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The *Atlas Shrugged* Reviews

Michael S. Berliner

With the publication of *Atlas Shrugged*, Ayn Rand's world changed. The novel established her as the foremost philosophic defender of capitalism. But she was no longer met with the polite and often positive reaction that greeted publication of *We the Living*, *Anthem*, and *The Fountainhead*.¹ The response to *Atlas Shrugged* was principally negative and often vicious—making her infamous in some circles and a controversial figure for the rest of her life.

The reason for this change is not difficult to discern. *We the Living* (1936) was a political novel involving a love triangle. *Anthem* (1937, revised in 1946) was a short, poetic novella that projected a future society without the word “I.” And *The Fountainhead* (1943) dramatized the virtue of independence, as it followed the story of an architect battling the Establishment. But with *Atlas Shrugged*, the themes were no longer so limited nor was the philosophy even slightly implicit. By 1957, Ayn Rand had become an uncompromising advocate of reason, egoism, and laissez-faire capitalism, and an uncompromising opponent of altruism, collectivism, and mysticism (including religion). With her three previous works, there may have been some doubts about where she stood philosophically; with *Atlas Shrugged*, there could be no doubts. It had become much more difficult for critics (and readers) to ignore or evade her ideas.

The changed attitude towards Ayn Rand was reflected in the reviews of her novels. *We the Living* received mixed but generally positive reviews, somewhat surprising given its anti-Soviet message and that it was published during the Red Decade. *Anthem*'s paean against collectivism was welcomed even in socialist England. *The Fountainhead* evoked some nascent philosophic opposition, but most critics ignored the theme of “individualism vs. collectivism, not in politics but in a man's soul” and treated the novel as a love story, a book about architecture, or—at most—an attack on conformity.

The *Atlas Shrugged* reviews constitute a microcosm of American intellectual life: the Left was appalled by its blatant pro-capitalism; the religious Right rebelled against its rejection of religion. Most reviewers were dismayed by its immoderation, that is, its absolutism, and horrified by its opposition to altruism. Thus were revealed the principal intellectual trends against which Ayn Rand would fight the rest of her life.

A SURVEY OF THE REVIEWS

Let us now look in some detail at the *Atlas Shrugged* reviews. Of the hundred reviews in Ayn Rand's personal files, about half were in folders she marked as “Junk,” “Mixed,” or “Medium.”² The other half were in general files and contained mostly negative reviews. Only fourteen (found mainly in “Mixed” and “Medium”) were basically positive, and that number drops when only

major publications are included. However, *Atlas Shrugged* did get some positive reaction from the majors. Paul Jordan Smith, writing in the *Los Angeles Times*, correctly identified the philosophy, about which he was completely approving, calling the book “challenging” and “fascinating,” and he was sure that left-wingers would hate it. The *Wall Street Journal* published a review by M. E. Davis (October 10, 1957) that was positive though weak, especially given that Ayn Rand was championing the businessman. Davis wrote that the novel favors selfishness and individualism, is a tense and gripping story, and—though he makes little mention of the ideas—he concluded by pointing out that Ayn Rand provides a bright future at the end by having a character add “freedom of trade and production” to the rights guaranteed by the Constitution. There were positive reviews in the *Boston Herald* (October 13) by Alice Dixon Bond, who called it “monumental,” and the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* by Berne Jacobson, who deemed it a book “for those who feel that man is a thinking animal and has a right to the products of his mind.” Other positive reviews appeared in San Francisco (Alma Oberst, October 19 in the *News*), Fort Worth (Thelma Cash, October 27 in the *Star-Telegram*) and some smaller cities. The most positive review in a national magazine came from *Playboy*, which described the theme rather imprecisely as: those who believe in reality believe in themselves and live for themselves. *Newsweek* began its review by quoting Ayn Rand on her “philosophy in essence”³ and proceeded through a non-sneering description of the plot and the philosophy. “Despite laborious monologues, the reader will stay with this strange world, borne along by its story and eloquent flow of ideas.” In sum, said *Newsweek*: “Powerful argument.” (And *Newsweek* followed with a respectful interview with Ayn Rand.)

