



The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution

Ayn Rand

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The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution Ayn Rand

This book is Ayn Rand's call to American youth to reject the tribal, conventional irrationality of the New Left and to grasp the need of a philosophical revolution founded on the supremacy of reason, with individualism, self-interest, science, technology, and progress as its consequences. There is nothing new about the New Left; it is the last gasp of an outworn philosophy. This is the view presented by Ayn Rand in a critical analysis of such superior perceptiveness and originality that it ranks as a landmark in the history of contemporary ideas. *The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution* is a brilliant addition to the works of one of America's most influential thinkers.

The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution Details

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Thought_Criminal says

If you hate hippies and all youthful, optimistic, dumb "counter cultures" that participate in self-induced brain trauma by drug and alcohol abuse (I am not going to lie, I participated in that in my youth and am currently drunk); read the "Apollo and Dionysus" article. I have not read a more accurate description of the fraudulence, conformity, and bullshit surrounding the hippie movement than in this article. It is as if you could take a youth involved with a "counter culture" today and interchange them with a hippie from 50 years ago. The similarities are frightening and depressing...

Though sometimes engaging in pseudo-psycho-babble, prepare for a mind f*ck in "The Comprachicos".

Apollo and Dionysus

"Avowed anti-materialists whose only manifestation of rebellion and of individualism takes the material form of the clothes they choose to wear, are a pretty ridiculous spectacle. Of any type of nonconformity, this is the easiest to practice, and the safest. But even in this issue, there is a special psychological component: observe the hippies' choice of clothing. It is not intended to evoke admiration, but to evoke mockery and pity. One does not make oneself look like a caricature unless one intends one's appearance to plead: Please don't take me seriously. And there is a kind of malicious wink, a contemptuous sneer, in the public voices acclaiming the hippies as heroes. This is what I would call "the court-jester premise". The jester at the court of an absolute monarch was permitted to say anything to insult anyone, even his master, because the jester had assumed the role of a fool, had abdicated any claim to personal dignity and was using self-abasement as his protection. The hippies are a desperate herd looking for a master, to be taken over by anyone; anyone who would tell them how to live, without demanding the effort of thinking,. Theirs is the mentality ready for a Fuhrer. The hippies are the living demonstration of what it means to give up reason and to rely on one's primeval "instincts", "urges", "intuitions", and whims."

"One of them (promoter of Woodstock) stated openly: "Maybe the best way to define the Underground Industrial Complex...is materialistic people of the underground trying to make money off of a generation of underground kids who feel they aren't materialistic."

The Comprachicos

(Whoa, if you want to know how to raise a kid, read this Comprachicos article. It illustrates the downfall in modern education. It is better than Rousseau's Emile, which argued to stick a child in hot and then cold water to create a "primitive vigor")...

"He learns that regardless of what he does- whether his action is right or wrong, honest or dishonest, sensible or senseless- if the pack disapproves, he is wrong and his desire is frustrated: if the pack approves, then anything goes. Thus the embryo of his concept of morality shrivels before it is born."

"He (a child) learns that it is no use starting any lengthy project of his own- such as building a castle out of boxes- it will be taken over or destroyed by others. He learns that anything he wants must be grabbed today, since there is no way of telling what the pack will decide tomorrow. Thus his groping sense of time-continuity- of the future's reality- is stunted, shrinking his awareness and concern to the range of the

immediate moment. He is able (and motivated) to perceive the present; he is unable (and unmotivated) to retain the past or to project the future."

"But even the present is undercut. Make-believe is a dangerous luxury, which only those who have grasped the distinction between the real and the imaginary can afford. Cut off from reality, which he has not learned to fully grasp, he is plunged into a world of fantasy playing. He may feel a dim uneasiness, at first: to him, it is not imagining, it is lying. But he loses that distinction and gets into the swing. The wilder his fantasies, the warmer the teacher's approval and concern; his doubts are intangible, the approval is real. He begins to believe his own fantasies. How can he be sure of what is true or not, what is out there and what is only in his mind? Thus he never acquires a firm distinction between existence and consciousness: his precarious hold on reality is shaken, and his cognitive processes subverted."

