigorous polemic and controversy but civility of mind is integral to the concept of a civilized society.”

Another interesting observation made by Ayn is that the intellectuals and business men started treating each other as enemies.

The New Intellectual will be the man who lives up to the exact meaning of his title: a man who is guided by his intellect – not a zombie guided by feelings, instincts, urges, wishes, whims or revelations. Ending the rule of Attila and the Witch Doctor, he will discard the basic premise that made them possible: the soul-body dichotomy. He will discard its
irrational conflicts and contradictions, such as, mind versus heart, thought versus action, reality versus desire, the practical versus the moral. 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 – the volitional level of reason and thought – is the basic necessity of man’s survival and his greatest moral virtue. He will know that men need philosophy for the purpose of living on earth.

The New Intellectual will be a reunion of the twins who should never have been separated, the intellectual and the businessman. He can come from among the best, that is, the most rational men who may still exist in both camps. In place of an involuntary Witch Doctor and a reluctant Attila, the reunion will produce two new types— the practical thinker and the philosophical businessman.

Ayn distinguishes between reason and force. She argues that the initiation of force paralyzes the mind, for it subverts the volitional consciousness in such a way as to invalidate our choices. Force against will instantiates which is to be right in the context of knowledge, purpose and values. This coercive state cannot achieve the cooperative determination of human destroy. It achieves the exact opposite, social fragmentation economic disintegration and political brutality.

She motivates the individualists who are silenced by oppressive majority opinion to step forward. She hopefully advises the new in to supply capitalism with a firm ethical foundation which is the most practical and moral system on earth. She ends the essay ‘The intellectuals are dead-long live the intellectuals.’

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This collection of essays by Ayn Rand and Nathaniel Branden was originally published in The Objectivist Newsletter. Ayn makes the clear essential definition of selfishness. The composition of this book is in a very broad prospective and eclectic. Ayn deals with subjects as 'Racism', 'The divine Right of Stagnation' etc. The collection of her essays in The Virtue of Selfishness represents a systematic attempt to outline Rand's philosophy. The first essay 'The Objectivist Ethics,' offers the best statement. Rand begins by defining ethics as a code of values to guide man's choices and actions, the choices and actions that determine the purpose and the course of his life. Next she identifies the values that should guide those ethical choices. An ultimate value is that final goal or end to which all lesser goals are the means it sets the standard by which all lesser goals are evaluated. An organism's life is its standard of value that which furthers its life is the good, that which threatens it is the evil. Therefore the standard of value of the Objectivist ethics is the standard by which one judges what is good or evil. Since reason is man's basic means of survival, that which is proper to the life of a rational being is the good; that which negates, opposes or destroys it is the evil. Since everything man needs has to be discovered by his own mind and produced by his own effort, the two essentials of the method of survival proper to a rational being are thinking and productive work. So, The Objectivist ethics holds man's life as the standard of value and his own life as the ethical purpose of every individual man, which leads to the idea that the basic social principle of the Objectivist ethics is that just as life is an end in itself, so every living human being is an end in himself, not the means to the ends or the welfare of others—and, therefore, that man must live for his own sake, neither sacrificing himself to others nor sacrificing others to himself. To live for
his own sake means that the achievement of his own happiness is man's highest moral purpose. And living for own sake really is just as selfish as it sounds. The Objectivist ethics proudly advocates and upholds rational selfishness—which means, the values required for man's survival qua man—which means, the values required for human survival, not the values produced by the desires, the emotions, the 'aspirations,' the feelings, the whims or the needs of irrational brutes.

The Objectivist ethics holds that human good does not require human sacrifices and cannot be achieved by the sacrifice of anyone to anyone. It holds that the rational interests of men do not clash—that there is no conflict of interests among men who do not desire the unearned, who do not make sacrifices nor accept them, who deal with one another as traders, giving value for value. Within this scheme then, the proper role of government is given a second thought. The only proper, moral purpose of a government is to protect man's rights, which means to protect him from physical violence, to protect his right to his own life, to his own liberty, to his own property and to the pursuit of his own happiness. Ayn Rand was not the first to advocate individualism and economic laissez faire, but she was certainly the first to elevate selfishness to the level of a philosophical absolute. To Ayn it was simply not enough to believe in individual liberty and the efficacy of the marketplace; one had to have a proper understanding of the fact that altruism is the root cause of all the evil that has ever existed on the face of the earth, and that selfishness or rational self-interest is the only proper motivation for all human conduct. All forms of altruism, including voluntary communes and even private charity, are viewed as inherently evil, since they will eventually lead to an altruistic political order: communism, a welfare state, any government designed to promote collective egalitarianism.
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The Objectivist ethics is the moral base needed by that politico-economic system which, today, is being destroyed all over the world, destroyed precisely for lack of a moral, philosophical defense and validation: the original American system, Capitalism, a full, pure, uncontrolled, unregulated laissez-faire capitalism—with a separation of state and economics, in the same way and for the same reasons as the separation of state and church.
Objectivism has been the target of innumerable attacks and its weaknesses. Reason should be the guide to human action and not the feelings. This Objectivist belief was not preferred by so many people. They felt that it is a personal preference. There is no abstract necessity for mankind generally to choose reason. And having so chosen, one would opt for freedom as the primary value, but someone who has chosen the feelings as a guide to their ethics, would be justified, within the four corners of their ethos, in making a more mutual survival their primary value. This is the difference between freedom and security. Men have tended to be more confident in their ability to survive and fend for themselves, and so have tended to come down on the side of freedom. Freedom must be a means to get man somewhere, not an end in itself otherwise it is simply one end among many that he might choose from. But Objectivism refuses to do so.

