

U^{the}ndercurrent

"It was as if an underground stream flowed through the country and broke out in sudden springs that shot to the surface at random, in unpredictable places." Ayn Rand

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Google Versus The Pope

by Ray Girn

In recent weeks, with the world's eyes fixed on the deteriorating health of an ailing Pope, Google quietly offered users a God's-eye view of Earth via its newest innovation—satellite imaging. The feature augments Google's widely lauded mapping service. Detailed digital photographs allow users to scope out millions of locations around North America. The images give an immediate sense of the density of a given area, the parks and vegetation, street and freeway layouts, local shops and hotels.

The satellite-mapping feature is the most recent addition to Google's long list of achievements: Google Glossary, Google Desktop, Google Mail, Google Mini, Google Video... Whoever coined the phrase "you never cease to amaze me" must have been perusing Google's recent press releases.

Google's most significant innovation, of course, is none other than its core service: its internet search engine. Few people remember search engines before Google. Results were plagued

with manipulated entries, ads undifferentiated from normal hits, and pages riddled with irrelevant information. Google set a new standard, one that remains unmet. From collecting dissertation data to finding the nearest flower shop, Google has become to research what antiseptics are to surgery—not merely helpful, but usually the difference between success and failure.

That Google is a free service is often taken for granted, but this too is a matter of innovation. Google's service includes a unique form of placed advertisements, seamlessly integrated into the search process. The placed ads are a win-win-win endeavor: the companies purchasing the ads get incredible exposure at low cost, the users get a free service unencumbered by pop-ups or annoying distractions, and Google nets the tremendous profit it deserves.

The Founders of Google have not only created this powerful tool, they've done the undoable by imbuing it—a computer search engine—with the type of playful,

friendly personality normally associated with Disneyland. From the colorful logo and "I'm Feeling Lucky" option to its many famous pranks, it's apparent from the first use that Google is not only effective, it's entertaining.

Google's love of intelligent technology and spirit of enthusiastic enterprise are evident in the many technology-related prizes, contests, and events it subsidizes. And underneath the company's playful exterior, not surprisingly, is an equally playful corporate culture of practical jokes and friendly camaraderie. The company's employees regularly engage in twice-weekly parking lot hockey games and enjoy daily Grade-A lunches prepared by a beloved in-house chef. From the inside out, Google seems to be getting everything right.

What makes possible such a profoundly revolutionary and consistently innovative company? In a word: virtue. Google creators Sergey Brin and Larry Page had the expertise to develop their search engine technology, the foresight to envision its value to

mankind, and the business genius to see that a free search engine could be tremendously profitable. They had the courage to put their postgraduate Ph.D. plans on hold, borrow tremendous sums of money, and invest their lives in this venture. They had the appreciation of human ability that enabled them to take seriously the need to seek out competent partners and employees and then to encourage innovation in those they hired. They developed a clear business plan that first enabled them to avoid additional capital investment, and then later gave them the resources to buy companies that had strategic value in relation to their goals.

Google's Founders have, since the company's inception in 1998, stayed true to their vision of Google's audacious mission: to organize all of human knowledge. The profundity of their achievement cannot be overemphasized: Google has so explosively improved man's ability to pursue knowledge that life without it is now almost inconceivable.

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Sex and the Suburbs

by Gena Gorlin

Breaking every viewer record and emerging as the #1 primetime TV sensation, ABC's *Desperate Housewives* has been called the *Sex and the City* of the suburbs. Writer Marc Cherry told *The Age* that "*Desperate Housewives* is a kind of skewed homage to suburban life," and that he "found inspiration in everything from the later episodes of *I Love*

Lucy (after they move to Connecticut) to the Oscar-winning *American Beauty*." The show, which is set in the archetypal suburban neighborhood of Wisteria Lane, follows a familiar pattern (seen also in *Pleasantville*, *The Truman Show*, *Stepford Wives*): an outwardly idyllic paradise is unveiled to reveal the seedy, depraved colony of frustrated role-

players swarming underneath.

With its soaring popularity *Desperate Housewives* reminds us that the corrupt-suburbia stereotype resonates with modern American viewers. Moreso, it seems, with the older generations than with the college-aged; ironically, the larger portion of viewers were found to reside in the suburbs of conservative, Bush-sup-

porting "red states." According to Frank Rich of *The New York Times*, "It is even a bigger hit in Oklahoma City than it is in Los Angeles, bigger in Kansas City than it is in New York." While college girls still cling nostalgically to their full 6-season DVD sets of *Sex and the City*, married suburbanites hastily put their kids to bed on Sunday nights and flip to the show that unabashedly pokes fun at their lifestyles.

At the same time, conservative groups like the American Family Association rage against the sex-drenched drama and its debasement of holy matrimony. (The AFA even pressured sev-

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The Real Purpose-Driven Life

by Robert Sherman and Ray Girn

Last March in Atlanta, suspected rapist Brian Nichols overpowered a deputy and stormed a courthouse, eventually shooting four people. Nichols then fled the scene and hid in the apartment of a woman he had taken hostage. The next day, the killer—his location unknown to police—voluntarily freed the woman and peacefully surrendered.

Many Americans found themselves wondering why. Ashley Smith, the hostage he had taken, had the answer when she appeared before the press. The turning point in her captivity began, she reported, when she read to Brian Nichols from a book, *The Purpose Driven Life*.

As the title might suggest, *The Purpose Driven Life* seeks to explain what it means to have purpose in life. Authored by Christian evangelical Rick

Warren, the book has already sold in excess of 20 million copies since it was published in 2002. Following Nichols' capture, sales soared to the #2 slot on Amazon.com.

According to Warren, the proper way for a human being to find purpose is to rely on divine revelation as expressed through the Bible. Warren's central thesis is that it is a mistake to equate having a *purpose* with merely pursuing one's life ambitions. To have a purpose means, specifically, to embrace God's plan for you. As the creator of human life, God is the only legitimate source of human purpose.

Translation: any pursuit motivated by your own interests constitutes abandoning your life's "true" purpose. There may be differences between the businessman who runs a bank and the criminal who seeks to hold

it up, but according to Mr. Warren, as long as each is motivated by his own goals, each lacks purpose: "Being successful and fulfilling your life's purpose are not at all the same issue! You could reach all your personal goals, becoming a raving success by the world's standard, and still miss the purposes for which God created you... The Bible says, 'Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self.'"

On this view, Nichols' basic problem was not that his life *lacked* direction. It was not that he would steal, cheat, lie, rape, and murder on whim—it was that he was not motivated by desire to serve God. In surrendering, Nichols came closer to accepting the idea that God had a plan for him—perhaps the very plan suggested by his hos-

tage, that God meant for him to minister to the spiritual needs of prison inmates.

