

Praxeology and the Rothbardians



Adam Knott

Praxeology and the Rothbardians

Introduction

The normative property theories of Rothbard and Hoppe are part of the foundation of praxeology. This is the amazing thesis put forth by writer Konrad Graf in his article "Action-Based Jurisprudence: Praxeological Legal Theory in Relation to Economic Theory, Ethics, and Legal Practice." In this paper, I will highlight important problems with the attempt to fuse the normative theorizing of Rothbard and Hoppe together with the value-free science of praxeology as conceived by its foremost practitioner, Ludwig von Mises.

I will divide this essay into two sections. The first section will treat the praxeological issues raised in Mr. Graf's article; and the second section will treat the normative theories of Rothbard and Hoppe, the problems with these theories, and their relationship to formal praxeology. My primary goal will be to address Mr. Graf's foundational ideas, not his application of these ideas to libertarian legal concepts. Therefore, I will only address Part I of Mr. Graf's paper, which is entitled "Foundations: An Extended Model of Praxeology."

Part I

Praxeology

What is praxeology? Carl Menger, the founder of the Austrian School of economics, provides the following definition:

The aim of this orientation, which in the future we will call the *exact* one, an aim which research pursues in the same way in all realms of the world of phenomena, is the determination of strict laws of phenomena, of regularities in the succession of phenomena which do not present themselves to us as absolute, but which in respect to the approaches to cognition by which we attain to them simply bear within themselves the guarantee of absoluteness. It is the determination of laws of phenomena which commonly are called "laws of nature," but more correctly should be designated by the expression "*exact laws*." (I-59)

The exact laws, economic laws, or praxeological laws, of which Menger speaks, are of such a nature that the contrary of what they assert seems unthinkable:

With the assumption of strictly typical elements, of their exact measure, and of their complete isolation from all other causative factors, [science] does to be sure, and indeed on the basis of the rules of cognition characterized by us above, arrive at laws of phenomena which are not only absolute, but according to our laws of thinking simply cannot be thought of in any other way but as absolute. That is, it arrives at exact laws, the so-called "laws of nature" of phenomena. (I-61)

In conceiving a science he named *praxeology*, Mises provided the same account of the nature and source of praxeological or exact laws:

But the characteristic feature of a priori knowledge is that we cannot think of the truth of its negation or of something that would be at variance with it. What the a priori expresses is necessarily implied in every proposition concerning the issue in question. It is implied in all our thinking and acting.

If we qualify a concept or proposition as a priori, we want to say: first, that the negation of what it asserts is unthinkable for the human mind and appears to it as nonsense; secondly, that this a priori concept or proposition is necessarily implied in our mental approach to all the problems concerned, i.e., in our thinking and acting concerning these problems. (U-18)

Both Menger and Mises conceive exact laws as applying to the “real world” (Menger) or to the “reality of action” (Mises). We can understand their meaning by considering the following two propositions:

1. “I intend to walk toward a location while being careful not to walk away from any.”
2. “Using my hands, I intend to strongly pull upward on the bottoms of my feet while being careful not to push down with my feet and, in this way, lift myself up off the ground.”

The above propositions both refer to intended *actions*. These intended actions entail *means* (walking, lifting, etc.), and they entail *ends* (avoiding walking away from any locations, lifting oneself up off the ground, etc.). The praxeological question at hand is whether the specified means in each case can possibly result in the end sought.

In their insistence that praxeological laws provide meaningful information about the “real world,” Menger and Mises mean that praxeological laws make explicit how the application of specific means cannot possibly result in the intended end, or, what is the same thing, how specific means must necessarily result in a given end. In other words, walking toward a location cannot possibly

result in walking away from none, or walking toward a location must necessarily result in walking away from one. Praxeology provides exact or certain knowledge demonstrating the necessary consequences of our intended actions.

It is important to realize that when Mises speaks of a priori propositions or a priori knowledge, he is speaking about economic or praxeological *laws*. The economic or praxeological laws Mises has in mind consist in a constant relationship (a regularity) between an intended action (creating more currency, lowering the legal interest rate, etc.) and the necessary consequence of that action (currency devaluation, the business cycle, etc.). Praxeological knowledge provides us with utilizable information about how to bring about or avoid phenomenon **B**, by either utilizing or abstaining from means **A**.

The purpose of the theoretical sciences is understanding of the real world, knowledge of it extending beyond immediate experience, and control of it...We control the real world in that, on the basis of our theoretical knowledge, we set the conditions of a phenomenon which are within our control, and are able in such a way to produce the phenomenon itself. (I-55/56)

The starting point of experimental knowledge is the cognition that an **A** is uniformly followed by a **B**. The utilization of this knowledge either for the production of **B** or for the avoidance of the emergence of **B** is called action. The primary objective of action is either to bring about **B** or to prevent its happening. (U-20)

The central concern of both Mengerian and Misesian praxeology is to explain the regularities that we experience in our action (in our conscious, purposive activity) in terms of exact or praxeological laws. Thus, praxeological analysis is not strictly identical to conceptual analysis alone. In praxeological analysis, a select experience of our conscious action (**E-1**) is rendered in conceptual

terms so that implications may be drawn as to a second experience (*E-2*) that must “also be present” because the presence of *E-2* is “deducible” from the presence of *E-1*. (See: ROB-121/122, IEO-62/63) Generally, *E-1* will be a *means* we intend to employ for some purpose. The central focus of both Mengerian and Misesian praxeology is to express regularities that we experience in action in terms of exact or praxeological laws.

The above notions constitute the most essential and fundamental characteristics of praxeology as this science has been conceived by both Menger and Mises. It is instructive that in section I of his paper, where Mr. Graf discusses his conception of praxeology, no reference is made to the concept of exact laws, economic laws, or praxeological laws. Meanwhile, in the same section, the term *norm* or *normative* is mentioned fifty times. In his article dealing with the foundations of praxeology, Graf has apparently omitted an essential characteristic of praxeology without any reason or explanation.

Actions Without a Science?

As those familiar with the writings of Mises know, Mises repeatedly asserted that praxeology is a general science of human action and that economics is but one branch of this general science. This implies that there are other branches of praxeology. But what might these other branches be? It is to Graf's credit that he realizes the importance of this question and seeks to provide an answer. It is also to Graf's credit that he realizes part of the answer has to do with the concept of *interaction* "in the sense of social action" (G-14). However, Graf's treatment suffers from several important defects. Graf's primary aim is to establish that the property theories of Rothbard and Hoppe are an essential part of praxeology. Guided by this narrow focus, Graf neglects to consider classes of action that are not relevant to his goal. Thus, the idea never occurs to him that the various *branches* of praxeology may correspond to the various *classes* of action.

The central concept of praxeology is the concept of *action*. A succinct definition of action is "anything that you do on purpose" (GOR-18). In contemplating the nature of action, we realize that there are different *kinds* or *classes* of actions:

The activities of every individual—all actions—stem from reason, the same source from which come our theories. Man's actions on the market, in the government, at work, at leisure, in buying and selling, are all guided by reason, guided by choice between what a person prefers as against what he does not prefer. (FM-16)

There are different kinds or classes of actions; and economics, as the study of market phenomena (what Mises refers to as *catallactics*, or economics in the narrow sense), is primarily

concerned with the study of man's actions on the market. In Mises's conception:

Economics is mainly concerned with the analysis of the determination of money prices of goods and services exchanged on the market. (HA-234)

The scope of praxeology, the general theory of human action, can be precisely defined and circumscribed. The specifically economic problems, the problems of economic action in the narrower sense, can only by and large be disengaged from the comprehensive body of praxeological theory. (HA-234)

Considerations of expediency and traditional convention make us declare that the field of catallactics or of economics in the narrower sense is the analysis of the market phenomena. This is tantamount to the statement: Catallactics is the analysis of those actions which are conducted on the basis of monetary calculation. (HA-234)

It is clear in Mises's conception that the various realms of praxeological study will correspond to the various classes or kinds of action. Mises conceived that economics is the branch of praxeology that studies primarily actions conducted on the basis of monetary calculation. He termed this branch "economics in the narrow sense" or "catallactics." In Mises's conception, economics in the wider sense is identical to praxeology. The formal analysis of actions generally is economics "in the wider sense" or "praxeology." The formal analysis of specifically market phenomena is economics "in the narrow sense" or "catallactics." Inexplicably, Graf fails to even consider Mises's own definition of economics as the analysis of those actions conducted on the basis of monetary calculation and instead discusses definitions proposed by Reisman and Rothbard.(G-10)

If we follow the spirit and intent of Mises's conceptual vision, there are at least four broad classes of actions to which four sciences may correspond. There are *economic* or *catallactic* actions—those

actions conducted based on monetary calculation. Next, as indicated by Graf, there is a class of actions that can be designated broadly as the class of *social actions*. This class of actions is comprised of all actions in which an individual acts toward another actor. This class of actions includes actions we may term “ethical” or “moral” actions (lying, cheating, coercing, etc.), and it includes actions we may term “political” actions (acts of government). We may also designate this class of actions “interpersonal actions.” The name we give to these actions is not important. What is important is that in an interpersonal action, one actor acts toward another actor.

A third and important class of actions is the class of *mental actions*—actions such as thinking, deliberating, reasoning, hoping, wishing, etc.

