

= Murray Rothbard =

Murray Newton Rothbard (/ ˈmʊri ˈrɒtbərd / ; March 2 , 1926 ? January 7 , 1995) was an American heterodox economist of the Austrian School , a revisionist historian , and a political theorist whose writings and personal influence played a seminal role in the development of modern libertarianism . Rothbard was the founder and leading theoretician of anarcho @-@ capitalism , a staunch advocate of historical revisionism , and a central figure in the twentieth @-@ century American libertarian movement . He wrote over twenty books on political theory , revisionist history , economics , and other subjects . Rothbard asserted that all services provided by the " monopoly system of the corporate state " could be provided more efficiently by the private sector and wrote that the state is " the organization of robbery systematized and writ large . " He called fractional reserve banking a form of fraud and opposed central banking . He categorically opposed all military , political , and economic interventionism in the affairs of other nations . According to his protégé Hans @-@ Hermann Hoppe , " There would be no anarcho @-@ capitalist movement to speak of without Rothbard . "

Rothbard was a heterodox political economist . Economist Jeff Herbener , who calls Rothbard his friend and " intellectual mentor " , wrote that Rothbard received " only ostracism " from mainstream academia . Rothbard rejected mainstream economic methodologies and instead embraced the praxeology of his most important intellectual precursor , Ludwig von Mises . To promote his economic and political ideas , Rothbard joined Llewellyn H. " Lew " Rockwell , Jr. and Burton Blumert in 1982 to establish the Ludwig von Mises Institute in Alabama .

= = Life and work = =

= = = Education = = =

Murray Rothbard 's parents were David and Rae Rothbard , Jewish immigrants who had immigrated to the U.S. from Poland and Russia respectively . David Rothbard was a chemist . Rothbard was born in the Bronx , but the family moved to an apartment on the Upper West Side of Manhattan , where he attended Birch Wathen , a private school on the Upper East Side . Rothbard later stated that he much preferred Birch Wathen to the " debasing and egalitarian public school system " he had previously attended in the Bronx .

Rothbard wrote of having grown up as a " right @-@ winger " (adherent of the " Old Right ") among friends and neighbors who were " communists or fellow @-@ travelers . " Rothbard characterized his immigrant father as an individualist who embraced the American values of minimal government , free enterprise , private property , and " a determination to rise by one 's own merits " . To Rothbard " all socialism seemed to me monstrously coercive and abhorrent . "

He attended Columbia University , where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in mathematics in 1945 and , eleven years later , his PhD in economics in 1956 . The delay in receiving his PhD was due in part to conflict with his advisor , Joseph Dorfman , and in part to Arthur Burns rejecting his doctoral dissertation . Burns was a longtime friend of the Rothbard family and their neighbor at their Manhattan apartment building . It was only after Burns went on leave from the Columbia faculty to head President Eisenhower 's Council of Economic Advisors that Rothbard 's thesis was accepted and he received his doctorate . Rothbard later stated that all of his fellow students there were extreme leftists and that he was one of only two Republicans on the Columbia campus at the time .

During the 1940s Rothbard became acquainted with Frank Chodorov and read widely in libertarian @-@ oriented works by Albert Jay Nock , Garet Garrett , Isabel Paterson , H. L. Mencken and others , as well as Austrian economist Ludwig von Mises In the early 1950s , when Mises was teaching at the Wall Street division of New York University Business School , Rothbard attended Mises ' unofficial seminar . Rothbard was greatly influenced by Mises ' book , Human Action . Rothbard attracted the attention of the William Volker Fund , a group that provided financial backing to promote various " right @-@ wing " ideologies in the 1950s and early 1960s . The Volker Fund

paid Rothbard to write a textbook to explain Human Action in a form which could be used to introduce college undergraduates to Mises' views; a sample chapter he wrote on money and credit won Mises' approval. For ten years, Rothbard was paid a retainer by the Volker Fund, which designated him a "senior analyst." As Rothbard continued his work, he enlarged the project. The result was Rothbard's book *Man, Economy, and State*, published in 1962. Upon its publication, Mises praised Rothbard's work effusively.

