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Message from the President

Francis Peddle

In previous issues of *ELEUTHERIA* (Vol. I, Nos. 1 & 2, 1989) I had occasion to discuss the problems of accountability in the public funding of research. Whether granting agencies, such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRCC) or the Canada Council, should be subject to judicial review and whether there should be substantive appeals with respect to the administrative and adjudicative process of awarding research grants were some of the topics considered.

As part of the overall downsizing of government announced in the February, 1995 budget the SSHRCC has decreed that administrative grants to the Canadian Federation for the Humanities (CFH) and the Social Sciences Federation of Canada (SSFC) will be completely phased out over the next three years along with administrative grants to the various learned societies which are the primary constituents of the federations. At the annual meeting of the CFH in June, during the learned societies conference at the University of Quebec at Montreal, it was decided that steps be taken to combine the CFH and the SSFC into one organization.

The disciplines within the SSFC have grown substantially in numbers and in the amount of public funding received in recent decades, while the traditional disciplines of philosophy, history, classics and so on have either stagnated or declined. It can only be assumed that unless stringent safeguards are built into the constitution of the new organization the humanistic disciplines will play a secondary role within it.

About seven years ago I addressed the Board of the CFH on the need to create an endowment fund because at some time in the future, difficult as it may be to determine that time, there will be an inevitable cutback in core funding to the CFH by federal the government. Shortly thereafter the Canadian Foundation for Teaching and Research in the Humanities was incorporated. Little was done, however, to raise sufficient funds to replace, on a permanent basis, a loss in core funding from the government. Now the inevitable has happened and the CFH in all likelihood will lose its autonomy and sense of focus in an organization dominated by neoteric disciplines that are mostly indifferent to the *Geisteswissenschaften*.

The obvious lesson in this unfortunate turn of events is that freedom of thought and economic independence are interconnected, and the absence of the latter often has overt and subtle consequences for the exercise of the former. The CFH should not amalgamate

itself with the SSFC. Rather, it should take its remaining core funding over the next few years along with current reserves and convert the funds into a small, but albeit, untouchable endowment fund upon which it can slowly build future activities. It is far more important to maintain independence and purity of purpose than to seek relevance and recognition in an organization overrun by research agendas that theoretically see themselves as having long since transcended the unscientific musings of philosophers, poets and historians of ideas.

This issue of *ELEUTHERIA* contains articles by James Lowry and myself on the diverse writings of Alan Bloom, Francis Fukuyama, John Ralston Saul, Ayn Rand and Immanuel Kant. One cannot but be astonished at how

two writers, Fukuyama and Rand, can read such utterly different philosophical agendas into German Idealism and its influence on America. For Fukuyama, the United States is the absolute state of which all other states will have to be clones. History has come to a political end and the last man has arrived. In Rand's optimistic world-view, America has to overcome the knowledge-annihilating and the freedom-negating orientation of German Idealism, as enunciated in Kant and Hegel, in order to achieve a benevolent objectivist philosophy and civil society wherein the good and rationality are upheld by the virtues of independence, integrity, honesty, justice, productiveness and pride. These opposing views demonstrate that the impact of Kant and Hegel on American thought is intricate and wide-ranging.

DESCHOOLING DECONSTRUCTION

James Lowry

The twentieth century has not been kind to philosophy. Since the excesses of nineteenth century idealism and the promises by its opponents of progress via natural science, the faculty of thinking has turned largely against itself. The epiphenomena have not been pleasant: the absolute state and empirical relativism.

Various efforts to be empirical yet theoretical have floundered on their own experimentation — most notably Marxism and Freudianism. The descent into more and more ordi-

nary forms of naturalism in the guise of social sciences, particularly sociology and experimental psychology, have not been the panacea they claimed — their theoretical relativism having undermined their endless efforts to craft some ongoing experimental results. Even the lowly bacteria are currently refusing to be Baconized as they become more and more immune to antibiotics.