Mr. Warren's "purpose-driven" life is a misnomer. It ought to be called the *duty-driven* life. To have purpose, on his account, means to push aside everything you know and want, and accept that your job is to serve God. Being purpose-driven, in other words, is supposed to mean voluntarily subordinating your own desires to an alleged plan that an alleged God has put forward for you.

This suggests that a purpose is supposed to be some mysterious supernatural command wholly indifferent to your own hopes and dreams, but one that must be accepted anyway. Where does this idea of "purpose" come from? Why think of *having a purpose in* (continued on page 4)

Google Versus The Pope

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Millions of people use Google daily. But is its value fully appreciated by our culture? Is its monumental impact on human life properly understood and celebrated?

Contrast Google with a very different cultural institution: the Papacy. Catholics world around revere the Papal Office. The Pope is a symbol representing single-minded devotion to God, including a strict renunciation of worldly pleasures.

Recently deceased Pope John Paul II was a man who, like Google's Founders, stayed true to his vision. From publishing on theological issues to visiting the destitute around the world, Pope John Paul II was a tireless crusader for the Catholic Faith. He revitalized the prohibition against contraceptives, abortion and euthanasia, Catholic tenants that were otherwise on the defensive. He contributed to the explosive growth of Catholicism in Latin America. While he did strongly oppose the spread of communism in Europe, John Paul was also an impassioned critic of free trade. He condemned the motives and practices of businessmen, a group which emphatically included

technological giants such as the founders of Google.

In his last years of life, Pope John Paul II developed an advanced case of Parkinson's Disease. More than anything else he did, it was his response to this condition that symbolized his life. Rather than precipitating his withdrawal from the public arena, his disease served as an opportunity for him to display how deeply he was committed to the creed of sacrifice. While all Popes are symbols of unwavering faith, Pope John Paul II's illness made him, perhaps more than any other Pope in history, a cultural icon for the view that *suffering* is a human ideal. The image of him—old, hunched, shaking with illness, lips quivering, cheeks grimacing against physical discomfort—dramatized his willingness to sacrifice his life for the sake of his Christian duty. Pope John Paul II, a faithful child of Jesus, demonstrated to the world what it means to bear a cross in service of God.

Those who admire Pope John Paul II do so because they recognize and applaud the *moral* significance of his life's work. They see his subordination of personal ambition, his indifference to material wealth, his suppression of romantic/sexual desire in favor of strict celibacy, his endurance of disease. The Pope's admirers look up at him and see the perfect embodiment of the Christian morality which tells man to sacrifice his happiness on Earth—with all the pleasures and joys it can offer—for the sake of an otherworldly ideal.

If the Pope embodies faith and suffering, consider what Google embodies. Its core mission—to make *knowledge* ever more accessible for human beings—entirely contradicts the Catholic Church's reverence for blind obedience. Google's history of innovation suggests that progress and development are good things, in contrast with the anti-technology, anti-science orientation of the Papacy. Its happy-go-lucky exuberance clashes head on with the Papacy's fixation on suffering.

Google's owners and employees have undoubtedly struggled against massive obstacles, yet rather than wearing their struggle as a badge of honor, they have denied its importance. The world represented by Google, far from being a veil of tears, is not even a battlefield—not even one where the good guys win—it is an exciting playground.

The actions of Google's executives and employees—all the decisions they make day-in, day-out—reflect an implicit set of moral values. The industriousness of its programmers, for example, suggests they value productivity. The long-term vision of its management shows they value foresight, planning, thought. The very idea of a search engine that organizes information suggests the view that knowledge is a value to be pursued. And Google's light, benevolent approach reflects the profoundly moral premise that life on Earth is to be enjoyed.

The Pope, a man of the cloth, wore his morality on his sleeve.

Catholic altruism explicitly guided his choices and actions. Pope John Paul II is dead, and Pope Benedict XVI has been elected his successor. By all indications, Ratzinger promises to be as much of an advocate of anti-pleasure, anti-self morality as Wojtyla ever was. The new Pope knows the difference between his morality and Google's, and will proceed to condemn audacious men who dare to place knowledge and happiness above faith and suffering.

Whether or not Google's owners pay lip service to the Pope's morality, they certainly do not operate their business by it. But no other professed code guides Google.

Google, as a major cultural symbol of the pro-knowledge, pro-happiness spirit of enterprise, will come under moral attack. Google's management should apply their boundless ambition to the task of defending themselves and their worldview from such attack. They should search the expanse of human knowledge and see if they can find a new code of morality, one that will enable them to fight off the Popes of the world and proudly bring heaven to earth.

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The Pharmaceutical Industry: In the Business of Saving Your Life

by Jessica Wilson

The way the media would have you see it, the pharmaceutical industry is made up of a bunch of greedy businesses trying to make a buck off of you and your ailing family members' illnesses. And the truth is that they are trying to make a buck, but only by *curing* your sickness. Critics allege that drug prices are set 'arbitrarily' high, but this neglects the fact that prices are a function of supply and demand. They also neglect that the greatest benefit to the consumers is the medicines themselves—and that the pharmaceutical industry only benefits when they deliver valuable products that promote your health.

The pharmaceutical industry functions according to the principle of voluntary exchange to mutual benefit. Sadly, this is rarely explained and in general poorly understood. Yet knowing the truth about how the pharmaceutical industry operates is so important that it is literally knowledge that will help you save your life.

When the media makes the claim that the pharmaceutical industry sets "arbitrarily high drug prices," they have already fallaciously assumed that the industry is somehow able to work outside the constraints of the laws of supply and demand. On the supply side, drugs are costly to produce and investors demand hefty return for their very risky investment. On the demand side, people are (or ought to be) willing to pay for medicines because of the incredible life-saving benefits.

Producing prescription drugs is extremely expensive and risky. In 2001, the pharmaceutical industry spent \$30 billion dollars in drug research. Each therapy area (oncology, respiratory, neuroscience, etc.) produces, on average, 1 million new drug compounds yearly. Of those 1 million compounds, 250 will make it to pre-clinical trials and only 5 of those will make it to actual clinical trials. As if these barriers were not enough, there is still the ominous prospect of the FDA, which companies must pay to evaluate their products—and there is nothing to stop them from failing to approve these drugs in the end. The research and development (R&D) cost of a single drug usu-

ally totals \$800 million.

