

## Chapter 1 : What is Objectivism?

*Ayn Rand called her philosophy "Objectivism" because central to it is a new conception of objectivity. Traditionally, objectivity has meant the attempt to efface the knower out of existence, so that consciousness can "mirror" or "copy" reality, "untainted" by any processing.*

Ayn Rand was not a systematic thinker or writer, so Peikoff must serve as her interpreter, drawing together into a relatively coherent whole her disparate, repetitive tantrums that randomly re-surface like Whac-a-Mole on crack rock. Peikoff is much more charming than Rand, too, which is a virtue. But precisely because all of Objectivism is presented here in a centralized narrative, it becomes vulnerable to a decapitation strike. Let Objectivism be Second supplemental to multi-part review series. Key to Objectivism is the confrontation with Evil. Draw out the pronunciation like Mermaidman to get the full effect: The confrontation can go two ways: One of the villains feared by Objectivism appears in the distinction between force and violence, wherein the latter is simply a species of the former--both are equally Evil: We do not seek to preserve the present system, but to change it at the root. The desired capitalism is purely fictive: And purity is extremely significant: Fascists conceive of the nation as an organism, shaped by historic, cultural, and in some cases, ethnic and hereditary factors, a mythic construct incompatible with liberal, conservative, and communist theories of society. The fascist process of national regeneration demands radical measures to create or assert national validity and strength. In terms of form, fascism arises out of the perceived crisis of liberalism, with the assistance of traditional rightwing groups, under threat from an alleged leftwing menace, during the period of mass politics 42 ff. Rebirth of the US through revolution is equivalent to saving Rome, saving the world, even. They disagree with socialists, liberals, conservatives. Force in this conception is the action of the state against individual rights, even when authorized by electoral process, carried out by bureaucrats. Objectivism assumes a mythic independent, free-willed individual, who not only freely chooses actions, but freely chooses thoughts, beliefs, desires, whether to focus the mind, whether to be rational. It is a religion beyond all others in its lack of rigor. This free independent individual is oppressed by the state--we know from Rand that the industrialist is the most oppressed creature in the world--urged by looters, moochers, evaders, parasites, ivory tower intellectuals, scheming public servants, criminals, communists--the League of Evil that hates the good because it is good. The victims must reclaim the state, boycott the Evil, and retaliate against the initiators of force--the altruists. They are obsessed with the imagined decline and humiliation of the large industrialist, placing modern transnational corporations into nostalgic relation with the robber barons. They wish to purify capitalism of decadent and false democratic rights to return to the mythologized golden age of the 19th century. Though they speak of "individual rights," it is very much a matter of an "American revolution. Though Objectivism adopts an ersatz liberalism with its "individual rights" language, it actually only recognizes the right to property, which it regards as absolute, not subject to democratic adjustment. This is evidence therefore of a profound illiberalism, as is the complete contempt for egalitarianism, which was an essential component of classical liberalism ab initio. At no point does Objectivism engage with Locke, Montesquieu, or any other Enlightenment figures. That Objectivism regards subjects of dictatorship as living dead--zombies to be assassinated casually--and that it considers the slightest corruption of any part to extend to complete corruption of the whole, it is fair to state that it regards the subjects of the mixed economy to be similarly zombified, subject to the same retaliation by property-owners that might be exercised against criminals, bureaucrats, looters, moochers, communists, and so on. Any platitudes about individual rights for everyone should be taken in this context, in which the Objectivist "obligation to lie" is triggered: What remains after the lying is bracketed: Conclusion Based on the above and foregoing, we find that the world would undoubtedly come to a horrifying end in Objectivist hands. I accordingly declare any and all Objectivists to be hostis humani generis. Recommended for those who feel the glee of the destroyer, the mind-hater, the nihilist; walking corpses who have just consigned themselves to the void; and subverters of every rational virtue.

**Chapter 2 : Ayn Rand (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)**

*Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand* is a book by the philosopher Leonard Peikoff, in which the author discusses the ideas of his mentor, Ayn Rand.