The demise of the absolute state, of the promise of relativism as a progress against nature, has left the anti-rationalist anti-

idealist mindset in a rather bizarre quandary. Bereft of any ballast in either reason, which it impossibly thinks to be beyond, or in religion, which it disdains to acknowledge, twentieth century theorists gyrate between two empiricisms — a blithely naive ahistorical natural science and a neurotically talkative historicism.

The variations on these themes are, of course, endless and tend to hide in their denial of analogy from their inevitable categorization. It seems somehow safe to think that phenomenology is beyond the limits of strict science; to demand that the soft disciplines of literature and of belles-lettres in general be cast as the criminal class of historical prejudice; to imagine that numbers in their precision are the only knowable structures of life. And it is safer still to adhere to everything and anything in its place and time and finitude as a possibility.

The forms and shapes of life, of humanity, become in this safeness politically correct even as in their fleeting glory they effervesce before our eyes. Education in its tranquil strain for relevance reduces to a constancy of "how", never of "why" or even of "what." The strain of stability, of classic form in real existence is simply overcome as a mere instance in the rush of time. Even a "good" idea is only relevant for fifteen minutes.

Philosophically the problem imbedded in this ultimate deconstruction is the self-destruction of anything that could pre-exist its deconstruction. Hence criticism takes precedence over the object of criticism and becomes an end in itself. Or to put it more speculatively, process, being neither a beginning nor an end, imitates itself. More simply, the characteristic most common to contem-

porary intellectual life is to make do without any sense, existential or otherwise, that there can be a teleology to life and thought, without any necessity of structure or law outside of will.

The sphere of philosophy is a fair paradigm of this predicament of the will. Denial of ends, of essences, of the unity of being necessarily leads to the priority of will and subjectivity. Thus philosophy began this century by rejecting the objectivity of thought in one of two ways. Science must be the simple acceptance of sense experience or essences must be deconstructed into existences. Empiricism in this form at first seemed quite exhilarating in the simplicity of its innocence from thought. But the reality of its wish soon evaporated. The gain of subjectivity escaped the empirical bottle.

Simple British realism devolved into mathematical structures. Internal consistency could not find a hold in reality. The result was the Heisenberg uncertainty principle and Gödel's Theorem. Both show in different ways the triumph of subjectivity and will in so far as the unity of thought and being, posited by the Greeks and medievals, is lost forever in time and probability. Self-reference is simply serialized.

Complex European realism suffered the same fate. Non-mathematical or psychological essences become detached from reality. Objective structures become de-constructed in conversations, which take the place of experiments. But like experiments the conversations become in their limitless possibility self-referential. Historical scholarship rather than natural science seeks its origin in a past no more certain than that of natural experiment. Always the subjectivity

of the enquiry intervenes whether it be the physical instrument embodying the mathematics of scientific discovery, or the psychological agenda of a researcher redolent with historical essences.

As philosophy has shifted from thought and being to will and subjectivity, it has gone through the parallel shift from form to ambiguity; from the hard logic of numbers to its softness in ordinary discourse; from confidence in thinking to a confidence in other non-conceptual ways of knowing.

Philosophy, like all forms of scholarship, of theoretical understanding in the twentieth century, has become "instrumentalized." Its end is not to be found in itself but as an aid for some other enterprise, more solid, more praiseworthy. The problem, however, is that it is not theoretically possible to have a pragmatism that can actually "be" pragmatic if the only end or goal is merely a relative historical structure merely willed until the will wills another.

Once the forces of deconstruction, whether as the constant revision of natural science or as the ever blurred vision of phenomenological historicism, take the reigns of thought a peculiar set of circumstances takes hold. The inherent self-destruction of the activity must lead to an unpalatable uncertainty and a wariness before any kind of dogmatic assertion. At the same time a certain scepticism cannot afford to be sceptical of itself. The vacuum can only be filled by some form of historicism: either in an ahistorical form as evinced, for example in evolutionism; or in an historical form as, for example, in going back to the Presocratics to regain an uncertain future, or to the Enlightenment to reject a certain one. The internal problematic

is actually quite a simple one. A process with no beginning or end is, as remarked before, unable to be a process. A process not only implies but needs something prior *and* posterior to itself. Otherwise, it must lead to an internal infinite regress and destroy itself.

