

# AYN RAND'S CRITIQUE OF IDEOLOGY

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Ayn Rand has gained fame—and infamy—for her defense of rational selfishness and laissez-faire capitalism. But the Randian philosophy is much broader in its scope. In this article, I begin the task of reconstructing Rand's analysis of the "anti-conceptual mentality." This Randian construct is presented as the rudimentary foundation for a non-Marxist, radical critique of "ideology," and should be reconsidered as one of Rand's fundamental contributions to 20th century radical theory.

While Rand never formally constructed a theory of "ideology" in the Marxian sense, it is clear that her critique of anti-conceptual thinking shares much in common with the Marxian view. Hence, when I refer to the concept of "ideology," I am using a Marxian notion of ideology to understand the Randian contribution. Ironically, our understanding of Rand's project can be enriched by a broader grasp of the Marxian structure of analysis. Our exposition will enable us to make some rather provocative comparisons between Rand and Marx.<sup>1</sup>

Ayn Rand presents a conception of ideology which is as profoundly radical as the Marxian alternative. Yet, where Marx's construct is specifically social and class-based, Rand's is primarily

epistemological. Her critique emerges through her analysis of the "anti-conceptual mentality," a mode of ideological thinking which subverts conceptual awareness because it ignores contextuality, and the distinction between the metaphysical and the man-made. Rand's critique is a direct outgrowth of her objectivist epistemological presuppositions. Hence, a brief discussion of the principles of objectivist epistemology is crucial.

For Ayn Rand, consciousness is an attribute of certain living organisms, including man. It is defined as the faculty of perceiving that which exists. It is constituted by an active process which identifies, differentiates, and integrates the material provided by man's senses. Man's reason is a constituent element of consciousness, allowing him to rise above the perceptual level of awareness to the level of the conceptual.

The first stage of human awareness is the perception of things and objects. Implicitly, this awareness of things differentiates into an awareness of their identities. On the conceptual level, it is the relational concept of "unit" that is the building block of man's knowledge. It is man's ability to regard entities as units that constitutes his distinctive mode of cognition.<sup>2</sup>

For Rand, "a *concept* is a mental integration of two or more units which are isolated according to a specific characteristic(s) and united by a specific definition."<sup>3</sup> A process of abstraction is necessary to concept-formation because it makes possible a selective mental focus that isolates a certain aspect of reality from all others on the basis of essential characteristics. Man's definitions describe the essential characteristics of concepts based upon a selective observation of the existents within the field of his awareness. By identifying relationships, man expands the intensive and extensive range of his consciousness.

It is clear that human interests and concerns play a role in both perception and the conceptual classificatory process.<sup>4</sup> David Kelley, writing in the Randian tradition, argues that a theory of perception must take into account the principle that "the object appears in a way that is relative to the means by which we perceive it." Kelley critiques the "Cartesian quest for an infallible type of knowledge" as a theory of immaculate perception which abstracts from the human subject the enormous context within which perception functions. This context includes the subject's cognitive history and the particular interests that guide the subject's awareness. The subject constitutes a perceptual system whose basis is a relational interaction with objects in the world around it.<sup>5</sup>

Just as perception is contextual, so too is concept-formation.

Rand writes that "the essence of a concept is determined contextually and may be altered with the growth of man's knowledge."<sup>6</sup> Thus, conceptual awareness incorporates a temporal dimension. For Rand, only conceptual awareness is "capable of integrating past, present and future." It is through his concepts that man grasps the totality of experience, the continuity of existence and, introspectively, the continuity of consciousness.<sup>7</sup> Robert Hollinger argues persuasively, that in Rand's philosophy, "knowledge is rooted in praxis, knowledge is contextual, and not to be judged by reference to a context-free absolute standard."<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, Rand argues that human knowledge is acquired within an existential context of objectivity. For Rand, the basis of objectivity is the axiomatic concept of existence. "Existence exists," that is, reality is what it is independent of what human beings think or feel, and must be accepted as metaphysically given. Human action is efficacious to the extent that it follows the scientific laws by which nature operates. But the products of human action "must never be accepted uncritically." The man-made "must be judged, then accepted or rejected and changed when necessary."<sup>9</sup>