Man’s inability to accomplish this makes thinking itself an action, proceeding step by step from the less satisfactory state of insufficient cognition to the more satisfactory state of better insight. (HA-99)

If, for example, I think of a chair, my mental action is not a picture of the chair....Thinking is an action, a mental “doing,” as it were. (GOR96-5)

Some “actions” don’t seem to involve physical movement, e.g., thinking. (GOR-19)

Thus, it is generally recognized in Austrian School literature that *thinking* is a form of action. Included in the class of mental actions are actions such as envisioning, daydreaming, contemplating, “trying to control one’s emotions,” etc. These are examples of mental activities that we can do on purpose.

Lastly, we may conceive a class of *physical actions*. Physical actions are those actions in which an actor interacts with physical nature, including his own body. Lifting one’s arm is an action, running is an

action, making a cup of coffee is an action, building a house is an action, etc.

From these simple considerations, it becomes clear that the branches of praxeology correspond to the *classes of actions*. If economics, as a branch of praxeology, attempts to arrive at economic laws—laws instructing on the consequences of “economic” acts such as increasing the money supply, erecting tariffs, lowering the legal interest rate, etc.—then the other branches of praxeology attempt to arrive at exact laws or praxeological laws in their respective fields. The goal will be to discover or reveal the formal relations or formal implications (praxeological laws) entailed in *interpersonal actions*, *mental actions*, and *physical actions* in the same way that economics attempts to reveal the formal relations of economic actions. Just as economic science instructs on the necessary consequences of “economic” acts, a praxeological science of interpersonal actions or a praxeological science of mental actions will instruct on the necessary consequences of interpersonal acts or mental acts. This is what Mises means in writing “Praxeological knowledge makes it possible to predict with apodictic certainty the outcome of various modes of action” (HA-117).

The classification of various types of actions, and the corresponding notion that the branches of praxeology correspond to the various classes of action, is a relatively simple extension of Mises’s conception of praxeology. In this conception, praxeology is the general science of action, and there are numerous classes or categories of action which the praxeologist may approach with an eye toward understanding or conceiving the regular patterns or regularities (invariant relations) that seem to inhere in the class of actions in question. Arguing and discussing are forms of action and forms of interpersonal action. But so are coercing, dancing, lovemaking, insulting, commanding, and threatening forms of action and forms of interpersonal action.

While interpersonal action (Graf's *interaction*) is a kind of action, and is therefore the subject of praxeological study, there are other forms of action that Graf has failed to consider. Thus, Graf's conception of praxeology as comprised mainly of economic theory and legal theory must be considered defective as it fails to account for (or even mention) important forms of action. This serious mistake could possibly have been avoided if Graf had been cognizant of current attempts to extend Mises's conception of praxeology to other realms of human action, or if he had seriously studied praxeology as it was being developed by Mises, Hayek, Schutz, and others in the early twentieth century.

Rothbard's Misconception of Praxeology

Graf correctly identifies Rothbard as chiefly responsible for the poor state of knowledge concerning the nature of praxeology. Rothbard generally equated praxeology with economics (in the narrow sense) and thus wrongly concluded that noncatallactic forms of action (moral actions, ethical actions, political actions, etc.) could only be studied by objective ethics and not praxeology:

Value in the sense of valuation or utility is purely subjective, and decided by each individual. This procedure is perfectly proper for the formal science of praxeology, or economic theory, but not necessarily elsewhere. For in natural-law ethics, ends are demonstrated to be good or bad for man in varying degrees; value here is *objective*—determined by the natural law of man's being, and here "happiness" for man is considered in the commonsensical, *contentual* sense. (EOL-12)

In other words, in the political, moral, and ethical spheres of man's activity, praxeology is not "proper." In these spheres of action, only objective ethics can guide us and provide meaningful knowledge. Thus, we must "cast out the hobgoblins of *Wertfreiheit*" (EOL-26). This was Rothbard's view.

Referring to Rothbard's conception that praxeology and economics in the narrow sense were identical, Graf writes:

However, such accounts of "praxeology and economics" leave little space for a sphere of content for praxeology to call its own, independent of economics. Rothbard writes that, "With praxeology as the general, formal theory of human action, economics includes the analysis of the action of an isolated individual (Crusoe economics)..." While the proposed

distinction appears to be between “general and formal” and greater specificity, this sentence could generate confusion because “Crusoe economics” is a fictional device to explain the most fundamental concepts of praxeology itself—from ends and means to production to time-preference. Rothbard’s comment comes at the end of the chapter called “Fundamentals of Human Action,” which uses Crusoe to explain the most fundamental praxeological concepts. This could leave the impression that “economics,” as represented by “Crusoe economics,” has on day one moved in to occupy all of the identifiable territory in this new land of praxeology, taking as its own any and all content that might otherwise be assigned to a core of praxeology itself—an independent core that could be shared with other possible “branches” or “sub-divisions” besides economics.

Unsurprisingly, economics has remained the dominant branch of praxeology decades later, and only a few writers have speculated on what other branches might be. (G-4)

Thus, owing largely to Rothbard’s misconception of the nature and scope of praxeology and owing to his advocacy of a theoretical paradigm wherein market activity is studied by praxeology and political activity is studied by objective ethics, many were persuaded to ignore Mises’s insight that praxeology could be extended to other realms of human action. Graf has done Austrian School scholarship a service by bringing this point further into the foreground. Graf refers to some important remarks by Larry Sechrest that are worth printing here:

Thus praxeology is the broader category. Economics is one of the subsets of praxeological inquiry. “[T]he praxeological view sees the economic affairs as distinguished solely by the fact that they belong to the larger body of phenomena that have their source in *human actions*” (Kirzner 1976, p. 148). Yet many Austrians slip into the habit of equating praxeology with economic theory alone. This is understandable as long as

Austrians think of economics as the science of human action. However, to do so is an error, since it is praxeology which is the science of human action, not economics. In other words, it would be preferable to define economics in a narrower fashion, one that does not merely equate it with praxeology. (SEE-24)

Thus, the Rothbardian conception equating economics with praxeology is an error. However, we have already seen that this error didn't originate with Mises, who clearly conceived that there were different kinds of actions, and that economics (catallactics) was the branch of praxeology that studies those actions conducted on the basis of monetary calculation. That Rothbard was making a significant error with important implications was realized decades ago by Peter Boettke, who wrote:

Rothbard has intensely defended what he considers the basic tenets of Misesian economics: apriorism, deductivism, and individualism. These tenets represent to Rothbard "the method of economics": praxeology. There is no doubt that Mises advocated a transcendental apriorism to ground the action axiom, just as there is no doubt that Mises thought deductive logic was indispensable for clear thought, and that economic explanations must be traceable back to the meaningful acts of individuals. But, upon deeper examination, Rothbard's apparent authority is highly questionable.

Mises's thought is much more subtle than is typical of Rothbard. First of all, praxeology is a discipline, not a method. Rothbard totally obscures this point throughout his methodological writings. To Mises, praxeology is the broader discipline of the human sciences, of which economics represents a mere subset,... (PB-30)

Boettke wrote these words in 1988. It is no exaggeration to assert that Rothbard, through the advocacy of his own personal theoretical paradigm (praxeology in market exchanges and objective and normative theorizing in ethics, morals, law, and politics), inhibited the study of praxeology for decades.

Praxeological Insights/ Praxeological Mistakes

Graf lists and understands some of the most general features of praxeology. Praxeology, he writes, “addresses the formal concept of action and its deducible implications” (G-1). The “core concepts of praxeology can be explained with reference to the actions of an isolated individual” (G-11), and “praxeological concepts are universal; they apply to all cases of action and interaction by definition” (G-14).

Graf’s paper does put forth the idea that there are different *kinds* of actions, though these insights are presented mainly as the thoughts of other thinkers. In a passage from Kinsella and Tinsley, it is suggested that “aggression is a particular kind of human action” (5), and Graf also writes that “Hoppe notes the tight interconnections between the axiom of action...and the A Priori of Argumentation—a set of statements about one type of interaction...” (14). Thus, aggression is a particular kind of action. Argumentation is a particular kind of action *and* a particular kind of social interaction. Arguing is a different kind of social interaction from, for example, coercing, cooperating, dancing, fighting, etc.

Graf also notes that whether praxeology treats economic actions, interpersonal actions, mental actions, or physical actions, it is not the content of the action that is the concern of praxeology. As Mises instructs us, “Praxeology is not concerned with the changing content of acting, but with its pure form and its categorial structure” (HA-47). Graf follows Mises in writing:

For both action and interaction—and this is the genius of Mises’s method—we are not speaking in praxeology about the

content of any given action or interaction, but rather the universal features that must be shared in all instances of action or interaction. (G15)

The structure of praxeology proposed by Graf entails a distinction between the general concept of action and the more narrow concept of interaction in the sense of social action—what we refer to as *interpersonal action*.

Just as the root level of praxeology comprises those *aspects of action* that must be present in all forms of action, the trunk level comprises those *aspects of interaction* (in the sense of social *action* as opposed to mere interactive behavior) that are necessarily present in all forms of interaction. (G-14)

Thus, we are led to a vision wherein we may conceive action generally (anything you do on purpose), or we may conceive action more narrowly (anything you do on purpose to another actor). This latter conception we may designate as interaction, social interaction, interpersonal action, etc.