An eclectic form of this phenomena can be seen in the contemporary passion for criticism which, when its vitriol finishes, seems to just vaporize into itself. In the last few years there have been a number of books, hailed as critiques of contemporary society, which have captured the popular imagination. What is most remarkable about them, however, is not their departure from contemporary norms but their unity with them. Two good examples are American Alan Bloom's, *The Closing of the American Mind*, and Canadian John Ralston Saul's, *Voltaire's Bastards: the Dictatorship of Reason in the West*.

Bloom gets our attention by seemingly wanting to return to some form of absolute verities. His Straussian credentials and generally ahistorical sense that the ancients are not just historical artifacts entices his readers to hope for some certainty to juxtapose to the relativism of contemporary academe. Chapters on the superiority of Mozart to rock'n roll and the spinelessness of university administrations faced with the politically correct strengthen this hope. But, alas, hope must spring eternal, for Bloom has in fact no Platonic agenda. Unfortunately he is a prime example of that preference for Plato over Aristotle seen amongst the Europeans and British since the nineteenth century just because Plato is for them a "literary" philosopher without a "system." Thus he can be thought to represent a kind of "safe" openendedness — absolute but not really! Thus it should come as no surprise

that Bloom is unable to end his book with any answer to his criticism. The final result is an exhortation to try and be more like Socrates, to keep the dialogue going. In other words we end with a kinder gentler form of deconstruction – the endless conversation of a cultivated European enjoying a cup of cappuccino and a good cigar.

Saul demands attention with a catchy sort of risqué title and a passion for vitriol against the “establishment.” Chapters on the market for armaments and the inability and unwillingness of hypocritical governments to control their manufacture and distribution, together with a conspiracy theory blaming everything bad in the world on the Enlightenment and the Jesuits as the precursors mentally and organizationally of the IMF, the Ivy League and the École Nationale d’Administration make for entertaining reading. Unfortunately, Saul’s case is undermined by his Pascalian notion that he can argue rationally against the primacy of reason. This fly in his intellectual ointment gradually turns the laughter and elation of his reader into frustration with his inability to end: that is, to provide for any solution to the world political structure that he laments and despises.

One might think that relief from Bloom and Saul’s lack of teleology would be provided by Francis Fukuyama in his book, *The End of History and the Last Man*, which makes the amazing but soothing claim that the contemporary American state is the “absolute state” that Hegel posited but failed to properly enunciate. In Fukuyama we find the paradigmatic contemporary scholar. Full of learning without command of original sources, he shows in full flower the result of an abstract political education at the best

universities.

Bloom knows his sources well enough to be somewhat careful. The problematic of his position is due to his lack of a thorough knowledge of the metaphysical sources of the political works he favours. Saul’s inability to achieve any solution, his negativity in general, is due to his unacquaintance with anything theoretically significant predating the Aufklärung and to the naivete, showed somewhat by Bloom, involved with thinking that politics has any theoretical independence from speculative thought.

In Fukuyama we come face to face with the consequence of a first class contemporary education having made it impossible to distinguish between primary and secondary sources. Kojève and Hegel become the same, or to paraphrase Fukuyama, frustrated with scholarly distinctions, their differences matter not - they are just symbols of an *empirical* truth; namely, that properly interpreted they evidence theoretically what we already know politically - the United States is the Absolute State. All states from now on will have to become clones. There is nothing now to fight about or to create politically. Everything is déjà vu. Or to put it in the form Fukuyama learned second hand - history is at an end, the last man has finally arrived.