For more significant reviews, let us turn to those from what might be termed the “liberal establishment.”

Earle P. Browne in the *Washington Post and Times-Herald* (October 13) alleged that “her industrialists are so ruthless they make Hollywood’s worst producers seem like Bernard Baruch,” and the book’s major weakness, he wrote, was its neglect of the ordinary individual. Miss Rand, wrote Browne, seems to believe that to be a “heroic being” and fight oppression, you have to be the inventor of a new metal, the girl vice-president of a railroad, or the creator of a motor which harnesses energy from the sun. The *Washington Star*, in a review by Mary McGrory (October 13) labeled “junk” by Ayn Rand, called the book preposterous and endless, with no charm, humor, or nuances of character; a paean to survival of the fittest written like a battering ram. Another “junk” review appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* (October 13) by Ruth Chapin Blackman, who maintained that the novel does its own purpose a disservice through caricature. There was, the reviewer lamented in a paradigm of nonconceptual analysis, no relevance to the book because, she wrote, the American economy is booming; furthermore, the novel is full of extremes and absolutes, with no middle ground or compromise; in fact, Blackman claims, had Rearden et al. exercised their political responsibility, they wouldn’t have been taken over.

The reviews in New York City—which Ayn Rand thought to be the only important reviews for any book—were mostly negative. The *New York Times Book Review* (October 13), selected by then ex-Communist Party member Granville Hicks as its reviewer. Hicks, in fact, had been an editor at Macmillan in 1936 and, according to Ayn Rand,⁴ had tried unsuccessfully to prevent Macmillan from publishing *We the Living*. Hicks called *Atlas Shrugged* a harangue and not a serious novel. He made fun of having heroes and villains and attacked the novel for being a tribute to the superior individual. The book, he concluded, was written out of hate, a conclusion whose sole basis was that it was set in a dying New York City. An unlikely plot, wrote *New York Post* reviewer W. G. Rogers (October 13), who would rather have read four shorter novels of the

same total length. The novel, he said, is preposterous and endless, praises cutthroat competition, and lacks charm and humor. The review in the *New Yorker*, by Donald Malcolm (October 26), was predictably snide. It called the theme unbelievable and pointless. "After all," wrote Malcolm, "to warn contemporary America against abandoning its factories, neglecting technological progress and abolishing the profit motive seems a little like admonishing water against running uphill." (He obviously didn't foresee the ecology/environmentalism movement, which Ayn Rand termed "the anti-industrial revolution."⁵) *Time* magazine (October 14) began: "Is it a novel? Is it a nightmare? Is it Superman in the comic strip or Nietzschean version? The reader can't be sure. Then the truth emerges: Ayn Rand is smashing the world in order to rebuild it according to her own philosophy. And that philosophy must be read to be believed." After making fun of the story and Ayn Rand's writing, *Time* asserted that her philosophy is merely Nietzsche's inversion of Christianity and is ludicrously naïve. In fact, opined *Time*, her version of capitalism is such a hideous caricature that it will destroy faith in capitalism. Charles Rolo, in the *Atlantic Monthly* (November) said that *Atlas Shrugged* might be mildly described as execrable claptrap. In a typical distortion, he claimed that Ayn Rand is a Nietzschean and "holds that egoism can be deduced from A is A. Makes our most reactionary journals sound like do-gooders." *Atlas Shrugged*, he wrote, is an extreme expression of the aggressiveness and power worship which have been the Black Death of this century (a none-too-subtle way of calling Ayn Rand a Nazi).

In the *Saturday Review of Literature*, H. B. Woodward (October 12) called Ayn Rand a writer of "dazzling virtuosity" and *Atlas Shrugged* the equivalent of a fifteenth-century morality play which challenges the welfare state and the whole Christian ethic. However, Woodward thought the book to be over-simplified with its good guys and bad guys, had too much philosophy, demolished straw men and was shot through with hatred: of moralists, mystics, income taxes, professors, altruists, Communism, and Christianity. Demonstrating a certain inability to identify abstract principles, Woodward concluded that Ayn Rand's solution is the same as that of nineteenth-century altruists: a small, controlled Utopia. E. Nelson Hayes, writing in the *Progressive*, the journal of the Humanist Society (November), attacked selfishness, equated heroes with superheroes and referred to Aristotelian logic as "the blind almost mystical belief in either-or and in absolutes and the unreality of contradictions." In fact, he maintained, man has survived because of his power to love and has produced because of his ability to cooperate.

