

Ayn Rand: Theory versus Creative Life

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All theory, friend, is gray;
Life's golden tree is green.
—Goethe, *Faust*¹

Ayn Rand occupies a curious position among American novelists: Both her friendly and her hostile critics scarcely regard her as a novelist at all. As an imaginative writer as well as a systematic philosopher, Rand achieved a strikingly unusual combination of roles; her political and moral theories, however, engross virtually all the analytical attention given her work, while the quality of her imaginative writing is almost entirely ignored. Academic analysis of her fiction is rare and is usually focused on her political theories; a similar emphasis on theory appears in the accounts of Rand's work in the popular press. In the libertarian press, she has been analyzed extensively, and with varying degrees of admiration or disappointment, but even writers who judge her work favorably tend to evaluate its success almost entirely in relation to the correctness of the theories it propounds.²

Meanwhile, Rand retains her immense popularity with the general audience—a degree of continued popularity that is unexampled among American philosophical novelists. The prevailing intellectual climate has never been favorable to her ideas. Her perennial popularity, therefore, argues that she possessed an impressive degree of purely literary skill. But there are two other, and more common, ways of explaining her success. The first is the prudishly dismissive approach favored by conservatives who assert, as did Russell Kirk, that people enjoy Rand's novels "for the fornicating bits."³ This isn't much of an explanation: If you want sex-scenes, you can get them more quickly and graphically from a hundred other authors. A second explanation is implicit in many libertarian accounts of Rand: People enjoy her novels because—or to the extent to which—her ideas are individualist.⁴ This is at once a likelier and a more troublesome explanation than the conservative one. Many people do like Rand's novels because of her individualist orientation. But how many like them solely for that reason? Would *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*

or *The Virtue of Selfishness* have attracted any audience at all without the prior success of her fiction?⁵ Is it assumed that effective literature is merely the result of correct philosophical theory, or that literary skill is of negligible importance when compared with theoretical correctness?

I am afraid that these are, indeed, the unexamined assumptions in a good deal of libertarian writing, not only about the works of Rand, but also about literature in general; and I would suggest that this sort of reverence for theory helps to distance libertarian writing from a wider audience and imparts a grayness and lifelessness to many libertarian discussions of creativity. Rand's own work, unfortunately, provides some good examples of what too often happens when theory strives for mastery over creative life. Her theory of art enables her to identify some of the sources of aesthetic value in her novels, but it leads her into gross undervaluations of many of her greatest achievements. When theory imposes its own shape on her novels, it usually does so to their detriment. Usually, but not always: The aphorism against "all" theory that I have quoted from Goethe considerably overstates the case. Yet there is enough truth in the saying to encourage analysis of the relation of abstract theory to free, creative practice in the works of an author who attached the utmost significance to correct and comprehensive theory.

One of the most important, and most troublesome, elements of Rand's theory of literature is her insistence on morally idealized characters: "The motive and purpose of my writing is *the projection of an ideal man*. The portrayal of a moral ideal, as my ultimate literary goal. . . ."⁶ The principle is distinctively Randian. She feels impelled to justify it, however, by resorting to the distinction drawn by Aristotle, in his *Poetics*, between history, which "relate[s] actual events," and imaginative literature, which relates events that "might happen." According to Aristotle, the historian must be concerned with what real people actually did, but the imaginative writer forms his characters to reveal "the kind of thing which a certain type of person would probably or inevitably do or say."⁷ Using this "great philosophical principle" for her own theoretical purposes, Rand asserts it to mean that "history represents things only as they are, while fiction represents them 'as they *might be* and *ought to be*.'"⁸ But Aristotle is not arguing for idealized characterization. He is merely observing that characters—of whatever moral "type"—should be used to illustrate "general truths" about the way in which various sorts of people behave. At one point in the *Poetics*, he recognizes that an author may properly create characters who are what they "ought to be," but he does not stipulate that an author *should* do so, nor does he make this the basis of his distinction between history and imaginative literature.⁹ The kind of hero in whom he is most interested is hardly an example of perfection and success: He is a tragic hero, an essentially good man—"or one better rather than worse"—who nevertheless suffers as the result of some "flaw."¹⁰ This is a kind of character that is common enough in life. Yet it is a kind that is conspicuously excluded by Rand's moral theory of art—with peculiar effects on the picture of life in her novels.

