

# NEWSLETTER

## OF THE AYN RAND INSTITUTE

Volume 1, No. 2 • The Ayn Rand Institute: The Center for the Advancement of Objectivism, Los Angeles • June, 1986



Leonard Peikoff delivering his 1986 Ford Hall Forum address "Religion Versus America." An ARI-produced videotape will soon be available to campus clubs.

### CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PROJECT

We are pleased to announce that the United States Chamber of Commerce will include a selection from *Atlas Shrugged* in a curriculum package on capitalism that it will distribute to U.S. high schools.

Among the reading materials assembled under the heading of "Competition and Productivity," the Chamber is reprinting the scene in which Rearden is put on trial for "illegally" selling Rearden Metal. Students will be asked to contrast this with an excerpt from Upton Sinclair's anti-business polemic in *The Jungle*.

Additionally, the Chamber has agreed to print the following at the conclusion of the *Atlas Shrugged* excerpt: "For further information on Ayn Rand's philosophy, including her defense of individualism and the morality of rational self-interest, write to The Ayn Rand Institute, (address). Ask for packet CC, especially prepared for this U.S. Chamber of Commerce project."

"Packet CC," to be prepared with the help of our high-school teachers group, will include such items as a brief synopsis of Objectivism, answers to common questions and misconceptions about capitalism, a list of suggested Objectivist readings, and information about the high-school essay contest, campus clubs, tape courses, etc.

This project could be a major breakthrough into the pre-college audience. According to the Chamber, its current programs are being used in more than 90 percent of all American secondary schools and in 14 foreign countries.

## FIRST YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

In September of 1984, Leonard Peikoff announced that there was a slight possibility that an Objectivist institute of some kind might open in the distant future.

On February 1, 1986, The Ayn Rand Institute celebrated its first anniversary.

In the first issue of this Newsletter, we indicated that during our first year we would be concentrating most of our efforts on two particular projects: the high school essay contest and the organization of campus clubs. Both have been successful.

Before the Institute opened, there were eight campus clubs. To date, 30 more Objectivist clubs are fully operational, and at least 15 more are in the process of organizing. It is particularly encouraging that Objectivist clubs now exist at most of the country's top academic schools. (See page 3.)

The response to the essay contest indicates that we reached some of the brightest students in the U.S. and Canada. One reader, David Kelley, reports: "I was very encouraged by these essays. On the whole, I found them better than the average lot of papers I got at Vassar."

There have been other successful "firsts" as well: the launching of our Campus Club Speakers Bureau; the production of Institute videotapes; the placement of two philosophic "advertisements."

Fund-raising has exceeded even our own expectations. Since our opening, we

have significantly increased our financial base and are constantly adding contributors. This has enabled us to increase our staff, employ professionals to handle specialty projects, and develop a more ambitious agenda for our second year.

We will, of course, continue to emphasize the campus club project and the high-school essay contest, but we are planning developments on a number of fronts. We intend to target specific universities in order to encourage the teaching of courses on Objectivism. Additionally, we will be investigating new ways to reach high-school teachers and students. Publicity will also be a major new goal during the upcoming year; utilizing the services of public relations practitioners, we will try to increase public awareness of both the Institute and Objectivism.

In order to implement these plans and to develop the Institute into a truly effective cultural force, we must, of course, substantially increase our financial base. Toward that end, there will be an even greater emphasis on fund-raising throughout the upcoming year.

From the outset, we knew that the philosophic battle which the Institute has undertaken would be long and difficult. Thus, although we are encouraged by what we have accomplished so far, we know that we have barely begun.

## 1986 ESSAY CONTEST

We received more than 2,500 essays from high schools in every state, Canada, India and West Germany. Although we had hoped for many more entries, the response was better than that for most writing contests. And since we were not prepared to underwrite a major promotional campaign for this initial contest, we are not surprised by the results. (The 1987 contest will be publicized much more extensively.)

### LATE NEWS

The winner of the 1986 essay contest has just been chosen. The \$5000 first prize will go to James Kwak, a senior at Horace Greeley H.S. in Chappaqua, N.Y. Our next issue will provide details on all winners and include Mr. Kwak's essay.

Several state Departments of Education reacted favorably to this project. In California, the Deputy Superintendent

praised our concern for student writing, and wrote to all high-school principals in the state, encouraging them to inform their teachers and students about the contest.