Rand originally expressed her philosophical ideas in her novels, most notably, *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*. An axiom is a proposition that defeats its opponents by the fact that they have to accept it and use it in the process of any attempt to deny it. It is proof that they are axioms, that they are at the base of knowledge and thus inescapable. The axiom of existence is grasped in differentiating something from nothing, while the law of identity is grasped in differentiating one thing from another, i. As Rand wrote, "A leaf Any other approach Rand termed "the primacy of consciousness", including any variant of metaphysical subjectivism or theism. The way entities act is caused by the specific nature or "identity" of those entities; if they were different they would act differently. For example, a belief in dragons, however sincere, does not mean reality contains any dragons. A process of proof identifying the basis in reality of a claimed item of knowledge is necessary to establish its truth. This is understood to be a direct consequence of the metaphysical principle that "existence is identity. The distinguishing characteristic of logic the art of non-contradictory identification indicates the nature of the actions actions of consciousness required to achieve a correct identification and their goal knowledge "while omitting the length, complexity or specific steps of the process of logical inference, as well as the nature of the particular cognitive problem involved in any given instance of using logic. An item of knowledge cannot be "disqualified" by being arrived at by a specific process in a particular form. Thus, for Rand, the fact that consciousness must itself possess identity implies the rejection of both universal skepticism based on the "limits" of consciousness, as well as any claim to revelation, emotion or faith based belief. Objectivist epistemology maintains that all knowledge is ultimately based on perception. For example, optical illusions are errors in the conceptual identification of what is seen, not errors in sight itself. Perceptual error, therefore, is not possible. The form in which an organism perceives is determined by the physiology of its sensory systems. Whatever form the organism perceives it in, what it perceives"the object of perception" is reality. An "unprocessed" knowledge would be a knowledge acquired without means of cognition. She argued that concepts are formed by a process of measurement omission. Peikoff described her view as follows: The integration is completed and retained by the selection of a perceptual symbol a word to designate it. That measurements must exist is an essential part of the process. Rand acknowledged the importance of emotion for human beings, but she maintained that emotions are a consequence of the conscious or subconscious ideas that a person already accepts, not a means of achieving awareness of reality. Faith, for Rand, is not a "short-cut" to knowledge, but a "short-circuit" destroying it. Rand argued that neither is possible because the senses provide the material of knowledge while conceptual processing is also needed to establish knowable propositions. Criticisms on epistemology[ edit ] The philosopher John Hospers , who was influenced by Rand and shared her moral and political views, disagreed with her over issues of epistemology. Campbell says the relationship between Objectivist epistemology and cognitive science remains unclear because Rand made claims about human cognition and its development which belong to psychology, yet Rand also argued that philosophy is logically prior to psychology and in no way dependent on it. The existence of inanimate matter is unconditional, the existence of life is not: It is only a living organism that faces a constant alternative: In any hour and issue of his life, man is free to think or to evade that effort. Thinking requires a state of full, focused awareness. Man can focus his mind to a full, active, purposefully directed awareness of reality"or he can unfocus it and let himself drift in a semiconscious daze, merely reacting to any chance stimulus of the immediate moment, at the mercy of his undirected sensory-perceptual mechanism and of any random, associational connections it might happen to make. Life is given to him, survival is not. His body is given to him, its sustenance is not. His mind is given to him, its content is not. To remain alive he must act and before he can act he must know the nature and purpose of his action. He cannot obtain his food without knowledge of food and of the way to obtain it. He cannot dig a ditch"or build a cyclotron"without a knowledge of his aim and the means to achieve it. To remain alive, he must think. If [man] chooses to live, a

rational ethics will tell him what principles of action are required to implement his choice. If he does not choose to live, nature will take its course. The only alternative would be that they live without orientation to reality. Rand also rejected subjectivism. A "whim-worshiper" or "hedonist," according to Rand, is not motivated by a desire to live his own human life, but by a wish to live on a sub-human level. Instead of using "that which promotes my human life" as his standard of value, he mistakes "that which I mindlessly happen to value" for a standard of value, in contradiction of the fact that, existentially, he is a human and therefore rational organism. The "I value" in whim-worship or hedonism can be replaced with "we value," "he values," "they value," or "God values," and still it would remain dissociated from reality. Rand repudiated the equation of rational selfishness with hedonistic or whim-worshipping "selfishness-without-a-self. He argues that her attempt to defend the morality of selfishness is, therefore, an instance of begging the question. In response, the philosophers Douglas B. Persuasion is the method of reason. By its nature, the overtly irrational cannot rely on the use of persuasion and must ultimately resort to force to prevail. Peikoff, explaining the basis of rights, stated, "In content, as the founding fathers recognized, there is one fundamental right, which has several major derivatives. The fundamental right is the right to life. Its major derivatives are the right to liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness. Objectivism maintains that only societies seeking to establish freedom or free nations have a right to self-determination. Furthermore, the value of a commercial product comes in part from the necessary work of its inventors. However, Rand viewed limits on patents and copyrights as important and held that if they were granted in perpetuity, it would necessarily lead to de facto collectivism. Rand opposed racism and any legal application of racism. She considered affirmative action to be an example of legal racism. She therefore said she opposed capital punishment "on epistemological, not moral, grounds. Friedman , Roy Childs , Norman P. Barry , and Chandran Kukathas , have argued that Objectivist ethics are consistent with anarcho-capitalism instead of minarchism. Art, according to Objectivism, serves a human cognitive need: In this respect Objectivism regards art as a way of presenting abstractions concretely, in perceptual form. A concept is already a sort of mental shorthand standing for a large number of concretes, allowing a human being to think indirectly or implicitly of many more such concretes than can be held explicitly in mind. But a human being cannot hold indefinitely many concepts explicitly in mind eitherâ€”and yet, on the Objectivist view, needs a comprehensive conceptual framework to provide guidance in life. Objectivism regards art as an effective way to communicate a moral or ethical ideal. Moreover, art need not be, and usually is not, the outcome of a full-blown, explicit philosophy. The Fountainhead is the best example of this effort. This higher symbolism should be represented in all art; artistic expression should be an extension of the greatness in humanity. Rand held that Romanticism was the highest school of literary art, noting that Romanticism was "based on the recognition of the principle that man possesses the faculty of volition," absent which, Rand believed, literature is robbed of dramatic power, adding: What the Romanticists brought to art was the primacy of values Values are the source of emotions: Historically, many romantic artists were philosophically subjectivist. Most Objectivists who are also artists subscribe to what they call romantic realism , which is how Rand labeled her own work. The Russian Radical Some scholars have focused on applying Objectivism in more specific areas. In the field of ethics, Kelley has argued in works such as Unrugged Individualism and The Contested Legacy of Ayn Rand that Objectivists should pay more attention to the virtue of benevolence and place less emphasis on issues of moral sanction. Induction in Physics A Treatise on Economics , George Reisman attempts to integrate Objectivist methodology and insights with both Classical and Austrian economics. In psychology, Professor Edwin A. Her outspoken defense of capitalism in works like Capitalism:

**Chapter 3 : Ayn Rand Institute eStore : The Philosophy of Objectivism (MP3 download)**

*Objectivism is a philosophical system developed by Russian-American writer Ayn Rand. She first expressed Objectivism in her fiction, most notably *The Fountainhead* (1943) and *Atlas Shrugged* (1957), and later in non-fiction essays and books.*

Rand first made her name as a novelist, publishing *We the Living*, *The Fountainhead*, and her magnum opus *Atlas Shrugged*. These philosophical novels embodied themes she subsequently developed in nonfiction form in a series of essays and books written in the 1940s and 1950s. Petersburg, Russia, on February 2, 1919, Rand was raised in a middle-class family. As a child, she loved storytelling, and at age nine she decided to become a writer. In school she showed academic promise, particularly in mathematics. The family moved to the Crimea to recover financially and to escape the harshness of life the revolution brought to St. Petersburg. They later returned to Petrograd, the new name given to St. Petersburg by the Soviets, where Rand was to attend university. At the University of Petrograd, Rand concentrated her studies on history, with secondary focuses on philosophy and literature. At university, she was repelled by the dominance of communist ideas and strong-arm tactics that suppressed free inquiry and discussion. Having studied American history and politics at university, and having long been an admirer of Western plays, music, and movies, she became an admirer of American individualism, vigor, and optimism, seeing them as the opposites of Russian collectivism, decay, and gloom. Not believing, however, that she would be free under the Soviet system to write the kinds of books she wanted to write, she resolved to leave Russia and go to America. Rand graduated from the University of Petrograd in 1941. She then enrolled at the State Institute for Cinema Arts in order to study screenwriting. In 1942, she finally received permission from the Soviet authorities to leave the country in order to visit relatives in the United States. Officially, her visit was to be brief; Rand, however, had already decided not to return to the Soviet Union. From New York, she traveled on to Chicago, Illinois, where she spent the next six months living with relatives, learning English, and developing ideas for stories and movies. She had decided to become a screenwriter, and, having received an extension to her visa, she left for Hollywood, California. She was spotted by Cecil B. DeMille. He had recognized her as he was passing by in his car, and he had noticed her staring at him. He stopped to ask why she was staring, and Rand explained that she had recently arrived from Russia, that she had long been passionate about Hollywood movies, and that she dreamed of being a screenwriter. Rand worked for DeMille as a reader of scripts and struggled financially while working on her own writing. Rand had been working for years on her first significant novel, *We the Living*, and finished it in 1936. However, for several years it was rejected by various publishers, until in 1941 it was published by Macmillan in the U.S. Rand described *We the Living* as the most autobiographical of her novels, its theme being the brutality of life under communist rule in Russia. *We the Living* did not receive a positive reaction from American reviewers and intellectuals. While the theme of *We the Living* was political, the theme of *The Fountainhead* was ethical, focusing on individualist themes of independence and integrity. Twelve publishers rejected it before it was published by Bobbs-Merrill in 1943. Again not well received by reviewers and intellectuals, the novel nonetheless became a best seller, primarily through word-of-mouth recommendation. *The Fountainhead* made Rand famous as an exponent of individualist ideas, and its continuing to sell well brought her financial security. Warner Brothers produced a movie version of the novel in 1949, starring Gary Cooper and Patricia Neal, for which Rand wrote the screenplay. In 1950, Rand began work on her most ambitious novel, *Atlas Shrugged*. At the time, she was working part-time as a screenwriter for producer Hal Wallis. In 1952, she and her husband moved to New York City, where she began to work full-time on *Atlas*. Published by Random House in 1957, *Atlas Shrugged* is her most complete expression of her literary and philosophical vision. Dramatized in the form of a mystery about a man who stopped the motor of the world, the plot and characters embody the political and ethical themes first developed in *We the Living* and *The Fountainhead* and integrates them into a comprehensive philosophy including metaphysics, epistemology, economics, and the psychology of love and sex. Her novels had expressed philosophical themes, although Rand considered herself primarily a novelist and only secondarily a philosopher. The creation of plots and characters and the dramatization of achievements and conflicts were her central purposes in writing fiction,