The anti-conceptual mentality ignores this distinction between the metaphysical and the man-made. In addition, it disregards the contextuality of concepts. It achieves these epistemological distortions because it relies upon a faulty mode of awareness. Rand's critique goes beyond mere epistemology; it asks fundamental questions about the methods by which human beings think, and is thus, profoundly psycho-epistemological in its orientation. Hence, our discussion of the Randian critique cannot proceed without a greater comprehension of Rand's approach to "psycho-epistemology," that branch of philosophy which deals with the methods of human cognitive awareness.

Man's ability to alter his environment emerges from his capacity to initiate goal-directed action. This is an outgrowth of his volitional consciousness. A man's ability to think, his ability to engage in a process of abstraction, is one that must be initiated, directed and sustained volitionally, under the guidance of an active mind. The quality of a man's mind is a product of his "method of awareness" or "psycho-epistemology." Human knowledge evolves through the interaction of the content and the method of a man's consciousness. Rand maintains that a certain reciprocity is achieved in which "the method of acquiring knowledge affects the content which affects the further development of the method, and so on."<sup>10</sup>

The efficiency of a man's mental operations depends upon the kind of context a man's subconscious has automatized.<sup>11</sup> The learn-

ing process is not merely psycho-epistemological; it is *social*, and as such, it is deeply affected by the social character of learning. Rand violently opposed the "tribal irrationality" of contemporary education which, she believed, seriously stunted the development of a child's rational psycho-epistemology. Furthermore, Rand believed that the educational institutions were organically expressive of a social system which needed irrationality to survive. Where Marx identifies this social system as "capitalism," the known, historical reality, Rand argues that capitalism is still an "unknown ideal."<sup>12</sup> She seeks to liberate modern society from oppressive, collectivist statism.

This brief discussion of the principles of objectivist epistemology enables us to better comprehend the multi-dimensional character of the Randian critique. Rand's analysis of the "anti-conceptual mentality" suggests that her revolutionary proposals for social and political change cannot be actualized in the absence of a more profound psycho-epistemological achievement.

In essence, the "anti-conceptual mentality" is based upon a fundamentally distorted mode of cognition. In a remarkable characterization of this faulty method of awareness, Rand expresses a distrust of anti-conceptual thinking that shares much in common with the Marxian view of ideology. Rand writes,

The anti-conceptual mentality takes most things as irreducible primaries and regards them as 'self-evident.' It treats concepts as if they were (memorized) percepts; it treats abstractions as if they were *perceptual* concretes. To such a mentality, everything is the given: the passage of time, the four seasons, the institution of marriage, the weather, the breeding of children, a flood, a fire, an earthquake, a revolution, a book are phenomena of the same order. The distinction between the metaphysical and the man-made is not merely unknown to this mentality; it is incommunicable.<sup>13</sup>

Rand would agree with Marx, who ridiculed the classical economists for their belief that the laws of political economy were both "natural" and "self-evident." Capitalism, for Rand, as for Marx, depends upon a huge philosophical, social, cultural and historical context. The anti-conceptual mentality abstracts concepts from their contextual setting, reducing them to ahistorical, floating abstractions which "can mean anything to anyone."<sup>14</sup> Limited to the present and the perceptual level of awareness, the anti-conceptual mentality eliminates any sense of a concept's past or future. This promotes a tacit approval of the status quo, and tends to thwart progressive social change.

By tearing an idea from its context, and treating it as "a self-sufficient, independent item," the anti-conceptual mentality commits a profound psycho-epistemological error. Rand's associate, Leonard Peikoff, argues that "in fact, everything is interconnected. That one element involves a whole context, and to assess a change in one element, you must see what it means in the whole context."<sup>15</sup> Thus, by fracturing the connection between concept and context, the anti-conceptual mentality reproduces what Marxists have called a "one-dimensional" view of social reality. In this regard, Rand's critique shares much in common with the Marxian framework.

