

THE AYN RAND INSTITUTE

Newsletter

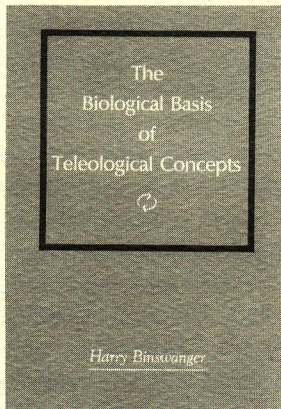
Vol. 5, No. 2

• The Center for the Advancement of Objectivism •

July, 1990

ARI Press Publishes First Book

The Biological Basis of Teleological Concepts, by Harry Binswanger, has been published by The Ayn Rand Institute. A scholarly work in the philosophy of science, this is the first book to be published by ARI Press.



The Biological Basis of Teleological Concepts is an edited, updated version of the author's doctoral dissertation on goal-directed action, written from 1969 through 1973 at Columbia University. Applying principles defined by Ayn Rand in "The Objectivist Ethics," Dr. Binswanger presents a "sustained argument in favor of an exclusively biological teleology," based on an "inescapable connection" between life and goals. He states in his Introduction: "The actions of living organisms, even of non-conscious organisms such as plants, are goal-directed; the actions of inanimate objects, even of man-made devices such as 'target-seeking' torpedoes, are not....men, animals, and plants act for the sake of obtaining certain ends, but rocks, rivers, and machines do not."

Included in the volume is an appendix in which Dr. Binswanger assesses work done in the field since
(See *ARI Press*, p. 6)

New Edition of *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology* Released

A new, expanded edition of Ayn Rand's *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology* is now available. Conceived by The Ayn Rand Institute and published by New American Library in April, 1990, the new edition is nearly three times the length of the original. In addition to Ayn Rand's seminal monograph on the theory of concepts, it contains an appendix of material from her epistemology workshops, a new foreword and preface, and an authors index.

Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology is Ayn Rand's masterwork in technical philosophy. She held that the fundamental issue in epistemology is the "problem of universals," or the relationship between abstractions and concretes. As early as the 1940's, she had developed the essentials of the

Objectivist theory of concepts, a radical and original view of abstraction as "measurement-omission."

The many questions she was asked by younger Objectivist scholars (particularly Leonard Peikoff, who in 1965 was preparing to teach a university course entitled "Objectivism's Theory of Knowledge") convinced her that a written presentation of the principles she had defined was required. Between July 1966 and February 1967 she published a series of essays in *The Objectivist* on her theory of concepts, stating in her Foreword that they were "for the guidance of philosophy students." These essays were subsequently published in book form as *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology* by *The Objectivist, Inc.* in 1969. (NAL published the Mentor paperback in 1979,
(See *ITOE*, p. 5)

Record Year for Essay Contest

The Institute's increased efforts in promoting the annual essay contest on *The Fountainhead* appear to be producing results: the 1990 contest attracted the largest number of entries yet in the five-year history of the contest. An unprecedented 2,830 high-school juniors and seniors participated this year, an increase of 11.5% over the previous record year (1986) and an increase of 19% over last year.

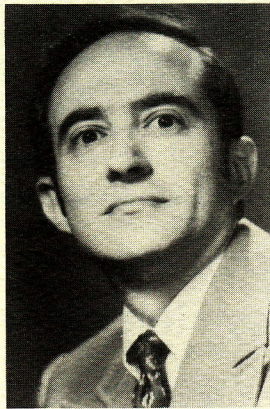
Another sign of the contest's success in spreading Objectivism is the increase in *The Fountainhead* book sales, an increase much greater than that of other Ayn Rand titles. The increase dates from the first essay contest, with the novel now selling over 100,000 paperback copies per year in the U.S.

Although it is impossible to identify exactly why the number of entries increased, a likely cause is two new features of the Institute's marketing plan. Last fall, we sponsored a booth at the National Council of Teachers of English conference, where we distributed contest information and materials to hundreds of high-school English teachers. In addition, we added to our direct-mail publicity efforts a special mailing to 5,500 Advanced Placement English teachers. Both of these promotional methods will become regular features in future contest publicity. (For more details on essay contest procedures, see the February 1990 *Newsletter*.)

The 1990 contest also marks an
(See *Contest*, p. 5)

Institute Interview: ARTHUR MODE

by Kathy Kroeger



Arthur Mode is a psychiatrist in private practice in the Washington, D.C. area. He lectures regularly on America's Founding Fathers at The Jefferson School conferences. He is a member of ARI's Board of Advisors.