== Marriage, employment, and activism ==

In 1953, in New York City, he married JoAnn Schumacher (1928 ? 1999), whom he called Joey. JoAnn was his editor and a close adviser, as well as hostess of his "Rothbard Salon". They enjoyed a loving marriage, and Rothbard often called her "the indispensable framework" behind his life and achievements. According to Joey, patronage from the Volker Fund allowed Rothbard to work from home as a freelance theorist and pundit for the first fifteen years of their marriage. The Fund collapsed in 1962, leading Rothbard to seek employment from various New York academic institutions. He was offered a part-time position teaching economics to the engineering students of Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute in 1966, at age 40. This institution had no economics department or economics majors, and Rothbard derided its social science department as "Marxist." However, Justin Raimondo writes that Rothbard liked his role with Brooklyn Polytechnic because working only two days a week gave him freedom to contribute to developments in libertarian politics.

Rothbard continued in this role for twenty years, until 1986. Then 60 years old, Rothbard left Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute for the Lee Business School at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he held the title of S.J. Hall Distinguished Professor of Economics, an endowed chair paid for by a libertarian businessman. According to Rothbard's friend, colleague and fellow Misesian economist Hans-Hermann Hoppe, Rothbard led a "fringe existence" in academia, but was able to attract a large number of "students and disciples" through his writings, thereby becoming "the creator and one of the principal agents of the contemporary libertarian movement." Rothbard maintained his position at UNLV from 1986 until his death. Rothbard founded the Center for Libertarian Studies in 1976 and the *Journal of Libertarian Studies* in 1977. In 1982, he co-founded the Ludwig von Mises Institute in Auburn, Alabama, and was vice president of academic affairs until 1995. The Institute's *Review of Austrian Economics*, a heterodox economics journal later renamed the *Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics*, was also founded by Rothbard in 1987.

After Rothbard's death, Joey reflected on Rothbard's happiness and bright spirit. "... he managed to make a living for 40 years without having to get up before noon. This was important to him." She recalled how Rothbard would begin every day with a phone conversation with his colleague Llewellyn Rockwell. "Gales of laughter would shake the house or apartment, as they checked in with each other. Murray thought it was the best possible way to start a day." Rothbard was irreligious and agnostic toward the existence of God, describing himself as a "mixture of an agnostic and a Reform Jew." Despite identifying as an agnostic and an atheist, Rothbard was critical of the "left-libertarian hostility to religion". In Rothbard's later years, many of his friends anticipated that he would convert to Catholicism, but he never did. The *New York Times* obituary called Rothbard "an economist and social philosopher who fiercely defended individual freedom against government intervention."

== Conflict with Ayn Rand ==

In 1954, Rothbard, along with several other attendees of Mises' seminar, joined the circle of novelist Ayn Rand, the founder of Objectivism. He soon parted from her, writing, among other things, that her ideas were not as original as she proclaimed but similar to those of Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas and Herbert Spencer. In 1958, after the publication of her novel, *Atlas Shrugged*, Rothbard wrote a "fan letter" to Rand, calling her book "an infinite treasure house," and "not

merely the greatest novel ever written , [but] one of the very greatest books ever written , fiction or nonfiction . " He also wrote that " you introduced me to the whole field of natural rights and natural law philosophy , " prompting him to learn " the glorious natural rights tradition . " He rejoined her circle for a few months , but soon broke with Rand once more , over various differences , including his defense of anarchism .

Later , Rothbard satirized Rand 's acolytes in his play *Mozart Was a Red* and the essay " *The Sociology of the Ayn Rand Cult* . " " *Mozart Was a Red* " was Rothbard 's unpublished one @-@ act play written as a farce . Rothbard characterized Ayn Rand 's circle as a " dogmatic , personality cult . " His play parodies Rand (through the character " Carson Sand ") and her friends , and is set during a visit from Keith Hackley , a fan of Sand 's novel *The Brow of Zeus* (a play on Rand 's most famous novel , *Atlas Shrugged*) .

= = Ethical and philosophical views = =

= = = Austrian economics = = =

Rothbard was an advocate and practitioner of the Austrian School tradition of his teacher Ludwig von Mises . Like Mises , Rothbard rejected the application of the scientific method to economics , and dismissed econometrics , empirical and statistical analysis , and other tools of mainstream social science as useless for the study of economics . He instead embraced praxeology , the strictly a priori methodology of Mises . Praxeology conceives of economic laws as akin to geometric or mathematical axioms : fixed , unchanging , objective , and discernible through logical reasoning , without the use of any evidence . On the account of Misesian economist Hans @-@ Hermann Hoppe , eschewing the scientific method and empirical evidence distinguishes the Misesian approach " from all other current economic schools " . Mark Skousen of Grantham University and the Foundation for Economic Education , a critic of mainstream economics , praises Rothbard as brilliant , his writing style persuasive , his economic arguments nuanced and logically rigorous , and his Misesian methodology sound . However , citing Rothbard 's absence of academic publications , Skousen concedes that Rothbard was effectively " outside the discipline " of mainstream economics and that his work " fell on deaf ears " outside his ideological circles . Paralleling Skousen 's remarks , Hans @-@ Hermann Hoppe laments the fact that all non @-@ Misesian economists dismiss the Misesian approach , which both he and Rothbard embraced , as " dogmatic and unscientific " .