Bukowski read Rand I bet:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qup1B...>

"At the age of five and a half, he is ready to be released into the world: an impotent creature, unable to think, unable to face or deal with reality, a creature who combines brashness and fear, who can recite its memorized lessons, but cannot understand them- a creature deprived of its means of survival, doomed to limp or stumble or crawl through life in search of some nameless relief from chronic, nameless, incomprehensible pain. "

Now I am convinced Bukowski read Rand:

"No better method than this type of grading could be devised to destroy a child's individuality and turn him into a stale little conformist, to stunt his unformed sense of personal identity and make him blend into an anonymous mob, to penalize the best, the most intelligent and honest children in class, and to reward the worst, the dull, the lethargic, the dishonest."

"The independent children, who resist the conditioning and preserve some part of their rationality, are predominately shunted, or self-exiled, into the physical sciences and allied professions, away from social, philosophical or humanistic concerns. The social field- and thus society's future- is left to the "adjusted," to the stunted, twisted, mutilated minds the comprachicos' technique was intended to produce."

"He (high school graduate) assumes the pose of an authority on the latest, journalistic issues in politics (part of his "class projects") and recites the canned bromides of third-rate editorials as if they were his original discoveries. He does not know how to read or write or consult a dictionary. He is sly and "wise"; he has the cynicism of a decadent adult, and the credulity of a child. He is loud, aggressive, belligerent. His main concern is to prove that he is afraid of nothing- because he is scared to death of everything".

Now I am convinced no one cares...

Michael Connolly says

The best chapter in this book is titled "The Age of Envy". In it she discusses something even darker than envy, something she names "hatred of the good for being the good." Considering all the public conversation

the past fifty years regarding hatred of blacks, women, Jews, homosexuals, foreigners and so on, it is surprising that so little attention has been paid to what must be the worst bigotry of them all.

Anthony says

Ayn Rand is a lot like George W. Bush. They both think from the gut. So when Rand rambles for tens of pages in *The Comprachicos*, the (thankfully) concluding story in her compendium, *The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution*, you will quickly realize that her discourse on the cognitive development of the human child is nothing more than thinking from the gut. Her psycho-epistemological overview is a self-inflicted wound that the reader subjects him/herself to with every turn of the page. It is absolutely devoid of any reference to scientific or medical studies that hint at the actual neural workings of the child in his/her development. Instead, Rand works backwards from her deistic praising of reason and rationality into developing a systematic program of concept identification, percept formation, and logical sequencing. To establish a framework through which the brain develops and neural processes mature should require the assistance of neuroscientists and cognitive theorists. Ayn Rand is neither and though she holds rationality in the most magnanimous of lights, fails to abide by her own standards with such a hideous piece of ideological smut.

Rand's non-fiction is loathsome. According to her, there are two people: rational and irrational. The irrational have along the way never gained access to the divine light of reason and Rand fails to deliver hypotheses as to why this is the case. Instead, she accepts her own 'amoral' hierarchy and abuses those that don't.

The reader will surely empathize with Rand when she explains how the mental deterioration of a child is more likely than not due to Progressivism, Collectivism, early exposure to cavalier philosophers like Kant or Rousseau or Marx, or a heavy injection of 'fear.' The word 'fear,' like 'rat pack,' 'thug,' 'brute,' 'parasite,' and 'misfit,' is one of those words that comprise about 50% of the content of the average Rand story, whose collective erasure might point to the extinction of a comprehensible Rand piece. In sum, Rand is unpleasantly disappointing in this collection of stories that for whatever unknown reason, were never published until Signet pulled them all together.

John says

This turned out to be just a rehash of her other books and articles . nothing new for me.

Marcus Clark says

THE NEW LEFT AYN RAND

Good. Mostly interesting, thought-provoking. Although there is much I cannot agree with, there is much I can. Her fault seems to be in generalizations, exaggerations, and making issues black and white i.e. simplifying (distorting.) to reach simple answers.

Also a great deal of hate and bitterness seems to pervade her writing. For example:

"the unwashed face and snarling mouth of a hippie".

All in all it gives much to think about.

Don't expect to agree with everything in this book, but expect to get a different viewpoint, one that might surprise you.