Ayn Rand maintains that the anti-conceptual mentality is an expression of "passivity in regard to the process of conceptualization and therefore, in regard to fundamental principles."<sup>16</sup> Thinking in terms of fundamental principles is a prerequisite for radical change. It was the young Karl Marx who wrote that, "To be radical, is to grasp things by the root. But for man the root is man himself."<sup>17</sup> This man-centered, secular vision of the radical project is basic to both Marxian and Randian philosophy. The parallels between Marx and Rand are truly provocative. Indeed, the critique of anti-conceptualism is, in many ways, a Randian version of Marx's theory of ideology.

Ideology, for Marx, is class-based; it tends to represent the view of a particularly dominant group in society which attempts to universalize its perceptions as a means of consolidating its rule. In capitalism, the bourgeoisie embraces a one-dimensional view of social reality. Bourgeois "individualism" reflects and perpetuates social dualism and separateness while purporting to constitute a self-sufficient whole. Throughout Marx's writings, there is a persistent denigration of those liberal thinkers who view the capitalist system as a logical derivative of the "eternal laws of nature and of reason."<sup>18</sup> The "Robinsonades," as Marx calls them, dissolve society "into a world of atomistic, mutually hostile individuals," who are self-interested and isolated from one another.<sup>19</sup> For Marx, the liberal vision of civil society as "natural" and "normal" was typical of each epoch in its quest for trans-historical legitimacy.<sup>20</sup>

The bourgeois attempt to universalize its historically specific ideological and social relations was, according to Marx, a product of abstraction. The Marxist scholar, Bertell Ollman, observes that "an abstraction' is a part of the whole whose ties with the rest are not apparent; it is a part which *appears* to be a whole in itself."<sup>21</sup> Thus, the bourgeois economists abstract from the capitalist system the apparent reciprocity of exchange relations, failing to grasp the essential exploitative character of capitalist production. This emphasis on abstract equality-in-exchange, masks the capitalist's

extraction of surplus value from the labor process. By focusing on the principle of equality, the bourgeois mistake the part for the whole, reifying the exchange relation as the animating principle for all aspects of the capitalist system.

Marx describes this as a distinction between appearance and essence. The hallmark of liberal ideology is the one-dimensional emphasis on appearance. Liberalism sanctions the form of social liberation, embodied in free human choice, by abstracting it from the social context within which choices are made. Thus, bourgeois "freedom of conscience" merely tolerates religion, rather than liberating the human soul "from the witchery of religion."<sup>22</sup> While man creates religion as the "heart of a heartless world," he will not transcend mysticism until he abandons the social conditions which require illusions.<sup>23</sup> Thus, in civil society, "man was not freed from religion; he received religious freedom. He was not freed from property. He received freedom of property. He was not freed from the egoism of trade, but received freedom to trade."<sup>24</sup>

One does not have to agree with the Marxian assessment of capitalism in order to appreciate Marx's insights into the usefulness of ideology as a means of consolidating social domination. The power of Marx's structure of analysis lies in his ability to trace the organic links between and among the constituent elements of a social totality. An organic relationship is one that is characterized by a systemic structure, forming a totality which is both constituted by the parts and expressed in each constituent element. Marx identifies those political, economic, philosophical, religious, racial, literary, artistic, legal and other factors that are each expressive of the historically constituted capitalist mode of production.

Thus, for Marx, ideology is more than mere "false consciousness." Ideology abstracts an aspect of social reality from its wider context and as such, distorts our vision of the totality. It perpetuates and is perpetuated by the system itself, serving the interests of the privileged and masking those internal contradictions which propel the system toward its ultimate transcendence.

Ayn Rand's critique of the "anti-conceptual mentality" exhibits a similar tendency toward structural analysis of organic relationships. Indeed, the Randian critique is but one vantage point from which to view her thoroughly integrated, multi-dimensional philosophical schema. Rand's opposition to anti-conceptual thinking is a simultaneous recognition of the fact that true radical social change cannot be realized without a profound transformation in the faulty methods by which so many human beings think. *This is crucial to our understanding of the Randian project.* It underscores

the organic link between an individual's distorted psycho-epistemology and the irrational social system within which it is both expressed and perpetuated.