rather than presenting an abstracted and didactic set of philosophical theses. The *Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*, however, had attracted to Rand many readers who were strongly interested in the philosophical ideas the novels embodied and in pursuing them further. Among the earliest of those with whom Rand became associated and who later became prominent were psychologist Nathaniel Branden and economist Alan Greenspan, later Chairman of the Federal Reserve. The *Objectivist Newsletter*, published from to ; the larger periodical *The Objectivist*, published from to ; and then *The Ayn Rand Letter*, published from to . Perhaps the most significant of these books are *The Virtue of Selfishness*, which develops her ethical theory, *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*, devoted to political and economic theory, *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*, a systematic presentation of her theory of concepts, and *The Romantic Manifesto*, a theory of aesthetics. He was the founder and head of the Nathaniel Branden Institute, the leading Objectivist institution of the s. The rapid growth of the Nathaniel Branden Institute and the Objectivist movement came to a halt in when, for both professional and personal reasons, Rand and Branden parted ways. Rand continued to write and lecture consistently until she stopped publishing *The Ayn Rand Letter* in . Rand died on March 6, , in her New York City apartment. Traditional ethics has always been suspicious of self-interest, praising acts that are selfless in intent and calling amoral or immoral acts that are motivated by self-interest. A self-interested person, on the traditional view, will not consider the interests of others and so will slight or harm those interests in the pursuit of his own. Self-interest, properly understood, is the standard of morality and selflessness is the deepest immorality. Self-interest rightly understood, according to Rand, is to see oneself as an end in oneself. Self-interest rightly understood also entails self-responsibility: It is up to each of us to determine what values our lives require, how best to achieve those values, and to act to achieve those values. In other words, the moral legitimacy of self-interest implies that individuals have rights to their lives, their liberties, their property, and the pursuit of their own happiness, and that the purpose of government is to protect those rights. Economically, leaving individuals free to pursue their own interests implies in turn that only a capitalist or free market economic system is moral: Free individuals will use their time, money, and other property as they see fit, and will interact and trade voluntarily with others to mutual advantage. Reason and Ethics Fundamentally, the means by which humans live is reason. Our capacity for reason is what enables us to survive and flourish. We are not born knowing what is good for us; that is learned. Nor are we born knowing how to achieve what is good for us; that too is learned. It is by reason that we learn what is food and what is poison, what animals are useful or dangerous to us, how to make tools, what forms of social organization are fruitful, and so on. Thus, Rand advocates rational self-interest: By the use of reason one takes into account all of the factors one can identify, projects the consequences of potential courses of action, and adopts principled policies of action. The principled policies a person should adopt are called virtues. A virtue is an acquired character trait; it results from identifying a policy as good and committing to acting consistently in terms of that policy. One such virtue is rationality: Having identified the use of reason as fundamentally good, the virtue of rationality is being committed to acting in accordance with reason. Another virtue is productiveness: Given that the values one needs to survive must be produced, the virtue of productiveness is being committed to producing those values. Justice is another core self-interested virtue: The opposite policy of giving to people more or less than they deserve is injustice. It is by living the morality of self-interest that one survives, flourishes, and achieves happiness. Conflicts of Interest Most traditional ethics take conflicts of interest to be fundamental to the human condition, and take ethics to be the solution: Basic ethical principles are to tell us whose interests should be sacrificed in order to resolve the conflicts. Taking conflicts of interest to be fundamental almost always stems from one of two beliefs: If human nature is fundamentally destructive, then humans are naturally in conflict with each other. If what individuals naturally want to do to each other is rape, steal, and kill, then in order to have society these individual desires need to be sacrificed. Consequently, a basic principle of ethics will be to urge individuals to suppress their natural desires so that society can exist. In other words, self-interest is the enemy, and must be sacrificed for others. If economic resources are scarce, then there is not enough to go around. This scarcity then puts human beings in fundamental conflict with each other: Many ethical philosophies begin with this premise. And so, in order to solve the problem of destructive competition the lack of resources leads us to, a basic principle of ethics will be to urge individuals to sacrifice their

interests in obtaining more, or even some, so that others may obtain more or some and society can exist peacefully. In other words, in a situation of scarcity, self-interest is the enemy and must be sacrificed for others. Rand rejects both the scarce resources and destructive human nature premises. Human beings are not born in sin or with destructive desires; nor do they necessarily acquire them in the course of growing to maturity. Nor are resources scarce, according to Rand, in any fundamental way. By the use of reason, humans can discover new resources and how to use existing resources more efficiently, including recycling where appropriate and making productive processes more efficient. Humans have, for example, continually discovered and developed new energy resources, from animals to wood to coal to oil to nuclear fission to solar panels; and there is no end in sight to this process. At any given moment, the available resources are a fixed amount, but over time the stock of resources are and have been constantly expanding. Because humans are rational they can produce an ever-expanding number of goods, and so human interests do not fundamentally conflict with each other. Instead, Rand holds that the exact opposite is true: Since humans can and should be productive, human interests are deeply in harmony with each other. For example, my producing more corn is in harmony with your producing more peas, for by our both being productive and trading with each other we are both better off. It is to your interest that I be successful in producing more corn, just as it is to my interest that you be successful in producing more peas. Conflicts of interest do exist within a narrower scope. For example, in the immediate present available resources are more fixed, and so competition for those resources results, and competition produces winners and losers. Economic competition, however, is a broader form of cooperation, a social way to allocate resources without resorting to physical force and violence. By competition, resources are allocated efficiently and peacefully, and in the long run more resources are produced.