Many of Rand's most interesting characters have the makings of tragic heroes, yet their tragic possibilities seem almost to embarrass her. Only Gail Wynand, in *The Fountainhead*, is allowed to develop the complex role of a good man who falls by his own error. Other "good" characters, such as Hank Rearden in *Atlas Shrugged*, are usually maneuvered into mending their potentially fatal flaws. Characters who somehow fail to do so are usually discovered not to have been so good, or at least so bright, as one was led to think: The best example here is the hapless Eddie Willers, who is the center of consciousness in the opening pages of *Atlas Shrugged* but finishes in misery and confusion at its end. Even in her first novel, *We the Living* (1936), whose three leading characters are all potentially tragic, Rand finds ways of softening the tragic focus. Her heroine Kira perishes as the victim of Soviet tyranny, and her death is portrayed, with considerable skill, as a psychological triumph over that tyranny. But Kira's status as a morally idealized character causes difficulties in understanding and evaluating the other major characters.¹¹ Leo Kovalensky, Rand's aristocratic hero, is a pointlessly arrogant, besotted irrationalist; yet because Kira continues to love him, we are urged to regard his spiritual death, not as his own fault, but as entirely the result of Soviet oppression.¹² Andrei Taganov, a much more admirable character by Rand's standards, is the person whom Kira resists loving. A moral idealist, Andrei turns heroically against the communist cause that he served during the revolution, and even prevents the execution of the worthless Kovalensky. Having purged Andrei of his Soviet flaw, Rand nevertheless dooms him to suicide, an act that frees Kira from embarrassing emotional conflicts but leaves her to wonder "whether she had killed him, or the revolution had, or both."¹³ It's a good question, and Rand herself seems unsure of the answer.

The problem in *We the Living* is not novelistic immaturity, as some have suspected; the novel contains many rich and telling explorations of its characters' psychology. Rather, the problem is that Rand's broad vision of life is unduly constrained by the moralistic imperatives of her theory. By the time of this first novel, Rand was already operating on the theory of moral idealization that she later codified in *The Romantic Manifesto* (1969)—including the idea that the "primary value" of a work of art must be to give people "the experience of living in a world where things are *as they ought to be*."¹⁴ Translated into the characterization of *We the Living*, this means that someone (Kira) must be enabled to live a morally ideal life, at least inwardly, and that this person must be tainted by no serious flaws, even if the policy results in wavering or improbable judgments and brusque manipulations of associated characters such as Leo and Andrei.

Similar processes are at work in the later novels, and the damage to Rand's characters is sometimes even greater. In the conclusion of *Atlas Shrugged*, Hank Rearden remedies his intellectual errors and lapses into a sexless life in the company of his former lover and her new, superior partner. This is hardly what one would expect from the tensely sensual psychology of Rearden, as Rand has painstakingly created it. Her imposed solution merely saves Rearden from a tragic

ending and his former lover, Rand's heroine, from any suffering that might result from it. It is not Rearden's individual psychology but Rand's theory about the proper objects of sexual love that expresses itself in the long speech by which he registers his cheerful acceptance of his new situation.¹⁵ Bound by her own moral-aesthetic theory, Rand refuses to permit her characters to develop all the various types of significance, tragic or otherwise, that their richly observed psychology seems to require. The effect, ironically, is to reduce the stature and independence of characters whom Rand wishes to render large and free.

Rand's difficulties in matching theory and practice are still more clearly evident in her treatment of mythology. In her first novel there is little mythology, but its influence is unmistakable in the later three: *Anthem* (1938), whose hero is bluntly named "Prometheus"; *The Fountainhead* (1943), in which Howard Roark, creator and destroyer, subtly but insistently acquires the characteristics of Prometheus, Vulcan, and an angel of final judgment; *Atlas Shrugged* (1957), whose hero recalls not only Atlas and Prometheus but also such artists of miraculous power as Orpheus and Amphion.¹⁶ By discovering ways of using a mythological technique in her treatment of modern subjects, Rand fashioned for herself an extremely valuable tool, one that often does much to give her novels a grandeur and intensity of life.