For Rand, the anti-conceptual mentality is in an organic relationship with a cultural and social system that thrives on cognitive subversion. Rand may view anti-conceptual thinking as pure folly, but she implores us, "don't bother to examine a folly—ask yourself only what it accomplishes..."<sup>25</sup> While Rand focuses important attention on the individual, and the debilitating psychological, cognitive and ethical consequences of anti-conceptual thinking, she does not ignore the broader, systemic implications. *Rand maintains that anti-concepts are crucially important precisely because they are ideological products of the "mixed economy," and hence, a means of social oppression.* This aspect of Rand's thought cannot be divorced from her view of power relationships. It is therefore, necessary to briefly examine the Randian conception of power, which is integral to her ethical and psycho-epistemological theories.

Rand argues that existentially, man needs a code of values to guide his actions. Reason, purpose and self-esteem are essential attributes of a "rational" morality because they are crucial to man's survival qua man. When Rand views man's life as the standard of moral values, she is positing life as both the standard, and the context, of human valuation. Hence, any "moral" code which seeks to deny the centrality of human reason negates the very means by which *human* life is made possible. For Rand, the concept of "natural rights" is the social means of morally legitimating the ontological fact of human free will. It sanctions freedom of consciousness and action in a social context.

Rand argues that a distinction between the personal and the political is self-defeating.<sup>26</sup> She claims that the achievement of a truly free society is the outgrowth of a specific code of moral action, one which does not sever reason from ethics, or freely-chosen ethics from a rational, social existence. While Rand defends the individual's right to lead his own life according to his own values, it is clear that she opposes certain value systems (e.g., altruism) because they debilitate the individual and legitimate oppression.

According to Rand, such oppression is not simply a by-product of the initiation of physical force. Oppression is legitimated by the "sanction of the victim." The most subversive political implication of Rand's magnum opus, *Atlas Shrugged*, is that individual freedom is possible only to those who are strong enough, psychologically and morally, to withdraw their sanction from any social system which coercively thrives off their productive energies.<sup>27</sup> This concept of the

“sanction of the victim” is illustrative of Rand’s crucially important insights into the psycho-epistemological dimensions of power relationships.

Rand recognizes that man’s cognitive processes must be studied in terms of “the interaction between the conscious mind and the automatic functions of the subconscious.”<sup>28</sup> As a man’s psycho-epistemology is automatized, his ability to think can be fundamentally distorted by a faulty method of awareness. Rand argues that “no mind is better than the precision of its concepts.”<sup>29</sup> The anti-conceptual mentality integrates and automatizes a series of invalid concepts, or “anti-concepts,” into the cognitive process, introducing an element of imprecision into man’s consciousness. This obliterates legitimate concepts since it fails to recognize the contextual parameters of concept-formation.<sup>30</sup>

In her essay, “Causality Versus Duty,” Rand analyzes one such “anti-concept.” She identifies “duty” as “one of the most destructive anti-concepts in the history of moral philosophy.” This anti-concept, according to Rand, has profound implications for metaphysics, epistemology and psychology. The notion of “duty” destroys legitimate concepts of morality. It sanctions obedience to authority and in the process, it subverts reason, values, and self-esteem. A man who obeys a higher (mystical or secular) authority supersedes his own knowledge and judgment. He severs the link between values and choice and cripples his own ability for self-directed moral action. Rand writes that “duty” destroys a man’s self-esteem; “it leaves no self to be esteemed.”<sup>31</sup>

Thus, Rand views obedience and authority as two sides of the same psycho-epistemological coin. Obedience is based upon the passivity of anti-conceptual thinking. This is the essence of Rand’s notion of the “sanction of the victim.” Likewise, Rand argues that the use and manipulation of various “anti-concepts” provide those in power with a means of legitimating their authority. This systemic rationalization of power helps us to understand the underlying significance of Rand’s assertion that “power-lust is a psycho-epistemological matter.”<sup>32</sup>

Fundamentally, Rand views the systemic irrationality of coercive statism as an outgrowth of the anti-conceptual mentality. But this is not a simple matter of one-way causation. Rand’s perspective suggests that statism and anti-conceptualism are organically conjoined, that is, the relationship between statism and the anti-conceptual mentality is reciprocal and mutually reinforcing. Statism thrives on anti-conceptual thinking to sustain itself, while the anti-conceptual mentality makes statism inevitable.