**Chapter 4 : Ayn Rand Institute eStore : Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand**

*Ayn Rand said of these lectures: "Until or unless I write a comprehensive treatise on my philosophy, Dr. Peikoff's course is the only authorized presentation of the entire theoretical structure of Objectivism—that is, the only one that I know of my knowledge to be fully accurate."*

It should be thrown with great force. Europeans find it baffling, while academic philosophers use it as opening for easy jokes. If a philosophy conference is getting especially dull and grim you can simply say the name Ayn Rand and you will get at least a few amusing jabs at her. Followers of Rand are impervious to any criticisms of her work however. When one mentions the obvious problems and contradictions in her work they are greeted with an almost religious parroting of her maxims. Maxims are really all they are because Rand rarely gives justification for any of her claims but simply states her point of view as emphatically as possible and then she or her followers accuses anybody who disagrees as being irrational. If anybody doubts that my portrayal of Rand is an accurate representation of her philosophy then I invite you to go to [aynrandlexicon](#). The whole point of the study of metaphysics is to try and derive objective reality from the subjective reality that human beings experience through their senses and consciousness. Descartes tried to prove the epistemological position of rationalism by stripping away all knowledge that can possibly be held in doubt. His conclusion from this was that only his own existence was certain I think therefore I am and that all knowledge must be derived from that certainty. Kant tried to resolve these issues between rationalists like Descartes and empiricists like Hume and his complex metaphysics now form the basis of modern analytical philosophy while both Hume and Descartes still exert a huge influence. So basically Rand says. The thing that is crazy about this is that she gives no argument to why this is objective at all. She claims that the facts of experience and of science are completely objective despite a huge amount of evidence to the contrary. Science itself is philosophically dominated by the school of thought called realism which says that although the scientific method gives us the best way to derive knowledge, science does not derive objective facts about reality but merely gives us data from which we can inductively infer facts about reality. Rand makes no attempt to address scientific realism in any way. We have a number of problems with this. While there are facts that we can derive from a priori before experience means, these are very few. Kant included in his philosophy the idea of synthetic a priori knowledge. The rest of knowledge is a posteriori from experience and for this to be verifiable as genuine knowledge it must be falsifiable. The problem with this is that moral claims are not falsifiable and therefore have no validity as scientific claims. She basically claims that all facts can be derived from reason alone. Kant also dismissed the idea that humans could ever truly know objective reality because our senses are necessary parts of our way of interacting with the world. Rand rejects this premise despite the fact that she has absolutely nothing to base it on. Kant made the claim that how we experience the world is based on intuitions. We perceive time and space a certain way from our perspective because of our intuitions but basically an alien race on another planet might perceive these same concepts differently. This does not mean that time and space do not exist only that our perceptions of them are subjective. Rand makes a complete straw man of Kant, "man is limited to a consciousness of a specific nature, which perceives by specific means and no others; therefore, his consciousness is not valid; man is blind because he has eyes—deaf because he has ears—deluded because he has a mind—and the things he perceives do not exist because he perceives them. He is just saying that human perception is limited and our way of perceiving things may not be the only way of perceiving things. It is interesting to note that Rand could have sidestepped this whole problem by taking the approach that the existentialists took. Existentialist philosophers rejected the idea that science could present us with concrete values of how to live our lives. They based their ethical philosophies on individual human drives and desires. Rand rejects this idea, once again with no real evidence or argument made. She insists that her philosophy is completely objective and based solely on reason. Her reasons for this seem to be only so she can bully anybody who does not agree with her by saying they are irrational. ETHICS Since Rand has come to metaphysical conclusions based on false premises it should come as no surprise that she continues to establish her ethics along the same vein while basing the whole idea on her