Again, however, theory circumscribes her practice. In *The Romantic Manifesto*, she offers a surprisingly brief and oblique justification for the use of mythology:

Art is the indispensable medium for the communication of a moral ideal.

Observe that every religion has a mythology—a dramatized concretization of its moral code embodied in the figures of men who are its ultimate product.¹⁷

Having associated myth with the embodiment of moral ideals, Rand turns directly to the moral uses of characterization:

Many readers of *The Fountainhead* have told me that the character of Howard Roark helped them to make a decision when they faced a moral dilemma. They asked themselves: "What would Roark do in this situation?"—and, faster than their mind could identify the proper application of all the complex principles involved, the image of Roark gave them the answer. . . . Such is the psycho-epistemological function of a personified (concretized) human ideal.¹⁸

In the course of her argument, Rand makes a characteristic assertion that "the primary focus of art is metaphysical, not ethical. Art is not the 'handmaiden' of morality, its *basic* purpose is not to educate, to reform or to advocate anything." She even makes a bitter reference to "the sterile, uninspiring futility of a great many theoretical discussions of ethics."¹⁹ But her own theory, apparently in some difficulty at trying to explain her exuberant use of mythology, proposes to compel her mythological characters to endure a detailed and possibly very petty and impertinent ethical inspection by their audience. Since Rand sets no limits to the

theory that her characters should be able to help her readers with their moral dilemmas, she encourages the idea that art functions to help its audience make decisions about virtually all such problems.

Although this particular idea has had an unfortunate influence on the intellectual independence of some of Rand's admirers, one finds little indication that she had it specifically in mind when she created Howard Roark. By the time of *Atlas Shrugged*, however, she had obviously taken her theory about the importance of moral idealization very far in this direction. *Atlas Shrugged* is virtually a catalogue of moral problems that John Galt and his associates are set to solve, and the imposed solutions sometimes play strange tricks with Rand's development of characters. It may—to cite two examples—be ethically allowable, in Rand's system, for Galt and Dagny Taggart to keep Rearden in suspense about Dagny's fate while he is risking his life to search for her; it may be allowable for Dagny to regard her devoted friend Willers with near indifference when he no longer has an important purpose in her world. If any of Rand's readers face moral dilemmas like Dagny's, this may help them. But Rand's way of maneuvering her characters as illustrations of a detailed moral theory works against the sense of largeness and vitality that their mythological associations otherwise provide for them.

The seriousness with which Rand takes her characters' moral problems is not, in itself, a source of aesthetic weakness. In fact, it is a source of considerable aesthetic strength. It adds to *Atlas Shrugged* a solidity and a unity of concern that it might not be able to derive from any other source. Rand's ethical preoccupations transform the adventures of the Taggart railroad into something more than background for a glamorous heroine. The railroad becomes the locus of moral choice for a character whose nature is revealed and developed by the type of decisions she makes in her work. The fortunes of the railroad, which are in large part determined by Dagny's ethical decisions, provide a unifying and suspenseful story that symbolizes the destruction and future regeneration of the whole of industrial civilization.

But even Rand's nicely designed plot shudders under the moral and theoretical weight she would have it bear. There is a nervous multiplication of minor characters who have some moral problem to illustrate but who are insufficiently developed to seem at all like individual people. Then, of course, there is Galt's speech. In *The Fountainhead*, Roark delivers a relatively brief, rhetorically effective speech that serves the double purpose of stating his essential ideas and of getting him acquitted in his climactic courtroom battle. Galt's speech, by contrast, is a lengthy theoretical development of ideas that have already been made clear, and it is more a burden than a help to the plot. Here Rand does what she reproves Victor Hugo for doing—interrupting a narrative in order to introduce an essay.²⁰ Rand violates her own literary sensibilities, and it doesn't work.

This is only one occasion on which Rand's interest in theory deflects attention—her own as well as her readers'—from the principal sources of her very great merit as an imaginative writer. The sources with which I am most concerned are, first, Rand's talent as a satirist, and, second, her talent as a creator of images.