The Book-of-the-Month Club selected as its reviewer Clifton Fadiman. Fadiman was a prominent liberal and one of the models Ayn Rand used for Ellsworth Toohey, villain of *The Fountainhead*,⁶ but his review wasn't worse than mixed. He found *Atlas Shrugged* to be "slightly mad," with an improbable thesis and a belief in the profit motive to the point of anti-Christianity. However, he praised Ayn Rand's narrative power and cunning plot and concluded with the opinion that she "possessed the story-telling ability of a Dumas or a Margaret Mitchell, as rare in our day as is her frenzied power-philosophy."⁷

Ayn Rand's uncompromising support of capitalism and its foundations had elicited predictable opposition from the liberal establishment. But what might seem surprising was the level and depth of opposition from Ayn Rand's supposed allies on the political right. So let us look at those reviews and then assess their significance.

The review on the front page of the *New York Herald-Tribune Book Review* (October 6) was written by well-known conservative John Chamberlain. Chamberlain praised the novel as monumental and inspired, a book that could satisfy readers on many levels: "First-rate pedagogy

combined with first-rate entertainment.” But the philosophic lesson to be learned, he thought, was merely that government interference with private property will destroy the economy. Demonstrating his lack of understanding of the novel, Chamberlain found one fault: the rejection of Christian morality. “To the Christian, everyone is redeemable. But Ayn Rand’s ethical hardness may repel those who most need her message that charity should be voluntary. . . . She should not have tried to rewrite the Sermon on the Mount.” Chamberlain repeated this theme in his review in *The Freeman* (December 1957), where he suggested she should have made “voluntarism” (i.e., subjectivism) rather than selfishness her philosophical touchstone. In a similar vein, E. Merrill Root, a conservative professor at Earlham College, praised the book and maintained that Rand’s atheism was a mere superficial aberration and that her metaphysical roots tended toward religion despite her denial.⁸

Catholic publications, such as *The Sign* and *The Tablet*, were scandalized by her abandonment of God and belief that we have a right to exist for ourselves. Patricia Donegan in *Commonweal* (November 8) complained about the opposition to Original Sin and the lack of compassion, charity, and humility. Another Catholic reviewer, Francis E. O’Gorman, in the *Catholic Telegraph Register* (November 22), branded it “the most immoral and destructive book he’d ever read,” but was mollified that its 500,000 words would not endure.⁹ And Riley Hughes, in *Catholic World* (January 1958), opined that Rand subscribed not to reason but to rationalism, or why else would she sneer at anything mystical. But these reviews were mild, compared to the harshest attack on *Atlas Shrugged*.

WHITTAKER CHAMBERS’S REVIEW IN THE NATIONAL REVIEW

The most significant review from the political right appeared in the *National Review* (December 28, 1957) and signaled the “official” conservative position.¹⁰ The 2,700-word review was written by another ex-Communist, Whittaker Chambers, and was republished in 2005 and yet again on the *National Review* website in 2007 on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of the novel. Chambers spent a good part of his review sneering at the novel, which he characterized as “remarkably silly,” “bumptious,” and “preposterous”—a book that no sensible adult could take seriously. All of the characters were mere caricatures, which he thought spared Miss Rand the necessity of explaining “how they came to exist at all”—this despite the fact that Ayn Rand’s novels are unusual, if not unique, in identifying and explaining the philosophic roots of her characters. His review came across as so non-objective to Rand’s colleague Leonard Peikoff that he stated in his letter to the *National Review* (which they did not publish): “Mr. Chambers is an ex-Communist. He has attacked *Atlas Shrugged* in the best tradition of the Communists—by lies, smears, and cowardly misrepresentations. Mr. Chambers may have changed a few of his political views; he has not changed the method of intellectual analysis and evaluation of the Party to which he belonged.”¹¹

It is significant that the *National Review* wanted (and wants) to go on record as seeing no redeeming value in what has become a classic and a favorite novel of so many Americans, from businessmen to Hollywood stars.¹² But even more significant is Chambers’ attack on Ayn Rand’s ideas. His criticisms show how intent the *National Review* was (and is) to distance itself from Ayn Rand’s philosophy.