The book mainly dealt with then current problems like Racism. 1960s were a time of racial unrest. She condemns racism as the most basic primitive, barnyard variety of collectivism. Ayn believed that it negated the uniqueness of the individual, his reason, choice, and values by ascribing moral, social or political significance to his ‘genetic lineage.’ It judged each individual solely on the basis of his internal body chemistry, not by his own character and actions, but by the characters and actions of a collective of ancestors. Psychologically, it emerged from the ‘racist’s sense of his own inferiority. It was a quest for the unearned, a quest for automatic knowledge, and a quest for an automatic self-esteem or pseudo-self-esteem. In evaluating people by a racial criterion, racists attempt to by-pass the need to rationally judge the facts of a person’s character. They seek moral distinction not in their own actions, but in the actions and beliefs of their forebears. They struggle to induce radical guilt, by punishing people for the sins — real or illusory — committed by their ancestors.
The racist has an associational, perceptual psychoprophenoepistemology that stores concrete memories and emotional estimates of isolated incidences. Such a mentality is incapable of thinking in terms of principles or abstractions. Racism, in all of its forms, was a "manifestation of the anti-conceptual mentality." The fear of foreigners (xenophobia), the group loyalty of the guild, the ancestor worship of the family, the blood ties of the criminal gang, and the chauvinism of the nationalist were all examples of anti-conceptual tribalism. Tribalism was "a reciprocally reinforcing cause and result" of the various caste systems throughout history.  

Rand argued that, philosophically, tribalism is the product of irrationalism and collectivism. Though some people denigrate the efficacy of reason, they cannot dispense with the need for a comprehensive view of their own existence. They cannot dispense with the need for self-efficacy and self-worth. Such people will seek an illusory efficacy and worth by latching on to any group that provides them with a frame of reference. The group seems to possess a kind of 'knowledge' the individual lacks, 'knowledge' acquired by an effort-less, ineffable process. People find that the easiest group to join is that to which they belong by virtue of birth – their race.  

Racism claims that the content of a man's mind is inherited; that a man's convictions, values and character are determined before he is born, by physical factors beyond his control. This is the caveman's version of the doctrine of innate ideas – or of inherited knowledge – which has been thoroughly refuted by philosophy and science. Racism is a doctrine of, by and for brutes. It is a barnyard or stock-farm version of collectivism, appropriate to a mentality that differentiates between various breeds of animals, but not between animals and men.  

She advises that a capitalist system in which each person is treated as an individual and not as a member of race, can liberate men from racist thinking. She condemns equally the Southern politicians who make laws
to keep blacks in their place and the federal government that enlarges its powers so as to see that blacks are given greater opportunity. She condemns equally the conservatives who deny black progress and the liberals who fictionalize it. She is equally opposed to segregation and fusing to achieve racial balance.

IV

The next book published was *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*. Nathaniel Branden, Alan Greenspan and Robert Hessen contributed their articles to this book. Ayn called the book a collection of essays on the moral aspects of capitalism.

Ayn Rand explains that the world view she sought to express as an aspiring novelist was missing from the contemporary intellectual climate. This required that she turn to philosophy. She realized that only if, she first developed a rational philosophy, would there exist a complex and non-utopian conditions to inspire men and women and to admire and defend the social and political system suitable for its realization namely capitalism.

The problem with western liberal capitalism is that the political liberty it cherishes has not been adequately justified by the pursuit of human excellence. As Solzhenitsyn has noted, “a society without any objective legal scale is a terrible one indeed. But a society with not other scale but the legal one is not worthy of man either.” Ayn firmly believed this. She defines capitalism as the only social system based on the recognition of human rights, particularly property rights, without governmental interference with the means of production. She credits a group of manufacturers in seventeenth-century France with the best early description of such free enterprise.
The least understood and most widely misrepresented aspect of the history of capitalism is child labor.

The guiding purpose of the government regulator is to prevent rather than to create something. He gets no credit if a new miraculous drug is discovered by drug company scientists; he does if he bans thalidomide. Such emphasis on the negative sets the framework under which even the most conscientious regulators must operate. The result is a growing body of restrictive legislation on drug experimentation, testing, and distribution. As in all research, it is impossible to add restrictions to the development of new drugs without simultaneously cutting off the secondary rewards of such research—the improvement of existing drugs. Quality improvement and innovation are inseparable.13

The hallmark of collectivist is their deep-rooted distrust of freedom and of the free-market processes; but it is their advocacy of so-called consumer protection that exposes the nature of their basic premises with particular clarity. By preferring force and fear to incentive and reward as a means of human motivation, they confess their view of man as a mindless brute functioning on the range of the moment, whose actual self-interest lies in irrationality of man.

Another important essay in the book is by Nathaniel Branden, titled *Alienation*. The concept of Alienation, in its original psychiatric usage, denoted the mentally ill, the severely mentally ill—often, particularly in legal contexts, the insane. It conveyed the notion of the breakdown of rationality and self-determination, the notion of a person driven by forces which he cannot grasp or control, which are experienced by him as compelling and alien, so that he feels estranged from himself.

It was the philosopher Hegel who introduced the concept of alienation to the modern world. ‘Alienation’ was taken over by Karl Marx and given a narrower, less cosmic meaning. He applied the concept primarily to the worker. The worker's alienation was inevitable, he
asserted, with the development of the division of labour, specialization, exchange, and private property. The worker must sell his services; thus he comes to view himself as 'a commodity,' he becomes alienated from the product of his own labor, and his work is no longer the expression of his powers, of his inner self. The worker, who is alive, is ruled by that which is 'dead' like, capital and machinery. The consequences, says Marx, are spiritual impoverishment and mutilation. The worker is alienated from himself, from nature and from his fellow-men; he exists only as an animated object, not as a human being.