Published discussions of Rand's career generally omit all reference to her comic and satiric skill. She is known as a preacher, a novelistic spoilsport, and—despite her contentions to the contrary—a narrow propagandist.²¹ For this her acerbically theoretical literary essays are partly to blame. Despite her frequent allusions to the joy embodied in great works of art, her essayistic style is more guardedly solemn than usual on the issue of comedy and satire. In *The Romantic Manifesto*, practically all she is willing to say about the issue is that "evil" is "worth re-creating" only "as a foil" to "the good," and that "humor is not an unconditional virtue. . . . To laugh at the contemptible, is a virtue; to laugh at the good, is a hideous vice. Too often, humor is used as the camouflage of moral cowardice."²² This is the Rand who, in the 1959 reprinting of *We the Living*, made sure to change her heroine's "funny short summer dresses" to "short summer dresses."²³

What is surprising, in view of such solemnities, is the wealth of comedy, from broad farce to black humor, to be found in her novels. At one extreme are Rand's expertly staged symposia of clowns, gatherings of figures like Wesley Mouch, Tinky Holloway, Jimmy Taggart, and Mr. Thompson, the Head of State in the satirically conceived Republic of *Atlas Shrugged*:

Mr. Thompson, the Head of the State, was a man who possessed the quality of never being noticed. In any group of three, his person became indistinguishable, and when seen alone it seemed to evoke a group of its own, composed of the countless persons he resembled.²⁴

At the other extreme are single moments that combine horror with a grotesque comedy, as in the bizarre self-revelations of *The Fountainhead*'s villain, Ellsworth Toohey, Rand's greatest satiric creation:

Ellsworth was fifteen, when he astonished the Bible-class teacher by an odd question. The teacher had been elaborating upon the text: "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Ellsworth asked: "Then in order to be truly wealthy, a man should collect souls?"²⁵

Rand's villains sometimes have more vitality than her heroes, perhaps because they are not expected to conform to the demands of an idealistic theory, perhaps because Rand was actually more fascinated by evil, of which she had long experience, than by an ideal good which no one ever encountered. However that may be, she allows certain of her villains—Peter Keating, the failed creator, the ruined Adonis; Ellsworth Toohey, the baroquely wicked genius—to attain the rank of mythic figures, symbols of vast territories of wasted human life. These are figures that are imposing to the imagination even while arousing laughter and scorn.

It is instructive to compare Rand's achievement in satire with that of another American satirist, Sinclair Lewis, whose work she respected.²⁶ A number of Rand's minor characters resemble the fools who populate Lewis's novels, and in some cases they may ultimately be derived from them. But Lewis rarely develops a satiric figure who is vital, complex, unpredictable. When Lewis wishes to portray a villain capable of precipitating a crisis of serious proportions, he creates Buzz Windrip of *It Can't Happen Here*—but there is an enormous distance between his coarse satire of Windrip and the rich, dark comedy of Toohey's portrayal. From a reading of Rand's theories, however, few people would suspect that she would have been interested in creating Toohey.

And few would suspect her of the interest and skill in imagery that one finds in her novels. Consider the way in which Toohey is first presented to view. Catherine Halsey, his naive young niece, describes a frightening vision:

I couldn't hear a thing, not a sound in the living room, and there was that paper rustling, so softly, like somebody being choked to death. And then I looked around and . . . and I couldn't see Uncle in the living room, but I saw his shadow on the wall, a huge shadow, all hunched. . . .²⁷

I have chosen this one image, with difficulty, from among the hundreds of powerful images in Rand's novels, images that are striking, compelling, yet fully responsive to her philosophic purposes. One of her aims in *The Fountainhead* is to show that evil can never win complete success; another is to show that the fundamental sins are intellectual ones. It is, therefore, the word-filled paper in Toohey's home that suggests the thought of death to Catherine, who eventually is ruined, "choked to death," by Toohey's philosophy. And it is, therefore, as a shadow that Toohey first appears: He is a force that casts a giant shadow over *The Fountainhead*, yet he is a force that will be able to leave no deeper mark on Howard Roark than a shadow leaves on the surfaces it temporarily obscures.