Chambers advanced the claim—popular mainly with the Left—that Ayn Rand is a Nietzschean, with political views leading to Nazism. “Miss Rand acknowledges a grudging (sic) debt to one, and only one, earlier philosopher: Aristotle. I submit that she is indebted, and much

more heavily, to Nietzsche. Just as her operatic businessmen are, in fact, Nietzschean supermen, so her ulcerous leftists are Nietzsche's 'last men.'" These supermen heroes are, according to Chambers, a "technocratic elite," who will "head us into dictatorship, however benign, living and acting beyond good and evil, a law unto itself (as Miss Rand believes it should be)." "From almost any page of *Atlas Shrugged*," he charges, "a voice can be heard, from painful necessity, commanding 'To a gas chamber—go!'" What are we to make of these charges? For one thing, it is impossible to take Chambers as an honest critic: he charges her with ideas (e.g., that some people are "beyond good and evil") that she went to great lengths to denounce (both dramatically and in Galt's Speech), so it seems as though Chambers' hatred of the book is beyond fact. But let us look briefly at some specifics. Is Ayn Rand's philosophy Nietzschean? It is beyond the scope of this chapter to explain why the answer is "no." Suffice to say that—although, as a teenager in Soviet Russia, she was temporarily attracted to Nietzsche's poetic paean to the individual—she soon realized that his philosophy was antithetical to hers, particularly his opposition to reason and his advocacy of determinism and of power over other people. "You are wrong," she would write later to a fan, "when you see any parallel between my philosophy and Nietzsche's."¹³ As to her views on dictatorship (and its philosophical antecedents), those views were too well-established even in 1957 to necessitate any refutation of Chambers' claim. Her novella *Anthem*, published in 1937, established her credentials as anticollectivist, and in 1942, Mussolini's fascist government banned the Italian film of *We the Living* when the government realized that Rand was attacking collectivism per se, not merely Soviet Communism. By 1957, Ayn Rand was even more established as a champion of reason and individual rights, placing her in the tradition of the Founding Fathers and the Declaration of Independence. One might think that such ideas would endear her to the political Right—until one realizes that those ideas are precisely what the *National Review* conservatives oppose, as is evidenced by Chambers' other criticisms of *Atlas Shrugged*.

Rand's approach to ethics is not to Chambers' liking, because "everybody [in *Atlas Shrugged*] is either all good or all bad." Of course, perhaps employing some dialectical logic from his past, he also claimed that her heroes were presented as being "*beyond* [my italics] good and evil." Nevertheless, he is obviously opposed to Rand's moral absolutism. He is also unsympathetic to her individualism, because it leaves "no other nexus between man and man other than naked self-interest," a view he claims allies her with Marxism, although his criticism is almost identical to that leveled by Marx against individualism: "The concern of the French Constitution of 1793," wrote Marx, "is with the freedom of man as an isolated monad withdrawing into itself. . . . The human right of freedom is not based on the connection of man with man but rather on the separation of man from man. It is this right of separation, the right of the *limited* individual, limited unto himself."¹⁴ Beyond his sneers at "naked self-interest" and his attempt to turn her ethics upside down by characterizing it as promoting a technocratic elite, Chambers makes no mention of her opposition to altruism or her insight that altruism is the ethical basis of dictatorship.