Rothbard wrote extensively on Austrian Business Cycle Theory and as part of this approach , strongly opposed central banking , fiat money , and fractional reserve banking and advocated a gold standard and a 100 % reserve requirement for banks .

= = = = Polemics against mainstream economics = = = =

Rothbard authored a series of scathing polemics against modern mainstream economics . He was critical of Adam Smith , calling him a " shameless plagiarist " who set economics off @-@ track , ultimately leading to the rise of Marxism . Instead , Rothbard praised Smith 's contemporaries ' works , including Richard Cantillon , Anne Turgot , and Condillac for developing the subjective theory of value . In response to Rothbard 's charge that Smith 's *The Wealth of Nations* was largely plagiarized , David Friedman castigated Rothbard 's scholarship and character , saying that he " was [either] deliberately dishonest or never really read the book he was criticizing " . Tony Endres called Rothbard 's treatment of Adam Smith a " travesty " .

Rothbard was equally scathing in his criticism of John Maynard Keynes , labeling Keynes weak on economic theory and a shallow political opportunist . Rothbard also wrote more generally that Keynesian @-@ style governmental regulation of money and credit created a " dismal monetary and banking situation " . He demeaned John Stuart Mill as a " wooly man of mush " , and speculated that Mill 's " soft " personality led his economic thought astray .

Rothbard was critical of monetarist economist Milton Friedman . In a polemic entitled " Milton

Friedman Unraveled " , he maligned Friedman as a " statist " , a " favorite of the establishment " , a friend of and " apologist " for Richard Nixon , and a " pernicious influence " on public policy . Rothbard said that libertarians should scorn rather than celebrate Friedman 's academic prestige and political influence . Noting that Rothbard has " been nasty to me and my work " , Friedman responded to Rothbard 's criticism by calling him a " cult builder and a dogmatist . "

In a memorial volume published by the Mises Institute , Rothbard 's protégé and libertarian theorist Hans @-@ Hermann Hoppe wrote that the work *Man , Economy , and State* " presented a blistering refutation of all variants of mathematical economics , " and included it among Rothbard 's " almost mind @-@ boggling achievements " . Hoppe lamented that , like his own mentor Ludwig von Mises , Rothbard died without winning the Nobel Prize that Hoppe says Rothbard deserved " twice over . " Though Hoppe acknowledged that Rothbard and his work were largely ignored by academia , he called Rothbard an " intellectual giant , " comparable to Aristotle , Locke and Kant .

= = = Reception of Rothbard 's work = = =

Though he self @-@ identified as an Austrian economist , Rothbard 's methodology was at odds with many other Austrians . In 1956 , Rothbard deprecated the views of Austrian economist Fritz Machlup , stating that Machlup was no praxeologist , and calling him instead a " positivist " who failed to represent the views of Ludwig von Mises . Rothbard stated that in fact Machlup shared the opposing positivist view associated with economist Milton Friedman . Mises and Machlup had been colleagues in 1920 's Vienna before each relocated to the United States , and von Mises later urged his American protege , Israel Kirzner , to pursue his PhD studies with Machlup at Johns Hopkins University . Professors Gabriel J. Zanotti and Nicolas Cachanosky recently reviewed the controversy stating " Machlup 's interpretation shows that Austrian epistemology is well grounded in post @-@ Popperian epistemology and that most criticisms of Austrian economics based on its aprioristic character are misplaced . Furthermore , Machlup 's interpretation provides us with a setting to re @-@ build the academic interaction between Austrians and non @-@ Austrians that was characteristic of the early twentieth century . "

According to libertarian economists Tyler Cowen and Richard Fink , Rothbard wrote that the term evenly rotating economy (" ERE ") can be used to analyze complexity in a world of change . The words ERE had been introduced by von Mises as an alternative nomenclature for the mainstream economic method of static equilibrium and general equilibrium analysis . Cowen and Fink found " serious inconsistencies in both the nature of the ERE and its suggested uses . " With the sole exception of Rothbard , no other economist adopted Mises ' term , and the concept continued to be called " equilibrium analysis . "

In an 2011 article critical of Rothbard 's " reflexive opposition " to inflation , *The Economist* noted that his views are increasingly gaining influence among politicians and laypeople on the Right . The article contrasted Rothbard 's categorical rejection of inflationary policies with the monetary views of " sophisticated Austrian @-@ school monetary economists such as George Selgin and Larry White , [who] follow Hayek in treating stability of nominal spending as a monetary ideal--a position not all that different from Mr Sumner 's " .