A Freudian or Jungian orientation - declare that the complexity of modern industrial society has caused man to become 'over-civilized,' to have lost touch with the deeper roots of his being, to have become alienated from his 'instinctual nature.' Other - notably those of an existentialist or Zen Buddhist orientation - complain that our advanced technological society compels man to live too intellectually, to be ruled by abstractions, thus alienating him from the real world which can be experienced in its 'wholeness' only via his emotions.

Nathaniel Branden refers Fromm, the psychologist:

Self-awareness, reason, and imagination have disrupted the harmony which characterizes animal existence. Their emergence has made man into an anomaly, into the freak of the universe. Man cannot live as an animal: he is not equipped to adapt himself automatically and unthinkingly to his environment. An animal blindly 'repeats the pattern of the species,' its behavior is biologically prescribed and stereotyped, it 'either fits in or it dies out' - but it does not have to solve the problem of survival, it is not conscious of life and death as an issue. Man does and is; this is his tragedy. Reason, man's blessings, is also his curse...

That man's rational faculty deprives man of paradise, alienating and estranging him from nature. His mind dooms man to confront
contradictions inherent in life itself. These contradictions constitute the
dilemma of the human situation, contradictions with which man is
compelled to struggle, but which he can never resolve or annual, and which
alienate man from himself, from his fellow men, and from nature.

Regarding Capitalism, Fromm says that it has proven itself
superlatively capable of producing goods and of raising men's material
standard of living to undreamed - of heights. But a 'sane society' must
have more to offer man that political freedom and material well-being.
Capitalism is destructive of man's spirit. Capitalism condemns the worker
to experience himself, not as a man, but as a commodity, as a thing to be
traded. The Individual capitalist expands his enterprise not primarily
because he wants to, but because he has to, because postponement of
further expansion would mean regression.

As consumer in a capitalist economy, Fromm contends, man is
subject to further alienating pressures. He is overwhelmed with
innumerable products among which he must choose. He is bewildered and
brainwashed by the blandishments of advertisers, forever urging him to buy
their wares. This staggering multiplicity of possible choices is threatening
to his sanity. Moreover, he is conditioned to consume for the sake of
consuming, to long for an ever-higher standard of living, merely in order to
keep the "system" going.

Under capitalism, men are free to choose their 'social bonds' to
choose whom they will associate with. Men are not trapped within the
prison of their family, tribe caste, class, or neighborhood. They choose
whom they will value, whom they will befriend, whom they will deal with
what kind of relationships they will enter. This implies and entails man's
responsibility to form independent value - judgments. It implies and entails, also, that a man must earn the social relationships he desires.¹⁵

Rand herself defined capitalism simply as, "a social system based on the recognition of individual rights, including property rights, in which all property is privately owned." As simple as that definition sounds, it requires an understanding of what the term "individual rights" really means. Rand states that in a capitalist society, all force is banished in human relationships. No human being may initiate the use of violence. If all relationships are voluntary, then people are free to deal with each other rationally. Each person has rights that no one may interfere with by using coercion or force. The common good is an ill-defined term that means nothing but that the interests of the individual are sacrificed to that of society. The end result of policies devoted to the common good are that some people, the productive ones, are used as sacrificial animals for the benefit of those who cannot or will not produce.

It is the individual that is paramount in Rand's philosophical system, a principle that many conservatives also claim but rarely live up to. It is the individual that raises society, not the collective, an objectivist would opine, and it is their rights that are paramount, not society's. Capitalism rewards rationality, not subjective judgments and actions. Capitalism can only be defended by rational arguments, not hazy calls for the protection of the common good. The roughly labeled traditionalists and thinkers who regard Christianity as the moral basis of western civilization see Rand's advocacy of ethical egoism and laissez - faire capitalism as a continuation on the road to hell, taken by modernity. Rand's opposition of altruism and praise for capitalism are considered an antireligious message of philosophical materialism.
The libertarians deny the legitimacy of ethics or consider enforcement to be beyond the government's purview. They are ambivalent toward Ayn Rand's conjunction of ethical egoism and laissez faire capitalism. Ayn's defense of the free market is considered magnificent, but her advocacy of natural rights is regarded as troublesome, for her commitment to the existence of moral truths is thought of as the basis by which one can limit liberty and thus pave the way. Consequently, neither the traditionalist nor the libertarian offers Rand as ideological home.

Ayn was the first to reject both of these labels. Her basic message is that a concerted effort to think fundamentally about basic questions is not only appropriate, but required. On the one hand, there is her contention that selfishness is a virtue and altruism is a vice. On the other, there is her uncompromising defense of laissez faire capitalism. As it is, these two theses were not provocative enough when separately considered. Ayn continues to fuel controversy by claiming that capitalism can not be defended unless, one first accepts the truth of ethical egoism.

In order to defend what might appear to some to be paradoxical theses at best, Ayn felt that she had to develop her own systematic philosophy. The political position Ayn is most noted for, depend on her defense of natural rights. To defend natural rights Rand believes she must formulate an ethical theory and an ethical theory in turn reiterates a position on metaphysical and epistemological questions. "She is so nimbly eclectic, it is impossible to assign her to any of the recognized philosophical schools." 16

If conservatives are to be intellectually honest to the term 'individualism', then they can no longer entertain notions of government involvement in the lives of its citizens. Conservatives can no longer
reject one form of collectivism in favour of another. Conservatives can no longer, if they wish not to be hypocrites, to uphold and argue for any belief that would compromise the integrity of the ultimate definition of individualism. A logical and rational subordination of society or the common good, or the brotherhood of mankind, whatever might be the collectivist jargon, they show it off to the rational interests of the individual.