The modern-day "mixed" economy is a concretized expression of this inter-relationship. Rand writes that the "mixed economy is rule by pressure groups... an amoral, institutionalized civil war of special interests and lobbies, all fighting to seize a momentary control of the legislative machinery, to extort some special privilege at one another's expense by an act of government—i.e., by force."<sup>33</sup> In the mixed economy, each pressure group makes use of "anti-concepts" in its quest for political power. For Rand, "*any ideological product of the mixed economy... is a vague, indefinable, approximation and, therefore an instrument of pressure group warfare.*"<sup>34</sup> [Emphasis added] Rand maintains that the internecine struggle among the rival groups of the mixed economy leads to contemporary tribalism, where "loyalty to the group" takes precedence over any other social rules. These groups are not exclusively economic. Racist, xenophobic, and socio-economic castes perpetuate different forms of group loyalty; each is a manifestation of the anti-conceptual mentality.<sup>35</sup>

Thus, Rand makes the formal connection between psycho-epistemology and the domain of politics. But the Randian schema goes beyond mere politics. Rand recognizes that there are broadly operative hegemonic principles in social reality. She identifies those "altruist-collectivist-mysticist" premises that underlie each aspect of modern culture—including art, literature and music, family and sexual relations, political, religious and educational institutions. In her assessment of the "cultural bankruptcy of our age," the religious right, and the state of American education, Rand views each as a manifestation of anti-conceptualism. *The anti-conceptual mentality is the thread running through the fabric of statist society; it is expressed in culture and religion as well as politics and pedagogy.* In fact, Rand's evaluation of American education equally applies to her view of contemporary statism. She writes that "the system is self-perpetuating: it leads to many vicious circles."<sup>36</sup>

Given this inter-locking hegemony of statist structures, institutions and processes, it is unfortunate that Rand failed to grasp the radical implications of her analysis. Indeed, Rand's resolution amounts to an endorsement of a quasi-philosophical determinism. Rand's emphasis on the primacy of ideas in shaping history is an outgrowth of her belief in the centrality of human reason. Rand argues that the battle for social change is primarily intellectual. She writes that "politics is the last consequence, the practical implementation, of the fundamental (metaphysical-epistemological-ethical) ideas that dominate a given nation's culture." Hence, if men are taught the right philosophy, "their own minds will do the rest."<sup>37</sup>

Yet, the Randian perspective *in toto* suggests that radical social

change is far more complex. Rand's understanding of systemic inter-relationships indicates that the system itself perpetuates the anti-conceptual mentality upon which it is based. Ideology and power, culture and psycho-epistemology are inter-locked in a hegemonic bond that seems to thwart any profound social change. Given these organic inter-relationships, it is highly improbable that education alone will deliver us from evil. Indeed, revolutions *are* multi-dimensional. Struggle is *both* personal and political.

One of the political dimensions that Rand ignores is the nature of class struggle. The Randian perspective lacks any structured class analysis, and this is its chief weakness. Though class analysis is central to the Marxian approach, it is not an exclusive Marxian concern. Indeed, contemporary libertarians have reconstructed the class analyses pioneered by Marx's classical liberal predecessors. Writers, such as Murray Rothbard, have begun to develop the rudiments of a non-Marxist class analysis which draws upon the insights of Austrian economics and revisionist history. Libertarians identify those structural mechanisms which enrich certain groups (or "castes," or "classes") more than others. The boom-bust cycle perpetuated by government manipulation of the money supply is one such mechanism. Militarization of the economy is another. Each of these institutional devices provides an avenue of expropriation which is bolstered by the power of the state.<sup>38</sup>

Rand was not entirely ignorant of this structural bias. She believed that the mixed economy was a new form of fascism. But Rand was not entirely consistent in her condemnation of American statism. There may be important reasons for this lack of consistency. It must not be forgotten that Rand was among the first Russian dissidents. Her virulent anti-communism may have led her to a glorification of the American state in its efforts to contain Soviet expansion. In addition, her romantic visions of American business often prevented her from embracing a more radical political assessment of the business community's historic role in the rise of contemporary statism.