Graf then continues:

Since only an individual can perform actions, it is natural to consider an isolated individual to find the universal and general features that all action must include. Similarly, since interaction must involve two or more actors, it is natural to look to an action-based consideration of two people to locate the most fundamental, universal, and general features that all interaction must include. (G14)

Here, Graf makes a serious conceptual error. He implies that the praxeological conception of social action requires two people in the objective sense. However, this notion constitutes a misunderstanding of the nature of praxeological reasoning. How this is so can be understood if we consider the following praxeological insights made by Hayek, Kirzner, and even Rothbard:

Here again, it is very important to recognize that what is significant for human action is *not* the physical property of a good, but the evaluation of the good by the actor. (MES-19)

This [praxeological] point of view makes possible the construction of chains of reasoning that are purely formal, in the sense that they refer to goods, services or factors of production only abstractly; they depend for their validity not on the specific objects with which human action may be concretely concerned, but only on postulated attitudes of men towards them. (KIR-179)

It is important to remember that the so-called “data,” from which we set out in this sort of analysis, are...all facts given to the person in question, the things as they are known to (or believed by) him to exist, and not, strictly speaking, objective facts. It is only because of this that the propositions we deduce are necessarily a priori valid and that we preserve the consistency of the argument. (IEO-36)

In other words, praxeology arrives at a priori valid propositions only because it deduces the necessary implications of the *subjective* fact—the situation as understood or evaluated by the individual actor. For praxeology, it is not the objective, physical, or “real” qualities of the object or situation that are important. For praxeology, what counts is the actor’s attitude, opinion, or intention regarding the object of his action. That is the meaning of the above passages from Rothbard, Kirzner, and Hayek. In his essay “The Facts of the Social Sciences,” Hayek described the praxeological or analytical method in this way:

From the fact that whenever we interpret human action as in any sense purposive or meaningful, whether we do so in ordinary life or for the purposes of the social sciences, we have to define both the objects of human activity and the different kinds of actions themselves, not in physical terms but in terms of the opinions or intentions of the acting persons, there follow

some very important consequences; namely, nothing less than that we can, from the concepts of the objects, analytically conclude something about what the actions will be. If we define an object in terms of a person's attitude toward it, it follows, of course, that the definition of the object implies a statement about the attitude of the person toward the thing. When we say that a person possesses food or money, or that he utters a word, we imply that he knows that the first can be eaten, that the second can be used to buy something with, and that the third can be understood—and perhaps many other things. (IEO-62/63)

Above, Hayek describes a method whereby the theorist begins with a subjective fact (the opinion or intention or purpose of the acting person) and attempts to draw an analytical conclusion or analytical implication from this subjective fact. The data of praxeological analysis are not objective data, but subjective data. And this insight is not an isolated insight of Hayek's, but rather a core concept of praxeological reasoning that Hayek likely came to—as did Kirzner and Rothbard—via his association with Mises.

It is illusory to believe that it is possible to visualize collective wholes. They are never visible; their cognition is always the outcome of the understanding of the meaning which acting men attribute to their acts. We can see a crowd, i.e., a multitude of people. Whether this crowd is a mere gathering or a mass...or an organized body or any other kind of social entity is a question that can only be answered by understanding the meaning which they themselves attach to their presence. And this meaning is always the meaning of individuals. Not our senses, but understanding, a mental process, makes us recognize social entities. (HA-43)

In praxeological analysis, social phenomena are not a function of the physical, objective, or "real" situation. Rather, in praxeological analysis, social phenomena are a function of the intention or purpose of the actor concerned. It follows that in praxeological

analysis, social interaction need not involve two or more actors in the objective sense which Graf intends. In praxeological analysis, for social interaction to occur for a given actor, it is only necessary that the actor concerned believes the object of his action is another purposive being. Thus, contrary to Graf's assertion, not only may we consider the actions of an isolated individual to find the universal and general features of *all* action, but we may also consider the actions of an isolated individual to find the universal and general features of *interpersonal* action. This is so because social interaction in the praxeological sense is a subjective fact and exists for the individual concerned when he believes he is interacting with another actor. To understand this concept, we need only realize that what Rothbard wrote:

Here again, it is very important to recognize that what is significant for human action is *not* the physical property of a good, but the evaluation of the good by the actor. (MES-19)

...applies in praxeology *generally* to *any object* of an actor's action, not merely to "economic" objects exchanged on markets, as was Rothbard's deficient understanding. Here is where Rothbard's faulty conception led Graf to make the corresponding mistake. As we've seen, Rothbard equated praxeology with economics, and this led him to treat actions that people direct toward the market by a social-theoretical method different from the one he used to treat actions that people direct toward one another. Employing this bifurcated conception, Rothbard conceived that market theory begins with the individual's "subjective" valuation of objects of exchange, yet social theory, in the sense of interpersonal action, does *not* begin with the individual's subjective evaluation of the objects in *this* realm of his purposive action. Rothbard never explained why theoretical subjectivism and praxeology cannot treat social objects aside from the objects of market exchange. He merely conceived and asserted that "this procedure is perfectly proper for the formal science of praxeology, or economic theory, but not necessarily elsewhere" (EOL-12).

Once Rothbard's mistake is realized and once we make the corresponding adjustments in our theoretical assumptions, the praxeological conceptions which Mises, Hayek, and others were developing in the early twentieth century can be understood as applying to social objects and social phenomena generally, not just to the objects of market exchange.

As an example, we may consider a person who walks into a park and sees a bronze-painted human figure. In praxeological reasoning, whether this figure is a statue or a person posing as a statue in the *real* or *objective* sense is not important. What is important, as Rothbard wrote, is the evaluation of the "good" (the object) by the actor. This evaluation of the object by the actor—the data of praxeological analysis—is a subjective and not an objective fact.

When Graf writes "interaction must involve two or more people," it is clear that he intends an objective account of social interaction and not a subjective account of social interaction deriving from the intention of the actor concerned. An objective conception of social interaction will generally entail an account of social interaction as it might appear to an *observer* of social interaction, whether that observer is explicitly referred to or is only implicit in the analysis. From the observer's point of view, one forms a visualization of two people, conceiving that social interaction is an observable event that takes place between two physical bodies in extended space. This way of thinking leads to Graf's assertion that "interaction must involve two or more actors." However, praxeology deals with subjective meaning and not objective meaning. It deals with the meaning which the individual subject gives to his own action.

The objective conception of social phenomena is obtained by providing a description of an observer's observation while omitting explicit reference to the observer, thus giving the impression that an "objective" event is taking place. When explicit reference to the observer is omitted from the description of his observation, this conceals that we are describing a situation as it appears to observer *O* in his act of observation. We don't make explicit that we are

discussing *O*'s act of observation, and we are thus led to believe that we are discussing an "objective event." However, in praxeological reasoning, the meaning of a given action is the subjective meaning given to this action by the actor concerned.

For it is obvious that an action has only one subjective meaning: that of the actor himself. It is *X* who gives subjective meaning to his action, and the only subjective meaning being given by *O* and *P* in this situation are the subjective meanings they are giving to their own actions, namely, their actions of observing *X*. (SCH-32)

Here, Schutz provides the theoretical path toward conceiving things from the point of view of the individual actor (subjective meaning) as opposed to conceiving things "objectively." In the objective account, explicit reference to the observer is omitted; in the subjective account, the observer's observations are explicitly conceived as *acts* of the observer. In the praxeological account of social interaction, the "objective" situation (i.e., the situation as it may be understood by an observing subject not explicitly referred to) is not the data of analysis. Instead, it is the meaning of the actor himself that is the data of praxeological analysis. In other words, in praxeology, social interaction happens for actor *A* when *A* thinks he is interacting socially, not when observer *O* thinks *A* is interacting socially.

If I am going for a walk to Hyde Park, there are any number of things that are happening in the course of my walk, but their descriptions do not describe my intentional actions, because in acting, what I am doing depends in large part on what I think I am doing. (SEA-58)

Now we can see that the preferred description of an action is determined by the intention in action. What the person is really doing, or at least what he is trying to do, is entirely a matter of what the intention is that he is acting with. (SEA-66)

The explanation of an action must have the same content as was in the person's head when he performed the action or when he reasoned toward his intention to perform his action. (SEA-67)

For a large number of social and psychological phenomena the concept that names the phenomenon is itself a constituent of the phenomenon. In order for something to count as a marriage ceremony or a trade union, or property or money or even a war or revolution people involved in these activities have to have certain appropriate thoughts. In general they have to think that's what it is. So, for example, in order to get married or buy property you and other people have to think that that is what you are doing. (SEA-78)

"Money" refers to whatever people use and think of as money. "Promise" refers to whatever people intend as and regard as promises. I am not saying that in order to have the institution of money people have to have that very word or some exact synonym in their vocabulary. Rather, they must have certain thoughts and attitudes about something in order that it counts as money and these thoughts and attitudes are part of the very definition of money. (SEA-78)

It is easily seen that all these [social] concepts...refer not to some objective properties possessed by the things, or which the observer can find out about them, but to views which some other person holds about the things...If we wish, we could say that all these objects are defined not in terms of their "real" properties but in terms of opinions people hold about them. In short, in the social sciences the things are what people think they are. Money is money, a word is a word, a cosmetic is a cosmetic, if and because somebody thinks they are. (IEO-59/60)

We have to define both the objects of human activity and the different kinds of actions themselves, not in physical terms but

in terms of the opinions or intentions of the acting persons,..
(IEO-62)

As these important insights of Searle and Hayek indicate, the data of praxeology are the valuations, evaluations, intentions, and attitudes of the actor concerned. Social interaction happens for actor **A** if and when social interaction is the intention actor **A** is acting with, regardless whether or not there is social interaction from an observer's point of view. If, for example, actor **A** believes the bronze-colored figure before him is another actor who has painted himself as a statue and if actor **A** asks this figure "Is it difficult to stand still like that?" then **A** interacts socially in the subjective sense regardless of the observations of observing scientist **O**. All that matters is whether or not **A** *intends* to perform an interpersonal action. This is the subjective datum which forms the basis of praxeological analysis.