bogus metaphysics and epistemology. She argues that self-interest is moral and that altruism is immoral. Her argument for the whole thing goes like so: Hume stated that a moral value an ought cannot be derived from a physical fact an is. Rand is actually aware of this famous philosophical problem you could have knocked me over and this is her response. Thus the validation of value judgments is to be achieved by reference to the facts of reality. The fact that a living entity is, determines what it ought to do. Anyway, Rand is wrong about this too. What about the soldier that jumps on the grenade to save the rest of his platoon? Equality is a moral value. Liberty, altruism and justice are abstract moral values and you simply cannot derive them from physical facts about the world. A person who does not share these moral intuitions is morally blind like a color blind person cannot see color. The funny thing is that Rand bases her own morality on one of these intrinsic human values and that value is being human itself. Both Rand and her archenemy Immanuel Kant start their moral philosophy from the same place. They both base their morality on the idea that every human being is intrinsically valuable. Kant forms the basis of his morality as acting as a free and rational person and on always treating people as not means to an end, but ends in themselves. Rand flips this on its head and says that human beings should value themselves above all other people and that altruism is allowing yourself to become the means to others ends. There is a huge logical problem with this. Kant says that we have a duty to the rest of humanity and that duty is to help our fellow man to be as free as possible. When we treat others as ends in themselves we validate their intrinsic value as human beings and therefore validate our own value. If we treat people as Rand would have us treat them then we are invalidating the very value that she is basing her whole morality on in the first place. To not value the needs and lives of others as much as our own is to invalidate the entire idea that all human individuals have intrinsic value. It is also worth noting that Rand straw mans Kant yet again when she addresses the idea of duty in her writing. Sorry Ayn, you lose again. To Rand, freedom means being able to do what you want when you want to do it. She states over and over again that you really only have two choices, capitalism and socialism. If that is the case then every developed country in the world, including the United States is a Socialist country. Socialism or collectivism if you prefer and capitalism have co-existed in the United States government since the beginning. We have a lot of values in our society that contradict each other. We respect the rule of law but most people think that there are times when breaking the law is justified. We believe in individuality but we also believe in equal opportunity. Rand herself has this problem in her philosophy. She says that force is unjustified but gives us no real criteria to judge this on. Then she turns around and addresses the idea of anarchy. This really makes no sense whatsoever. To Rand taxation is theft but then what is the debt owed for the benefits society gives us? Once again my previous Hub addresses this in much greater detail which is a pretty good thing because Ayn Rand never does.

**Chapter 5 : Objectivism – Ayn Rand Lexicon**

*Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand (OPAR) is the only comprehensive treatment of Ayn Rand's philosophy. The OPAR web site features a wide variety of resources on OPAR, including a detailed table of contents, and a list of the broad range of issues it covers.*

At a sales conference at Random House, preceding the publication of *Atlas Shrugged*, one of the book salesmen asked me whether I could present the essence of my philosophy while standing on one foot. I did as follows: Capitalism If you want this translated into simple language, it would read: But to hold them with total consistency – to understand, to define, to prove and to apply them – requires volumes of thought. Which is why philosophy cannot be discussed while standing on one foot – nor while standing on two feet on both sides of every fence. This last is the predominant philosophical position today, particularly in the field of politics. My philosophy, Objectivism, holds that: Man – every man – is an end in himself, not the means to the ends of others. He must exist for his own sake, neither sacrificing himself to others nor sacrificing others to himself. The pursuit of his own rational self-interest and of his own happiness is the highest moral purpose of his life. The ideal political-economic system is laissez-faire capitalism. It is a system where men deal with one another, not as victims and executioners, nor as masters and slaves, but as traders, by free, voluntary exchange to mutual benefit. It is a system where no man may obtain any values from others by resorting to physical force, and no man may initiate the use of physical force against others. In a system of full capitalism, there should be but, historically, has not yet been a complete separation of state and economics, in the same way and for the same reasons as the separation of state and church. If one recognizes the supremacy of reason and applies it consistently, all the rest follows. This – the supremacy of reason – was, is and will be the primary concern of my work, and the essence of Objectivism. I most emphatically disagree with a great many parts of his philosophy – but his definition of the laws of logic and of the means of human knowledge is so great an achievement that his errors are irrelevant by comparison. It does not regard politics as a separate or primary goal, that is: Politics is based on three other philosophical disciplines: It is only on such a base that one can formulate a consistent political theory and achieve it in practice. For information address New American Library. Reprinted with permission of Stein and Day Publishers. Excerpts from *Atlas Shrugged*.

*'Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand' is the most comprehensive and all inclusive exposition that you will need to begin your first steps, and it helps you understand explicitly the complexity of many original ideas, not to mention the fundamental laws that drive mankind.*

In her non-fiction, Rand developed a conception of metaphysical realism, rationality, ethical egoism, rational self-interest, individual rights, laissez-faire capitalism, and art, and applied her philosophy to social issues. She wrote polemical, philosophical essays, often in response to questions by fans of *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Fountainhead*; lectured on college campuses; and gave radio and television interviews. In her own words, her philosophy, in essence, is the concept of man as a heroic being, with his own happiness as the moral purpose of his life, with productive achievement as his noblest activity, and reason as his only absolute. She developed some of her views in response to questions from her readers, but never took the time to defend them against possible objections or to reconcile them with the views expressed in her novels. Her philosophical essays lack the self-critical, detailed style of analytic philosophy, or any serious attempt to consider possible objections to her views. Her polemical style, often contemptuous tone, and the dogmatism and cult-like behavior of many of her fans also suggest that her work is not worth taking seriously. Some contemporary philosophers return the compliment by dismissing her work contemptuously on the basis of hearsay. Some who do read her work point out that her arguments too often do not support her conclusions. This estimate is shared even by many who find her conclusions and her criticisms of contemporary culture, morality, and politics original and insightful. It is not surprising, then, that she is either mentioned in passing, or not mentioned at all, in the entries that discuss current philosophical thought about virtue ethics, egoism, rights, libertarianism, or markets. We present specific criticisms of her arguments and claims below, in the relevant sections of this entry.