These weaknesses in Rand's perspective do not constitute an indictment of the critique of ideology which I have attempted to reconstruct in this article. It may be possible to link the Randian critique to a more fully developed framework for class analysis, but this theoretical endeavor would take me well beyond the scope of the present essay.

Nevertheless, in its essentials, the Randian framework *is* radical. If it does not provide all of the answers, it compels us to ask the fundamental questions. On this basis, Rand has made an important contribution to contemporary radical social thought.

1. It is my conviction that there is an important intellectual link between Karl Marx and Ayn Rand but this would take me well beyond the scope of the present paper. Rand was educated in the Soviet Union and her works exhibit some remarkably dialectical philosophical formulations. Considering that Marx and Rand have both accredited Aristotle as their philosophical forefather, the relationship that I am proposing in this note is not entirely speculative. I hope to devote a future article to this provocative topic. On the Aristotelian elements in Marxism, see Scott Meikle's *Essentialism in the Thought of Karl Marx* (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1985). Also see note 15, below.
2. Ayn Rand, *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*, (New York: New American Library, [1966] 1979), p.7.
3. *Ibid.*, p.11.
4. Douglas Den Uyl and Douglas Rasmussen, "Ayn Rand's Realism," in *The Philosophic Thought of Ayn Rand*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984), p.17.
5. David Kelley, *The Evidence of the Senses*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), p.17. None of this should be interpreted as a conflation of the mode of awareness and the object of awareness. Rand believes that awareness is inherently relational, i.e., that consciousness is consciousness of objects that exist independently of the means by which man acquires knowledge. See Douglas Rasmussen, "Ideology, Objectivity, and Political Theory," in *Ideology and American Experience: Essays on Theory and Practice in the United States*, ed. by John K. Roth and Robert C. Whittemore, (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute Press, 1986), especially pp.58-66. However, there is a profound link between a man's method of awareness and the content of his consciousness. I explore this aspect of "psycho-epistemology" below, as it relates to Rand's critique of the "anti-conceptual mentality."
6. Rand, *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*, p.69.
7. *Ibid.*, p.75-76.
8. Robert Hollinger, "Ayn Rand's Epistemology in Historical Perspective," in Den Uyl and Rasmussen, 1984, p.55.
9. Rand, *Philosophy: Who Needs It*, (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1982), p.33.
10. Rand, *The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution*, (New York: New American Library, [1971] 1975), pp.193-194.
11. *Ibid.*, p.193.
12. *Ibid.*, pp.187-239. See also, Rand, *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*, (New York: New American Library, 1967), p.46.
13. Rand, *Philosophy: Who Needs It*, p.46.
14. Rand, *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*, p.65. See also Rand, *The New Left*, p.218. Rand's essay on "The Comprachicos" is an indictment of American education which, in her opinion, fosters this type of "anti-con-

ceptual mentality.”

15. Leonard Peikoff, “Context-Dropping,” *The Ayn Rand Lexicon: Objectivism from A to Z*, ed. by Harry Binswanger, (New York: New American Library, 1986), p.105. This quote from Peikoff is taken from his lecture series on “The Philosophy of Objectivism” (1976), lecture 5. It should be noted that in this passage, Peikoff is expressing a basic agreement with the philosophy of internal relations, a crucial foundation for dialectical methodology. Rand and Peikoff have never explicitly defended the philosophy of internal relations, but their emphasis on the need for contextuality suggests a strong affinity with this doctrine, albeit in non-idealist terms. A discussion of this topic would take me well beyond the scope of this paper. On the philosophy of internal relations, see Brand Blanshard, *Reason and Analysis*, (LaSalle, Ill.: Open Court, 1962), pp.475-477, and Bertell Ollman, *Alienation: Marx’s Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, 2d. ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), especially pp.26-40, and pp.256-276. Kevin Brien suggests in his book, *Marx, Reason, and the Art of Freedom*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987) that Blanshard’s idealist interpretation can be appropriated by Marxists in their efforts to define and reconstruct a non-idealist dialectical method. The chief problem with Blanshard’s idealism is that it seems dependent upon an omniscient grasp of all the relational ties between and among the constituent elements of a totality. See my review of Brien’s book, “Marx on the Precipice of Utopia,” *Critical Review* 2, no. 4 (Fall 1988), pp.82-90.