Because the data of praxeology are not objective facts, it follows that in praxeological analysis, social interaction does not require two people in the objective sense. Graf's assertion that interaction must involve two or more actors may be a reasonable, commonsense proposition, and it may be a reasonable statement from the point of view of philosophical objective realism; but it is not an accurate statement in the context of praxeological analysis.

The Hoppean Concept of Action

It is important to realize that the Misesian conception of action differs essentially from the concept of action that Hoppe employs. In the Misesian conception, an actor is conceived to strive for satisfaction or, equivalently, to strive for the absence of dissatisfaction. The precise language in which this notion is expressed is less important than the essential idea intended.

Action is the search for improvement of conditions from the point of view of the personal value judgments of the individual concerned. (FM-14)

One may say that an actor attempts to remove uneasiness, or one may say that an actor attempts to improve his conditions. In the Misesian conception, these are merely different ways of saying the same thing: the actor is dissatisfied with the current situation and attempts to replace it with a different situation. This conception of action makes no reference whatsoever to a means or method by which an actor may attempt to bring about a more satisfactory situation.

The Hoppean concept of action differs from the Misesian concept in specifying that action must entail the guiding or positioning of a physical body or object in space:

Acting is a cognitively guided adjustment of a physical body in physical reality. (ESA-70)

The essence of action for Hoppe is the positioning of an object in space. Hoppe introduces a contentual aspect to the concept of action that is absent from the Misesian concept. As Rothbard conceives that praxeology is the study of only those conscious

actions surrounding the market, Hoppe conceives that actions are only those activities in which a body or object is consciously positioned or guided in space. Rothbard equates praxeology with market study. Hoppe equates action with *physical* action. However, as Gordon has correctly recognized, thinking is an action and a form of action that is not accurately defined in terms of physical movement:

Some “actions” don’t seem to involve physical movement, e.g., thinking. (GOR)

We can easily conceive of thinking as a particular instance of action. In thinking, I try to arrive at a conclusion or answer, and my attempt to reach this end implies that I am dissatisfied with my current state of knowledge and consider the attainment of this conclusion or answer an improvement in my conditions. In the Misesian conception of action, the two primary categories are the state or situation that confronts the actor and his attempt to replace this state or situation with a different one. Thus, in Mises’s conception, it is natural to consider thinking as a specific or particular form of action.

This makes thinking itself an action, proceeding step by step from the less satisfactory state of insufficient cognition to the more satisfactory state of better insight. (HA-99)

By contrast, if we apply Hoppe’s definition of action to the purposive mental activity of thinking, we are led to a notion such as:

Thinking is a cognitively guided adjustment of a physical body in physical reality.

Hoppe seems to miss what is essential about thinking and about acting. The reason can be seen if we consider the following insight by Searle:

If I am going for a walk to Hyde Park, there are any number of things that are happening in the course of my walk, but their

descriptions do not describe my intentional actions, because in acting, what I am doing depends in large part on what I think I am doing. So for example, I am also moving in the general directly of Patagonia, shaking the hair on my head up and down, wearing out my shoes, and moving a lot of air molecules. However, none of these other descriptions seems to get at what is essential about this action, as the action it is. (SEA-58)

If we contemplate Searle's insight, we eventually come to realize that because the physical movements of the actor are consistent with an unlimited number of actions, the physical movements of the actor are not essential to the definition of his action. The action which the actor is engaged in is *entirely* a matter of the intention he is working with:

What the person is really doing, or at least what he is trying to do, is entirely a matter of what the intention is that he is acting with. (SEA-66)

Searle's insight is of the same nature as the insights Hayek described in "The Facts of the Social Sciences":

What I am arguing is that no physical properties can enter into the explicit definition of any of these classes, because the elements of these classes need not possess common physical attributes. (IEO-61)

The common attributes which the elements of any of these classes possess are not physical attributes but must be something else. (IEO-62)

Whenever we interpret human action as in any sense purposive or meaningful...we have to define both the objects of human activity and the different kinds of actions themselves, not in physical terms but in terms of the opinions or intentions of the acting persons... (IEO-62)

As these passages from Hayek and Searle indicate, the action which the actor performs is entirely a matter of the intention of the actor. The essence of the action is the intention. We may say that the particular observable movements of an actor are the historical content of his action. However, praxeology is not concerned with the historical content of a particular action, but only with the categorical form of acting.

Praxeology is not concerned with the changing content of acting, but with its pure form and its categorial structure. The study of the accidental and environmental features of human action is the task of history. (HA-47)

Of course, Graf derives his concept of action from Hoppe, and he seems unaware of any differences between Hoppe's contentual conception of action and Mises's formal conception of action:

All action involves some form of movement, if only at a subtle level, and it is matter that moves when we act. (G-11) Any action must occur at specific sets of spatial coordinates... (G-12)

Part II

Rothbardian Social Theory

According to Hoppe, *The Ethics of Liberty* is to be considered the pillar of the Rothbardian system (INT). *The Ethics of Liberty*, as Rothbard writes, deals with a subset of human acts—violence and nonviolence—employed as modes of interpersonal relations.

The intention is to set forth a social ethic of liberty, i.e., to elaborate that subset of natural law that develops the concept of natural rights, and that deals with the proper sphere of “politics,” i.e., with violence and non-violence as modes of interpersonal relations. (EOL-25)

It was Rothbard’s contention that to deal with violence employed as a means of social interaction, it was necessary to abandon the theoretical tools of Austrian analysis as those had been developed from Menger through Mises. Regarding the theoretical approach he had in mind, Rothbard wrote, “I at no time believed that value-free analysis or economics...can ever suffice to establish the case for liberty” (EOL-xlvi). He stated that the concept of subjective value “is perfectly proper for the formal science of praxeology, or economic theory, but not necessarily elsewhere” (EOL-12), and he urged his followers to “cast out the hobgoblins of *Wertfreiheit*” (EOL-26). Rothbardian social theory is founded on a rejection of Austrian analysis and on an attempt to establish a theoretical justification for a set of norms favored by Rothbard and his followers—norms that cannot be validated or justified within the framework of value-free praxeological analysis. The norms Rothbardians have in mind and which they want to validate or justify through social theory are generally *political* actions or policies such as: banning fractional reserve banking, banning intellectual property, mandating that all government functions be

performed by businesses and insurance agencies, and other political reforms advocated by Rothbard and his supporters.

Peter Klein lists the core concepts of Austrian analysis as human action, means and ends, subjective value, marginal analysis, methodological individualism, the time structure of production, and the Austrian theory of value and price (KLI). It was Rothbard's contention that these concepts were not appropriate analytical tools for understanding the realm of purposive human activity that includes "moral" and "ethical" actions such as lying, being truthful, coercion, cooperation, etc.

As has been established, Rothbard understood the study of market phenomena to be largely identical with praxeology. Economics, or praxeological analysis applied to the study of market phenomena, seeks to demonstrate the necessary consequences of a specific class of actions—actions such as increasing the money supply, lowering the legal rate of interest, erecting tariffs, establishing minimum wage laws, etc. As Rothbard understood it, this type of "cause-and-effect" analysis made no sense in the context of interpersonal relations. When it comes to the acts which we intend to initiate toward other people, Rothbard reasoned, we have to change our social-theoretical approach to one where actions are described as good or bad, moral or immoral (EOL-12, 32).

By contrast, the Misesian conception of praxeology is based on the central conception of *action*, and as there are other kinds of actions besides market-related actions (e.g., physical actions, interpersonal actions, mental actions), praxeology becomes the general science of human action. As Kirzner writes:

The subject matter of economics came to be connected with the material things that are the objects of traffic in the market; it came to be linked peculiarly with the use of money in market transactions or with the specific social relationships that characterize the market system. (KIR-183)

In finding the economic aspect of activities in general to consist in concern with the ends-means relationship, [the praxeological conception] includes within its scope kinds of actions with which economics has had traditionally little to do. (KIR-183)

Here Kirzner reinforces the conception that praxeology studies action—the employment of means toward ends—and there are kinds or types of actions which economics has not traditionally dealt with. Praxeology is not exclusively concerned with market exchanges, nor is it exclusively concerned with exchanges (of whatever type) between several people. The object of praxeological study is the attempt of the individual to improve his situation by employing means toward the attainment of ends.

The primary failing of Rothbard's theory in *The Ethics of Liberty* is its failure to overcome Hume's is-ought gap. Rothbard's theory is a form of objective ethics, and Patrick M. O'Neil's article "Ayn Rand and the Is-Ought Problem"—the authoritative article on objective ethics in the libertarian literature—explains the problems that any objective ethics system will face vis-à-vis Hume's is-ought gap. Rothbard wanted to prove, for example, that it is immoral to eat poisonous mushrooms (EOL-32). But if a person values the lives of his family or his army unit and during a war eats poisonous mushrooms as a means to commit suicide and avoid being tortured into divulging their location, then is eating poisonous mushrooms an immoral act to be avoided at all times and places? Thus, the objective rule of conduct, "Do not eat poisonous mushrooms"—which Rothbard wanted to prove "absolute, immutable, and of universal validity for all times and places"—inevitably reverts to a "utilitarian" rule dependent on the "subjective" ends of the person concerned: "In order to stay alive (end), do not eat poisonous mushrooms (means)"; "In order to commit suicide (end), eat poisonous mushrooms (means)."