Like any business, the pharmaceutical industry has to make a profit above these high costs in order to afford to continue to pay its hundreds of thousands of employees, compete within its extremely competitive market, advance technology, continue to reinvest in R&D, and return its investment to its shareholders. Unlike most industries, which reinvest 4 cents for every dollar they make, the pharmaceutical industry reinvests 18. Despite this tremendous investment, the fact remains that out of every ten drugs produced, only three will ever make enough profit to reinvest in R&D.

The point here is that pharmaceutical production is ex-

remely risky. Drug production is a long-term task of trial and error which often ends in failure. When a major discovery is finally made it is an achievement that deserves profit. The pharmaceutical business requires both a large investment in productive effort and capital, which means that when it is successful it has *earned* its profits.

Of course it is not hard work that is the measure of an industry's profitability, but the value of its products. The fact remains that while prescription drugs are expensive, the benefits far outweigh the costs. For every \$1 spent on prescription drugs, hospital stay expenses are lowered by \$3. In just the last ten years, nursing

home admissions have declined by 200,000, even though the number of people 85 and older has increased. Since 1980 over 600 new drugs have been developed and marketed in the US, all of which help avoid more expensive treatments, such as hospitalization, surgery, and nursing home care, and reduce your need to see a doctor. Thanks to increased pharmaceutical treatment, life expectancy has dramatically increased from 69.7 percent in 1960, to 77.2 in 2001.

This should not be surprising because saving lives is the purpose of pharmaceuticals. Profits motivate the pharmaceutical industry to produce more effective
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The FDA: Corporate Stooge or Coercive Stodge?

by Rebecca Knapp

In 1906, Upton Sinclair wrote *The Jungle*, the Food and Drug Act was passed, and the FDA was born. Founded on the premise that consumers can't distinguish between a bottle of cough medicine and poison—or between a scientific drug study and an advertisement for a miracle cure—the Food and Drug Administration was meant to protect the American public against "the profit motive." Now, a century later, the media has begun a new mud-slinging campaign. This time it is not against companies, but against the FDA.

A CNN.com article offers a carefully worded insinuation that the FDA is receiving kickbacks from major drug companies. The article complains, "The agency also receives hundreds of millions of dollars from the drug companies, which pay huge fees to have new drugs expeditiously reviewed and approved. Most people agree that relationship is all too comfortable."

If the media were going to attack the FDA, this is precisely the sort of attack one might expect. It's exactly the same profit-motive accusation that got the FDA established in the first place: if an entity—be it an individual, a corporation, or a government agency—is motivated

by money, it must be corrupt.

What's unexpected is that the media is attacking the FDA at all. Isn't the FDA our protection against profit-seeking drug companies? The industry is regulated. Aren't we safe now?

Apparently not. The FDA, it seems, is no more immune to errors of judgment than drug companies are. In December, the New York Times reported on a defective line of FDA approved defibrillators. Earlier in the year a scandal involving Merck's popular drug, Vioxx, leapt to the headlines and inspired the current wave of anti-FDA sentiment. Senator Grassley of Iowa, leading that wave, states the problem succinctly: "The American people should be the number one and only client of the FDA." It couldn't be more true—but not in the way Senator Grassley intends it.

The problem is not that the FDA is receiving kickbacks from drug companies. First of all, it isn't. Drug companies are forced, by a law called the Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA), to pay the "huge fees" CNN talks about—not for having their drugs approved, but for having them reviewed at all. Second, because Senator Grassley is right. The American

public is not the one and only client of the FDA. The FDA, in fact, could not have any clients: it does not engage in voluntary trade. The FDA is not offering a product to clients who will forsake it if it offers nothing of value, or sue if it perpetrates a fraud; it is accountable to no one. It does not sustain itself as a productive enterprise, but by government decree.

In other words, the FDA has no vested interest in keeping harmful drugs off the market. If it slips up, it will weather a media storm. It has been weathering such storms since 1906. The distrust of the people who are meant to benefit by it does not matter—the FDA's existence does not depend on those people's choice. It is drug companies who really stand to suffer from selling harmful drugs—precisely because drug companies are actually motivated by profit. Drug companies, in a free market, stand or fall based on the voluntary actions of consumers. A company's profit is the measure of the extent to which people choose to trade with it. The FDA do not work to create a product that consumers see the value of and therefore purchase. No indi-

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“BUY AMERICAN” IS UN-AMERICAN

—by Harry Binswanger—

According to a recent poll, 80% of Americans think it their patriotic duty to give preference to American-made products. But “Buy American” is wholly un-American in both its economics and its philosophy.

America’s distinction among all the nations of the world is that it enshrined political and economic freedom. Although we have departed greatly from our original *laissez-faire* principles, to the whole world America still symbolizes capitalism. Americanism means understanding that a free market, domestically and internationally, is the only path to general prosperity.

International trade is not mortal combat but a form of cooperation, a means of expanding worldwide production. The benefits of international trade flow to both trading partners, even when one of the countries is more efficient across the board. This is the “Law of Comparative Advantage,” covered in every economics textbook. Free trade does not destroy but creates employment.

The lucrative workings of free markets do not depend upon lines drawn on a map. The economic advantages of international commerce are the same as those of interstate, intercity, and crosstown commerce. And if we kept crosstown trade accounts, the “trade deficits” that would appear would be as meaningless as are our international “trade deficits.” Fact confirms theory: the U.S. ran a trade “deficit” practically every year of the nineteenth century, the time of our most rapid economic progress.

Philosophically, Americanism means individualism. Individualism holds that one’s personal identity, moral worth, and inalienable rights belong to one as an individual, not as a member of a particular race, class, nation, or other collective.

But collectivism is the premise of “Buy American.” In purchasing goods, we are expected to view ourselves and the sellers not as individuals, but as units of a nation. We are expected to accept lower quality or more expensive goods in the name of alleged benefits to the national collective.

Most “Buy American” advocates are motivated by misplaced patriotism. But for some the motive is a collectivist hostility towards foreigners. This xeno-

phobic attitude is thoroughly un-American; it is plain bigotry.

Giving preference to American-made products over German or Japanese products is the same injustice as giving preference to products made by whites over those made by blacks. Economic nationalism, like racism, means judging men and their products by the group from which they come, not by merit.

Collectivism reflects the notion that life is “a zero sum game,” that we live in a dog-eat-dog world, where one man’s gain is another man’s loss. On this premise, everyone has to cling to his own herd and fight all the other herds for a share of a fixed, static, supply of goods. And that is exactly the premise of the “Buy American” campaign. “It’s Japan or us,” is the implication. If Japan is getting richer, then we must be getting poorer.