Are such books as the three alluded to here worth reading? As exemplars of the contemporary state of intellectual dialogue perhaps they are. In themselves they are not. And this is the problem of our time. For many centuries, particularly our own, reason has been under attack - from itself! The result is the theoretical weakness and sheer willfulness of a reason using itself as an “instrument” for means rather than ends.

Bloom, Saul and Fukuyama are in a way symbols of this problematic. But we must be clear that they are not symbols due to an inability to make distinctions between primary and secondary sources. Rather they become symbols when we are willing to take the time and effort to think speculatively. To do so we must be able to distinguish between reason as simply calculative and discursive

and reason as comprehensive of contrariety. We must be able to grasp in thought the Platonic criticism of sophistry as apparent reason and the Aristotelian insight that actuality must always predominate over possibility. In a word we must regain the ability to grasp the ontological necessity that process must have an end as well as a beginning.

AYN RAND AND IMMANUEL KANT

Francis K. Peddle

Ayn Rand's "objectivism" is derived from her theory of concepts. Leonard Peikoff, her principal student and expositor, states that:

To be "objective" in one's conceptual activities is volitionally to adhere to reality by following certain rules of method, a method based on facts *and* appropriate to man's form of cognition.¹

Logic is the method of cognition or the manner in which volitional consciousness conforms to reality. Existence has primacy over consciousness, in Rand's view, and the latter is dependent upon existence — consciousness looks out to, perceives and grasps existence but does not control or

create it.

Nonobjective philosophers take consciousness as primary. According to Rand these subjectivist philosophies regard existence as somehow derivative from consciousness. Rand uses the formula "Existence is Identity; Consciousness is Identification", to declare that the law of identity links existence and consciousness, or metaphysics and epistemology.²

The law of contradiction underlies the method of objectivist or reality based thought. Contradiction negates the law of identity. Identifications between consciousness and existence must therefore be *noncontradictory*. Peikoff points out that for Rand "logic *is* the art of noncontradictory

¹ Leonard Peikoff, *Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand* (Dutton, New York, 1991), p.117. I am reliant on this thorough and comprehensive presentation of Ayn Rand's work for the positions attributed to her in this article.

² *Ibid.*, p. 118.

identification.”³ Any metaphysics that is immersed in dialectic and does not hold fast to noncontradictory identification ignores reality and is incapable of rational thinking.

A conspicuous target of Rand’s objectivism is the critical philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Peikoff picks up on this theme when he declares:

In the eighteenth century, Immanuel Kant secularized the religious viewpoint. According to his philosophy the human mind – specifically, the cognitive structures common to all men, their innate forms of perception and conception – is what creates existence (which he called the “phenomenal” world). Thus God’s will gives way to man’s consciousness, which becomes the metaphysical factor underlying and ordering existence.⁴

Rand believes she is the first philosopher to accept the full meaning and implications of the self-evident identity of consciousness. Her position is against both Kantianism and naïve realism. Peikoff states :

All the standard attacks on the senses – and wider: all the modern, Kant-inspired attacks on human cognition as such – begin with the opposite premise. They begin with the premise that consciousness *should not* have identity and conclude that, since it does, consciousness is invalid. (The naïve realists accept the same premise, but hold that it poses no problem; consciousness, they say *is* a

characterless “mirror”, i.e., a thing without any identity.⁵

Rand is undoubtedly focusing her attack on the well-known Kantian distinction between the noumenal and phenomenal world – things-in-themselves and the objects of possible experience. She sees identity as the precondition of consciousness and proceeds to characterize Kantianism as an “anti-identity” approach to the problem of consciousness.