Rand is an expert at constructing elaborate systems of imagery that define her characters and dramatize her themes. She is a master both of the concise and telling image and of the long, bravura passage—one thinks of the somber magnificence of her lengthy description of Petrograd in *We the Living*, Part Two, or of the explosive First Run on the John Galt Line in *Atlas Shrugged*.²⁸ Throughout her career, she is intensely concerned with images, a fact that is strikingly evident in her revisions of *We the Living* for its 1959 edition. Although Rand claimed that she revised the book in order to correct her early mistakes in using English as a literary language,²⁹ it is often assumed in libertarian circles that her verbal changes resulted mainly from changes in her philosophy. Rand does make some significant "ideological" revisions, as when she tries to reduce the violence of the novel's contempt for the "masses." For instance, in the original version, Andrei observes that "we can't sacrifice millions for the sake of the few," and Kira replies, "You can! You must. When those few are the best." In the 1959 edition, her declaration is replaced by a question: "Can you sacrifice

the few?" A little later, Kira's remark that she knows "no worse injustice than justice for all" is replaced by the more rational "I know no worse injustice than the giving of the undeserved."³⁰

But the majority of Rand's hundreds of revisions are fastidious tinkерings with sentence rhythms and images—changes that usually have little to do with her ideology or with her acquisition of the English language. About her imagery she is minutely conscientious: "dusk" becomes "semi-darkness," an official's "stamp" becomes a "rubber stamp," and "little bridges" become "delicate bridges."³¹ If this degree of concern is any indication, it seems clear that Rand devoted a huge proportion of her life as working novelist to problems of imagery. It is doubly surprising, then, that her theoretical writings give only slight attention to sensuous imagery. In *The Romantic Manifesto*, she treats imagery as a subset of "style," notices that every author has his own style, and points out that an author's stylistic choices express his particular "sense of life." She applauds stylistic clarity and precision.³² This is all very well, but it hardly reflects the importance given to sensuous imagery by her practice as a novelist.

Rand's recommendation of her favorite novel is also characteristic of an aesthetic theory at odds with her practice. Her choice is *Calumet "K"* (Merwin and Webster, 1901), a story about the skill and perseverance shown by an employee of a contracting firm who succeeds against great odds in constructing a grain elevator on the Chicago waterfront.³³ In the introduction that she wrote for a reprinting of this novel, Rand fully recognizes its deficiencies of structure and conception; what she likes about it is its finely competent and successful hero, who—except in his sense of humor—somewhat resembles her own morally idealized characters. The strange thing about *Calumet "K"*, in view of Rand's own practice, is its virtually complete lack of vivid sensuous imagery—a deficiency that she does not discuss. The novel is all story and hero—all skeleton and brain, no flesh at all. In this sense, a less Randian book could scarcely be imagined. Her recommendation of *Calumet "K"* is one more example of her difficulty in reconciling her working sense of what art is with the demands of an ethically based artistic theory.

One of Rand's most interesting descriptions of an object of art appears in *The Fountainhead*, at the moment in which Peter Keating contemplates Roark's drawing of the Enright House:

He did not need to see the caption or the brusque signature in the corner of the sketch; he knew that no one else had conceived that house. . . . There was [a] severe, mathematical order holding together a free, fantastic growth . . . an incredible variety of shapes, each separate unit unrepeatable, but leading inevitably to the next one and to the whole. . . .³⁴

This image is, in its way, a powerful statement of aesthetic theory, a theory that in its emphasis on the uniqueness of the artist's accomplishment is fully appropriate to Rand's individualist ethic. According to this image, uniqueness is manifested

in "free, fantastic growth" as much as in severely intellectual order. Some of the finest aspects of Rand's art are "free, fantastic growths": her novels' profuse imagery, their exuberant satire, their splendid proliferation of villains and grotesques. Yet these are features to which her unduly severe theory gives little notice. Her constrained and constraining theory is of limited use in revealing what is really individual and "free" about her own art.