Q: How did your interest in psychiatry develop?

A: My early career choice was to be a pediatrician, until I realized, in my senior year of medical school, that I was looking for a different kind of mental challenge. I wanted a field that required lots of diagnostic work, demanding a kind of scavenger-hunt epistemology, with subtle clues. After considering all the medical specialties, I decided on psychiatry. This rather amazed me, since I had never pictured myself as a psychiatrist, and my psychiatric professors in medical school were not such as to invite emulation. But twenty-six years later, I'm still happy with my choice.

Q: Can you identify anything in your development and childhood interests that led you to appreciate Ayn Rand's novels?

A: I think so. I had always thought of life as an adventure, and tried to fill it with activities that were fun and exciting to me. I enjoyed physical challenges, such as a white-water canoe trip I took one summer. But I never did much of this sort of activity, for various reasons, including some over-protectiveness by my parents. So I lived such adventures vicariously, through biographies and fiction. I was enthralled with Irving Stone's descriptions of Jack London's long ocean cruises on sailboats and his treks to the Yukon to gather material for his sto-

ries. What appealed to me was never the physical aspect alone, but the combination of physical adventure and mental problem-solving (e.g., London designed his own boat, learned how to navigate, etc.). Another favorite was Sherlock Holmes. Not only did he solve complex mysteries, but he actually went out into the field to track and apprehend the criminals. So Ayn Rand's novels crystallized something very important to me. When I read *The Fountainhead*, I found my kind of hero in Howard Roark, who blended the cerebral with the practical in extraordinary fashion.

Q: What role has Objectivism played in your psychiatric work?

A: To begin, I could not have understood self-esteem properly without Objectivism. During my training period, the prevalent views were rooted in behaviorism or instinct theory, neither of which provides much of a framework for self-esteem. However, the Objectivist concept of free will—linked to the idea of reason as an absolute, not just an occasionally used "tool"—does provide a framework for self-esteem and for general mental health. In addition, without Objectivism I could not have grasped easily the variety of conflicts caused by altruistic premises, let alone the proper way out of such conflicts.

In my practice, I use daily the Objectivist idea of emotions, as automatic responses to things and events in accord with an individual's ideas and values, to help me figure out the origins of patients' emotions that have no apparent cause. Objectivism also makes easier the differentiation between such things as simple generosity and appeasement, or between giving the benefit of the doubt and the failure to make moral judgements. And since mental health involves more than clearing away mistaken ideas, unresolved conflicts, or other problems from one's past, I also use the Objectivist concept of virtues as firm standards of action in the pursuit of recovery and happiness.

Q: A few years ago, you gave a lecture on psychological defense mechanisms at The Jefferson School. Is that a special interest?

A: Very much so. To me, the subject of defense mechanisms is the most interesting, challenging, and important in the field. The defenses people use to conceal painful self-doubts and difficult-to-face truths can be multi-layered and very tough to identify, and they offer me plenty of the mental sifting and problem-solving effort that I enjoy. Helping someone discover what has been blocking his pathway to fulfillment is very gratifying. One of my long-range goals is to expand my lecture into a book on defense mechanisms.

Q: You have given a number of biographical lectures on various American Founding Fathers. What motivated you to study these men?

A: My interest was sparked in 1980, when I read two delightful biographies of Thomas Jefferson. He and the other Founding Fathers were extraordinarily well-rounded men of ideas and action. For example, aside from their careers in politics, Jefferson was an architect and inventor, Washington was a surveyor and land developer, and Franklin was a successful printer, publisher, and entrepreneur. They pursued their ideas seriously and actively, despite the considerable risks. Instead of seeing them as the impersonal "giants" portrayed in schoolbooks, I began to view them as men of above-average intelligence, whose achievements came about not by chance or "historic necessity," but by purposeful effort; they chose to study political science, history and philosophy in order to learn how to construct a new and better form of government; they chose to identify their moral ideals and try to live up to them in their daily lives; and they chose to defend their convictions rationally, with solid, logical argumentation. Ultimately they became "giants" to me, but in a different, more personal and psycho-epistemological sense.

Q: Have you noted any interesting parallels between the Founding Fathers and Ayn Rand?