Conservatives and Ayn Rand always had a difficult relationship. While Rand herself condemned conservatism as a different form of collectivism, one that attempted to validate its core philosophy with religion or tradition, conservatives condemned Rand for her atheism. Those who follow Rand’s philosophy to the letter, Objectivists, occupy an odd place in the political continuum. Rand’s legal and philosophical heir Dr. Leonard Peikoff perhaps put it best when he recently stated, "Being atheists, we’re anathema to the right. Being capitalists, we’re anathema to the left. Being absolutists, we’re anathema to the middle." 17

Rand’s relationship with the right has always been at best cold and at worst, openly hostile. The key strength of Rand’s philosophy is that it is a completely consistent philosophy. That consistency allows for nothing that cannot be proven rationally. Conservatism today is of different philosophical principles, a controversy that leads to vicious fighting.

I assume, therefore, that by “Conservative” you mean: a defender of Capitalism. That is the meaning of all the basic policies you advocate in your book; that is the meaning of the term “Conservative” in the mind of the American public: “Conservative” stands for Capitalism – as against “Liberal,” which stands for Collectivism. The conflict of today’s world is between these two political systems. Everybody knows it – but our Conservative leaders lack the courage to say it, which is the reason why
they are losing the Cold War internationally and every political battle domestically, even though the overwhelming majority of the American people are, potentially, on their side. Since nobody would accuse you of lacking courage, I regard you as the man who might bring the American Conservatives back to life, by means of a clear-cut, unequivocal stand. I don't have to tell you that if the American Conservatives do not stand for Capitalism, they're done for.18

She believed that if men feel they are faced with a choice between the moral and the practical, then proving to them that capitalism is practical will never motivate them. Men have always been willing to fight and to die if necessary, for moral principles; they will not fight and die for economic principles. They will choose morality over practicality, whatever the cost. In order to turn the country to capitalism, one must first demonstrate the morality of capitalism. She there contrasts market value, which is a function of actual wants, with philosophically objective value, which is a matter of what actually is the best possible to man. Each of us is the prime expert on our own wants, whereas other and superior persons may pretend to prescribe what we most truly need. What people actually want in this less than perfect world may well be deplorable in the eyes of others. The division between economic freedom and personal freedom, or of either from political freedom, is an artificial one convenient for discussion. In practice, there is only one freedom in society: that of living one's life as one chooses, and allowing others to do the same. Democracy without the limits of a constitution, without the limits of individual rights, is simply majority rule. The Founders of the United States recognized that historically, democracy has led, and can only lead, to tyranny. A man's rights cannot be put up to vote. The purpose of a government is to secure these rights, not to swing the collective fist of a mob. The Founders declared the United States was a constitutional republic, in which
The battle for a country of individual liberty was fought two hundred years ago, but the war has not ended. It cannot be fought merely with the cold stare of a memorial statue, a dry recitation in history classes. One must defend liberty at every opportunity, and never lose focus on its shining goal. One must live up to the courage that defied an empire. It is not too late. An individual can re-ignite a revolution. Ayn passionately visualized such kind of changes in her adopted country.

V

*Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology* is Ayn’s concerted attempt to begin a systematic presentation of objectivism. “All knowledge is in terms of concepts. If these concepts correspond to something that is to be found in reality they are real and man’s knowledge has a foundation in fact; if they do not correspond to anything in reality they are not real and man’s knowledge is of mere figments of his own imagination.” 19

A theory of knowledge is basic to philosophy and knowledge is acquired and stored in conceptual form. Ayn introduced her theories on epistemology by presenting her theory of concepts. In her *Introduction to
Objectivist Epistemology she summarizes the four schools of Philosophy from which one may choose his epistemology.

The 'extreme realists' or Platonists, hold that abstractions exist as real entities or archetypes in another dimension of reality and that the concretes we perceive are merely their imperfect reflections, but the concretes evoke the abstractions in our mind. According to Plato, they do so by evoking the memory of the archetypes which we had known, before birth, in that other dimension. The 'moderate realists,' as per Aristotle hold that abstractions exist in reality, but they exist only in concretes, in the form of metaphysical essences, and that our concepts refer to these essences. The 'nominalists,' hold that all our ideas are only images of concretes and that abstractions are merely 'names' which we give to arbitrary groupings of concretes on the basis of vague resemblances. The 'conceptualists' who share the nominalists view that abstractions have no actual basis in reality, but who hold that concepts exist in our minds as some sort of ideas, not as images.

Rand's description of concept formation seems more sensible. Qualities are abstracted from experience and formulated into concepts. Rand shoots for a 'conceptualist' theory of universals, which avoids an Aristotelian realism of substantial essences on the one hand and the subjectivism of nominalism, where universals are just words, on the other hand. However, a conceptualist theory cannot be consistently maintained. Even if concepts may be conventional and arbitrary in many ways, they can only be connected to reality if they are based on some abstract features that are really in the objects. Thus, as soon as Rand allows that the terms for features abstracted from experience refer to features that are really there, then she has let in some form of Aristotelian realism, whether she wants to or not. And if there are indeed natural kinds, then there must be natural,
and real, essences. Otherwise her theory is nominalist and subjectivist. Evidently aware of that tension, the motivation for Rand's idea is that concepts refer to everything in the objects. That preserves the objectivism of her theory, and so the appropriateness of "Objectivism" as the name of it, but, it leads down the paradoxical theory of concepts.

In fact, most intellectuals saw natural rights as a religious concept and not an intellectual one. Rand came along and promoted concepts that intellectuals had rejected without consideration. There are individuals who reject natural rights, but who still see the idea itself as an intellectual one and not a religious one. But when Rand was promoting her view of natural rights, she was doing so in an intellectual world, void of the concept. Since right and wrong was considered the realm of the church, then Rand must be advocating some sort of religion. The first thing that should be said about Rand's philosophy is that it is a form of Aristotelianism.