While I was preparing this essay, Rand's novels accompanied me to bus-stops, airport waiting rooms, and many late-night restaurants; in such places, nothing was more common than for strangers—students, waiters, business people—to see what I was reading and begin enthusiastic conversations about her work. These people were not libertarians, only the proto-libertarians that the movement's theorists have constantly tried to reach. Rand had clearly impressed them with her ideas, but it was clear that she had done so chiefly by her practical success in transforming ideas into colorful and inventive literature, and not by her ability to transform literature into a theoretical guide to ethical conduct. This does not mean that her ethical theory adds nothing of importance to her art. It does suggest, however, that Rand the working novelist succeeded better than Rand the theorist. Rand's work still has much to offer the individualist movement, and not the least of its gifts may be an awareness of the danger that abstract theory may pose to the "incredible variety of shapes" in which the creative mind can express itself.

NOTES

1. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust*, part 1, 11. 2038-39, in *Goethes Werke* (Munich: Beck, 1976), 3:66 (my translation).
2. Similar observations about the critical attention given Rand's theories, rather than her literary achievement, are made by Paul Deane, "Ayn Rand's Neurotic Personalities of Our Times," *Revue des langues vivantes* 36 (April 1970):125-29; and John Cody, "Ayn Rand's Promethean Heroes," *Reason* 5 (November 1973): 30-35. Cody reviews the critical literature, as does Robert Greenwood, "Ayn Rand and the Literary Critics," *Reason* 6 (November 1974):44-50. Analyses of Rand during the past ten years have continued to emphasize her theoretical positions (or public activities), as is evident in such academic studies as Philip Gordon, "The Extroflective Hero: A Look at Ayn Rand," *Journal of Popular Culture* 10 (Spring 1977):701-10—an attack on Randian individualism—and in the interesting debate over the significance of Rand's career that emerged in individualist journals following her death; see, for example, Roy A. Childs, Jr., "Ayn Rand and the Libertarian Movement," *Update* 2 (April 1982):4-5, 7, and *Update* 2 (May 1982):4-5, 9, 11; Bill Birmingham, "Rand: The Conscience of a Conservatarian," *Update* 2 (May 1982):6-7; Justin Raimondo, "Ayn Rand, 1905-1982," *Libertarian Vanguard* 4 (June 1982):7-8; and Don Feder, "Atlas Shrugged at 25—An Appreciation," *On Principle* 1 (October 4, 1982): 68-70. Valuable work on Rand has recently been done by feminist critics: Mimi R. Gladstein, "Ayn Rand and Feminism: An Unlikely Alliance," *College English* 39 (February 1978):680-85; Judith Wilt, "On *Atlas Shrugged*," *College English* 40 (November 1978):333-36. These two essays are, however, concerned more with Rand's theories of exploitation, sex, and love than with the quality of her literary enterprise.
3. Kirk, as quoted by William F. Buckley, Jr., "Ayn Rand, R.I.P.," *National Review* 34 (April 2, 1982):381.
4. This not unreasonable assumption is also frequently made explicit, as by Jerome Tuccille, *It Usually Begins with Ayn Rand* (New York: Stein and Day, 1971), esp. p. 19; or by Raimondo,