According to economist Peter Boettke , Rothbard is better described as a property rights economist than as an Austrian economist . In 1988 , Boettke noted that Rothbard " vehemently attacked all of the books of the younger Austrians " .

= = = Ethics = = =

Although Rothbard adopted von Mises ' deductive methodology for his social theory and economics , he parted with Mises on the question of ethics . Specifically , he rejected Mises conviction that ethical values remain subjective , and opposed utilitarianism in favor of principle @-@ based , natural law reasoning . In defense of his free market views , Mises employed utilitarian economic arguments aimed at demonstrating that interventionist policies made all of society worse off . Rothbard , on the other hand , concluded that interventionist policies do in fact benefit some people ,

including certain government employees and beneficiaries of social programs . Therefore , unlike Mises , Rothbard attempted to assert an objective , natural law basis for the free market . He called this principle " self @-@ ownership , " loosely basing the idea on the writings of John Locke and also borrowing concepts from classical liberalism and the anti @-@ imperialism of the Old Right .

Rothbard accepted the Labor theory of property , but rejected the Lockean proviso , arguing that if an individual mixes his labor with unowned land then he becomes the proper owner eternally , and that after that time it is private property which may change hands only by trade or gift .

Rothbard was a strong critic of egalitarianism . The title essay of Rothbard 's 1974 book *Egalitarianism as a Revolt Against Nature and Other Essays* held , " Equality is not in the natural order of things , and the crusade to make everyone equal in every respect (except before the law) is certain to have disastrous consequences . " In it , Rothbard wrote , " At the heart of the egalitarian left is the pathological belief that there is no structure of reality ; that all the world is a tabula rasa that can be changed at any moment in any desired direction by the mere exercise of human will . "

Commenting on Rothbard 's ideas , Noam Chomsky says that they are " not worth talking about " and " not really serious " .

= = = Anarcho @-@ capitalism = = =

Various theorists have espoused legal philosophies similar to " anarcho @-@ capitalism . " The first person to use the term , however , was Murray Rothbard , who in the mid @-@ 20th century synthesized elements from the Austrian School of economics , classical liberalism , and 19th @-@ century American individualist anarchists . According to Llewellyn Rockwell , Rothbard is the " conscience " of all the various strains of libertarian anarchism , whose contemporary advocates are former " colleagues " of Rothbard personally inspired by his example .

During his years at graduate school in the late 1940s , Murray Rothbard considered whether a strict laissez @-@ faire policy would require that private police agencies replace government protective services . He visited Baldy Harper , a founder of the Foundation for Economic Education , who doubted the need for any government whatsoever . During this period , Rothbard was influenced by nineteenth @-@ century American individualist anarchists , like Lysander Spooner and Benjamin Tucker , and the Belgian economist Gustave de Molinari who wrote about how such a system could work . Thus he " combined the laissez @-@ faire economics of Mises with the absolutist views of human rights and rejection of the state " from individualist anarchists . In an unpublished memo written around 1949 Rothbard concluded that in order to believe in laissez @-@ faire one must also embrace anarchism .

Rothbard began to consider himself a private property anarchist in 1950 and later began to use " anarcho @-@ capitalist " to describe his political ideology . In his anarcho @-@ capitalist model , a system of protection agencies compete in a free market and are voluntarily supported by consumers who choose to use their protective and judicial services . Anarcho @-@ capitalism would mean the end of the state monopoly on force .

In *Man , Economy , and State* , Rothbard divides the various kinds of state intervention in three categories : " autistic intervention " , which is interference with private non @-@ economic activities ; " binary intervention " , which is forced exchange between individuals and the state ; and " triangular intervention " , which is state @-@ mandated exchange between individuals . According to Sanford Ikeda , Rothbard 's typology " eliminates the gaps and inconsistencies that appear in Mises 's original formulation . " Rothbard writes in *Power and Market* that the role of the economist in a free market is limited but is much larger in a government that solicits economic policy recommendations . Rothbard argues that self @-@ interest therefore prejudices the views of many economists in favor of increased government intervention .