But individualism recognizes that wealth is produced, not merely appropriated, and that man’s rise from the cave to the skyscraper demonstrates that life is not a zero-sum game—not where men are free to seek progress.

Accordingly, individualism holds that the interests of men do not conflict—provided we are speaking of self-supporting individuals who pay for what they get. Where there is free trade, the exchange of value for value, one man’s gain is another man’s gain.

The same harmony of men’s interests applies in the international arena. One nation’s enrichment raises the standard of living of all other nations with which it trades. Which nation adds more to your standard of living: Japan or Bangladesh? And how would you fare if Japan were suddenly reduced to the economic level of Bangladesh?

The patriotic advocates of buying American would be shocked to learn that the economic theory underlying their viewpoint is Marxism. In describing the influx of Japanese products and investment, they don’t use the Marxist terminology of “imperialism” and “exploitation,” but the basic idea is the same: capitalistic acts are destructive and free markets will impoverish you. It’s the same anti-capitalist nonsense whether it is used by leftists to attack the United States for its commerce with Latin America or by sup-

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The Value of Purpose

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life as synonymous with accepting such a duty?

Warren’s book begins with a quotation from the atheist philosopher Bertrand Russell: “Unless you assume a God, the question of life’s purpose is meaningless.” This is Warren’s unexplained, undefended starting point which he assumes as an article of faith.

Unlike Warren, most people contrast being purposeful with drifting aimlessly: a student who studies regularly because he is devoted to getting into law school is purposeful—a student drifting aimlessly through his undergrad years is not. A mother dedicated to providing her children with a healthy, happy childhood is purposeful—a mother who raises her children by the seat of her pants, without any overarching plan, is not. When most people talk about someone having a purpose, *this* is what they mean: someone whose actions are deliberately and consciously directed towards the achievement of some goal.

Underlying the ordinary idea of purposefulness is a set of important facts about human nature. Unlike animals, human beings need to think and plan long-range in order to survive. They also need to *choose* to do this, which includes choosing the goals that will constitute their life.

In fact, some people accept the responsibility of figuring out what they want out of life and going after it while others do not. Some *actively* choose and pursue their dreams, while others passively default on that choice.

But *which* ends do purposeful men pursue? Is it really true, as Warren suggests, that a criminal like Brian Nichols was “purposeful” in the ordinary sense because he chose the goal of robbing a bank? No. Just because we need to choose our ends in life does not mean that “anything goes.” There is another important way in which men differ from animals: we survive by *production*, not by vegetation or predation on others. Choosing a purpose in life requires choosing a central, *productive* goal.

A central, productive goal, of course, is a career. A career, as his source of livelihood, is a man’s basic source of self-esteem—it is what enables him to pursue a romance, cherish friendships, enjoy art, sport, recreation. Choosing a career permits him to define the course of his life, to sort out

from all of the complexities what is important and what is not.

A man whose life lacks an ambitious, productive goal is a man whose life lacks direction. As philosopher Ayn Rand once observed, “a man without a purpose is lost in chaos. He does not know what his values are. He does not know how to judge. He cannot tell what is or is not important to him, and, therefore, he drifts helplessly at the mercy of any chance stimulus or any whim of the moment. He can enjoy nothing. He spends his life searching for some value which he will never find.”

Having abandoned the idea of a productive career, Brian Nichols was not purposeful in any meaningful sense. But picking up the search for a divine purpose in life won’t help him, either.

Consider Warren’s conception of the purpose-driven life—a life in which an individual subordinates what he wants to God’s (alleged) plan for him. Is this idea even consistent with the idea of a productive, purposeful life? Consider Jesus’ message in the Sermon on the Mount, which chastises man for thinking that he must toil to provide for his own sustenance. The fowl of the air “sow not, neither do they reap”; the lilies of the field “toil not, neither do they spin.” That is to say—*other* living organisms do not work to survive, so why should man presume his survival requires productive work from him?

Of course we have already discovered why man *cannot* survive by the methods of the fowl of the air or the lilies of the field: he must think. Indeed, the *reductio ad absurdum* of Warren’s view of purpose is Terri Schiavo. Hers is that coveted vegetable state in which man toils not. Having existed in a state of living death for 15 years, pro-life groups defended the “sanctity” of her life. In their eyes, her life had “purpose.” Incapable of thought or awareness, unable to conceive of any goals, she embodied the ideal of Warren’s conception of the purpose-driven life—a passive, selfless life in which one is resigned to whatever God has ordained.

The Biblical conception of purpose is arbitrary. Not only does it fail to explain the difference between those people who seem to lead goal-directed lives and those who don’t, but it counsels an individual to defer to God the very responsibility denoted by the concept “purpose”: the responsibility of consciously deciding which goals one wants to pursue in life and then making

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The Double Injustice of Immigration Restrictions

by Corinne L. Bloch

Three months ago, I came from Israel to the United States as a visiting scholar at the University of Pittsburgh. The journey started long before the flight, with my traveling through the corridors of the American embassy, from office to office, writing letters and going through interrogations. Even when I landed in this country, the journey was not over. In a crowded room, I stood in line for hours, my tired, three-year-old daughter hanging on my shoulder. I was still not quite there yet. At the counter of the USCIS (formerly INS), one wrong answer—the accidental mentioning of an American boyfriend or of my plans of a future in the U.S.—would likely result in federal agents planting us on the next plane back to Israel. These are all parts of the system designed to protect the American people from me.

What is it about me that the American people need to be defended from?

Immigration restrictions do not provide protection against potential terrorists; the security checks are a separate procedure. This danger that I and other potential immigrants allegedly impose on the United States is not one of destruction, but of production.

Some supporters of immigration laws claim that these laws are useful in preventing immigrants from receiving welfare at the expense of the taxpayer. This is a legitimate concern, but its solution lies in changing welfare laws, not in imposing immigration restrictions. However, most people who oppose immigration feel threatened not by the minority of immigrants who are unemployed, but rather by the hard-working and ambitious majority.

Whether they are highly educated or unskilled, all immigrants have made the conscious decision to leave behind everything familiar—their jobs, their language, their culture, their families and friends—and seek something better for themselves. They come knowing that in the U.S. they will have to produce to survive. They have enough confidence in their ability to know that they will succeed.

This is the kind of people most employers are looking for. And that is precisely what the supporters of immigration laws fear. Immigrants, the argument goes, “steal” jobs from Americans. It is unfair, they say, that those immigrants would better their lives at the expense of American-born citizens.

But no one—whether born here or abroad—is born with the

right to a job. The only rights associated with any job are the right of the employer to choose whom to hire for it, and the right of the employee to accept the offer. Immigration laws deny both of these rights.