A: Definitely. In addition to holding similar views on reason, individualism, man's rights, and limited

(See Mode, p. 6)

THE 1990 WINNING ESSAY

*Sarah Henstra, a 17-year-old student at London District Christian Secondary School in London, Ontario, answered the first of the three essay questions: "The theme of *The Fountainhead*, said Ayn Rand, is 'individualism versus collectivism, not in politics, but in man's soul.' How do the motives and actions of Roark, Keating, and Toohey dramatize the theme?"*

The Fountainhead demonstrates Ayn Rand's theme of "individualism versus collectivism, not in politics, but in man's soul." The characters of *The Fountainhead* are archetypical of the ideals they represent, and the polarities of Ayn Rand's philosophy are presented through them. The motives and actions of Howard Roark, Peter Keating, and Ellsworth Toohey specifically dramatize and underscore the author's theme.

Howard Roark, as the hero of *The Fountainhead*, is Ayn Rand's Adam—a "first and only man on earth"—living to do justice to the vast potential for development in the world around him. Working only with his intellect and the earth's resources to create buildings (for Roark is an architect), he seeks to bring what he knows to be truth into existence. Roark's personal Truth and his underlying rational self-interest allow him to be completely autonomous, living apart from the opinions and demands of others. As creator, innovator, and egotist, Roark is an end in himself—a true individualist.

Roark has never allowed the collective will of society to cripple his creative ego; in fact, Roark is not *able* to concern himself with others: "He knew the source of his actions; he could not discover theirs. He did not care. He had never learned the process of thinking about other people..." Neither does Roark adhere to the collective's norms about architecture. He does not try to incorporate historic styles into his designs; Howard Roark's buildings must be purely the product of his own mind. One particular scene portrays Roark in a desperate state. A badly needed commission has just been offered to him on the one condition that he modify his building to suit the traditional Classic tastes of the public. Explaining that a building, like man, must have integrity and cannot assemble its soul from borrowed pieces, Roark finally refuses the commission.

In Part Four of *The Fountainhead*, Ayn Rand clarifies for the reader the core of the individualist's motivation. Howard Roark agrees to design the Cortlandt housing

project for Peter Keating who will submit the plans in his own name. Roark will receive no credit for his work, yet he is content with the deal. He tells Keating: "You'll get everything society can give a man....And I—I'll take what nobody can give a man, except himself. I will have built Cortlandt." This statement proclaims the creator's truth: the doing is the reward. Cortlandt's existence—the truth, integrity, and independence of Roark's completed work—was all the payment he would need.

Peter Keating is also content with the Cortlandt agreement, for it gives him fame, admiration, and money—everything he needs to win public approval. The quest for prestige has shaped Keating's life and has made him unable to function without the advice and support of others. Keating is paralysed when alone. He is unable to think, judge, or feel anything with his own mind. Keating is a parasite, a "second-hander," for he needs other people to live for him. When he designs a building, he feels no certainty of its quality or worth unless someone tells him it is good: "...it might be good...he was not sure. He had no one to ask."

This lack of a self-sufficient ego causes Keating to feed off Roark time after time for ideas, advice, and even building designs. Keating "creates" buildings by amassing borrowed styles and techniques. Roark does his best to improve Keating's clumsy Renaissance-and-Doric conglomerations when Keating comes to him in despair; yet Keating insists on building only for the public's taste.

Peter Keating is a member of the collective. To meet with approval, he spends his life building for himself a world of prestige and publicity. His job, marriage, recreation, and private life are all designed to be pleasing to the public eye. Keating feels a warm pleasure when told that all men are equal, and he is truly comfortable only with crowds of people surrounding him: "There were no questions and no doubts when he stood...over a sea of faces....That was Peter Keating, that, the reflection in those staring pupils,

and his body was only its reflection." Keating is a mirror: seeing through others' eyes, thinking through others' minds, working through others' capabilities, judging through others' values, and living his life through others' lives.

Peter Keating, in all of his pathetic non-identity, is presented to the reader as an object of pity. If Keating can be termed a "benevolent" collectivist, then Ellsworth Toohey is a "malevolent" collectivist. Toohey wants to rule. Power over people is the objective that determines his every action. Toward the end of the novel, Toohey describes for Keating his methods of conquering people. Since the soul cannot be ruled, he states, it must be broken. Toohey uses collectivism as his sledgehammer, preaching "unite and rule." He groups people together, winning over the public in speeches, even using such techniques as chanting to sway the public mind. He forms many organizations such as the Council of American Writers and the Council of American Architects—all with this credo in mind: that if many minds are made into one collective mind, then that mind is simple to conquer and rule.

Toohey destroys the individual ego and makes it part of the collective using three techniques. First, he preaches altruism as an ideal, knowing that true selflessness is just that—the surrender of one's self to the collective. Toohey emphasizes the smallness and insignificance of the individual, praises Keating for his "selfless young spirit," and states that architects are "Important...in the service you render to your fellow men." Toohey tells his niece Catherine to "kill the most stubborn of roots, the ego."