Nor do Objectivists speak of “things in themselves,” which Kantians contrast to “things in relation to consciousness.” The very terminology insinuates the notion that consciousness, by the mere fact of existing is an agent of distortion.”⁶

Objectivist philosophy stands in stark contrast to subjective idealism as exemplified by Plato, Locke, Kant and Hegel. Kantian subjectivism is a reaction to the deficiencies of intrinsicism. Objectivism advances over and beyond intrinsicism and subjectivism by making it axiomatic that there is “no consciousness without existence and no knowledge of existence without consciousness.”⁷ Conceptual cognition consists of a volitional relationship between consciousness *and* existence. The *volitional* aspect of consciousness is an important, albeit undeveloped, component of objectivism.

Rand views Kant’s Copernican revolution as shaping and defining modern philosophy.

⁵ Ibid., p. 49, see also, p. 109.

⁶ Ibid., p. 51.

⁷ Ibid., p. 149.

³ Ibid., p. 118.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 21-22.

Objectivism is specifically charged with the task of refuting and overcoming the destructive force of critical philosophy. As the twentieth century progressed, *duty* to the noumenal world became transformed into *duty* to the group or the state.⁸ Peikoff declares that:

Ayn Rand is to Aristotle what Kant is to Plato. Both sides of the perennial duel in their pure form, have finally been made explicit. Kant's philosophy is Platonism without paganism. Ayn Rand's philosophy is Aristotelianism without Platonism.⁹

The "perennial duel" is between otherworldliness and worldliness, the primacy of either consciousness or existence, intrinsicism and extrinsicism, fantasy and reality, metaphysics and epistemology, the negative and the positive, unreason and reason, abstract and concrete concepts, mind and body, and the almost opened panoply of contraries, oppositions, dichotomies, antitheses and nonidentities which pervade and are the dynamic and life of the philosophical tradition. The question for us is whether Rand's characterization of how Kant fits into the "perennial duel" is accurate and how does Kantianism itself deal with the interconnection between consciousness and existence?

There appears to be no subtle distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness in Rand's work. This is a convenient lapse when it comes to her treatment of animals. In what follows it will simply be assumed that consciousness for Rand is what Kant and

Hegel meant by self-consciousness.¹⁰

Does consciousness create existence in Kant's critical philosophy? Is there any naive sense in which he would maintain that if humanity disappeared so would external reality? Numerous passages in the *Critique of Pure Reason* would lead us to say otherwise. And in what sense are consciousness and existence interdependent and how are they disconnected? I shall, however, limit myself here primarily to the often maligned "transcendental aesthetic".

The "transcendental aesthetic" deals with space and time as the pure *a priori* intuitions ("Anschauungen") which are the forms of all appearances of outer and inner sense. Necessity and universality (which are mutually dependent) can only inhere in *a priori*, not empirical, intuitions. Kant seeks absolute necessity and universality, unlike David Hume who limits himself to custom as a relative subjective necessity.

It is by and large misleading to use the word "subjective" within the context of the critical philosophy, although there is undoubtedly a forceful sense in which it subjectivizes knowledge. Kant seeks to explicate the fundamental conditions under which knowledge is possible and in doing so he discovers its inherent limitations. In delineating these conditions, as the prolegomenon to a speculative science of knowledge, it is more appropriate to use

⁸ Peikoff, *op. cit.*, "The Duel Between Plato and Aristotle," p. 457.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 458-459.

¹⁰ For a more thorough treatment, see, G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, tr. A.V. Miller (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971), Section I, "Mind Subjective," Subsection B, "Phenomenology of Mind" (a) Consciousness Proper, (b) Self-consciousness, pp. 153-178.

terms such as pure, *a priori*, ideal and transcendental. For example, the “transcendental ideality” of time, means that we must deny to time an “absolute reality”.¹¹ In other words, time cannot be understood independently of any reference to sensible intuition, although it does not arise out of, nor is it conditioned by, sensible intuition. Time has an empirical, but not an absolute or objective, reality. By denying that time has an absolute reality, Kant merely means that as such it does not inhere in objects themselves.¹²

In a revealing passage in the “transcendental aesthetic” Kant counters the position of realists and indeed of Randian objectivism:

This ideality of space and time leaves, however, the certainty of empirical knowledge unaffected, for we are equally sure of it, whether these forms necessarily inhere in things in themselves or only in our intuition of them.¹³

In characterizing space and time, outer and inner sense as ideal, Kant must necessarily portray all objects of the senses as mere appearances. In doing so he does not mean that these objects are “illusions:”

For in an appearance the objects, nay even the properties that we ascribe to them, are always regarded as something actually given. Since, however, in the

relation of the given object to the subject, such properties depend upon the mode of intuition of the subject, this object as *appearance* (Erscheinung) is to be distinguished from itself as object *in itself*. Thus when I maintain that the quality of space and time, in conformity with which, as a condition of their existence, I posit both bodies and my own soul, lies in my mode of intuition and not in those objects in themselves, I am not saying that bodies merely *seem* (scheinen) to be outside me, or that my soul only *seems* to be given in my self-consciousness. It would be my own fault, if out of that which I ought to reckon as appearance, I made mere illusion.¹⁴

The fallacy of both subjectivism and objectivism is that they give primacy to either consciousness or existence. By making space and time the subjective conditions of all sensible intuition, Kant is asserting that existence cannot be primary as something in itself since consciousness cannot connect with empirical reality outside of, or independently of, the *a priori* intuitions of all sensibility. Likewise, the pure intuitions, although not arising, *a posteriori*, from sensibility are necessarily and universally connected with the existence of objects.

Our mode of intuition is dependent upon the existence of the object, and is therefore possible only if the subject's faculty of representation is affected by

¹¹ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, tr. Norman Kemp Smith (New York, St. Martins, 1965), p. 78, B52.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 79, B54.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 80, B56, see also, p. 85, B64.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89, B69. This is not to be confused with dialectical and transcendental illusion, see pp. 99-101, B86-88. There can be no transcendental illusion with respect to the transcendental aesthetic.

that object.¹⁵

Kant points out that space and time need not be limited to human sensibility. The pure intuitions *may* inhere in all finite, thinking beings. Only a primordial being would have a non-derivative intellectual intuition.

Surmising the universality of the pure intuitions of all sensibility, is but further evidence of Kant's humble estimation of the human condition. If space and time were indeed limited to human sensibility (of which no proof can be made), then indeed human consciousness would have the primacy Rand imputes to Kant's philosophy. The critical philosophy is setting the conditions for the knowable and in doing so starkly carves off human knowledge from the divine intellect. Transcendental philosophy is occupied with the mode of our knowledge of objects to the extent that it is possible *a priori*.

In a well known passage Kant declared that he "found it necessary to deny *knowledge*, in order to make room for *faith*."¹⁶ Objectivism, on the other hand, is *atheistic*. Reason is the only means of knowledge. Rand rejects God and any form of idealism.¹⁷ She will posit nothing that transcends existence and will only accept facts as the absolutely metaphysically given. Kant would say that to accept simply the factually given is to sidestep altogether the *a priori* dimension in our knowledge. It is to jump uncritically and superficially into the sensible and the objects

of possible experience without recognizing the conditions under which metaphysical knowledge is possible.¹⁸ The *Critique of Pure Reason* has both positive and negatively limiting elements. The transcendental aesthetic and analytic together make up a positive methodology within which knowledge is possible. The noumenal world, on the other hand, limits sensibility and shows the impossibility of a transcendental employment of the pure concepts of the understanding.

Objectivism encapsulates and at the same time counters the twentieth century. It absolutizes human reason, makes openended its potential and gives primacy to the empirically given. When the principle of noncon-tradiction is violated, it is the volitional consciousness which adjusts. Rand sees in Kant the progenitor of everything that is wrong with modernity. He is the father of statism, be it fascist, communist or welfare-capitalist. In aesthetics he is the "epistemological antipode" of Romanticism, the father of modern art.¹⁹ He denies existence in the name of nothing, and makes the unknowable, the thing in itself, primary. The result was the culture of nihilism, according to objectivist philosophy.