Immigration restrictions do an injustice to American employers by forcing them to base their hiring decisions not upon the applicants’ qualifications but on their nation of origin. Compelled to hire less competent workers and pay them more than their labor is worth, American businesses lose productivity and profits. Immigration laws hurt not only the competent immigrant, but also the American businessman.

If these laws harm both immigrants and entrepreneurs, whom do they benefit? Allegedly they protect American employees from competition. But able, hard-working Americans need no such “protection.” In a free labor market, ambitious, talented workers are able to find employment on their own, regardless of their nation of origin.

Only those who refuse to work hard, only those who demand a job they do not deserve and high wages they have not earned, aim to benefit from such laws. With immigration restrictions in effect, workers do not have to expand

their skills and knowledge to get a better job—all they have to do is to be born in the right place.

Immigration laws are unjust because they punish the competent, productive immigrants and those employers who recognize their ability, while rewarding laziness, stagnation, and an entitlement mentality among American workers.

Whether hired as teachers, doctors, computer-programmers, or street-cleaners, immigrants benefit their neighbors through the production and free exchange of goods, services and ideas. I am a neurobiologist, and I have a lot to offer to this country. Like many people overseas, I want to become an American because here I will be free to produce do the work I love and be rewarded for my ability. Instead of locking us out, the U.S. should welcome us with open arms.

Disguised as a mechanism that preserves Americanism, immigration laws subvert what the United States stands for—the individual pursuit of happiness.

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The Virtue of Pharma

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tive medicines and technologies. The more life-saving products they produce, the more people will pay them to do it. As these facts illustrate, curing diseases is a mutually beneficial process wherein everyone profits.

In fact, the price consumers pay for medicine is relatively low compared to what companies pay to develop them. In effect, consumers gain much more than the pharmaceutical industry whenever they trade because they do not have to go through the difficult process of discovering and producing new drugs. Think about it: in comparison to the centuries of scientific advancement and the billions of dollars needed to create the drugs you need, the \$100 or so per bottle that you pay is an enormous bargain.

Unfortunately, gratitude for these benefits is rarely forthcoming. Instead of thanking the

pharmaceutical industry for their irreplaceable life-giving contributions, pundits and politicians envious of their profits demand that medicine be socialized, as in Europe. Yet the commonly held notion that Europe’s socialized healthcare systems help reduce drug prices is completely false. The fact is that drugs cost more in the United States *because* they cost less in Europe.

Nationalized healthcare systems, such as Britain’s National Healthcare Service (NHS), offer drugs to their citizens at exceptionally reduced prices, sometimes even for free. They are able to do this because their governments implement controls that set artificially low caps on drug prices. While this may reduce drug prices for the average European for the time being, it means that the pharmaceutical industry must charge more in the US to recoup those lost profits in Europe. They have to do this, of course, because the money to fuel new R&D has to come from somewhere. If the same socialized medicine were to come to the United States, these lost profits could not be recouped, and both Europe and America

would lose important medicines they have both come to rely on.

The pharmaceutical industry recognizes the injustice of this situation but is powerless to stop it: there is no way to work around European regulations. It will take far more than objections to these regulations, however, to protect the viability of the pharmaceutical industry. The rising tide of demand from socialized systems is symbolic of a wider demand for the unearned, not only from abroad, but from critics at home, as well. Yet everyone must recognize that is in their interest to protect this industry from price controls and the socialist systems that necessitate them, because these very measures hinder the availability of healthcare in the United States—health care on which the rest of the world depends.

The most important thing to understand about the pharmaceutical industry is the way in which it operates through voluntary trade to mutual benefit. The incentive for profit is what leads this industry to continue its quest for creating and supplying the world with better life-saving drugs that offer a quick fix

to diseases that have devastated the globe for centuries. The price you pay in comparison to all the work and investment that goes into drug production is minimal.

The more that people understand the truth about how the pharmaceutical industry operates, they less likely they will hinder its progress. The people who work for this industry should be applauded for their honesty, integrity, and productivity at a time when they are misunderstood and yet continue to work every day in the pursuit of saving millions of lives. By recognizing the value of the pharmaceutical industry, and how integral making a profit is to ensuring its success, there is hope that this industry will be left free to continue to discover and create new drugs. As long as there is disease on this earth, we should be thankful that there is someone with the ingenuity and the drive to profit from curing it.

Jessica Wilson is a senior at Duke University. Next year she plans to attend law school, where she will begin her training to defend the pharmaceutical industry from unjust attack.

The Disinterest of the FDA

(continued from page 3)

vidual chooses to trade with the FDA. The public is forced to accept their reviews—irrespective of whether they judge them to be even honest, let alone correct.

The same CNN article that lambastes the FDA reports that “Merck’s legal costs in the wake of the Vioxx fallout could reach \$12 billion, and the company’s liability could total \$18 billion.” And that’s just for a painkiller that might or might not create a higher risk of heart disease. Drug companies can’t get a billion dollars—much less 12 billion—by taxing the American public. They can only get it by creating a product that people want to buy. It is drug companies that are motivated by profit; it is drug companies that truly care about keeping bad drugs off the market.

Were the FDA disbanded, however, it would not be merely the fear of lawsuits that would motivate drug companies to offer effective and safe drugs. It would be—surprise—the profit motive. How priceless would a reputation for impeccable caution be in a free market drug company? How much more care a company would take to insure drug safety knowing that a lawsuit would destroy its credibility, not that of the eradicable FDA? How effectively would private review boards, like those that exist for cars and appliances, publish studies by which the consumer could easily educate and inform himself? How willingly would a drug company spend billions on R&D for a cure for cancer or Alzheimer’s, if it had to rely only on the freedom and independent judgment of the consumer to ensure a fair return?

The media’s proposed solution to the FDA problem is to create “an independent drug safety board” to review the decisions of the FDA. But when the next Vioxx scandal hits, who will review the reviews of the Independent Drug Safety Board that allowed the FDA to allow the drug to hit the market?

The answer is not a new level of disinterested review. The answer is to recognize that interest, i.e. profit, is the best safeguard against harmful drugs. The answer is to place sole responsibility for drug safety on the private sector, to allow whatever corporation is up to the task of production to stand or fall based on the quality of its products.

Rebecca Knapp is a junior at the University of Chicago. She is studying classics and plans to go to law school.

Sex and Housewives

(continued from page 1)

eral companies to withdraw their advertisements from the show in protest.) Yet their protestations seem like hollow gestures when the “family-values” advocates who form their support base cannot help but tune in to the show.