In the context of libertarian social theory, Rothbard's theory fails because it can't overcome Hume's is-ought gap. Within the Rothbardian school of libertarianism, Rothbard's theory is mainly

rejected due to the following sentence written by Hoppe in the endnotes to *A Theory of Socialism and Capitalism*:

It has been a common quarrel with this [natural rights] position, even on the part of sympathetic readers, that the concept of human nature is far “too diffuse and varied to provide a determinate set of contents of natural law.” (ATS-235)

Graf provides the same sentence in altered form and from a different source:

It has been a common quarrel with the natural rights position, even on the part of otherwise sympathetic observers, that the concept of human nature is far too diffuse to allow the derivation of a determinate set of rules of conduct. (G22)

This means that Rothbard’s attempt to arrive at objective and universally valid rules of conduct such as “Do not eat poisonous mushrooms” has failed. Hoppe acknowledges that O’Neil was right and the objective and natural rights ethicists (Rothbard, Rand, Den Uyl, Rasmussen, etc.) were wrong. Since it is generally acknowledged that Rothbard’s theory as expressed in *The Ethics of Liberty* is untenable, the attempt to validate or justify Rothbardian norms has shifted to Hoppe’s theory of argumentation. As Hoppe explains the intent of his theory:

I was attempting to make the first two chapters of Rothbard’s *Ethics of Liberty* stronger than they were. That in turn would provide more weight to everything that followed. (INT)

Thus, the intention of Hoppe’s theory of argumentation was not to extend praxeology into other realms of human action. The intention was to justify a specific set of preexisting political norms given that Rothbard’s attempt to do so had failed. As Hoppe wrote:

It follows that intersubjectively meaningful norms must exist...

Norms must indeed be assumed to be justified as valid...

The answer, then, to the question of which ends can or cannot be justified is to be derived from the concept of argumentation. (ATS-130/131)

Hoppe's theory was originally intended as a *moral* theory:

In contrast to the role of reason in establishing empirical laws of nature, reason can claim to yield results in determining moral laws which can be shown to be valid a priori. (ATS-131)

It is noteworthy that Hoppe argued that reason can discover moral laws just as reason discovers *physical* laws. One wonders why Hoppe chose not to argue that reason can discover moral laws just as reason discovers *economic* laws. The apparent reason is that the "laws" Hoppe has in mind are not of the same nature as the praxeological laws of economics. Physical laws and praxeological laws are laws that can be denied but not defied. Moral laws, as Hoppe conceives them, are laws that can both be denied *and* defied. One can act contrary to Hoppe's moral laws, and there are no demonstrable consequences or effects that must result. This defect in the notion of moral "laws" was noted by O'Neil in his article and was more recently noted again by Butler Shaffer:

The "natural law" theory also suffers from a failure to identify causal relationships associated with their violation. If someone speaks to me of Newton's "second law of motion," I can set up an experiment to test its validity. While one may justifiably quarrel over the propriety of speaking of *regularities* in nature as "*laws*," one can at least identify a relatively clear cause-and-effect connection. But if I argue that I have a "natural law" right to my property, and my neighbors proceed to violate my interests, what will occur? Will the forces of nature suddenly turn upon them—perhaps by suspending the principle of gravitation—causing them to no longer be able to function in the world? And if the inviolability of my property is mandated by the laws of nature, how could my neighbors succeed in despoiling me in the first place? If their actions violated "natural

law” they could not, by definition, carry out their acts...How, after all, can anything that happens within nature be considered to be in violation of nature’s laws? (SHA-142)

Though Hoppe doesn’t consider his theory a natural law theory, Shaffer’s criticism applies to the extent Hoppe claims to have discovered moral *laws*. It seems the moral laws of which Hoppe writes are not—as he intends them—the kind of laws by which an individual actor can bring about or avoid experience **B** by utilizing means **A**. Empirical laws and economic laws demonstrate to an actor how to produce end **B** by utilizing means **A**. We recall once again Menger’s original vision:

We control the real world in that, on the basis of our theoretical knowledge, we set the conditions of a phenomenon which are within our control, and are able in such a way to produce the phenomenon itself. (I-56)

The aim of the theories of Menger and Mises is to conceive the regularities that seem to inhere in our conscious actions in terms of exact laws. By contrast, in his theory of argumentation, Hoppe was trying to do the same thing as Rothbard. The goal of Rothbardian and Hoppean moral theorizing is to prove the objective goodness, rightness, morality, and justness of *my* conduct and to prove the objective badness, wrongness, immorality, and unjustness of *your* conduct. The attempt to prove that my values are objectively superior to your values requires some form of objective value theory, and this explains why theoretical subjectivism is ignored in the theories of Rothbard and Hoppe, and why Rothbard and Hoppe redefine the concept of praxeology, changing it from its Mengerian and Misesian meaning.

Regarding the difference between the scientific search for constant relations and the search for moral justification, Mises wrote:

The discovery of the inescapable interdependence of market phenomena overthrew this opinion. Bewildered, people had to face a new view of society. They learned with stupefaction that

there is another aspect from which human action might be viewed than that of good and bad, of fair and unfair, of just and unjust. In the course of social events there prevails a regularity of phenomena to which man must adjust his actions if he wishes to succeed. It is futile to approach social facts with the attitude of a censor who approves or disapproves from the point of view of quite arbitrary standards and subjective judgments of value. One must study the laws of human action and social cooperation as the physicist studies the laws of nature. Human action and social cooperation seen as the object of a science of given relations, no longer as a normative discipline of things that ought to be—this was a revolution of tremendous consequences for knowledge and philosophy as well as for social action. (HA-2)

In speaking of theories that conceive human acts in terms of good and bad, just and unjust, Mises has in mind precisely the kind of ethics theories that Rothbard and Hoppe propose. Praxeology is concerned with expressing the regularities we experience or intuit in our conscious actions in terms of exact laws.

Hoppe's Theory of Argumentation

Two Kinds of Apriorism

Part of the misunderstanding surrounding the status of Hoppe's theory of argumentation stems from the various interpretations of the term "a priori" or "apriorism." Hoppe claims that he has given an "*a priori* justification of the private property ethic" (H-207). Similarly, Mises claimed that praxeology is based on *a priori* knowledge and that it arrives at *a priori* propositions (U-18). Hoppe also claims that his theory constitutes a "praxeological proof" (H-204, 207). Since outwardly both Hoppe and Mises present *aprioristic* theories having some relationship to praxeology, it appears to those with little knowledge of praxeology that Hoppe and Mises are involved in the same discipline. But this is not the case.

Praxeology, as Mises conceived it, does not consist of discursive reasoning alone. An essential component of Misesian praxeology is a *regularity* which we experience in action, and which our reason attempts to conceive in terms of an exact law. The regularities occurring in human action have up until now been most successfully conceived in terms of scientific laws in economic science. These laws have been developed as a means to explain the causes of regular occurrences that we experience in our lives: recessions, price fluctuations, shortages, currency devaluations, etc. The starting point of our experience is, as Mises writes, "the cognition that an **A** is uniformly followed by a **B**" (U-20). Experiencing that **A** is uniformly followed by **B**, the praxeologist sets out to find or reveal the *exact* sense in which **A** follows **B** or is copresent with **B**. The praxeologist is only concerned with exact laws (every time I walk toward a location, I walk away from one) and not with empirical laws (when I walk toward a location, I usually

arrive there). The conception of praxeology as concerned with the production or avoidance of phenomenon **B** through the utilization of means **A** is Menger's conception as well, and we will quote again:

The purpose of the theoretical sciences is understanding of the real world, knowledge of it extending beyond immediate experience, and control of it...We control the real world in that, on the basis of our theoretical knowledge, we set the conditions of a phenomenon **A** which are within our control, and are able in such a way to produce **B**, the phenomenon itself. (I-55/56)(note: "**A**" and "**B**" added for purposes of illustration)

Thus, the foundation of the science Mises and Menger practiced includes, as an integral part, the cognition of a regular relationship in the occurrence of two phenomena, **A** and **B**, and an attempt to demonstrate an exact or invariant relationship between them, such that the production of phenomenon **A** must necessarily produce or bring about phenomenon **B**.

Apriorism in the Misesian/Mengerian sense means that the ultimate source of our certain knowledge of the relationship between phenomenon **A** and phenomenon **B** is that our mind can't comprehend the contrary of this relationship. That **A** and **B** are related in the way expressed is implied in all of our thinking and acting concerning **A** and **B**. Regarding the idea that in walking toward a location I would not also walk away from a location, "such a thing simply seems inconceivable to the critical mind" (I-60).

The kind of apriorism that Hoppe refers to is not of this type. In this alternate kind of apriorism, there are generally no "reference phenomena" available by which an actor could experience the theory's validity as a regularity in his own action. In physical law, the scientist can conduct an experiment. In praxeological, *economic* law, for example, various economic policies can be enacted to which praxeological laws apply. An actor can conceivably create more currency, can lower the legal interest rate, can establish wage

and price controls, and can erect tariffs. In each of these cases, praxeological law conceives of the inevitable consequences of these acts in terms of an experience that may be had in our goal-directed consciousness. Rising commodity prices, boom/bust cycles, and shortages are things that may “happen” to us as an inescapable consequence of the acts we initiate.

By contrast, the apriorism that Hoppe employs means something like “the conclusion I have reached is correct because I have correctly reasoned.” “A priori” means, essentially, *correctly reasoned*. Here there is no intention to provide the actor with the kind of information that physical law and praxeological law provides. A theory based on this type of apriorism does not say to an actor, “Try action **A**. You will experience phenomenon **B**.”