Judging by comments we received, the project did make a start toward accomplishing its primary purpose: to introduce Ayn Rand's ideas to young minds.

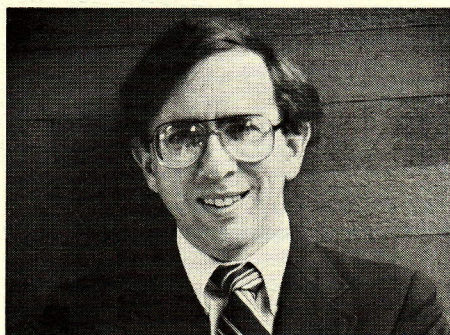
An English teacher from Illinois, who submitted essays from her Honors Advanced Composition class, wrote: "Thank you for initiating an essay competition which has provided not only a forum for a relevant twentieth century philosophy, but also a stimulating impetus for all of us."

An Oklahoma teacher wrote: "Regardless of whether or not any of my students win your contest, their educations have been greatly enriched by their exposure to Ayn Rand and her philosophies."



## Institute Profile: MICHAEL S. BERLINER

by Susan Ludel



Michael S. Berliner

**"I'll never forget it. It was the fall of 1958, and I was a junior at the University of Michigan. I didn't leave my room for days, and when I finally walked out — it was shocking. It was as though I were having an actual physical reaction. I looked around, and everything looked different, everything looked clear to me for the first time in my life. I didn't understand all of the implications, but it was the most intense reaction I've ever had. And I knew that what had happened would have the most important effect on my life."**

What had happened is that Michael Berliner had just finished reading *The Fountainhead*.

He then switched his major from journalism to political science. He had been interested in politics since junior high school in Columbus, Ohio, where he was raised. "I was one of those typical 'Liberal-types,'" he says wryly, "you know, the kind who thought that anyone who was intellectual just had to be on the left."

Now more interested in ideas, he remained at Michigan and got a Master's Degree in philosophy of education.

Deciding that he wanted to pursue an academic career, he then went to Boston University, where he specialized in the philosophy of education, and received his Ph.D. in philosophy in 1970.

Dr. Berliner taught for twenty years, most of them in the Department of Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education at California State University, Northridge, in Los Angeles. His favorite courses dealt with comparative political philosophies and with the philosophic foundations of teaching. He also convinced his department to permit him to teach a two-semester course on Objectivism. His papers on Montessori education appeared in several professional journals, and he served on the Board of Directors of a Montessori school. For a year, he also did a weekly five-minute FM radio show called "Philosophy in Action."

By the early 1980's, however, having served as Chairman of his department for several years, Dr. Berliner discovered something new about himself: he was enjoying administrative work more than teaching. Planning and coordinating a variety of projects, dealing with a continuing series of

problems, juggling a host of disparate details simultaneously — the actual day-to-day activities of management — "this is what I felt much more at home doing," he says. "Teaching just wasn't giving me a great deal of personal satisfaction any more."

It was time for re-evaluation: "I started to question very seriously what I wanted to do with the rest of my life, and I started to explore other fields."

He seemed to be looking for the impossible: a career that would combine his administrative skills with his interest in philosophy and Objectivism.

He found it briefly during the summer of 1983 when he was hired as conference coordinator for The Jefferson School.

The next summer, during a conversation with Leonard Peikoff, Dr. Berliner happened to mention that he was now looking for a career outside of academia. The Ayn Rand Institute was just in its formative stage; no one yet knew whether enough money could be raised for it to begin. But the two men discussed, in principle, whether Dr. Berliner would be interested in becoming its Executive Director.

"I was on the edge of my seat waiting to see if the Institute would go," Dr. Berliner says. "Given my background in both academia and administration, the job would be ideal. Also, I loved the idea of starting something from the beginning. And can you imagine getting paid to spread Objectivism! I thought it would be the best job in the world."

Experience has only confirmed his view. "I actually like this job as an end in itself. I like dealing with all of it — from budgets, to public relations, to explaining Objectivism to potential contributors. I like the thinking process that's needed in the actual daily work of carrying out Board policies. And I love the end result — helping to further Objectivism. I'm now doing what I think is the most important thing I could possibly do."