So what is really so wrong with “suburbia,” and why are the suburb-dwellers so engrossed by its sex-infused televised dissection?

Consider some of the frequent criticisms of suburbia. Many decry the “spoiled rich” who are allegedly corrupted by their gigantic saunas and lavish three-story mansions, who sink into depravity when their shallow materialism fails to provide fulfillment.

Of course wealth is not restricted to suburbia. Indeed, the city girls of *Sex and the City* lead indisputably luxurious lifestyles, accessorizing to their heart’s content, strutting around in their \$450 Manolo Blahniks and retreating to the Hamptons whenever they want some quality girl time. Yet for some reason, they do not end up as cynical manipulators or corpses (as in the case of *Desperate Housewives*’ narrator and symbolic centerpiece, Mary Alice, who kills herself in episode 1 amid her husband’s freshly laundered shirts).

Perhaps, as some feminists maintain, the problem is with the stifling marriage ethic itself. The new, liberated woman does not surrender her individuality to old-world sexist expectations, slaving away in the kitchen and chasing after the kids while the “man of the house” is busy bringing home the bacon.

But wait—what about Miranda and Charlotte, our beloved *Sex and the City* singles, who end up happily (but not submissively) domesticated? Indeed, Charlotte even quits her job as an art agent, choosing to place her husband and long-awaited child as her top priorities. Yet Charlotte, unlike the uptight and verging-on-breakdown *Desperate Housewife* Lynette, gains a serenity and genuine sense of purpose through her struggle to adopt a child and giving her beloved but uncouth husband Harry some lessons in proper hygiene.

No, it is neither riches nor men that makes a woman’s life in the suburbs such hell compared to our cheerful New York City girls. It is rather some deeper attitude toward their riches

and their men that distinguishes the ladies on Wisteria Lane—and America’s attitude toward them—from the *Sex and the City* feisty foursome.

What kind of attitude, or general approach to life, is associated with the women of suburbia? Marc Cherry himself provides a hint in describing the show’s premise: “All these women have made some kind of choice in their lives and are in various stages of regretting it.” So what, if any, is the common approach that makes their various choices so uniformly dissatisfying?

Consider the advice of Gabrielle, the rich married slut who wraps her handsome husband around her dainty little ex-model’s finger while sleeping with the 17-year-old gardener: “You’re a woman. Manipulate him. It’s what we do.” Yes, Gabrielle is a very rich lady, with a beautiful house and a dazzling (though slightly skanky) wardrobe.

But her wealth hinges on a lie—and she will resort to any manipulative scheme, just short of murder (but not by much), to hold on to those illusory riches. No wonder she complains to her high-school aged lover about feeling “trapped.” Her choices are to stay captive, bored and bound, in a loveless marriage, or leave her husband and be penniless (which, by Wisteria Lane standards, is unacceptable).

And it is not only for wealth that the women on Wisteria Lane are willing to entertain illusions. Bree, described as “Martha Stewart on steroids,” goes to desperate lengths to conceal from her suburban critics a failing marriage and a hateful relationship with her children. “Don’t confuse my anal retentiveness,” she tells her husband, “for actual affection.”

There is nothing “actual” about Bree’s relationship with her family: her husband has asked for a divorce, after being discovered with the neighborhood prostitute, but Bree insists on patching things up and acting normal because “what would the neighbors think?” Her friendships are defined, appropriately, by mutual deception: as she tells Gabrielle when the women find out each other’s shameful secrets, “great friends pretend nothing happened.”

Lynette, once a successful executive, has given up her career to play “model housewife” — and secretly resents it. Unlike the lying, cheating Gabrielle and the phoney Bree, Lynette lovingly devotes all her time to the care of her high-maintenance family.

Unlike Charlotte’s (eventual) discovery of blissful matrimony,

contentment and joy somehow always seem to elude Lynette. In a typical episode, she fantasizes about her grouchy old neighbor, Mrs. McCluskey, dropping dead on the door stoop; when she “does the right thing” and rescues the old woman from death’s jaws, she does it out of grudging duty. “Half of life is obligation,” she explains to Mrs. McCluskey, agreeing to take her to the pharmacy when she admittedly has no desire to do so.

The people of Wisteria Lane live by service to others (like Lynette) or dependence on others (like Gabrielle); in either case, it is others’ aims and perceptions that run their lives. They live either for or through each other. And that means, in the end, that they (literally, in Mary Alice’s case) don’t live at all.

Contrast this with our sexy NYC ladies. To start, Carrie earns her wealth by excelling at work that she loves, creating a witty and insightful column that inspires millions of single New York women. Miranda is a successful lawyer who balances her responsibility as mother with her responsibilities as career woman; Samantha and Charlotte, too, earn their riches through creativity and persistence.

Of course, the girls highly value the men in their lives. But they never cede their judgment or their values to appease a boyfriend—at least not for long. Charlotte, the closest to a suburban-housewife-at-heart, gets a much-needed dose of reality after marrying the “ideal” cookie-cutter Protestant husband. Trey embodies Charlotte’s hand-me-down fairy tale of the perfect mate: he says everything that is expected of him, and gives the right gifts at the right time.

Yet, as Charlotte discovers, in his performance as husband and lover he is—on both counts—impotent. It is not until Charlotte chooses a man she genuinely loves (a highly non-cookie-cutter, eccentric, bald Jew!) that she discovers *true* “domestic bliss”—a marriage based on mutual affection and her own, chosen values.

Contrast this with poor Lynette, who lives out her days according to a unwanted and involuntary “obligation.” Wherever that obligation comes from, and whomever it’s intended to serve—her family, her suburban society, or her Christian ethic—one thing is clear: it does not come from *her*, nor does she derive much joy from its fulfillment.

Interestingly, like the proverbial “suburbs,” the city too takes on the character of an archetype. NYC is an anchor for the wom-

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Housewives

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en's personalities; it provides them with jobs they love, clubs and shows they can visit when lonely, taxis they can take if they don't have a man to drive them. Carrie actually jokes that the city is her "boyfriend," and her loyalty to it is unwavering. The city teaches the girls that they must reckon with the cold, hard facts of life: when Miranda finally marries Steve, she must part with her beloved Manhattan apartment and move to a house in Brooklyn to take her growing family's needs into account. And when Carrie attempts to flee her city and her career to fulfill her boyfriend's desires, she discovers (the hard way) that without New York and her column, she has nothing to live for. The man she loves and ultimately returns to is anchored to the city and to everything that is important in her life.