She recognizes what Aristotle said in Posterior Analytics, namely, that "to know what something is the same as knowing why it is; and this is either why it exists simply and not why it is one of the things predicated of it or why it exists simply and not why it is one of the things predicated of it or why it is one of the predicates." Rand, therefore, rejects attempts to explain existence as such. "Existence exists" is a primary fact and needs no explanation beyond the particular explanations offered for the various types of beings that constitute existence.

Rand, furthermore, accepts two central Aristotelian metaphysical tenets. There are many senses in which something may be said to be, and what exists primarily are individuals and nothing exists apart from them. The first tenet commits Rand to metaphysical pluralism and the rejection of reductionism. The second commits her to individualism and the rejection of Platonism in logic.20

She holds that consciousness is an attribute of certain living organisms; it is neither a spiritual substance within a body nor a mere linguistic fiction referring to nothing more than a set of electrochemical
processes and/or observable forms of behavior. Consciousness exists. It is a faculty of awareness by which living things relate themselves to what exists. Consciousness is ultimately of or about something other than itself—it is inherently relational. Moreover, consciousness always involves action—it is an activity exercised by some types of living entities but not by others. And consciousness allows for different levels of awareness as well. The conceptual as differentiated from perceptual is which some living entities can attain and some cannot. Rand’s pluralistic approach to existence demands neither a mind/body dualism nor a reductive materialism.

Ayn explains that objectivism accepts Aristotle’s moderate realism. They accept that the senses are valid, transmitters of reality to the brain that existence exists, objectively, that ‘A is A’. This statement implies two corollary axioms, that some thing exists which one perceives and that one exists possessing consciousness being the faculty of perceiving that which exists. She makes it clear:

To negate man’s mind, it is the conceptual level of his consciousness that has to be invalidated. Under all the tortuous complexities, contradictions, equivocations, rationalizations of the post-Renaissance philosophy—the one consistent line, the fundamental that explains the rest, is: a concerted attack on man’s conceptual faculty. Most philosophers did not intend to invalidate conceptual knowledge, but its defenders did more to destroy it than did its enemies. They were unable to offer a solution to the ‘problem of universals,’ that is: to define the nature and source of abstractions, to determine the relationships of concepts to perceptual data—and to prove the validity of scientific induction..... The philosophers were unable to refute the Witch Doctor’s claim that their concepts were as arbitrary as his whims and that their scientific knowledge had no greater metaphysical validity than his revelations.21
Universal concepts are neither revealed by a supernatural mind nor invented by the mind of man, they are produced by man’s consciousness, that too in accordance with the facts of reality.

Man is a being of volitional consciousness: beyond the level of percepts – a level inadequate to the cognitive requirements of his survival – man has to acquire knowledge by his own effort, which he may exercise or not, and by a process of reason, which he may apply correctly or not. Nature gives him no automatic guarantee of his mental efficacy; he is capable of error, of evasion, of psychological distortion. He needs a method of cognition, which he himself has to discover: he must discover how to use his rational faculty, how to validate his conclusions, how to distinguish truth from falsehood, how to set the criteria of what he may accept may knowledge.22

Rand assigns tremendous importance to philosophy as a cause of cultural, political, and social developments. She holds that humankind cannot survive without a rational philosophy; yet she also holds that most of modern history has been dominated by irrational philosophies. Since man’s character is the product of his premises, Ayn had to define and present the kinds of premises and values that create the character of an ideal man and motivate his actions. The man-worshippers are those who see man’s highest potential and strive to actualize it. Nietzsche is a mystic and an irrationalist. His metaphysics consists of a somewhat Byronic and mystically ‘malevolent’ universe; his epistemology subordinates reason to will. One may thus conclude either that Hume and Nietzsche were right or it is instinct and not reason that promotes survival, utility is not guide to truth, or else that Rand is wrong to suppose that more than a few people need to be rational for humankind to survive.

Rand, writing at a time when it was unfashionable to be a realist or rationalist, managed, despite herself, to pinpoint some basic difficulties in our philosophical tradition; and, again, despite herself, managed to suggest some potentially fruitful directions for the realist to
suggest some potentially fruitful directions for the realist to explore. He blend of commonsense realism, couples with a staunch advocacy of a free, open society and an unremitting attack on the practical ramifications of bad philosophy have earned her a lasting debt of gratitude. For the sort of achievements mentioned should not be mistaken for gratitude for something Rand never has done: develop her good sense for the rights and wrongs of the issues into a defensible and workable theory of knowledge.  

The special relationship of language to concept formation is discussed in the chapter on definitions. Rand definition of language is “a code of visual-auditory symbols that serve the psycho-epistemological function of converting concepts into the mental equivalent of concretes.” A definition, therefore, differentiates one concept from all other concepts as it identifies the distinguishing characteristics of the concept it defines. Rand credits Aristotle with being the first to formulate the principle of correct definitions; however, he believed that definitions referred to metaphysical essences. It is on the issue of essences that Objectivism differs from Aristotle. Objectivism holds that the nature of essences is epistemological, not metaphysical. Rand differentiates Objectivism from the four schools of thought on the issue of concepts because it is the only philosophy regards concepts as objective, derived from reality by the human mind, not revealed or invented.