16. Rand, *Philosophy: Who Needs It*, p.45.

17. Karl Marx, “The Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right,” *Early Writings*, translated and edited by T.B. Bottomore. Foreward by Erich Fromm, (New York: McGraw-Hill, [1843] 1963), p.52.

18. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, “The Manifesto of the Communist Party,” *Selected Works*, (New York: International Publishers, [1848] 1968), p.49.

19. Marx, “On the Jewish Question,” *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, ed. and translated by Loyd D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat, (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, Doubleday, [1843-44] 1967), p.247.

20. Marx, *Grundrisse: Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy*, ed. with an introduction by Maurice Dobb, (New York: International Publishers, [1857-58] 1973), p.83.

21. Bertell Ollman, *Alienation: Marx’s Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, p.61.

22. Marx, “Critique of the Gotha Programme,” in Marx and Engles, 1968, p.333-334.

23. Marx, “The Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right,” p.44.

24. Marx, “On the Jewish Question,” p.240.

25. Rand, *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*, p.178.

26. Rand’s philosophy aims to transcend most conventional dichotomies,

e.g., the personal and the political, theory and practice, facts and values. This offers yet another obvious comparison with the Marxian schema. However, an investigation of this theoretical parallel would necessitate a closer examination of Marx's analysis. This would take me well beyond the scope of the present article. Marx viewed most dichotomies as by-products of history. His dialectical theory posits the transcendence of all dualistic distinctions in communism.

27. Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*, (New York: Random House, 1957). It should be noted that in ethics, Rand reacts against the reification of moral systems as if they were given historical "facts." The tacit acceptance of such systems of morality is another example of anti-conceptual thinking. See Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness: A New Concept of Egoism*, (New York: New American Library, 1964).

28. Rand, *The Romantic Manifesto: A Philosophy of Literature*, 2d. rev. ed., (New York: New American Library, 1975), p.18.

29. Rand, *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*, p.177.

30. Rand, "Credibility and Polarization," *The Ayn Rand Letter*, vol. 1, no. 1 (October 11, 1971), p.1. See also, *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*, p.176. Rand identifies a number of "fallacies" that are related, directly or indirectly, to the anti-conceptual mentality. These include: package-dealing, context-dropping, frozen abstractions, and stolen concepts. For brief explanations of each of the "fallacies," see *The Ayn Rand Lexicon*.

31. Rand, *Philosophy: Who Needs It*, p.116.

32. Rand, *The New Left*, p.227.

33. Rand, *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*, p.207.

34. Rand, *Philosophy: Who Needs It*, p.231. Rand's works offer many analyses of specific "anti-concepts" that have been used by groups in the political arena. Some of these include: "isolationism," "meritocracy," "xenophobia," "cold war," "mixed economy," "polarization," "fairness doctrine," and concepts of mysticism, among others. For brief explanations of each of these "anti-concepts," see *The Ayn Rand Lexicon*.

35. Rand, *Philosophy: Who Needs It*, pp.50-51.

36. Rand, *The New Left*, p.228.

37. Rand, *Philosophy: Who Needs It*, pp.245-246.

38. For an introduction to Rothbard's thought, see his *For a New Liberty: The Libertarian Manifesto*, rev. ed., (New York: Collier Books, 1978). The libertarian perspective is not without its theoretical problems. For a brief analysis of its questionable methodological foundations, see my article, "The Crisis of Libertarian Dualism," *Critical Review*, 1, no. 4 (Fall 1987), pp.86-99.