In her memorable last line, Carrie expresses a basic premise underlying the show: "The most exciting, challenging and significant relationship of all is the one you have with yourself. And if you find someone to love the way you love, well, that's just fabulous." Even more basically, it is the relationship you have with the world around you—the values you have chosen by surveying and evaluating, by your own judgment, all the world has to offer—that

makes life exciting and fulfilling. Our New York foursome seems to realize that at least on some level. The ladies of Wisteria Lane, however, are operating on an entirely different policy.

So why such divergent approaches among the two types of women—surely it's not just a matter of geography?

Well, one clue to the answer may lie in the strikingly mixed and aggressive reaction to the show among conservatives. Ed Vitagliano of the American Family Association writes:

"*Desperate Housewives* provides a glimpse into our nation's prevailing view of good and evil. For example, goodness is defined in a scene where Paul, the surviving husband of Mary Alice... explains: 'Before my wife shot herself, we lived a life that I was proud of. We loved each other, we had values, we went to church. We gave to charity. We were good people, Mr. Shaw.'... This is a moral worldview built on human effort, on man-made standards of right and wrong... Of course, the church is supposed to be about the business of preaching the Gospel, which casts to the earth all humanistic morality, and views good deeds as nothing more than putting a veneer of rouge and lipstick on a corpse. We are sinners in need of a Savior. Period. There are no 'good people.'"

Mr. Vitagliano is strikingly honest in his description of the Christian view of human nature—

so much so, that he unwittingly reveals a truth he would just as soon conceal: in fact, the women on *Desperate Housewives*, and perhaps also many of the show's married suburb-dwelling conservative viewers, follow Vitagliano's prescription to a tee.

Whether or not they are on active duty to Christ, they are driven, in one form or another, by some externally imposed "Gospel": from Lynette's begrudged duties of motherhood and Bree's compulsive concern with keeping up appearances, to Gabrielle's ongoing deception which fosters leech-like dependence on her husband.

All these women are sinners in need of a savior to tell them what to do; when the Gospel's ideals of matrimony and motherhood fail to save them, they turn to neighbors and lovers for guidance. When even those prescriptions fail, the women give up all searching and—true to their "corpse"-like, purposeless selves—they kill themselves. Poor Mary Alice has discovered the futility of waiting for a "savior." Most of her neighbors, including Bree, whose lip service to Christianity has estranged her from her homosexual son, are learning it too.

Why, then, does America associate the suburbs with dreary desperation, and the city with adventurous vitality? It's not geography. Perhaps it's because we do, in fact, go to the suburbs to get married, buy homes, and raise

families. In most people's minds, such decisions represent life-long commitments. And since the only kind of life-long commitment they think of is of the Lynette brand—stifling, boring, superimposed by a Christian-esque duty premise—it is no surprise that they think of commitment with a sense of desperation. Marriage is a "ball and chain." A home is a tax liability. Children are "rugrats." Dare we say, then, that the problem is not with the suburbs, but with a certain attitude toward life's choices? Perhaps it is the self-driven, purposeful *spirit* of a Charlotte that's missing on Wisteria Lane.

Perhaps it is a hopeful sign that college girls still turn to the independent, high-achieving (and unabashedly secular) women of Sex and the City and leave the corrupt Christianity-drained "suburbia" to the disgruntled housewives. Somewhere in the transition from youth to adulthood, the hand-me-down principles of the church or the college professorate take the place of independent judgment. If you want to retain that sense of luminous independence into adulthood, you must learn to live by the independent and principled use of your own mind. In downtown Manhattan or in the Kansas countryside, always remember: your life is yours to live.

Gena Gorlin is a freshman enrolled at Tufts University and the New England Conservatory.

"Buy American" is UN-American

(continued from page 4)

posed patriots to attack Japan for its commerce with the United States.

Contrary to Marxism, one does not benefit from the poverty or incompetence of others. It is in your interest that other men—in every country—be smart, ambitious, and productive, not stupid, lazy, or incompetent. Would you be better off if Thomas Edison had been dim-witted? Nothing is changed if we substitute a Japanese inventor for Edison.

More and better production is good for all men, everywhere. What's good for Toyota is good

for America. That's individualism, and that's Americanism.

Government interference with free trade is un-American. Sacrificing one's standard of living in order to subsidize inefficient domestic producers is un-American. The tribal fear of foreigners is un-American. Resentment at others' success is un-American.

A patriotic American acts as a capitalist and an individualist: he buys the best, wherever it may be found.

Dr. Harry Binswanger, author of The Biological Basis of Teleological Concepts, is a member of the board of directors of the Ayn Rand Institute (ARI) and teaches philosophy at ARI's Objectivist Graduate Center.

Purpose vs. God

(continued from page 4)

those goals direct one's actions.

If man belongs to God then his life is not his to live. As those Americans who fought for the Emancipation Proclamation understood, only a master—not a slave—can actually lead a purpose-driven life. A life directed by purpose requires a process of independent, unrestrained thought at every moment: in regards to what goals you will pursue, how those goals will integrate together, and what means you will undertake to achieve them.

When Thomas Jefferson wrote about the sacred values of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness", what did he mean by the latter, if not the value of purpose? The right to have a purpose, as originally conceived by America's Founding Fathers, is not the duty to pursue some command from on high. It is the right to go after those things that you, as an individual, rationally decide constitute your happiness, your central productive purpose in life.

The media has made much of

Brian Nichols' surrender, and of the power of religion to inspire change and transformation. But can religion really give direction to a person's life? It depends on your conception of purpose. On Warren's conception, if you cajole a man into decent outward behavior with the bribe of God's forgiveness and Jesus' sacrifice atoning for his sins, that means he now has purpose. But on a proper conception, to choose the comforting fantasy of religion is to choose to abandon purpose—to reject your sacred responsibility to yourself as a reasoning, mortal being trying to live on earth: to actively pursue your own life and happiness.

Robert Sherman is an aspiring writer living in Sacramento, California. You can read his blog, authored under the alias "The General" at <http://benjoblog.weblogs.us>.

Ray Girn graduated last year from the University of Toronto, and now teaches math and science at a private elementary school in Orange County, California. He is a student at the Ayn Rand Institute's Objectivist Academic Center.

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Every week there are technological breakthroughs and innovations in crucial fields of production, such as computers and medicine. But you'd never know it reading the headlines of most major news outlets. Even where productiveness is covered to some extent, for example, in technology news, new products and innovations are taken for granted as the given.

The articles in these pages are in part an attempt to remedy that: all touch on productiveness from various angles. Let us consider here what "productiveness" is.

One often hears the environmentalist mantra that production is a process by which man defiles pure nature and is therefore bad. The truth is the exact opposite: production is the process by which man reshapes nature in accordance with his values and is therefore good.