As a preliminary attempt to understand the difference in the two types of apriorism, we may refer to Misesian apriorism as *experiential apriorism* and to the kind of apriorism employed by Hoppe as *nonexperiential apriorism*. In experiential apriorism, *experiential* means the actor can, at least conceivably, experience the specified invariant relationship in the reality of his conscious activity. *Aprioristic* means that the experienced invariant relationship derives from the categorial nature or form of action or consciousness.

If we were to apply Mises’s *experiential* apriorism to Hoppe’s theory of argumentation, this would mean that if a person engaged in a performative contradiction, he would invariably experience some other phenomenon (for example, unjustness) analogous to the way he invariably experiences walking away from a location as necessarily related to walking toward a location. It would be impossible to do **A** (performatively contradict oneself) without **B** (unjustness) happening to him. No matter how hard a person tried, he would find that every time he performed a contradiction, unjustness would “appear.”

This is obviously not the kind of apriorism that Hoppe and his supporters have in mind. In Hoppe's theory, apriorism refers exclusively to the cogency of the argument. The notions of argumentation, performative contradiction, and justification are not meant as precise scientific conceptions designating these phenomena whenever and wherever they appear in action. These conceptions are only meant to be interlocking components in a sequential argument designed to reach a specific political conclusion. For example, I may shout aloud "I am not alive!" to a crowd, perhaps as a form of protest or entertainment. The phenomena that Hoppe's theory describes now appear in my action: I argue while employing a performative contradiction. If the theory were designed to explain experiences that occur in action, then the theory would apply to this case. And thus, my act of protest or my act of entertainment will be "unjustified"; and the crowd I address, assuming they perform no contradiction, will be "justified." The same should apply, one assumes, if I say aloud "I am not talking" in order to make someone laugh or in order to prove a point. In saying "I am not talking" to make someone laugh, I will render my actions unjustified or render unjustified that which I'm attempting to do.

It seems obvious that Hoppe's theory isn't intended to treat situations such as these, even though they are arguments involving performative contradictions. The concepts of Hoppe's theory are meant to connect only to one another in a chain leading to the argument's predetermined conclusion. The concepts are not intended to correlate to the phenomena as they are experienced in action. The term *nonexperiential apriorism* means an apriorism that is concerned primarily with the cogency of the argument and not concerned with the correlation between the concepts of the argument and the phenomena as experienced in action. Thus, Hoppe's apriorism is essentially different from that of Mises.

A Theory of Justice

As previously mentioned, Graf implicitly acknowledges the nature of Hoppe's theory in referring to *norms* or *normative* fifty times while not referring to the concept of exact or praxeological laws a single time. Hülsmann, whom Graf quotes throughout his treatment, characterizes Hoppe's theory as a theory about justice (not about laws of action) and as one that abandons any attempt to build upon the value-theoretic approach (i.e., praxeology):

Thus one is led to the second type of solution, which consists in abandoning all attempts at building welfare economics on the theory of value and to look for other foundations. This is where Hoppe's theory of justice comes into play. Presently, that is, as long as nobody solves the problems of the value-theoretic approach, this seems to be the most promising route for welfare economics. (ESN-16)

The original intent of the argumentation ethics was to do what Rothbard had failed to do and what Mises argued could not be done: arrive at a way to rationally assess or evaluate *ends*.

The answer, then, to the question of which ends can or cannot be justified is to be derived from the concept of argumentation. (ATS131)

Hoppe was trying to prove that some ends are *just*, while other ends are *unjust*.

To reach this conclusion and to properly understand its importance and logical force, two insights are essential. First, it must be noted that the question of what is just or unjust—or, for that matter, the even more general one of what is a valid

proposition and what is not—only arises insofar as I am, and others are, capable of propositional exchanges, i.e., of argumentation. (H-204/205)

Hoppe's theory as he originally intended it is a theory about ends and not about means. This is why Hoppe sees his own theory as an attempt to strengthen Rothbard's *The Ethics of Liberty* and not as an attempt to extend Misesian praxeology. Mises had written:

The ultimate judgments of value and the ultimate ends of human action are given for any kind of scientific inquiry; they are not open to any further analysis. Praxeology deals with the ways and means chosen for the attainment of such ultimate ends. Its object is means, not ends. (HA-21)

Rothbard took exception to this pronouncement of Mises and held:

Not only can we say with absolute assurance that certain methods and means are irrational, but can also go on to say that certain ends are irrational. (ROTH-1)

Thus, the original intent of Hoppe's theory was to succeed where Rothbard had failed and to provide a way to evaluate ends. The original intent was to provide a type of moral argument conceived in terms of *just* and *unjust*, not an economic or utilitarian argument in terms of "if X, then Y."

Hoppe's Theory as a Theory of Means

Hoppe's theory of argumentation asserts that if you argue against ethic **X** (generally Lockean and Rothbardian property norms), you will commit a performative or practical contradiction; and therefore, your argument against ethic **X** is unjustified and/or ethic **Y** which you propose is unjustified.

Graf examines Hoppe's theory of property norms in some detail and arrives at an interesting conclusion:

A property norm and supportive legal norms can operate to prevent conflict and promote peace and prosperity in society. Nevertheless, while property norms can be viewed as means, they are not, in the view advanced here, the type of testable or empirical means addressed in the natural-science causality realm. (G-25)

Here, Graf acknowledges that Hoppean private-property norms can be seen as means in the limited sense that if they are adopted, they will—in the estimation of Hoppe's supporters—operate to promote peace and prosperity and to prevent conflict. Hoppean property norms can thus be considered means to ends.

What Graf and most Hoppeans apparently fail to realize is that by their own account, Hoppean property norms can be considered means in another important sense. For if Hoppe's theory is valid, it provides us with a means for avoiding or engaging in performative contradictions and with a means for avoiding or attaining injustice. According to Hoppe's theory, if we adopt and argue for Hoppean property norms, we may avoid a performative contradiction, and our acts will be just. If instead we reject and argue against Hoppean property norms, we will be ensnared in a performative

contradiction and our acts will be unjust. Thus, not only may Hoppean property norms be seen as means to the ends of peace and prosperity in society, but on a personal level, one may adopt and argue for Hoppean property norms as means to free oneself from performative contradiction and as means to attain justifiability for one's actions. Conversely, one who wants to performatively contradict oneself is instructed by Hoppe's theory that arguing against Hoppean property norms is one means of doing so. Similarly, one who wants one's own acts to be unjustified is instructed that arguing against Hoppean property norms is one means by which one can render one's actions unjust. Further, if Hoppe's theory is valid, it seems to provide means/ends information concerning the general relationship between performative contradictions and personal justification. If engaging in a performative contradiction, in general, renders my actions unjustified, then I may choose to render my actions unjustified by engaging in a performative contradiction, or I may choose to render my actions justified by abstaining from performatively contradicting myself.

It seems incontestable that if Hoppe's theory is valid, the information it provides can be "utilized" as means by actors to bring about the ends they desire (social peace, freedom from personal contradiction, personal justification) or to avoid ends they consider harmful or displeasing (social conflict, personal performative contradiction, personal injustice). It is curious that Hoppeans seem not to have fully realized this beneficial utilitarian aspect of Hoppe's theory of argumentation.

When Hoppe originally proposed his theory of argumentation, he was trying to avoid a means/ends or utilitarian-type analysis. Following Rothbard, Hoppe was trying to construct a theory of ends. Mises held that a theory of ends must ultimately fail for the following reason:

As soon as people venture to question and to examine an end, they no longer look upon it as an end but deal with it as a

means to attain a still higher end. The ultimate end is beyond any rational examination. All other ends are but provisional. They turn into means as soon as they are weighed against other ends or means. (TH-14)

Graf acknowledges that Hoppean property norms can serve as means to promote peace and prosperity. But if we grant the validity of Hoppe's theory, there should be no reason people cannot utilize the knowledge it conveys in order to avoid performative contradictions or attain personal justification. This theoretical situation is what Mises was trying to explain to all those who were arguing that ends can be rationally evaluated. His point was that we cannot evaluate an end (**X**) other than by showing how it will benefit or harm one who adopts it or aims for it. As soon as we do that, we show how adopting or aiming for **X** will result in **Y**, the benefit or harm; and thus, **X** has "turned into a means" to attain or avoid **Y**.

Performative Contradictions

In saying aloud "I am not alive," I engage in a performative contradiction. There are an unlimited number of purposes for which I might possibly say aloud "I am not alive." For example, these words may be words in a play I am acting in, or I may say these words hoping to make my classmates laugh or my teacher angry. Saying aloud "I am not alive" may be passwords for entering a club, or in saying "I am not alive," I may have in mind the name of a musical band. The number of purposes for which I might engage in the performative contradiction "I am not alive" is practically (and possibly theoretically) unlimited.

In each of the cases listed here, we can see or think of no reason engaging in the performative contradiction "I am not alive" is not an appropriate means to the specified end from a praxeological/economic point of view. From the praxeological/economic point of view, the means seem fitted to attain the ends specified. From a commonsense, moral point of view, the activity engaged in would seem to be largely harmless to the person engaged in it and to those who observe it. As these examples illustrate, there seems to be no reason a person should abstain from engaging in a performative contradiction just because it is a performative contradiction. Borrowing a term from Graf, we may ask, what exactly is wrong with being "ensnared" in a performative contradiction?