Rand certainly found little to admire in traditional metaphysics but the Kantian rejection of it is, for her, even more pernicious. Peikoff summarizes:

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 90, B72.

¹⁶ Ibid., "A Preface to Second Edition," p. 29, Bxxx.

¹⁷ Peikoff, *op. cit.* pp. 30-33.

¹⁸ *Vide*, Francis K. Peddle, *Thought and Being: Hegel's Criticism of Kant's System of Cosmological Ideas* (Washington, University Press of America, 1980), pp. 31-32.

¹⁹ Peikoff, *op. cit.*, p. 449.

Modernist intellectuals are comparable to a psychopath who murders for kicks. They seek the thrill of the new; and the new to them is the negative. The new is obliteration, obliteration of the essential in every field; they have no interest in anything to take its place. Thus the uniqueness of the century behind us: philosophy gleefully rid of system-building, education based on the theory that cognition is harmful, science boastful of its inability to understand, art which expelled beauty, literature which flaunted *anti*heroes, language "liberated" from syntax, verse "free" of meter, *non*representational painting, *atonal* music, *unconscious* psychology, *de*construction in literacy criticism, *indeterminacy* as the new depth in physics, *incompleteness* as the revelation in mathematics — a void everywhere that was acclaimed by the avant-garde with a metaphysical chuckle. It was the sound of triumph, the triumph of the new *anti*-ideal, of the unknowable, the unreachable, the unendurable.

In a Kantian reality, nothing else was possible.²⁰

Can the widely alluded to cultural and philosophical malaise of modernity be ultimately, and causally, traced to the Kantian thing-in-itself? And how does the philosophy of objectivism purge modernity of the *anti*-ideal?

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 457-458. See also, "Kant versus America," in Leonard Peikoff, *The Ominous Parallels: The End of Freedom in America* (New York, Stein and Day, 1982), pp. 119-139.

Objectivism has a "benevolent — universe" premise. The good is achievable and rationality can be applied to practical life by adhering to the virtues of independence, integrity, honesty, justice, productiveness and pride. There is a naïveté in objectivism that declares that all one has to do is recognize the facts and act accordingly. On the other hand, some will find relief in this naïve metaphysics and epistemology. It's adherence to the principle of non-contradiction is the same as much that is in the philosophy of Plato, Kant and Hegel and its espousal of many other principles is hardly an arresting advance in the history of philosophy. Its rejection of primacy-of-consciousness philosophy as allegiance to the ruling consciousness of society is laudable. This is all a welcome antidote to our dependency-creating, overcomplex, homogenizing, mass entertainment culture.

The factualism of Rand's philosophy is, however, very much a twentieth century phenomenon. Consciousness is not simply a given, nor can we know that existence simply exists as well. In other words, subjectivity and objectivity are ineliminably conditioned by each other. Rand assumes their separateness and uses noncontradiction to find points of interrelation or logical connection. There is no difference between Rand's objectivism and experimental science in general or the hypothetico-deductive method. The method of experimental science is not philosophical method, science or inquiry. This is where Rand's views fall short of a thinking (especially a speculative science such as Kant's or Hegel's) that is subtly resilient to internal and external refutation.

Kant's critical philosophy is steadfast against

most second order criticisms of its own positions. The transcendental aesthetic, in particular, has been taken to task for advocating antiquated notions of space and time. But to conceive of sensibility without the pure intuitions is mere fantasizing in other-dimensional universes and the like. Of these things we can have no knowledge or certainty. One cannot understand modernity

without an acquaintance with the critical philosophy. Likewise, it cannot be said that everything one dislikes about modernity is the direct responsibility of Kantianism. Such hyperbole has no place in the philosophical tradition. But then again neither does a modesty which declares philosophy has little to contribute to civil society or our understanding of the world.

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