Another distinct emphasis in the Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology brings Rand close to the psychology of the time, but simultaneously distances her from the mainstream of the Cognitive Revolution. While American psychologists’ interest in cognitive development was much stimulated in the 1950’s a great many cognitive psychologists accepted that studies of development and learning were best put off until a fairly complete explanation of adult performance had been elaborated.
By contrast, Rand clearly regarded developmental issues as central to her account of concept-formation. The proposed sequence of development for definitions of the concept man is her most prominent excursion into cognitive development in the Introduction but there are several others in the main text, and countless statements about infant and child development in the workshops that Rand conducted from 1969 to 1971. Rand noted that first-level concepts are typically at an intermediate level of generality; she argued, for instance, that children form the concept of chair or table before they form the more general concept of furniture, but also before they form the more specific concepts of armchair or end table. The same issue loomed large in studies of child language during the period.

VI

The Romantic Manifesto: A philosophy of Literature is the most unified and coherent kind of work. Ayn explains the importance of art to human consciousness. Art concretizes abstractions and thereby provides images that integrate number of concepts. She considers herself a romantic although the movement is almost a dead thing in present times. She believed that romanticism as a movement had been destroyed by its own representatives. She considered herself as a link to romanticism and objectivist romanticism. Ayn rejected the mind-body dichotomy. Man, in her view, was a being of integrated body and soul. She rejected as mysticism the mind-body dualism of Rene Descartes, who said that matter and spirit are two separate kinds of substances which can exist apart from one another. Yet like Descartes she affirmed the self-evident existence of volitional consciousness. For her, the essence of romanticism is its recognition of man's faculty of volition.
The faculty of volition operates in regard to the two fundamental aspects of man's life: consciousness and existence, i.e., his psychological action and his existential action, i.e., the formation of his own character and the course of action he pursues in the physical world. Therefore, in a literary work, both the characterizations and the events are to be created by the author, according to his view of the role of values in human psychology and existence (and according to the code of values he holds to be right). His characters are abstract projections, not reproduction of concretes; they are invented conceptually, not copied proportionally from the particular individuals he might have observed. The specific characters of particular individuals are merely the evidence of their particular value-choices and have not wider metaphysical significance (except as material for the study of the general principles of human psychology); they do not exhaust man's characterological potential.24

This volition provides the individual the quality of discrimination. Romanticism was the product of Aristotelian sense of life. It validated the power of human reason. It perhaps appeared to the rebellious nature of Ayn because the Romantic Movement itself was rebel by nature. It rebelled against establishment on one aspect Ayn differed with romantics. Just because romanticism was opposed to classicism romanticism felt obliged to despise classicism's emphasis on reason and stick to the cause of emotions. Whereas history reports things as they are, literature presents things, "as they might be and ought to be." This was the principle of her writing, she explained; the projection, of man as he might be and ought to be; 'Might be' implies realism, she explained, as contracted with mere fantasy, 'ought to be' implies ethical judgment, a moral vision. "An abstract theory that has no relation to reality is worse than nonsense; and men who act without relation to reality is worse than animals. ---- I wanted to present my abstract theory where it belongs - in concrete reality - in the actions of men." 25 Even though, the main source of focus for romantics was a heroic vision of man, they viewed him without reason.
The Romanticists saw their cause primarily as a battle for their right to individuality and – unable to grasp the deepest metaphysical justification of their cause, unable to identify their values in terms of reason – they fought for individuality in terms of feelings, surrendering the banner of reason to their enemies. They defended instinct, condemned industrialism, followed mysticism, opposed capitalism. For Ayn, these qualities are unpardonable,

Since Romanticism’s essential characteristic is the projection of values, particularly moral values, altruism introduced an insolvable conflict into Romantic literature from the start. The altruist morality cannot be practiced (except in the form of self-destruction) and, therefore, cannot be projected or dramatized convincingly in terms of man’s life on earth (particularly in the realm of psychological motivation). With altruism as the criterion of value and virtue, it is impossible to create an image of man at his best – “as he might be and ought to be.” The major flaw that runs through the history of Romantic literature is the failure to present a convincing hero, i.e., a convincing image of a virtuous man.  

She avoided the complex nature of romanticism for her valuation, where individual reigned supreme. She took from romanticism, as always, what she wanted and moulded it as per her theories and concepts. Before the nineteenth century, in literature, man was made victim of outside forces, of some tragic inner flaw, or of a capricious God, Romanticism fought against these qualities of mysticism with its emphasis on Free will and liberated the hero from mystic chains. For Ayn, the pure Romantic novelists are, her childhood inspiration, Victor Hugo and Feodor Dostoevsky, and among dramatists she remembers Friedrich Schiller and Edmond Rostand. Novels with Romantic vision are Quo Vadis and Scarlet Letter. She also makes it a point to mention Walter Scott, Alexander Dumas and O. Henry. Particularly, O. Henry was her favourite for his qualities of inventive imagination and for popularizing romanticism’s psychological mission of making life interesting. But Sadly enough,
romantic movement failed to transform its sense of life into philosophy. Its own vigour and energy killed the movement, otherwise it would have given the world a grand new era of progress teaching individualism and moral values. The philosophic and aesthetic aura died very soon. The naturalists once again took over the scene. Zola, Balzac and Tolstoy wrote about perverts, addicts and Psychics.

Man's new enemy, in art, was Naturalism. Naturalism rejected the concept of volition and went back to a view of man as a helpless creature determined by forces beyond his control; only now the new ruler of man’s destiny was held to be society. The intellectual world was dominated by collectivism in politics and by naturalism in literature. The Naturalists proclaimed that values have no power and no place, neither in human life nor in literature, that writers must present men as they are, which meant, must record whatever they happen to see around them, that they must not pronounce value-judgments nor project abstractions, but must content themselves with a faithful transcription, a carbon copy, of any existing concretes.