Every human value above the level of the picking of wild berries is produced, is brought into existence by a thoughtful, purposeful rearrangement of various

Reshaping Nature

by Ned Chalmers

natural elements. Before someone does so, there is just raw matter—after someone does so, there is a new value, something good for his life.

Production is the way a thinking being survives. No other animal needs to produce; their nourishment and/or shelter exist ready-made in nature. But man needs to produce food and shelter—and medicine, and computers, and airplanes, and films, and luxuries yet to be imagined and tools to overcome obstacles yet to be encountered—to live a fully human existence, in comfort and happiness.

Living in a society with the division of labor does not change the fact that we need to produce our values. What it gives us is the ability to specialize, to spend our time producing superior goods, better values, which can be traded for more of the same. Everyone

benefits from this arrangement, even—nay, *especially* when companies "get rich off the sick." (See "The Pharmaceutical Industry.")

Values are values no matter where they are produced. It makes no difference if we can trade our efforts for a car made in Japan or a car made in America (see "'Buy American' is Un-American"). It makes no difference if the producer is born in America or in Mexico (see "The Double Injustice of Immigration Restrictions").

Production does not just keep a man physically equipped to live, but also keeps him spiritually integrated. A life-long focus on a particular kind of production—a career—is what allows one to organize one's values and to build one's personal identity and self-esteem, and thus form friendships and find romance. (See "The Real Purpose-Driven Life" and "Sex

and the Suburbs.")

The reason that productiveness is underappreciated, misunderstood, and rejected is because of moral codes that reject the importance of life on earth. If one's main concern is living long and well, then productiveness is a major moral virtue. Productiveness over the course of a lifetime demands the best within a person: ambitiousness, endurance, vision, courage. Its consistent practice leads to a mastery over oneself and nature, and thus health, benevolence, playfulness, and an ever-better life on earth. (See "Google Versus The Pope.")

Those who would ignore the virtue of productiveness cripple our ability to live, be they environmentalists, the Vatican, or run-of-the-mill government regulators. (See "The FDA.") Objectivism holds that producers should not be taken for granted, but revered, encouraged, and emulated.

Ned Chalmers will be starting graduate work in philosophy in the fall.

SPEAKERS, EVENTS, MEETINGS

<p>Chicago Objectivist Society (Chicago, IL)</p>	<p>a break. Taped copies available for missed lectures."</p>	<p>Front Range Objectivism (Denver, CO)</p>	<p>sible the enormous growth and development of American business today. Focusing on business history, this lecture will highlight the accomplishments of these men and assess their importance for American economic development."</p>	<p>George Mason University (Fairfax, VA)</p>	<p>Ayn Rand Institute (Irvine, CA)</p>
<p>What: Lecture course, "History of Economic Thought: Antiquity to 1870" Lecturer: Daniel Drake When: Saturday, April 30 Where: Lincolnwood, IL Cost: \$50 per person, \$25 for students Contact: Keith Schacht (keiths@inventables.com) Description:</p>	<p>What: Seminar, "Tackling Hard Thinking" Instructor: Jean Moroney When: Saturday, May 21 & Sunday, May 22 Where: Chicago-area Cost: \$250 per person Contact: Keith Schacht (keiths@inventables.com) Description: In "Tackling Hard Thinking," Jean Moroney teaches practical techniques for guiding your thinking when the task is challenging. The objective of the course is to teach practical methods for monitoring your cognitive progress and strategies for re-directing your thoughts when something blocks that progress. Specifically, Ms. Moroney teaches tactics for addressing four common problems that can bring thinking to a halt: blankness, vagueness, overload, and floundering. The course is organized around these four problems."</p>	<p>What: Supper Talk, "The Commercial Revolution in American Business" Speaker: Dr. Eric Daniels, postdoctoral fellow and research associate at Duke University's Program on Values and Ethics in the Marketplace When: Saturday, May 21 Where: Arvada, CO Contact: Lin Zinser, Lin@Zinser.com Cost: \$45 per person, \$35 for students Description: "American wealth today owes its very existence to the heroic achievements of the great businessmen-entrepreneurs of the nineteenth and early-twentieth century. These men saw that industrial technology could make life easier and more comfortable for all Americans. By innovating and creating new forms of business, businessmen heroes revolutionized the way that Americans purchased consumer goods, thereby improving the lives of every American and making pos-</p>	<p>Further info: http://www.frontrangeobjectivism.com</p>	<p>What: Public lecture, "The Use Value of Art" Speaker: Lee Sandstead, Professor of Art History, Montclair State University When: Wednesday, May 4, 7:30pm -- 9:00pm Where: TBA Contact: nprovenzo@moraldefense.com Description:</p>	<p>What: Public lecture, "Anti-Trust is Immoral" Speaker: Dr. Gary Hull When: Tuesday, May 24, 7:30pm, Q&A to follow Where: Hyatt Regency Irvine Description: "In this provocative lecture, Dr. Gary Hull argues that the targets of antitrust are not criminals but victims. Their much-reviled monopoly power is not coercive or destructive; it is the life-giving power to produce products that are incredibly appealing to customers and far superior to those of laggard competitors. Antitrust law, argues Dr. Hull, is fundamentally unjust: it throttles, punishes and sacrifices America's best producers for the sake of their inferiors. This evil is not merely in any specific case or application of antitrust, but inherent in the law, as such. Antitrust cannot be 'fixed' or redeemed. It must be abolished."</p>
<p>"This lecture series will survey the history economic thought from antiquity to 1870 (when modern economics begins its descent into corruption). It will focus on the development of fundamental concepts of economics: value, price, wages, interest, profit, money. For those uneducated in economics, this will serve as a good introduction. For those with some knowledge of economics, it will help to explain the problems and gaps modern economics. "This lecture series will consist of 8 lectures, one each month. Each lecture will last 2.5 hours, including</p>	<p>Further info: http://www.chicagoobjectivists.org</p>	<p>Further info: http://www.torontoobjectivist.org</p>	<p>Toronto Objectivist Association (Toronto, ON)</p>	<p>What: Social event, Sunday Brunch When: Sunday, May 1, 10:30am (please RSVP) Where: Milestone's Contact: Nicole Montpetit, info@TorontoObjectivist.org What: Social event, Informal Dinner When: Wednesday, May 18, 6:30pm (please RSVP) Where: Hot House Café Contact: Nicole Montpetit, info@TorontoObjectivist.org Further info: http://www.torontoobjectivist.org</p>	<p>Further info: http://www.aynrand.org</p>

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