More great non-fiction

Lisa (Harmonybites) says

I am by and large an admirer of Rand's writing and philosophy--it was literally life-changing. The relatively low rating simply represents the fairly low place of this book among the works by her I've read--by the time I got to this collection of essays, little in it represented anything new. That said, I can see its influence in my thinking--and there are a couple of gems in here I still remember vividly decades after first reading them--in particular, "Apollo and Dionysus" and "The Comprachicos." Anyone who reads the last and doesn't believe Rand felt compassion for her fellow human beings is willfully misunderstanding her. Mind you, she could be obstreperous--and often what comes across is the outrage towards those she feels do harm, then that compassion for the harmed--but it's there.

Gary Sudeth says

In this collection of essays, Rand provides substance to a recollection from my childhood that the radical left, which morphed into the "Green Movement", were fundamentally anti-industrial and anti-technical progress. Quite an act for people who today call themselves "Progressives". While we have forgotten that the impetus for much of the left's acts today stem from the efforts of communists beginning in the 1930's, Rand prescient pen quickly redraws the reality of this fact.

Colleen Mucci says

Enjoyed Rand's essays, however I found those written by Schwartz to be of lower quality (not very interesting nor current). Many of Rand's critiques of the left (and right) still apply today.

sologdin says

Part V of a multi-part review series.

Essays regarding '60s developments. Disappointing for a Rand effort--which is to say that it is as usual godsawful, just manifestly horrible, as though the abyss burped something up after a night of heavy drinking--but that its awfulness is not simultaneously awesomeness, as in *Virtue of Selfishness* or *Romantic Manifesto*, which are both so godsawful that one receives maximum lolarious return on readerly investment and the negative criticism writes itself. This one by contrast is tedious, annoying, childish--so wasteful that it

fails to provide even cautionary examples or an advertisement for termination of pregnancy.

The subtitle suggests primitivism, which she was ready to associate with the left in *Anthem*. I'm not seeing much alleged primitivism on display in the objects of her tantrums here, except in a couple essays (certainly she proves no real primitivism). In "The Left: Old and New," wherein she courageously exposes "anti-pollution--i.e., anti-technology--crusaders" (88): when most people think that environmental activists "just want to clean up the smog and the sewage," Rand sees through the lies! "Well, Hitler, too, announced his abstract principles and goals in advance" (id.). Let's be clear: wanting to clean up smog and sewage = Hitler. Understood? (Odd also that cleaning up smog and sewage is an abstract principle for Rand.)

In "The Anti-Industrial Revolution," she opens with a "fiction" (131) wherein technology is banned and everyone has to work harder, &c., all because the collectivist ecologists want to destroy capitalism because they are envious of it (no shit--the motivation is mere envy because, says Rand, collectivism just can't produce anything). Restricting technology is restricting the mind, &c. (145-47). Apparently, the anti-industrial revolution is led by someone with "the blank stare of [a] housewife" and the "snarling mouth of a hippie" (150). So, yeah, definitely not her A-game. This essay reveals two nasty flaws for Rand and Randites: first, a comical contradiction with *Virtue of Selfishness*, which ridicules the notion that leisure, recreation, entertainment are human rights; here, the text insists that "A life of unrelieved drudgery, of endless, gray toil, with no rest, no travel, no pleasure--above all, no pleasure. Those drugged, fornicating hedonists do not know that man cannot live by toil alone, that pleasure is a necessity, and that television has brought more enjoyment into more lives than all the public parks and settlement houses combined" (148). Okay...hippies take pleasure out of people's lives but capitalism can alleviate endless gray toil...with television. Good job! Second, "according to one scenario, the planet is already well advanced toward the phenomenon called 'the greenhouse effect.'" (136). "This is what bears the name of 'science' today." (137). NB: no refutation of climate change theory. She presents the global warming theory and simply suggests that it is ridiculous because other scientists have suggested global cooling from increased albedo. Turns out she's dead wrong on this--but we didn't need confirmation--she was dead wrong when she wrote it because her climate change denial is simple dogmatism.

Opening essay takes on the hippie menace. To take down the hippies, she strings together dogmatic mantras: "the obliteration of reason obliterates the concept of reality, which obliterates the concept of achievement, which obliterates the concept of the distinction between the earned and the unearned" (47).

Another essay employs the apollonian/dionysian distinction, drawn crudely from Nietzsche, in order to refute Woodstock. In attacking a mass culture event, she finds it relevant to announce "Kant was the first hippie in history" (65), which is, yaknow, beyond asinine.