Naturalism attempts a non-judgmental approach and depicts humans as the victims of a deterministic universe. Rand points out the flaws in this deterministic view. Shakespeare is seen as the spiritual father of nineteenth-century Naturalism and Honore Balzac and Leo Tolstoy as his heirs. All maintained an abstract level of characterization, presenting their views on a metaphysical level Rand admires them more than those who succumbed to Emile Zola's journalistic methods. The title of ‘the most evil book in serious literature,’ however, is reserved for ‘Anna Karenina’ which Rand says carries an anti-happiness message. Though she does not agree with their literary philosophy, she cites Sinclair Lewis and John O'Hara as the best representatives of contemporary Naturalism. Ayn writes:
Now, to demonstrate the difference between an intellectual approach and a sense of life, I will restate the preceding paragraph in sense-of-life terms: Hugo gives me the feeling of entering a cathedral—Dostoevsky gives me the feeling of entering a chamber of horrors, but with a powerful guide—Spillane gives me the feeling of hearing a military band in a public park—Tolstoy gives me the feeling of an unsanitary backyard which I do not care to enter. When one learns to translate the meaning of an art work into objective terms, one discovers that nothing is as potent as art in exposing the essence of a man’s character. An artist reveals his snaked soul in his work—and so, gentle reader, do you when you respond to it. 27

VII

Ayn Rand published *The New Left: Anti-Industrial Revolution* on the request of a student from Northern Illinois University. Ayn referred to the person as G.M.B. He asked her to make available in a convenient form her recent articles and addresses on education and the challenge college students were making to the American System. So, the new Left is mainly intended for college students and for those who care about them and about modern education. Her basic argument is that the student unrest of the day is due to the fact that students have not been taught to think rationally. In the first essay, *The cashing-In: The student Rebellion*, she says that American colleges are filled with weak administrators, skeptical professors and ignorant students. They all are inhabiting an anti-rational belief of Kantian world and therefore anti-industrial prejudice. Students are rebelling against this dead-end street they are forced to walk, yet their protests are as unfocused as their brains. In the essay *The Comprachicos* she quotes from Victor Hugo’s *The Man Who Laughs*. It is about a society that kept children in oddly shaped pots until they were so monstrously stunned and deformed, so that they can be used to entertain the dignitaries.
Comprachicos, as well as comprapequenos, is a compound Spanish word that means “child-buyers.” The comprachicos did not merely remove a child’s face, they removed his memory. At least, they removed as much of it as they could. The child was not aware of the mutilation he had suffered. This horrible surgery left traces on his face, not in his mind. He could remember at most that one day he had been seized by some men.

But today’s comprachicos do not use narcotic powders: they take a child before he is fully aware of reality and never let him develop that awareness. Where nature had put a normal brain, they put mental retardation. To make you unconscious for life by means of your own brain, nothing can be more ingenious. This is the ingenuity practiced by most of today’s educators. They are the comprachicos of the mind.

They do not place a child into a vase to adjust his body to its contours. They place him into a “Progressive” nursery school to adjust him to society. Progressive nursery emphasizes on conformity and socialization. They never paid any attention to conceptual skills. John Dewey considered that the children are too young to learn concepts. The damage continues in high-school and colleges. They damage done to Hugo’s comprachicos is less in comparison, because it was physical. But, here in America the minds of youngsters are shunned from growth. The Kantian professors train teachers to suppress individuality in children and teach them that knowledge is beyond the grasp of the human mind. Ayn motivates them to rebel because they have to win their mind. Her indictment of American education was called reactionary in its time, but today her criticism is in keeping with the conclusions of the president’s commission on Education.
Of all the government undertakings, none has failed so disastrously as public education. The scope, the depth, and the evidence of this failure are observable all around us. To name three of its obvious symptoms: drug addiction among the young (which is an attempt to escape the unbearable state of a mind unable to cope with existence) — functional illiteracy (the inability of the average high-school or college graduate to speak English, i.e., to speak or write coherently) — student violence (which means that students have not learned what savages know to some minimal extent: the impracticality and immorality of resorting to physical force.)

In the face of such evidence, one would expect the government’s performance in the field of education to be questioned, at the least, [but] the growing failures of the educational establishment are followed by the appropriation of larger and larger sums. There is, however, a practical alternative: tax credits for education.

The essentials of the idea (in my version) are as follows: an individual citizen would be given tax credits for the money he spends on education, 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.)

The upper limits of what he may spend on any one person would be equal to what it costs the government to provide a student with a comparable education (if there is a computer big enough to calculate it, including all the costs involved, local, state, and federal, the government loans, scholarships, subsidies etc.)

If a young person’s parents are too poor to pay for his education or to pay income taxes, and if he cannot find a private sponsor to finance him, the public schools would still be available to him, as they are at present — with the likelihood that these schools would be greatly improved by the relief of the pressure of overcrowding, and by the influence of a broad variety of private schools.

I want to stress that I am not an advocate of public (i.e., government-operated) schools, that I am not an advocate of the income tax, and that I am not an advocate
of the government’s “right” to expropriate a citizen’s
money or to control his spending through tax incentives.
None of these phenomena would exist in a free economy.
But we are living in a disastrously mixed economy,
which cannot be freed overnight. And in today’s
context, the above proposal would be a step in the right
direction.

Parents would still have to pay for education,
but they would have a choice: either to send their children
to free public schools and pay their taxes in full — Or
to pay tuition to a private school, with money saved
from their taxes.

It would give private schools a chance to survive
(which they do not have at present). It would bring their
tuition fees within the reach of the majority of people
(today, only the well-to-do can afford them).

It would break up the government’s stranglehold,
decentralize education, and open it to competition — as
well as to a free marketplace of ideas.