Second, Toohey attempts to kill man's ability to judge rationally by replacing the individual's values with the new values of the collective. After seeing a blatantly mediocre theatre play, Toohey decides he will laud it as outstanding; through the media, he will cloud the public's ability to discern good material from poor. In his novel Toohey writes, "All claim to an individual taste is bad taste." Toohey seeks to control the public "taste" as a whole. In this way he gains power.

Third, Toohey desires to destroy personal happiness which he determines to be the sign of a healthy ego. When acting as a vocational advisor, he discourages students from pursuing the careers they have chosen, stating: "You're much too tense and passionate about it." Toohey knows a happy individual cannot be ruled.

Toohey is the worst of Rand's "second-handers," for just as Roark seeks to conquer nature, Toohey seeks to conquer men. Other people—his subjects—thus determine his every action, for only they can grant him the power he desires. His whole being rests on the approval and obedience of the masses. Toohey has made himself a slave to the collective.

The characters of Roark, Keating, and Toohey embody the opposing principles present in today's society. The reader of *The Fountainhead*, along with every person in society, is faced with the choice Roark, Keating, and Toohey have made: shall I live as an end in myself, or as a means to the ends of others? This is the dialectic Ayn Rand brings to the reader's consciousness—this choice; this is the challenge at the heart of *The Fountainhead*.

Submitted to the Ayn Rand Institute's 1990 high-school essay contest by Sarah Henstra, London, Ontario.

(ITOE, continued from p. 1)

including Leonard Peikoff's essay, "The Analytic-Synthetic Dichotomy.")

Following publication of the book, several professors requested an opportunity to ask Miss Rand more questions about the theory and its implications. She decided to conduct several epistemology workshops, which took place between 1969 and 1971. Sponsored by the Foundation for the New Intellectual, the meetings were held by invitation only in a conference room at the McAlpin Hotel in New York City, and were audiotaped for future use.

The workshops provided a forum for a group of professionals in philosophy, physics, and mathematics to question Ayn Rand about Objectivist metaphysics and epistemology. In some twenty-one hours of intense discussion, she fielded inquiries from the participants, responding extemporaneously to a wide range of detailed, rigorous questions. Many years later, Harry Binswanger edited several excerpts from the workshop tapes and published them in the August, 1985 and February, 1987 issues of *The Objectivist Forum*.

The idea to include material from the workshops in a scholarly reissue of *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology* arose out of discussions among the members of ARI's Board of Directors about one of the Institute's primary goals: advancing Objectivism in the

philosophic profession. Realizing that a formal hard-cover edition might reach professional philosophers more effectively than had the mass-market Mentor version, ARI underwrote the preparation of the new volume.

Edited by Harry Binswanger and Leonard Peikoff, the 180-page appendix contains much new information of philosophic interest, illuminating the precise meaning of various aspects of the Objectivist theory and exploring the implications and applications of its principles. The value of the workshop material was doubly impressed upon

"...a glimpse of Ayn Rand's mind at work in the heat of philosophical give and take."

Dr. Binswanger when he taught *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology* to graduate philosophy students in ARI's first intellectual training seminar; he found himself returning to the edited transcripts on many occasions, seeking—and finding—valuable ramifications as he led the students through a step-by-step analysis of the book.

In addition, the new material affords an unusual opportunity to observe Ayn Rand in action. In his "Foreword to the Second Edition," Dr. Peikoff comments: "Aside from its new epistemological content, the appendix

offers the reader another value: a glimpse of Ayn Rand's mind at work in the heat of philosophical give and take. I had hundreds of such conversations with Miss Rand and always found her method of approach fascinating in its own right, regardless of the subject being discussed."

NAL has now replaced the old version of *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology* with the ARI edition. It is available in bookstores and from Second Renaissance Books in Oceanside, CA. The Institute is informing the philosophic profession about the new edition via advertisements in leading philosophy journals. ARI also sent announcements to thousands of philosophy professors in the United States and Canada; to date, nearly 800 have responded to the mailing and received complimentary copies of the new book.

By conveying that there is a systematic, comprehensive Objectivist philosophy and announcing the Institute as the center for more information, ARI hopes to aid philosophers who may be interested in learning more about Objectivism. Projects such as this one are made possible with contributor support; they serve to further the awareness and acceptance of Ayn Rand's ideas in the universities, and hasten the day when Objectivism will take its rightful place in the academic world. ■

(Contest, continued from p. 1)

increase in international representation among the winners. With one exception (a Canadian second-prize winner in 1989), the winners in previous years have all been residents of the United States. But this year, a student from Australia and two students from Canada are among the winners, and we hope this is a sign of increased interest in Objectivism world-wide.