The question whether performative contradictions as such are defective from an economic or praxeological point of view (they are not fitted to attain the ends aimed at) or from a commonsense, moral point of view (they are offensive or harmful in some way) is an important question in relation to Hoppe's theory of

argumentation. Hoppe argues that non-Hoppean ethics are unjust. The simple structure of his argument is:

Argument for non-Hoppean ethic = Performative contradiction =
Unjustified

Hoppe implies that performative contradictions are by nature unjust or that the use of them is unjust or that the use of them conveys injustice. But as the examples above illustrate, there seems to be nothing objectionable in the nature of performative contradictions per se. If Hoppe wants to argue that all performative contradictions are unjust in some sense, regardless of a person's intent in their usage, he will have to demonstrate how this is so, given that this seems contrary to the plain evidence.

If Hoppe wants to argue that only a definable subset of performative contradictions are unjust in some sense, this would entail categorizing the different types of performative contradictions and showing the sense in which class **X** of performative contradictions is unjust or conveys injustice, while class **Y** of performative contradictions is just or does not convey injustice.

What if Hoppe does neither? What if Hoppe neither expands nor revises his theory to show how all performative contradictions are unjust or how a specific class of performative contradictions is unjust? The problem is that there seem to be uses of performative contradictions that are clearly neutral or benign. If *all* uses of performative contradictions such as "I am not alive" are neutral or benign and if the use of any and all performative contradictions conveys no injustice, then we should be able to render Hoppe's theory simply as follows:

Argument for non-Hoppean ethic = Unjustified

If a performative contradiction as such conveys no injustice, then the injustice in Hoppe's argument derives not from the performative contradiction, but exclusively from the argument

against the Hoppean ethic. What Hoppe intends is that arguments against his ethic are unjustified owing to the employment of a performative contradiction. Thus, Hoppe must demonstrate the sense in which all performative contradictions are unjust or convey injustice, or he must demonstrate that a definable class of performative contradictions are unjust or convey injustice. If Hoppe cannot do this, then we lack evidence that performative contradictions per se are unjust or convey injustice. Because of this, we would have to conclude that it is not performative contradictions that are unjust, but simply the act of arguing against the Hoppean ethic. Hoppe's theory then reduces to the simple assertion that arguing against his property ethic is unjustified.

As Hoppe was a Heisenberg scholar when he presented his theory in *A Theory of Socialism and Capitalism*, this passage from Heisenberg seems particularly appropriate:

Why was this attempt of Voigt's so successful on the one hand, and so futile on the other? Because he was only concerned to examine the D-line, without taking the whole line-spectrum into account. Voigt had made phenomenological use of a certain aspect of the oscillator hypothesis, and had either ignored all the other discrepancies of this model, or deliberately left them in obscurity. Thus he had simply not taken his hypothesis in real earnest. In the same way, I fear that the quark hypothesis is just not taken seriously by its exponents. The questions about the statistics of quarks, about the forces that hold them together, about the particles corresponding to these forces, about the reasons why quarks never appear as free particles, about the pair-creation of quarks in the interior of the elementary particle—all these questions are more or less left in obscurity. If there was a desire to take the quark hypothesis in real earnest, it would be necessary to make a precise mathematical approach to the dynamics of quarks, and the forces that hold them together, and to show that, qualitatively at least, this approach can reproduce correctly the many different features of particle physics that are known

today. There should be no question in particle physics to which this approach could not be applied. Such attempts are not known to me, and I am afraid, also, that every such attempt which is presented in precise mathematical language would be very quickly refutable. (HEI-85/86)

Hoppe and his supporters want to characterize the conduct of their adversaries as unjust based on the notion of *performative contradiction*. However, to our knowledge, neither Hoppe nor his supporters have undertaken a serious study of performative contradictions in order to demonstrate exactly how or why they are unjust or convey injustice. Because the thesis of performative contradictions hasn't been taken in real earnest by its supporters, one is left with the impression that the notion of performative contradiction plays only a rhetorical role in the theory of argumentation.

Conclusion

Rothbard and Objectivist Social Theory

The common thread running through the work of all Rothbardian social theorists is the abandonment of methodological individualism and subjectivism in social analysis and the return to the philosophy of objective or ontological realism. The object of Rothbardian social analysis is the “objective” or “real” or “physical” world, as opposed to the world as it appears to an individual actor in action. One who understands the significance of the insight which gave birth to the Austrian School of economics will understand the significance of the proposal—implicit in Rothbardian-derived theorizing—to abandon theoretical subjectivism and return to philosophical objective realism.

The problem of the apparent paradox of value was solved by employing methodological individualism. In social science, we can ask questions such as “What is *really* more valuable, bread or diamonds?” or “What is *objectively* more valuable, bread or diamonds?” When we frame the problem in this way, we omit explicit reference to a valuing subject and create the impression that value “exists” independent of a valuing subject. This is the approach of philosophical objectivism. The theoretical advance of Menger and others consisted in explicitly framing the problem in terms of a valuing subject as the valuing subject makes a choice in action. In the new approach or method, the question then became “What is more valuable to *me* right now, *X* quantity of diamonds or *Y* amount of bread?” The Austrian School is founded on the revolutionary method of *individual subject analysis* (analysis from

the point of view of the individual subject) which is commonly referred to as *methodological individualism* or *theoretical subjectivism*. The essence of this approach is that we ask not how things "are," but instead, how things are *for subject or actor A*.

Subjectivism in this sense has nothing to do with the concept of randomness. The critique of theoretical subjectivism is often based on a disapproval of the notion of random choice or choice by whim. However, theoretical subjectivism as employed in praxeology does not deal with the *history* of a particular choice. Whether a given choice comes about by mere whim or as a result of the best Aristotelian theorizing available does not matter. Praxeological reasoning addresses the logic of choice, not the historical genesis of a choice.

When theoretical subjectivism is eschewed in favor of philosophical objectivism, important theoretical insights do not get developed or remain entirely unknown. An example is the notion of subjective value. When economic market analysis widens to become praxeological analysis of the universal aspects of action, the notion of *subjective value* evolves into the wider and more general notion of "subjective evaluation." In this newer conception, both the object of the actor's action and the actor's attitude toward the object are conceived exclusively in terms of the actor's point of view or intention. In this conception, the actor doesn't "subjectively value" objective things. Instead, what the object in question "is" is a function of the actor's intention in regard to it.

It is easily seen that these concepts...refer not to some objective properties possessed by the things, or which the observer can find out about them, but to views which some other person holds about the things. (IEO-59)

If we wish, we could say that all these objects are defined not in terms of their "real" properties but in terms of the opinions people hold about them. In short, in the social sciences the things are what people think they are. Money is money, a word

is a word, a cosmetic is a cosmetic, if and because somebody thinks they are. (IEO-6o)

In this conception, there is no longer any room or need for an objective realm, existing independently of anyone's conscious actions and which serves as a standard for judging whether the actor has "correctly" appraised the object of his action. Any separate appraisal (action 2) of a given action (action 1) is considered an *act* of appraisal, whether it is an act of an observer or of the actor himself. Any assertion (action 3) that an actor doesn't know or didn't know the "real situation" is an *act* of assertion.

The object or situation which the actor values or is satisfied with or is dissatisfied with is the object or situation *as he understands it*. It is a "subjective" object or situation, not an objective one. In praxeology, both the attitude of the actor *and* the object of his attitude are considered subjective phenomena.

As we quoted earlier from Schutz, it is only actor **A** himself who gives subjective meaning to his action, and the only subjective meaning being given by observer **O** who observes **A** is the subjective meaning **O** gives to his own act—his act of observing **A**. This same principle also holds in the case where **A** judges or appraises a previous act of his own. This judgment or appraisal is an *act* of **A**, and so it is clear that what we have in this case is simply a new or separate action. In praxeology and theoretical subjectivism, this new action of **A**—his judgment or appraisal of a situation—is not interpreted as saying something about an "objective reality" that was hidden from **A** in a previous action. This new action is simply considered another instance of action. Praxeology is only concerned with the universal features of all of these assumed or postulated instances of action: **A**'s action, **O**'s action (of observing), **A**'s action (of appraising a previous action), etc. As praxeology is only concerned with the formal analysis of action, then, with regard to any assertion that "such and such is the case," praxeology will only be concerned with the assertion as an *action*. With regard to a situation that is *expressed, asserted, rendered, depicted, described,*

advocated, argued for, observed, etc., praxeology is concerned with the universal and categorical form of such expressing, asserting, rendering, depicting, describing, advocating, arguing, or observing. We never “transcend” action or study the content of action as an independent entity or realm. To do so is to practice natural science.