Dr. Berliner also makes time for the other important things in his life, which he pursues with the same cheerful tenacity as he does his work. Music (as a pianist, he plays Chopin to Joplin), photography and travel are much more than casual interests. His wife, Judy, an Associate Professor of Pathology at the UCLA Medical School, has established a national reputation for her research in diabetes, and their 19-year-old daughter, Dana, will be a senior at Yale. ("Dana's a second generation Objectivist," Dr. Berliner says proudly, then quickly adds, "but not because we ever pushed her into it. When she was growing up she just took the philosophy for granted because it was true. Then she pursued it on her own. We left her alone.")

Back in the fall of 1958, it was an 18-year-old Judy Block who told her then-college boyfriend that he just *had* to read a really important novel. And it was soon after that everything looked clear to Michael Berliner for the first time in his life.

## ARI Contributors: Q and A

*(As a new feature of the Newsletter, we will interview Objectivists from business and other fields. As contributors to the Institute, they are essential to our continued growth and success. As individuals, their stories are interesting and inspiring.)*

Fourteen years ago, Jim Hanrahan sat in a small, windowless office in New York City with a friend and an answering machine. They had just opened their own telecommunications company. Two years later, he bought out his partner. Today, at the age of 40, Mr. Hanrahan is the sole owner and president of Precision Interconnect, a 7 million dollar company that provides telephone systems to 12 percent of all businesses in Manhattan.

**Q: How did you get into the telecommunications business?**

**A:** It was by accident. After I graduated from college (NYU), I was interested in business, and even more in making movies. But I decided that I first had to accumulate some money, so I looked for a job. I answered an ad from a company that had "communications" in its name because it sounded like a media-type company. It wasn't. It was a telecommunications company — a sort of fly-by-night-one, at that — but I went to work as a salesman.

**Q: Why did you remain in the field?**

**A:** First, I discovered that I really like selling. It was — and still is — constantly changing. I like the competition, the challenge of trying to get concepts across in situations that always differ. Also, part of the original appeal was fighting a government monopoly. This was way before the AT&T breakup and divestiture. Then as time went on, the phone systems got better (when electronic key systems replaced mechanical ones), and I thought the business would remain remunerative.

**Q: Why do you think you have been so successful?**

**A:** For several reasons. Many of my original competitors went out of business because they didn't analyze or adjust to the changes in the industry. They were pragmatic, range-of-the-moment. My approach has been more analytical, and I kept up with changes in the field. In 1979, I acquired the Toshiba distributorship, which hadn't been in New York yet. Their system is much more efficient and saves business an enormous amount of money. Also, I put in an awful lot of hard work — more than 80 hours a week at the beginning. And because I view what I'm doing as morally good, there's always been an emotional payback that most other businessmen don't get.

**Q: Has Objectivism contributed to your success?**

**A:** Absolutely. One important thing that I take from Objectivism to business is psycho-epistemological — having a logical approach, defining my terms, having specific answers to the specific questions that will come up. But the major thing, and this

*(Continued on page 4)*



## CAMPUS CLUB ROSTER

### United States

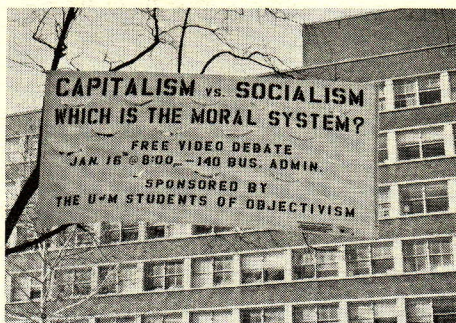
Amherst College  
Arizona State University  
Auburn University  
Baldwin-Wallace College  
Brandeis University  
Brown University  
Carnegie-Mellon University  
Cleveland State University  
Colorado School of Mines  
Columbia University  
Denison University  
Duke University  
Florida, University of  
George Washington University  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
Harvard University  
Indiana University  
Johns Hopkins University  
Kansas, University of  
Maryland, University of  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Michigan, University of  
North Texas State University  
Oregon State University  
Pennsylvania, University of  
Pennsylvania State University  
San Francisco City College  
San Francisco State University  
South Florida, University of  
Stanford University  
Texas, University of  
Washington University (St. Louis)  
Yale University

### Canada

Guelph, University of  
Manitoba, University of  
Saskatchewan, University of  
Waterloo, University of  
York University

### Starting

Alberta (Canada), University of  
Calgary (Canada), University of  
Colorado, University of  
Georgia, University of  
Illinois, University of  
Kent State University  
McMaster University (Canada)  
McGill University (Canada)  
Missouri (Kansas City), University of  
Nebraska (Omaha), University of  
Northwestern University  
Princeton University  
Purdue University  
Regina (Canada), University of  
State University of New York at  
Binghamton  
State University of New York at Buffalo  
Wisconsin, University of



Advertising banner on the University of Michigan campus.