Standard randroid BS otherwise: surplus citations to her novels, as though that proved anything, but very few citations to anything else, other than newspaper articles; severe Dunning-Kruger effect (e.g., "If you observe that ever since Hume and Kant [...] philosophy has been striving to prove that man's mind is impotent" (108)). Fairly plain that she hasn't really read anything serious in comments like "Yet for many decades past [...] there has been no such thing as political philosophy--with the stale exception of Marxism, if one can call it a philosophy" (109), which indicates a failure to have read and understood anything.

Her lack of principle is manifest in her approval of the sentimental presentation of soviet dissidents who had "thrown off the leading conformity of the only society they have known" (116). When US dissidents do likewise, though, they are "self-made puppets in search of a master, dangling and jerking hysterically at the end of strings no one wants to pick up, begging and demanding to be taken care of--these exhibitionists who have nothing to exhibit, who combine the methods of a thug with the candied platitudes of a small-town

evangelist, whose creative self-expression is as stale as their unwashed bodies, with drugs eating away their brains, obscenities as the voice of their souls, and an all-consuming hatred as their only visible emotion” (122-23). Of course, these hippies are “products of a decadent culture” (122)--so, neo-spenglerian pessimism.

Last essay attempts to take on educators, with the routine shrill dogmatic mantras.

One of the worst books by one of the worst writers. Knock your lights out!

JP says

It's been a while since I read a Rand book. This is a collection of essays she wrote, most in the last 60's and early 70's in response to hippie movements and Progressive education. Her comment on the sit-in's at Berkley: "Rule by pressure groups is merely the prelude, the social conditioning for mob rule. Once a country has accepted the obliteration of moral principles, of individual rights, of objectivity, of justice, of reason, and has submitted to the rule of legalized brute force, - the elimination of the concept "legalizes" does not take long to follow. Who is to resist it - and in the name of what?" In "The Comprachicos" she compares the effect and motives of Progressive education to the physical processes employed by comprachicos and in other cultures. Children are reared to follow the group and not to experience any connection between independent thought and success. Eventually they stop trying to see this connection and live a life without purpose, unable even to see the paradigm into which they've been molded.

April Hawkins says

This is a fine book of hers about the horrors of the public education system. She explains the kind of mindset it takes and the kind of effort it takes to thwart knowledge from students turning them into mindless, desperate zombies hungry for some moral code to live their lives by. The error is in the reigning philosophy of the day, Immanuel Kant's twisted and sick doctrine, which teaches students that knowledge is evil and nothing can be known about reality. She thoroughly examines and explains what has happened to our minds since pre-school and why we have such a difficult time changing the path we're on, or more over, having a path at all. I enjoyed this thoroughly and I recommend it to anyone and everyone.

Jenna says

I recommend to anybody to read this book. It's actually very good :) In Rand's composition she explained, and Identified the integral evils of the New Left and their movement, gang, group, and etc. Although I didn't like or (mis-used) a couple of words that she mentioned I assumed that she has some reasons. For example like she's praising the Montessori school which is totally different from the present Montessori school.

As my understanding the present Montessori school is now become progressive nursery school which is a progressive liberal mind set, she definitely denounce or criticize being "comprachicos", when she's written this book back then its more like her description of the old Montessori school.....and secondly the word she mentioned about the benevolent Universe. I think word benevolence is not the right word, coz how could be

a universe being benevolence or even malevolent when universe does not have consciousness.....it doesn't have any intent..... because nature is.

For people who'd like to attempt to derive or appreciate the state of American culture....Return of the Primitive or The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution is a good book to read.

Julien V says

This is terrible. I admit that I was in it for the laughs, but there wasn't much laughs to be had, except when she calls hippies thugs and brutes (whaaat?). In this compilation Ayn Rand is absolutely hysterical (and bitter too), her ideas about the environment are downright criminal... but instead of having proper arguments, she resorts to insults and the most ridiculous 'straw man' tactics in the history of sophisms.

You may think it's still worth to check out, especially if you find, as I did, a 1 dollar copy at a thrift store, but you will just lose your time.

Still, it says a lot about the intellectual capacity of libertards who find this book illuminating. Just mind-boggling.

Craig Bolton says

The New Left: The Anti-Industrial Revolution by Ayn Rand (1993)

Natalie Michelle Bradley says

This is great because it pisses off hippies.