Petersburg, Russia, on 2 February. A witness to the Russian Revolution and civil war, Rand opposed both the Communists and the Tsarists. She majored in history, but the social science program in which she was enrolled at Petrograd State University included philosophy, law, and philology. Her teachers emphasized "as she herself later did" the importance of developing systematic connections among different areas of thought. Sciabarra. But she was evidently also exposed to Hegelian and Nietzschean ideas, which blossomed during this period known as the Russian Silver Age, and read a great deal of Friedrich Nietzsche on her own. After graduating from Petrograd State University in 1921, an interest in screenwriting led her to enroll in the State Institute for Cinematography. In 1925, Rand succeeded in obtaining permission to visit relatives in the United States; hating the Soviet system, she left with no intention of returning. After six months with relatives in Chicago, she made her way to Hollywood where, on her second day, a fortuitous encounter with Cecil B. DeMille led to a job as a script reader, and later as a screenplay writer. She was married to him till his death in 1936.

Rand and her husband moved permanently to New York City in 1932, where she became involved with, and was influenced by, the circle of mostly New-York-based intellectuals involved in the revival of classical liberalism, such as the economic journalist Henry Hazlitt, the Austrian economist Ludwig von Mises, and the Canadian-American novelist, literary critic, and political philosopher Isabel Paterson. Rand also studied, and was a great admirer of, the Lockean philosophy of the American founding. Rand lived and worked in New York City until her death in 1982. Rand holds that philosophy, like all forms of knowledge and achievement, is important only because it is necessary for living a good human life and creating a world conducive to living such a life. Philosophy supplies the most fundamental cognitive and normative abstractions which, respectively, identify and evaluate what is. Everyone, according to Rand, needs a philosophy and is guided by at least an implicit one: a: Her novels express her belief that if our philosophy is more or less correct, our lives will be more or less successful, if our philosophy is wildly off the mark, our lives will be disastrous. Philosophy thus has an urgent, practical importance. But unlike Marx, her philosophical and political antipode, Rand thinks that social change has to start with a moral revolution within each individual and the spread of the right ideas and ideals through rational discourse and the inspiration of art. Like many famous Russian novelists, especially Dostoevsky, whom she recognized as a great psychologist, Rand also uses long speeches

to lay out her philosophy, a device that has both its supporters and its detractors. It also purports to show how the wrong metaphysics can lead to the wrong ethics and thus to disastrous personal choices and a disastrous political and economic system, and how the right philosophy is needed for the rebirth of the soul and the rebuilding of the world. Her protagonists are not knights on white steeds rescuing damsels in distress, or swordsmen who can fight off a dozen enemies single-handed, but men and women in the mid-th century industrial America of steel mills, skyscrapers, and glimmering highways: Her novels show the importance of striving to be the best we can be: Do not let your fire go out, spark by irreplaceable spark, in the hopeless swamps of the approximate, the not-quite, the not-yet, the not-at-all. Do not let the hero in your soul perish, in lonely frustration for the life you deserved, but never have been able to reach. Check your road and the nature of your battle. The world you desired can be won, it exists, it is real, it is possible. Atlas Shrugged, [1]: Her novels inspire readers because they present heroes of unbreached integrity, heroes who lead colorful and remarkable lives and succeed not in spite of, but because of, their uncompromising virtue. This estimate of their virtue is not, of course, shared by all: Rand holds that there is a widespread tendency to ignore the third category or to assimilate it to the second, thus setting up a false dichotomy between the intrinsic and the subjective. Consequently, Rand regularly concerns herself with the practical implications and social relevance not only of moral and political philosophy, but likewise of the seemingly more arcane strata of metaphysics and epistemology—as when she identifies errors in concept-formation as one of the roots of racism, or mind-body dualism as a root of the dichotomy between economic and personal freedom. Rand also tended—perhaps owing in part to the same two influences—to regard philosophical errors as revelatory of the psychological flaws of their authors. Rand claims that no philosopher before her has provided a scientific answer to this question, and so none has provided a satisfactory ethics. It is the conditional nature of life that gives rise to values, not just human values, but values as such. As she puts it: Metaphysically, life is the only phenomenon that is an end in itself: The same, suitably modified, applies to human beings. Life is the standard and goal of all genuine human values, in the sense that all of them—from food to philosophy to fine art to ethics—must be explained and justified as requirements of human survival. Thus, values are neither intrinsic properties of things, nor subjective, neither free-floating Platonic entities, nor mere matters of desire or preference, culture or time. Rather, values are relational or objective, dependent on the nature of the valuing entity and the nature of its environment. Rand seeks to bolster this claim by arguing that the concept of value entails the concept of life: Critics raise two objections to this argument. Unlike the robot of this example, real robots can be damaged or destroyed, not only by external events, but also by a failure to perform their functions well, that is, by their own actions or inactions. Hence they can, quite straightforwardly, be said to have values. The need for morality, according to Rand, is dictated by our nature as creatures that must think and produce to survive; hence we would need morality even on a desert island. There is, however, no duty to survive; morality is based on a hypothetical imperative: If asked why the choice to live commits you to your own long-term survival rather than some other ultimate end such as, for example, the greatest happiness of the greatest number Nozick, or becoming worthy of eternal life in heaven, the answer is: Hence rationality is the fundamental moral virtue, a virtue implicated in all the other virtues, including productiveness Section 2. But if the choice to live is itself a moral choice, in the sense that we ought to choose to live, then the argument proceeds from an ought to an ought, not from an is to an ought. Even more problematically, if morality is needed only for long-term survival, and choosing suicide is not immoral, then a suicide-bomber does no wrong in killing innocent people. Is a life proper to a rational being a necessary means, and only a necessary means, to literal, long-term survival? Or is such a life also, in part, the ultimate goal, something to be created and preserved for its own sake? Rand herself thought that she had only one, consistent metaethical view: The three views are: In the rest of Section 2, we will present the textual evidence for each of these views of the final goal, and the common objections to them, in turn. Survival is the source and final goal of all the actions of an entity, that which gives point to all its other values. Even those whose vice consists of imitating others rather than looting them live a precarious existence because they are likely to follow any destroyer who promises to be their savior b: The biological premise that survival is the ultimate goal of all living things is mistaken. Animals of many species risk their own death for the sake of reproduction, or for protecting their