- "Ayn Rand, 1905-1982." It is advanced even in conservative Terry Teachout's grudging acknowledgment of Rand's importance: "Farewell, Dagny Taggart," *National Review* 34 (May 14, 1982):566-67.
5. Jeff Rigenbach, "The Disowned Children of Ayn Rand," *Reason* 14 (December 1982):58, notes that "it is the atypical reader of Rand who goes on from the novels" to her nonfiction books.
 6. Rand, "The Goal of My Writing," in *The Romantic Manifesto: A Philosophy of Literature* (New York: World, 1969), p. 161.
 7. Aristotle, *The Poetics*, in *Aristotle: On Poetry and Style*, trans. G. M. A. Grube (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958), chap 9, p. 18.
 8. Rand, "Goal of My Writing," p. 169.
 9. Aristotle, *Poetics*, chap. 25, pp. 54-56.
 10. *Ibid.*, chap. 13, p. 24.
 11. In her foreword to the novel's second edition, Rand insists on Kira's role as a moral exemplar, as the embodiment of Rand's own "convictions" and "values": *We the Living*, 2nd ed. (New York: New American Library, 1959), p. ix. For the convenience of readers, I cite the readily available paperback printings of all Rand's novels except the first edition of *We the Living* (New York: Macmillan, 1936).
 12. Kira reflects, with respect to Leo, that "it was I against a hundred and fifty million people. I lost." She later tells Leo that she has "nothing to forgive" him for: *We the Living*, 1st ed., pp. 543, 545; 2nd ed., pp. 425, 427.
 13. Rand, *We the Living*, 1st ed., p. 537; 2nd ed., p. 421.
 14. Rand, "Goal of My Writing," p. 171. Friedrich Nietzsche, discussing Greek mythology (and writing in a less moral vein than Rand), makes a remark that may have some relevance to the godlike characters of Rand's fictions: "The gods justified human life by living it themselves—the only satisfactory theodicy ever invented": *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*, in *The Birth of Tragedy and the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Francis Golffing (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1956), p. 30.
 15. Rand, *Atlas Shrugged* (New York: New American Library, 1957), pp. 796-800. I am indebted to Murray N. Rothbard (correspondence, January 21, 1984) for important insights into the literary effects of Rand's theory of love.
 16. On Rand's handling of mythology, see also Cody, "Rand's Promethean Heroes."
 17. Rand, "The Psycho-Epistemology of Art," in *The Romantic Manifesto*, p. 25.
 18. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.
 19. *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 25.
 20. Rand, "Basic Principles of Literature," in *The Romantic Manifesto*, p. 65.
 21. Apparently showing some sense of humor about her reputation, Rand declared, "I'm not a propagandist, believe it or not": interview reported in Clare D. Kinsman, ed., *Contemporary Authors*, 13-16, first revision (Detroit: Gale, 1975), p. 655.
 22. Rand, "Goal of My Writing," p. 167; "Bootleg Romanticism," p. 126, in *The Romantic Manifesto*.
 23. Rand, *We the Living*, 1st ed., p. 256; 2nd ed., p. 206. It is interesting that in the first-edition text, Kira dislikes "all things weighty and solemn" (p. 44); in the second edition, published when Rand's own tone was becoming increasingly weighty and solemn, Kira is made to adhere explicitly to Rand's aesthetic theories; now she rebels against "the weighty, the tragic, the solemn" (p. 42; emphasis added).
 24. Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*, p. 499.
 25. Rand, *The Fountainhead* (New York: New American Library, 1971), p. 299.
 26. For Rand on Lewis, see esp. "Psycho-Epistemology of Art," p. 24; "What Is Romanticism?" p. 107, in *The Romantic Manifesto*. One reviewer of *The Fountainhead* noticed general similarities between that work and Lewis's *Arrowsmith*: N. L. Rothman, "H. Roark, Architect," *Saturday Review* 26 (May 29, 1943):30-31.
 27. Rand, *The Fountainhead*, p. 152.
 28. Rand, *We the Living*, 1st ed., pp. 285-91; 2nd ed., pp. 226-31; *Atlas Shrugged*, pp. 228-37. Recently I asked two experts in modern literature to read the Petrograd description and comment on its quality, without informing them of its author's name. Both pronounced it the work of some "important" and "distinguished" writer. One of them concluded from its style that

it was not the work of any well-known Russian, but nevertheless remarked that it was as excellent as any description in Russian literature. Both were amazed, and impressed, to find that it was the work of Rand.

29. Rand, foreword to *We the Living*, 2nd ed., p. viii.
30. For Rand's ideological revisions, compare *We the Living*, 1st ed., pp. 92-95, 499-502, with 2nd ed., pp. 79-81, 390-92.
31. Rand, *We the Living*, 1st ed., pp. 135, 45, 288; 2nd ed., pp. 112, 43, 228.
32. Rand, "Basic Principles," pp. 75-77; "Art and Sense of Life," pp. 43-44, 51-53, in *The Romantic Manifesto*.
33. Rand, introduction to *Calumet "K,"* reprint ed. (New York: NBI Press, 1967), pp. i-ix.
34. Rand, *The Fountainhead*, pp. 234-35.