It would eliminate the huge educational
bureaucracy of the government (which is now growing
with the speed of a terminal cancer) and reduce it to a
reasonable size. The amount of money this would save is
literally inconceivable to the average citizen.

Let us take the educational establishment at their
word and hold them to it: that their goal is to provide
education, not to control the intellectual life of this
country 28

Everywhere around her she observed the evidences of a new anti-
industrial movement. At its extreme, she even took the ecology movement
as an anti-intellectual, anti-rational, anti-industrial movement that dances to
the rhythm of African drums.

_Return of the Primitive_ is a new expanded edition of _The New Left:
Anti-industrial Revolution_ with additional articles by, Peter Schwartz. He
felt that even after three decades the intellectual essence of the ‘New Left’
endures.
Philosophy Who needs It? is Ayn Rand’s last anthology, published posthumously by Leonard Peikoff. As such there is no new material in this book. Most of the essays were published in the Ayn Rand letter. Ayn stick to the premise that every one’s actions or inactions derive fro a conscious or unconscious philosophy. She showed a keen interest in contemporary issues.

One of Rand’s greatest gifts is her ability to cut to the heart of a contemporary event or issue and analyze its philosophical implications. The essay Kant versus Sullivan is one example of Rand operating with that kind of critical clarity. Using the broad way play, The Miracle Worker, which is based on the true life account of how Anne Sullivan brought Helen Keller, who was both deaf and blind, into the realm of conceptual awareness, Rand cogently illustrates the undeniable significance of the world, of language. It is through the word that Helen is able to break out of her limited world of sensations and become a communicating part of the human family. Given the importance, Rand then castigates those academicians who publish articles to devalue the word and postulate “science without experience,” and language without words.

The rational individual, the man of ego, is by nature a selfish being, a man of supreme self-confidence and self-interest. Ayn Rand called such a man hero, a person to be respected and praised for his human spirit. It grieved her that selfishness had a negative connotation, and blamed this on advocates of what she considered destructive altruism.
Rand did not believe that the philosophical lines of dependency went in only one direction. One’s metaphysical or epistemological views can have effects upon one’s ethical and, therefore, one’s political thinking. This claim is reiterated in *Philosophy: Who Needs It?* As in her earlier writings, especially the novel *Atlas Shrugged*, this latest book tries to argue that the adherence to certain philosophical theories has practical consequences. For the objectivist, man is absolutely free to choose necessity, to opt for the objective and logical requirements of life itself. The individual must make this “choice” gratuitously, however, without any sort of pre-existing proclivities and in the absence of any sort of prior logical and empirical knowledge. If he makes the wrong choice, he is immoral and must justly suffer the behavioral consequence of his own epistemological sins. If he chooses correctly, he is precipitated into a state of psycho-epistemological grace which invariably yields the maximum degree of moral and material satisfaction.

After Ayn Rand’s demise, it is interesting to speculate on the future of Objectivism. Two distinct trends have already emerged. The official school of Objectivism headed by philosopher Leonard Peikoff, Rand’s self-proclaimed ‘intellectual heir’. Peikoff has decreed Objectivism to be a closed system and has rooted out heretics, thereby assuming the role of a Randian Grand Inquisitor. Such tactics will accomplish nothing more than to plunge Objectivism into a deep intellectual coma. A philosophy will not attract young philosophers with first-rate minds if they must agree with everything Rand has written. Inquisitive, original thinkers are unwilling to confine themselves to exegesis, even if the text to be interpreted is a good one.

Fortunately, the fate of Objectivism does not depend solely on the official Randians. Some capable neo-Randians have emerged during the
past two decades; and these philosophers, while willing to credit Rand where credit is due, are also willing to criticize Rand where criticism is due. Most importantly, the neo-Randians are philosophers, not expositors; they wish to expand the frontiers of Objectivism, not build walls around it. Prominent among the neo-Randian are Tibor Machan, who has argued extensively for a Randian approach of rights in *Human Rights and Human Liberties, Individuals and Their Rights* and other books; and David Kelly, who has ably defended Rand’s epistemology in *The Evidence of the Senses: A realist Theory of Perception*. Important work has also been undertaken by Douglas Den Uyl, Douglas Rasmussen, Eric Mack, Jack Wheeler, and others.

The *Objectivist News Letter* in a survey, *A Report to Our Readers* records some opinions. One reader writes, “She expected one to lead a rational life in the rapid epistemological degeneration of the present world. Ayn Rand has given me the glimpse and incentive of the high and noble experiences of life, and shown me the method of seizing and fighting for them. That method is reason.” Another writes, ‘In Ayn’s works, her persuasively genuine characters are motivated by values which project man as he might be and ought to be, not as he is. Focusing on intelligence, ability, integrity and achievement she has raised a gleaming goal for man to climb forward. Another writes: “She views existence as rational and man as a being capable of reason, heroism and almost infinite joy. Thanks to her.” The fourth writes, “Ayn does not just protest, as do most of today’s young people and their heroes. She is not anti-something. She is pro-freedom, pro-reason etc. She offers a predicament. – Ayn gives us hope – hope based on reason, not on mystical beliefs.”

She believed passionately in the importance of the individual, yet her books developed a cult like following among the millions of people who
read them. Rand became best known for her insistence on the primacy of human reason. The harsh certainty of an autodidact and self-made person, and the high handed authoritarian manner of Rand's personality, sometimes worked against her case, her cause, and her life, but every time she emerged with great vitality and vigour. After discussing the philosophy of Ayn Rand the project moves forward to find a conclusion. The next chapter concludes all those aspects discussed in the previous chapters.
REFERENCES

Chapter V


26. Ibid., P. 124.

27. Ibid., P. 43.