## CAMPUS CLUB REPORT



Some of the 60 students from 17 colleges at the ARI campus club party in Boston on April 19. Special thanks to co-organizers Anna Franco of MIT and John Murphy of Harvard.

## CLUB ACTIVITIES

Campus clubs are taking action to help spread Objectivism and to enhance their own members' knowledge of the philosophy.

Among the most popular club activities: presentation of videotapes and audiotapes, talks by guest speakers, and informal discussions about the writings of Ayn Rand and general philosophic issues.

Club members have also distributed our essay contest forms to high schools and have successfully campaigned to have their college libraries order the bound volumes of *The Objectivist Newsletter*, *The Objectivist*, and *The Ayn Rand Letter*.

Leonard Peikoff's taped lecture course "The Philosophy of Objectivism" is being sponsored by many clubs. By acting as tape lessees, the clubs are able to take advantage of the substantial ARI discount on the rental cost. We anticipate that clubs will also present Dr. Peikoff's course "Understanding Objectivism," now available to clubs under the same terms.

The Institute's videotapes are in regular use. These tapes have succeeded in attracting many non-members to club meetings. The availability of these tapes provides a ready-made schedule of events, making it easier for a club to get started and to establish itself on campus.

ARI's Campus Club Speakers Bureau began operating in February. We have helped to arrange appearances by Objectivist speakers at such schools as Brandeis, George Washington, Michigan, York, Guelph, and Waterloo. The Institute considers such speaking engagements by Objectivists to be a major means by which Objectivism can achieve increased visibility in the academic world.

Attendance at club events is encouraging. An organizational meeting at Yale attracted 40 students, most of whom had learned of the meeting from announcements posted around campus. Regular meetings at most schools are drawing 20-30 students, but special events are attracting even larger audiences. At Michigan, 60 viewed the "Debate 1984" tape and 100 viewed "The Sanction of the Victims" tape. The largest audience to date has been at York University in Toronto, where 325 attended a short talk on

Objectivism by Harry Binswanger, followed by a three-hour question-and-answer session with Dr. Binswanger and John Ridpath. According to York's club president Bill Poupore, 45 new members joined the York Objectivist club.

Although the clubs are making extensive use of the Institute's help, their success has been due primarily to the hard work and creativity of their members. They have produced effective publicity campaigns for their events, developed imaginative programs, and in two noteworthy cases, they have even arranged for funding from their own universities. At Stanford, under the leadership of Donna Regenbaum, the Objectivist club submitted a budget proposal to the Stanford Program Board, and received even more than the substantial amount of money it had requested — an apparently unprecedented large grant for a new club. And at George Washington University, Diana Carter's budget proposal resulted in the school's financing the full cost of renting "The Philosophy of Objectivism" taped course.

## Debate Team Formed

As part of our Campus Club Speakers Bureau, the Institute has formed a debate team of Harry Binswanger and John Ridpath.

Our goal is for the Objectivist team to debate leftists at campuses throughout the U.S. and Canada, in forums such as "Debate 1984" (in which Leonard Peikoff and John Ridpath debated two socialists on the topic of "Capitalism vs. Socialism: Which is the Moral Social System?").

Campus clubs interested in organizing such debates will be urged to obtain, as opponents, faculty members or other reputable spokesmen for the socialist position.

While philosophic debates have limited educational value, their inherent drama usually attracts large audiences. (More than one thousand people attended "Debate 1984" in Toronto.) Thus, such debates can give Objectivism more visibility on campuses, and introduce an even wider audience to the fact that Objectivism is a serious, systematic philosophy.

The first debate is tentatively scheduled for next fall at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.



will sound too formal, too much like a speech, but it's true — the most important thing is the moral sanction Objectivism gives a businessman. I don't feel compelled to justify myself, like most other businessmen, who seem embarrassed, ashamed of what they do. At the end of every day, there's an awareness that what I'm doing is right, noble.

**Q: What about Objectivism initially interested you?**

**A:** That it provided a comprehensive code of values based on reason. After the novels, I read all of the other books and took the lectures. This was before college. On my block, almost everyone cared about ideas and, in some way, they accepted reason. Was I surprised when I got to college! I went there prepared to argue Objectivism

with the teachers and students. But they weren't even interested enough in ideas to argue.