With respect to Ayn Rand's views on knowledge, Chambers' review is none too clear. His rejection of her absolutism regarding morality would likely apply to knowledge in general, but he doesn't say so. However, he does charge her with advocating dogmatism and being "the bringer of a higher revelation." Apparently Chambers believed that any advocacy of certainty must be taken as Revealed Truth and thus dogma. But what is Chambers' alternative? We can't be sure from the review. It is not the alternative offered by the liberals: skepticism. It is not reason, for nowhere does he laud the use of reason or chastise Ayn Rand for being anti-reason. In

fact, his alternative to what he sees as Rand's dogmatism is his own religious dogmatism, which he described five years earlier in the first chapter of *Witness*, the story of his rejection of Communism and of his testimony against Alger Hiss: "I am an involuntary witness to God's grace and to the fortifying power of faith."¹⁵ The Communist, he wrote, cannot admit "that there is something greater than Reason, greater than the logic of the mind."¹⁶

But it is with respect to Ayn Rand's metaphysics—her view of the nature of man and reality—that Chambers saves his major criticism. The story of *Atlas Shrugged*, he writes, "serves Miss Rand to get the customers inside the tent, and as a soapbox for delivering her Message. The Message is the thing. It is, in sum, a forthright philosophical materialism." This is a truly astounding claim and one explained only by holding, as Chambers clearly does, that anyone who is an atheist (i.e., does not accept the existence of invisible supernatural entities) is ipso facto a materialist. For Chambers, materialism is the only alternative to supernaturalism, a long-ago exposed false dichotomy that was at the heart of his rejection of Marxist philosophy: while gazing upon his infant daughter's ear, he concluded that it couldn't have been constructed by chance, and therefore there must be a Divine Plan (the possibility of a natural explanation eluding him).¹⁷ In fact, materialism is the view that only physical matter exists; anything else, for example, ideas, is reducible to physical matter. Thus Marx maintained "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness."¹⁸ But, for Ayn Rand, consciousness is not reducible to matter or to anything else; it is an irreducible primary, as she made clear in *Galt's Speech*.¹⁹

The actual theme of *Atlas Shrugged*, one that is obvious in virtually every page, is the role of the *mind* in human existence. Ayn Rand's message is: human existence and progress depend on the mind, that is, the independent thinking of those who choose to think. Marx's materialism, which Chambers believes Ayn Rand accepts, is in direct contradiction to the message of *Atlas Shrugged*. The materialist (or labor) theory of value, a cornerstone of Marxism, is the direct opposite of Ayn Rand's views on production: the pages of *Atlas Shrugged* are replete with the message that it is ideas and intellectual labor—not physical labor—that move the world.

Chambers' philosophic foundations are revealed by his exploration of Ayn Rand's supposed materialism: "Like any consistent materialism, this one begins by rejecting God, religion, original sin, etc. etc. . . . Thus Randian Man, like Marxian Man, is made the center of a godless world." For Chambers, that's all it takes. "The Communist vision," he wrote in *Witness*, "is the vision of Man without God," with "man's mind replacing God as the creative intelligence of the world."²⁰ Accepting the Marxist pretense at being pro-reason and pro-science, Chambers writes that "to the challenge of God or Man, [Communism] gives the answer: Man."²¹ So, despite its demand for blind obedience (to the Party), and its elevation of historical-economic forces over individual minds as the basic cause of human action, Communism is pro-reason—or so Chambers believes. Despite its decades of slavery and mass murder, Communism is pro-man—or so Chambers believes. Such are the blinders leading Chambers to lump Ayn Rand with Marxism. For there is, he recognizes, no other way to preserve religion.²²

The irony of Chambers' rejection of Communism in favor of Christianity is that the two are really philosophic brothers under the skin. Both advocate altruism ("from each according to his ability, to each according to his need" said Marx, echoing the Bible²³), reject free-will, demand obedience to an unseen entity (society or God). Both are—as Ayn Rand noted—"enemies of the independent mind."²⁴