The 1990 winner of the \$5,000 first prize is Sarah Henstra, a student at London District Christian Secondary School in London, Ontario. An avid reader, Miss Henstra had already read most of Ayn Rand's fiction as well as several of the non-fiction essays prior to reading *The Fountainhead* and entering the contest. She learned of the contest from her English teacher, Mr. Edward Vroon, who has been very encouraging of her writing. ARI's contest was the first essay competition she ever entered. She says that although she was already familiar with several Ayn Rand heroes, the purity and clarity of Howard Roark's heroism in *The Fountainhead* fascinated her: "I wanted to understand more fully the source of the sense of joy Roark has about himself and his life, the underlying quality of

life common to all her heroes." Miss Henstra will complete her Ontario Academic Credit graduation requirements next year, after which she plans to travel to Europe before pursuing university study in medicine.

According to Harry Binswanger, who is the final judge of the winning essays each year, Miss Henstra's essay is a careful, focused, thoughtful analysis. "She presents an excellent integration of the actual concrete events of the novel with the deepest philosophical issues the book raises," he commented. Her essay is reprinted on page three of this newsletter.

The five winners of the \$1,000 second prizes are: Chester Gilmore, a junior from Anchorage, AK; Albert Lee, a junior from Seattle, WA; Robin Mockett, from Don Mills, Ontario, a

(See Contest, p.6)

(ARI Press, continued from p.1)

1973, showing how Kantian epistemological premises undercut and distort potentially valuable work of the best contemporary theorists.

Dr. Binswanger's work was formally presented to the philosophic profession last December, when he gave a talk based on his book to members of the Ayn Rand Society, an affiliated society of the American Philosophical Association.

The Ayn Rand Institute is announcing the book to philosophers of science and other scholars via a special direct mailing, and by sending review copies to professional journals. By publishing this work and future scholarly writings, the Institute helps meet its goal of informing academic philosophers about Objectivism and the application of its principles to relevant and controversial philosophical topics.

All aspects of production, from editing to book and jacket design, were supervised by Donna Montrezza of ARI. The sole commercial distributor for the book is Second Renaissance Books in Oceanside, CA. ■

Many contributors have inquired about the possibility of including ARI as a beneficiary in their wills and/or insurance policies. The Institute is legally empowered to receive such bequests. For further information, please contact Dr. William Lanahan at ARI.

(Mode, continued from p.2)

government, Ayn Rand shares, with Jefferson and Franklin in particular, a tremendously optimistic sense-of-life regarding the possibilities open to man. Two of my favorite quotes capture that spirit:

"But truth and reason are eternal. They have prevailed. And they will eternally prevail, however in times and places they may be overborne for a while by violence..." (from a letter by Jefferson to Samuel Knox, 1810)

"...it is not true that there is no place in the future for a superlative achievement of man's mind; it can never be true...[she held] this immovable conviction that evil is unnatural and temporary....while the smiling sense of hope within her at the sight of a sun-flooded forest, the sense of an unlimited promise, was the permanent and the real." (Dagny in *Atlas Shrugged*)

Q: What future lectures can we look forward to?

A: I am preparing two for 1991: one on medical problems that masquerade as psychological problems, and one on Benjamin Franklin. ■

(Contest, continued from p. 5)

British student who plans to study biochemistry at Queen's University in Ontario; Tanya Ross, from Winthrop, Western Australia, who will study commercial law at the University of Western Australia; and Jennifer Vernon, from Littleton, CO, who will study biology and genetics at Duke University.

The ten third-place winners, each of whom received \$500, are:

Mark Goldrup, Mission Viejo (CA) HS
Stefan Goldstone, George Washington HS, San Francisco, CA
Drew Heles, Beaufort (SC) HS
Denise Hontiveros, J.P. Taravella HS, Coral Springs, FL
Amy Hsieh, Wyomissing (PA) Area HS
Sherman Lee, Enloe HS, Raleigh, NC
Michele McBride, New Haven (MO) HS
Mark McDonald, Loyola HS, Los Angeles, CA
Christopher Noble, A.C. Wilcox HS, Santa Clara, CA
Christopher Pena, Canyon HS, Anaheim, CA

In addition to the national contest, various ARI contributors organized regional contests in Florida, New Mexico, Northern California, Southern California, Dallas, Houston, and Washington, D.C., awarding a total of \$6,700 for the best essays at the local level. ■

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