External objects are as such only phenomena of the physical universe and the subject matter of the natural sciences...Praxeology does not deal with the external world, but with man’s conduct with regard to it. Praxeological reality is not the physical universe, but man’s conscious reaction to the given state of this universe. (HA-92)

In this type of analysis, there can never be an “objectively wrong” or “objectively incorrect” action. There can only be *given* or *supposed* actions. This is the meaning of the following passages from Mises:

The most common misunderstanding consists in seeing in the economic principle a statement about the material and the content of action. One reaches into psychology, constructs the concept of want, and then searches for the bridge between want, the presentation of a feeling of uneasiness, and the concrete decision in action. Thus the want becomes a judge over action: it is thought that the correct action, the one corresponding to the want, can be contrasted to the incorrect action. However, we can never identify the want otherwise than in the action. The action is always in accord with the want because we can infer the want only from the action. (EPIST-80)

It was forgotten that we are able to infer the need only from the action. Hence, the idea of an action not in conformity with needs is absurd. As soon as one attempts to distinguish between the need and the action and makes the need the criterion for judging the action, one leaves the domain of theoretical science, with its neutrality in regard to value judgments. (EPIST-149)

For there can be no doubt that [our science's] subject matter is given action and only given action. Action that ought to be, but is not, does not come within its purview. (EPIST-149)

In praxeological analysis, both the object of **A**'s action and the attitude of **A** toward the object of his action are defined in terms of **A**'s understanding of the situation, not in terms of how observer **O** understands **A**'s situation and not in terms of a separate act of appraisal or judgment of **A**. This principle can be illustrated by means of a simple example. In typical Austrian analysis we might conceive that actor **A** *values* his supply of firewood. In a conception such as this, the tendency may be to conceive that actor **A** subjectively values something that is objectively real (i.e., the firewood). However, this is not the approach of theoretical subjectivism. In theoretical subjectivism, the information or data that the object of **A**'s action is firewood, and not wood for building a playhouse or doghouse, is subjective data postulated to be **A**'s understanding of the situation in the action in question. That the object of **A**'s action is firewood and not something else is a function of **A**'s intention in relation to the object or content of his action. This datum is not obtained by consulting observers or by examining a separate act of appraisal that **A** performs.

It is important to remember that the so-called "data," from which we set out in this sort of analysis, are...all facts given to the person in question, the things as they are known to (or believed by) him to exist, and not, strictly speaking, objective facts. It is only because of this that the propositions we deduce are necessarily a priori valid and that we preserve the consistency of the argument. (IEO-36)

The same applies with regard to **A**'s "supply." **A**'s supply of firewood is **A**'s supply as he himself understands it in the context of the action concerned. Whether a given piece of wood does or does not belong to his supply is "subjectively" determined by **A** himself as revealed by his intention in action. Let us refer to this action as action **1**. The opinion of actor **B** that a particular piece of wood is not part of **A**'s

supply, we conceive to be an act of observation or appraisal on the part of **B**, action 2. The opinion of **A** that a particular piece of wood was not part of his own supply, we conceive as an act of appraisal or judgment on the part of **A**, action 3. What we have are three postulated actions, and praxeology is concerned only with those aspects of action that are common to all three instances. Thus, there are never “wrong” actions or “mistaken” actions—there are only “given” actions. The actions which form the subject matter of praxeology are defined exclusively in terms of the intention the acting person is acting with.

The explanation of an action must have the same content as was in the person’s head when he performed the action or when he reasoned toward his intention to perform his action. (SEA-67)

We have to define both the objects of human activity and the different kinds of actions themselves, not in physical terms but in terms of the opinions or intentions of the acting persons,.. (IEO-62)

The insight that in praxeological analysis both the attitude of the actor toward an object and the object itself are defined subjectively constitutes one of the most advanced insights that praxeological reasoning has attained. These important insights are discussed in detail by Hayek (“The Facts of the Social Sciences”) and Searle (SEA-58, 59, 66, 67, 78). As we’ve already seen, this is the conception at the heart of Mises’s praxeological reasoning:

Whether [a] crowd is a mere gathering or a mass...or an organized body or any other kind of social entity is a question which can only be answered by understanding the meaning which they themselves attach to their presence. And this meaning is always the meaning of individuals. Not our senses, but understanding, a mental process, makes us recognize social entities. (HA-43)

[The praxeological] point of view makes possible the construction of chains of reasoning that are purely formal, in the sense that they refer to goods, services or factors of production only abstractly; they depend for their validity not on the specific objects with which human action may be concretely concerned, but only on postulated attitudes of men towards them. (KIR-179)

Thus, as praxeology widens its scope and becomes more than just the analysis of market phenomena, the concept of the actor as “subjectively valuing” the objects of market exchange evolves. In this evolved and more general conception, the object itself—the thing the actor values or is satisfied with or is dissatisfied with—is a *subjective* thing or object. This object is the object as the actor himself understands or intends it.

For a large number of social and psychological phenomena the concept that names the phenomenon is itself a constituent of the phenomenon. In order for something to count as a marriage ceremony or a trade union, or property or money or even a war or revolution people involved in these activities have to have certain appropriate thoughts. In general they have to think that’s what it is. So, for example, in order to get married or buy property you and other people have to think that that is what you are doing. Now this feature is crucial to social phenomena. But there is nothing like it in the biological and physical sciences. Something can be a tree or a plant, or some person can have tuberculosis even if no one thinks: “Here’s a tree, or a plant, or a case of tuberculosis,” and even if no one thinks about it at all. But many of the terms that describe social phenomena have to enter into their constitution. And this has the further result that such terms have a peculiar kind of self-referentiality. “Money” refers to whatever people use and think of as money. “Promise” refers to whatever people intend as and regard as promises. I am not saying that in order to have the institution of money people have to have that very word or some exact synonym in their vocabulary. Rather, they must have certain

thoughts and attitudes about something in order that it counts as money and these thoughts and attitudes are part of the very definition of money. (SEA-78)

The goal of Rothbard and his followers is to re-cast Austrian School social thought in terms of objectivist conceptions—conceptions which Rothbardians believe to be compatible with the objective ethics and ethical norms they advocate. This program necessarily entails a corresponding diminishment in the study and in the comprehension of the subjectivist theories that were developed in the early twentieth century. Rothbardian social theory is based on ontological realism (objective realism, ontological materialism, etc.) and on the corresponding concept of an “objective real world.” Generally, the subjective element in this theoretical worldview is severely circumscribed, limited to analysis of the economic or market sphere of human activity in which actors are conceived to “subjectively value” marketable objects belonging to the “real world.” Outside of market analysis, and especially in the realm of political interpersonal action, theoretical subjectivism and methodological individualism are abandoned.

In Graf’s conception, praxeology will be converted to objective conceptions via the assertion that social interaction requires two people in the objective sense. This will entail a materialist or objective conception of two or more bodies, at which point Rothbardian and Hoppean property theory can be “attached” to praxeology. Praxeology in the Mengerian and Misesian meaning is then essentially altered and transformed into a normative discipline.

The objectivist worldview persists because important social questions are framed in such a way as to presuppose or imply objectivist conceptions. We ask, for example, “How do our minds give us meaningful information about the external, real world?” This question already implies a duality of realms—a “subjective” realm of thoughts, feelings, and valuations and an “objective” realm of physical processes and events. It implies a conception of

multiple minds, each positioned in extended space and each trying to comprehend a common “objective reality.” Theoretical subjectivism is ultimately incompatible with the positing of such an objective real world in which minds are conceived as “located” in various positions. Theoretical subjectivism is neutral with regard to an assumed objective reality; it neither denies nor affirms the existence of a real world independent of any consciousness.

Graf is correct to note that decades have passed during which Rothbard’s conception of “praxeology and economics” served to confuse and misinform people about the nature and scope of praxeology. Unfortunately, Graf’s proposed reconception—to install the property theories of Rothbard and Hoppe as part of praxeology—does little to clarify the issues concerned, and does much to confuse and misinform.

ATS—Hoppe, *A Theory of Socialism and Capitalism*, Mises Institute/Kluwer: 1990.

EOL—Rothbard, *The Ethics of Liberty*, New York University Press: 1998.

EPIST—Mises, *Epistemological Problems of Economics*, New York University Press: 1976.

ESA—Hoppe, *Economic Science and the Austrian Method*, Mises Institute: 1995.

ESN—Hülsmann, "Economic Science and Neoclassicism," *Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics* 2, no. 4 (1999).

FM—Mises, *The Free Market and Its Enemies*, Foundation for Economic Education: 2004.

G—Graf, "Action-Based Jurisprudence: Praxeological Legal Theory in Relation to Economic Theory, Ethics, and Legal Practice," *Libertarian Papers* 3, no. 19 (2011).

GOR—Gordon, *An Introduction to Economic Reasoning*, Mises Institute: 2000.

GOR96—Gordon, "The Philosophical Origins of Austrian Economics," Mises Institute: 1996.

H—Hoppe, *The Economics and Ethics of Private Property*, Kluwer: 1993.

HA—Mises, *Human Action*, 3rd. rev. ed., Contemporary: 1966.

HEI—Heisenberg, *Encounters with Einstein*, Princeton University Press: 1983.

I—Menger, *Investigations into the Method of the Social Sciences*, New York University Press: 1985.

IEO—Hayek, *Individualism and Economic Order*, University of Chicago Press: 1980.

INT—Hoppe, "An Interview with Hans-Hermann Hoppe," *Austrian Economics Newsletter* 18, no. 1.

KIR—Kirzner, *The Economic Point of View*, Mises Institute/Institute for Humane Studies: 2007.

KLI—Klein, "Menger the Revolutionary," *Free Market* 25, no. 2 (2007).

MES—Rothbard, *Man Economy and State*, Mises Institute: 1993.

PB—Boettke, "Economists and Liberty: Murray N. Rothbard," *Nomos*: 1988.

ROB—Robbins, *An Essay on the Nature & Significance of Economic Science*, MacMillan & Co.: 1945.

ROTH—Rothbard, "On Mises's Ethical Relativism," 1960.

SCH—Schutz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, Northwestern University Press: 1967.

SEA—Searle, *Minds, Brains and Science*, Harvard University Press: 2003.

SEE—Sechrest, "Praxeology, Economics, and Law: Issues and Implications," *Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics* 7, no. 4 (2004).

SHA—Shaffer, *Boundaries of Order*, Mises Institute: 2009.

TH—Mises, *Theory and History*, Mises Institute: 1985.

U—Mises, *The Ultimate Foundation of Economic Science*, Foundation for Economic Education: 2002.