From the time that Ayn Rand—at the age of nine—decided to become a fiction writer, her goal had been the creation of “the ideal man.” That ideal was first manifested in Howard Roark in *The Fountainhead* and culminated in the men and women of *Atlas Shrugged*. As she wrote in her postscript, “About the Author”: “My 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.” This view of man, I submit, is at the heart of Chambers’ antipathy to *Atlas Shrugged*. The Christian view has no place for man as heroic or for life on earth as the ultimate happiness. The best that Chambers can provide as an alternative to what he thinks is Ayn Rand’s animalistic pursuit of happiness is tragedy, and he laments her view, in which man’s “tragic fate becomes, without God, more tragic and much lonelier.”²⁵ From the standpoint of the philosophy of *Atlas Shrugged*, the most damning statement in Chambers’ book is his false description of Marxism: “[Marxism] is the vision of man’s liberated mind, by the sole force of its rational intelligence, redirecting man’s destiny and reorganizing man’s life and the world.”²⁶

Four years after the publication of *Atlas Shrugged*, Ayn Rand presented—at Princeton University—a lecture entitled “Conservatism: An Obituary.” In this, and many subsequent talks and essays, she argued that no matter how philosophically bad was the Left, the conservatives were worse, because they attempted to justify freedom and capitalism on faith and altruism, views that undermined capitalism rather than supported it. Freedom, she argued, is impossible on any philosophy that holds an individual to be moral only if he lives for others. On that ethical view, his life would belong to others, that is he would be a slave.

Intellectually, to rest one’s case on *faith* means to concede that reason is on the side of one’s enemies—that one has no rational arguments to offer. The “conservatives” claim that their case rests on faith, means that there are no rational arguments to support the American system [that they’re supposedly defending], no rational justification for freedom, justice, property, individual rights, that these rest on a mystic revelation and can be accepted only *on faith*—that in reason and logic the enemy is right, but men must hold faith as superior to reason.²⁷

CONCLUSION

Ayn Rand did not expect much from reviews of her books. As she stated in her biographical interviews, “I had read too many book reviews of books that I had read, and I had seen the terrible contradictions, [with] no standards nor reasons given.” Nor did she blame herself for bad reviews: “If anybody praises me I want to know why. And, particularly, if anybody criticizes me I want to know why. And if I see arbitrary statements, I discount them immediately, particularly if they’re distorting statements.” Nevertheless, the reviews of *Atlas Shrugged* had an important effect on Ayn Rand: they helped convince her of the urgent need to spread her philosophy.

The worst part for me of the after-*Atlas* period, was the fact that I could not make up my mind am I a fiction writer or am I a philosopher. Or rather, I knew that I was both, and neither prospect alone quite appealed to me. I did not know what I wanted to undertake next. I was enormously shocked by the state of the culture and by the attacks on *Atlas*, not by the attacks themselves, but by the fact that there was nobody to oppose them. I had expected more *intelligent* smears.

Actually in the thirties, reviewers and columnists and everybody else was on a higher intellectual level. I had predicted the smears to some extent. I had told Random House not to count on a single good review; if they got one it's possible, but that would be gravy. But what shocked me was the abysmal, stupid, hooliganism of the reviews, that they were self-contradictory even within their own terms. Total distortions, and that there was nobody objecting to it. That the whole state of the culture suddenly appeared much worse than I had imagined.²⁸

She was not willing to concede the battle to her philosophic enemies, to let them be the only ones speaking about the philosophy of *Atlas Shrugged*. And when she was convinced by Leonard Peikoff and others that her philosophy was not only more unique than she realized but wasn't as self-evident to others as it was to herself, she resolved to explain the details of that philosophy, which she did in lectures, essays, and books for the next twenty-five years.

NOTES

1. See my other essays on the reviews of Ayn Rand's novels: "Reviews of *We the Living*," in Robert Mayhew, ed., *Essays on Ayn Rand's We the Living* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2004); "Reviews of *Anthem*," in Robert Mayhew, ed., *Essays on Ayn Rand's Anthem* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2005); "The *Fountainhead* Reviews," in Robert Mayhew, ed., *Essays on Ayn Rand's The Fountainhead* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2007).

2. All reviews quoted herein are from Ayn Rand's collection in the Ayn Rand Papers, located in the Ayn Rand Archives, Irvine, Calif.

3. See the "About the Author" afterword to *Atlas Shrugged*.

4. In her Biographical Interviews (Ayn Rand Archives).

5. See "The Anti-Industrial Revolution," in Ayn Rand, *Return of the Primitive: The Anti-Industrial Revolution*, Peter Schwartz, ed. (New York: Meridian, 1999).