young or even their group. But even if survival were the ultimate goal of other species, it need not be ours. Even if our own survival needs were the source of all our values, it would not follow that survival must be the ultimate psychological and moral goal to which all our other values are merely necessary means. The genesis of x does not logically determine the ultimate goal of x. The survivalist view that turns happiness into a mere means to survival entails, quite implausibly, that a long, unhappy life is better than a somewhat shorter but happy life, and just as good as a long and happy one. Many dictators, including the Pharaohs of the past and the Stalins and Maos of the 20th century, have survived by making elaborate plans to preserve their lives and their power by using a combination of terror, myth, and bribery. So have many common criminals. So even if morality enhances our chances of survival, it cannot be necessary for survival. Under some circumstances, such as in a dictatorial system, acting morally decreases our chances of survival, a point that Rand herself convincingly dramatizes in *We the Living* and *Anthem*. A survivalist ethics can support, at best, a bare-bones Hobbesian morality, not a virtue ethics. Her rich and challenging picture of human life and virtue in her novels points to a richer and more challenging conception of the final end than mere survival. Like Hobbes, Rand rightly points out that if everyone or most people were to start preying on each other, then no one would survive for long—literally, and that generations of predators would end up destroying or driving away the producers, and thus destroying themselves *Anthem* and *Atlas Shrugged*. If some men attempt to survive by means of brute force or fraud—it still remains true that their survival is made possible only by their victims, only by the men who choose to think and to produce the goods which they, the looters, are seizing. Neither can be reduced to survival. What it means to value survival qua human being turns on the relationship of the three cardinal values to the three virtues. Rand often states that virtue is only a means to value. Reason is the source, the precondition of his productive work—pride is the result. This point generalizes to all the virtues and values. As an emotion it is not simply a positive subjective state, as on some contemporary views, but an emotion that meets certain normative standards: A virtuous life is, thus, essential to happiness. It is also a shield against soul-wracking unhappiness. Her characters reveal their souls not only in what they say or do, notice or fail to notice, focus on or evade, on this or that occasion, but in their cognitive, emotional, and action dispositions, their style of being in the world. This basically Aristotelian view of virtue goes hand-in-hand with a basically Aristotelian view of emotions. Rand rejects the reason-emotion dichotomy as stemming, ultimately, from a false mind-body dichotomy. Emotions are neither raw feelings nor inherently irrational but automatized value-judgments: Hence they can only be corrected by conscious reasoning, and in a conflict between reason and emotions, one must always side with the former. The chief objection to eudaimonism is that, by defining a happy life partly in terms of virtue, it employs an unconvincing conception of happiness. The philosophical literature on happiness in this sense usually called well-being makes and answers many such objections Badhwar The virtues are thus united or reciprocal.

### Chapter 7 : Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand by Leonard Peikoff

*Objectivism is the philosophy of rational individualism founded by Ayn Rand (). In novels such as The Fountainhead and Atlas Shrugged, Rand dramatized her ideal man, the producer who lives by his own effort and does not give or receive the undeserved, who honors achievement and rejects envy.*

### Chapter 8 : Rand, Ayn | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

*In , Peikoff reworked this course into his book Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand. Because this book's formulations and logical structure are "immeasurably superior," Peikoff regards his book (rather than his course) as "the definitive statement of Objectivism."*

### Chapter 9 : Leonard Peikoff Presents

*The so-called philosophy of Ayn Rand, known as Objectivism, has become a rather odious cult in the United States.*

*Europeans find it baffling, while academic philosophers use it as opening for easy jokes.*