What is Capitalism? By Ayn Rand

1. Rand bemoans the movement from studying man to studying society. Rand notes that the field of political economy attempts to study social systems without reference to “man” or the “individual”. In 20th-century philosophy, political science and psychology how his man viewed?
2. Rand refers to this as the “tribal view of man”. What reason(s) does she cite for this prevailing view and to whom is she referring?
3. How was the institution of private property influential in economic development?
4. Rand argues that Europeans fail to understand the “American philosophy of the Rights of Man and as a result of emancipation differently”. Why is this so?
5. How is wealth viewed by European thinkers?
6. What *is* social surplus according to Rand? How does Rand’s view of social surplus differ from the view which she is attacking?
7. So again, for the *Encyclopedia Britannica’s* author what was “… the special virtue that enabled capitalism to outstrip all prior economic systems”?
8. What is the answer to this same question for Rand?
9. In order to understand capitalism what must one realize?

*Epistemological* – epistemology is the branch of philosophy that investigates the origin, nature, methods, and limits of human knowing.

1. What is the essential characteristic of man?
2. To whom does rationality reside?
3. What is production?
4. What must people do if they choose not to think? How do they survive?
5. What must people do if they choose not to work? How do they survive?
6. What must a mind have in order to realize its full potential?
7. Read the passage on page 17, paragraph 5. What does Rand mean by“… a gun is not an argument.” in the last clause of the sentence?
8. What is the “social recognition of man’s rational nature”?
9. What is the most fundamental right?
10. What are the two fundamental questions to determine the nature of any social system? KEY!
11. What is *the* basic issue for Rand?
12. Rand maintains that capitalism is the only system that answers the question “Is man free?” in the affirmative. Why does she maintain this?
13. What is the sole function of government in a capitalist society?
14. What is the cardinal difference between capitalism and collectivism?
15. What are the four branches of philosophy Rand lists? What are their counterparts under capitalism?
16. What is Rand’s moral justification for capitalism?
17. Why does Rand consider a discussion of “the common good” spurious?
18. What does Rand believe is the common use of the term “the common good” throughout history?
19. Rand maintains that there are three schools of thought on the nature of the good. What are they and what does each say?
20. Which of the three schools of thought – subjectivist, objectivist or intrinsic - does capitalism best fit with, according to Rand?
21. What do intrinsic and subjective theories inevitably lead to according to Rand?
22. Why and how do intrinsic values or subjective values lead to tyranny according to Rand?
23. In her discussion of the objective perspective Rand maintains that the good can be discovered only by man’s mind. What is the implication for the use of physical force under an objectivist philosophy?
24. In a capitalist society, where do values originate and how are they established?
25. What is the wellspring of valuation in a market economy according to Rand?
26. What is the point of the lipstick and the microscope story?
27. What does capitalism require of an individual?
28. Rand argues that in one sense the producers run the free market and not consumers. Why?
29. What is the relationship between imitators and innovators?
30. What role does voluntary consent play in a free market?
31. What is required of trade in a free market economy?
32. How does the tribal mentality attack this perspective?
33. Read the quote starting on page 27 from *Atlas Shrugged*. What do you think of it?
34. On page 28 Rand speaks to the history of progress but she says that there is something that is underappreciated in our analysis of this. What is it?
35. On page 28 Rand has an interesting notion of how the tribal society is organized. Explain.
36. How does this story compare to what Rand notes about American industrialization?
37. What was the cause of this progress in America according to Rand?
38. What does Rand say about the creation of wealth and its distribution on page 30?
39. On page 31 Rand argues that capitalism was damned from the start. Why?
40. How does development progress in a society according to the Encyclopedia Britannica author?
41. What have “many economists asserted” according to the Encyclopedia Britannica author?
42. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica author what are the two major biases of a capitalistic outlook?
43. What is the last sentence of the Encyclopedia Britannica article on page 34? Interpret. Do you think the author right or wrong?

**Stalin’s Russia**

**Lenin on the 1921 famine:** Said [Lenin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lenin) on this issue: *"The greater the number of the representatives of the reactionary bourgeoisie and the reactionary clergy that we will manage to execute in this affair, the better."*[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_famine_of_1921#endnote_Pipes)

# Soviet famine of 1932-1933

### From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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| [The Black Book of Communism: Crimes,Terror, Repression](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Black_Book_of_Communism:_Crimes%2C_Terror%2C_Repression) |
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The **Soviet famine of 1932-1934** affected all major grain-producing areas of the [Soviet Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union): [Ukraine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukraine), [North Caucasus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Caucasus), [Volga Region](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volga_Region), South [Urals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urals), [West Siberia](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=West_Siberia&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Kazakhstan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kazakhstan). The manifestation of this famine in the [Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukrainian_Soviet_Socialist_Republic) is referred to as [Holodomor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holodomor). Unlike the [previous similar famine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_famine_of_1921), the information about the famine of 1932-1934 was suppressed in the Soviet Union until [perestroika](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perestroika).

## [[edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Soviet_famine_of_1932-1933&action=edit&section=1)] Estimation of the loss of life

* [Robert Conquest](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Conquest) in his book *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivisation and the Terror-Famine* estimates 7 million deaths.
* [The Black Book of Communism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Black_Book_of_Communism) estimates 6 million deaths.
* The 2004 book *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931-1933* by R.W. Davies and S.G. Wheatcroft, gives an estimate of around 6 million deaths.[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_famine_of_1932-1933#cite_note-0)

A study from 2005 by Michael Ellman: states "It should be noted that it would be a mistake simply to add this figure to the Davies & Wheatcroft estimate of 5.7 million famine deaths to arrive at a figure of 5.7 + 3=8.7 million ‘victims of famine and repression’. This would involve double counting the excess deaths in the [OGPU](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OGPU) system (approximately 300,000 according to Davies & Wheatcroft). Taking account of this, and also of the repression of non-peasants in this period, an estimate of ‘about eight and a half million’ victims of famine and repression in 1930 – 33 seems the best currently available."[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_famine_of_1932-1933#cite_note-1)

**Statistical Results of the Great Purge: October 1936-November 1938**

In the cases investigated by the State Security Department of the NKVD (GUGB NKVD):

* At least 1,710,000 people were arrested.
* At least 1,440,000 people were sentenced.
* At least 724,000 people were executed. Among those executed:
  + At least 436,000 people were sentenced to death by NKVD troikas as part of the *Kulak Operation*.
  + At least 247,000 people were sentenced to death by NKVD *Dvoikas* and the *Local Special Troikas* as part of the *Ethnic Operation*.
  + At least 41,000 people were sentenced to death by Military Courts.

Among other cases in October 1936-November 1938:

* At least 400,000 people were sentenced to labor camps by Police Troikas as *Socially Harmful Elements* (социально-вредный элемент, СВЭ)
* At least 200,000 people were exiled or deported by "Administrative procedures".
* At least two million people were sentenced by courts for common crimes; among them 800,000 were sentenced to GULAG camps.

**References**

1. [**^**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_the_Great_Purge#cite_ref-OR_0-0) [N.G. Okhotin, A.B. Roginsky *"Great Terror": Brief Chronology*](http://www.memo.ru/history/y1937/hronika1936_1939/xronika.html) [Memorial](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memorial_%28society%29), 200