6. Ayn Rand noted that she "always thought of [Harold] Laski and Fadiman as the main sources [of Ellsworth Toohey]. . . . Well [Fadiman] was the arch literateur of the Left. In other words, the intellectual who had enormous influence in Leftist circles and was kind of an elegant literary type. Enormously phony. . . . And it was that intellectual superciliousness of his, combined with Leftism, that was just right for Toohey." Biographical Interviews (Ayn Rand Archives).

7. As a consequence of that review and a shorter one he wrote in *Holiday* magazine, under the heading "Current Books I've Liked," Miss Rand—as she related in the same interviews—"sort of lifted him a few rungs in hell." Biographical Interviews (Ayn Rand Archives).

8. E. Merrill Root, "What About Ayn Rand," *National Review*, June 30, 1960, quoted in George H. Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement* (Wilmington, Del.: ISI Books, 2006), 240.

9. Similarly, in a classic case of wishful thinking, William F. Buckley began his obituary of Ayn Rand with: "Ayn Rand is dead. So, incidentally, is the philosophy she sought to launch dead; it was in fact stillborn" (*National Review*, April 2, 1982). Note that more than fifty years after publication it still sells more than 130,000 copies per year.

10. Whittaker Chambers, "Big Sister Is Watching You," *National Review*, December 28, 1957.

11. Peikoff's letter is published for the first time in this volume. See chapter 7.

12. A 1991 survey by the Library of Congress found *Atlas Shrugged* to be second in influence only to the Bible.

13. Ayn Rand, letter to Libby Parker, in Michael S. Berliner, ed., *Letters of Ayn Rand* (New York: Dutton), 614.

14. Karl Marx, from “On the Jewish Question,” quoted in Eugene Kamenka, *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism* (New York: Praeger, 1962), 64.
15. Whittaker Chambers, *Witness* (Washington, DC: Regnery Gateway, 1952), 6.
16. Chambers, *Witness*, 15
17. Chambers, *Witness*, 16.
18. Karl Marx, Preface to “A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy” in Eugene Kamenka, ed., *The Portable Karl Marx* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1983), 160.
19. See *Atlas Shrugged* (1933). For a discussion of Rand’s position, see Leonard Peikoff, *Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand* (New York: Dutton, 1991), 4ff.
20. Chambers, *Witness*, 9.
21. Chambers, *Witness*, 13.
22. M. Stanton Evans, in his 1967 critique of Ayn Rand in *The National Review* lamented that she tried to justify capitalism without its supposedly necessary base, that is “the Christian culture which has given birth to all our freedoms.” M. Stanton Evans, “The Gospel According to Ayn Rand,” *National Review*, October 3, 1967, quoted in Nash, 541.
23. Karl Marx, “Critique of the Gotha Program” in Kamenka, ed., *Portable Karl Marx*, 541. “And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.” (Acts 2:44–45) “Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles’ feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.” (Acts 4:34–35)
24. Ayn Rand, letter to Stephen Sipos, in Berliner, *Letters of Ayn Rand*, 565. For the similarities in the two supposedly opposed views, see Leonard Peikoff, “Religion vs. America,” in Ayn Rand, *The Voice of Reason* (New York: New American Library, 1989), 76–77.
25. Gary Wills, as part of *National Review*’s ongoing angst over Ayn Rand and *Atlas Shrugged*, echoed this tragic view of man: “When [John] Galt asserts the immediate perfectibility of man . . . he is working from the first principle of historical Liberalism,” in contrast to conservatism. Gary Wills, “But Is Ayn Rand Conservative?” *National Review*, February 27, 1960, quoted in Nash, 241.
26. Chambers, “Big Sister Is Watching You.”
27. Ayn Rand, “Conservatism: An Obituary,” in *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal* (New York: New American Library, 1967), 197. Rand could have had Chambers in mind, for he wrote in *Witness*: “[God] is the only guarantor of freedom,” and political freedom “is only a political reading of the Bible” (16).
28. Bibliographical Interviews (Ayn Rand Archives).