**Q: Why are you interested in the Institute?**

**A:** I was really happy to see the flyer announcing it. Because it's a way for me to do something to help that doesn't take up a lot of time. And if I can't spend time, at least I can spend money. The Institute's really an effective way to speed up the dissemination of ideas, to reach the high schools and colleges, to be a catalyst that will spread Objectivism more quickly. Also, it's a means of knowing that there's support for and interest in Objectivism out in the world.

**Q: What are your career goals now?**

**A:** Right now, I'm at a crossroads. My major goal is still to get into the film business. I've taken a lot of courses and made some short films, but I'm running out of time and energy trying to do both. At some point, I have to switch. Financially, I could do it now, but if I spend another two years in this business, the company would become much more valuable to a large company interested in acquisition. I'm giving myself another couple of years to make the switch. But then I'm going to have to learn as much about the film business as I had to learn about the phone business — everything.

**Q: Why do you want to make movies?**

**A:** Because people aren't making the kind I like to see. I'd like to see the Objectivist type of world on film.

## TIMES Ad Draws Response

On December 13, 1985, a full-page advertisement, sponsored by the Institute, appeared in *The New York Times*. Entitled "Warning: Government-Funded Medicine is Hazardous to Your Health," it contained lengthy excerpts from Leonard Peikoff's 1985 Ford Hall Forum address, "Medicine: The Death of a Profession."

More than 1,100 people responded to the ad, nearly 400 of whom were doctors. Fifty percent of these doctors sent contributions to the Institute; dozens also wrote letters, some excerpts of which are reprinted below. Although movingly tragic in tone, they indicate that Dr. Peikoff's message — if acted upon — may actually help to resolve this literal life-or-death crisis.

Congratulations on your *Times* ad from a leftwing activist of the 60's who has learned his lesson! . . . I have not agreed with many of your group's principles in the past, but I am certainly ready to re-evaluate my position.

M.D., Brooklyn, N.Y.

. . . I'm a "new" physician in practice and I'm frankly horrified at the state the health care system is in. You hit the nail on the head. I hear portions of what was said . . . every day at lunch. It's great to see it in print and stated so eloquently.

M.D., Mt. Kisco, N.Y.

Am I allowed to frame, and possibly enlarge the entire article or parts of it, and display it in my waiting room?

M.D., Bronxville, N.Y.

Your ad in the *NY Times* was most appropriate. It is frustrating being a young physician in N.Y. at this time. Please continue to inform the public that it is they who are victims.

M.D., Woodsburgh, N.Y.

[Your article] contains all the reality which is bound to hit American physicians. The proof mentioned is very much present in countries with governmental directed policy. It is an everlasting burden for the working man's mind and I envy you for the possibility of diverting the danger imposed by such laws.

M.D., Ljubljana, Yugoslavia

As one who recently retired from the active practice of medicine after 45 years, I can only agree that what we are experiencing today is not what we knew. Lacking is the trust, confidence and understanding that existed between a patient, the public and the doctor. My hope and prayer is that we awaken before it is too late. Thank Leonard Peikoff for an article well written.

M.D., Marco Island, Florida

I am presently in medical school and the tuition forbids my making any contributions . . . I do commit myself however, to sending you a substantial portion of my first DRG (Diagnosis Related Group)

payment, unless of course the government does away with them, in which case I will be able to send you considerably more.

Med. student, N.Y.

Thanks for your wonderful review of our serious problems — the best I've read. Enclosed is my contribution to your wonderfully understanding institute.

M.D., Larchmont, N.Y.

The article is one of the most stimulating and vivid descriptions I have read of the sad status of the American medical profession and its grievous future. The sad truth is that some of the medical profession and certainly most patients do not realize the consequences of DRGs. Personally, I am scared to be hospitalized with the knowledge that my future will be at the mercy of the hospital and insurance bureaucrats.

M.D., Tarrytown, N.Y.

## ARI BANQUET PLANNED

The Ayn Rand Institute will hold its first banquet and dance on November 8, 1986 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles. Its purpose is two-fold: to introduce the winners of this year's high-school essay contest, and to raise funds to promote next year's contest by auctioning books and other personal items from the estate of Ayn Rand.

More details will be announced in the months ahead.

THE AYN RAND INSTITUTE  
13101 Washington Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90066