= = = Race , gender and civil rights = = =

Michael O 'Malley , Associate Professor of History at George Mason University , characterizes Rothbard 's " overall tone regard [ing] " the Civil Rights Movement and the women 's suffrage

movement to be " contemptuous and hostile " . Rothbard vilified women 's rights activists , attributing the growth of the welfare state to politically active spinsters " whose busybody inclinations were not fettered by the responsibilities of health and heart " . Rothbard had pointed out in his ' Origins of the Welfare State ' that progressives had evolved from elitist Gilded Age pietist Protestants that wanted to bring a secularized version of millennialism under a welfare state , which was spearheaded by a " shock troop of Yankee protestant and Jewish women and lesbian spinsters . "

Rothbard called for the elimination of " the entire ' civil rights ' structure " stating that it " tramples on the property rights of every American . " He consistently favored repeal of the 1964 Civil Rights Act , including Title VII regarded employment discrimination and called for overturning the Brown v. Board of Education decision on the grounds that forced integration of schools was aggressive . Rothbard also urged the (state) police to crack down on " street criminals " , writing that " cops must be unleashed " and " allowed to administer instant punishment , subject of course to liability when they are in error " . He also advocated that the police " clear the streets of bums and vagrants " , and quipped " who cares ? , " in response to the question of where these people would go after being removed from public property .

Rothbard held strong opinions about many leaders of the civil rights movement . He considered black separatist Malcolm X to be a " great black leader " and integrationist Martin Luther King to be favored by whites because he " was the major restraining force on the developing Negro revolution . " Rothbard praised Malcolm X for " acting white " through use of his intellect and wit , and contrasted him favorably with the " fraudulent intellectual with a rococo Black Baptist minister style , " Dr. " King " . But while he compared Malcolm X 's black nationalism favorably to King 's integrationism , and for a time praised black nationalism , in 1993 he rejected the vision of a " separate black nation " , asking " does anyone really believe that ... New Africa would be content to strike out on its own , with no massive " foreign aid " from the U.S.A. ? " Rothbard also suggested that opposition to King , whom he demeaned as a " coercive integrationist " , should be a litmus test for members of his " paleolibertarian " political movement .

= = = Race and intelligence = = =

Political scientist Jean Hardisty commented on Rothbard 's " praise " of the argument , made in Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray 's book The Bell Curve , that blacks tend to score , on average , lower than whites on IQ tests . Hardisty noted that Rothbard 's remark on intellectual and " temperamental " differences between races are ? self @-@ evident ? .

= = = Opposition to war = = =

Like Randolph Bourne , Rothbard believed that " war is the health of the state . " According to David Gordon , this was the reason for Rothbard 's opposition to aggressive foreign policy . Rothbard believed that stopping new wars was necessary and that knowledge of how government had led citizens into earlier wars was important . Two essays expanded on these views " War , Peace , and the State " and " The Anatomy of the State . " Rothbard used insights of Vilfredo Pareto , Gaetano Mosca , and Robert Michels to build a model of state personnel , goals , and ideology . In an obituary for his friend historical revisionist Harry Elmer Barnes , Rothbard wrote :

Our entry into World War II was the crucial act in foisting a permanent militarization upon the economy and society , in bringing to the country a permanent garrison state , an overweening military @-@ industrial complex , a permanent system of conscription . It was the crucial act in creating a mixed economy run by Big Government , a system of state monopoly capitalism run by the central government in collaboration with Big Business and Big Unionism .

Rothbard 's colleague Joseph Stromberg notes that Rothbard made two exceptions to his general condemnation of war : " the American Revolution and the War for Southern Independence , as viewed from the Confederate side . " Rothbard condemned the " Northern war against slavery " , saying it was inspired by " fanatical " religious faith and characterized by " a cheerful willingness to uproot institutions , to commit mayhem and mass murder , to plunder and loot and destroy , all in the

name of high moral principle " . He celebrated Jefferson Davis , Robert E. Lee , and other prominent Confederates as heroes while denouncing Abraham Lincoln , Ulysses S. Grant and other Union leaders for " open [ing] the Pandora 's Box of genocide and the extermination of civilians " in their war against the South .

= = = Middle East conflict = = =

Rothbard 's The Libertarian Forum blamed the Middle East conflict on Israeli aggression " fueled by American arms and money . " Rothbard warned that the mid @-@ East conflict would draw the U.S. into a world war . He was anti @-@ Zionist and opposed U.S. involvement in the Middle East . Rothbard criticized the Camp David Accords for having betrayed Palestinian aspirations and opposed Israel 's 1982 invasion of Lebanon . In his essay , " War Guilt in the Middle East , " Rothbard states that Israel refused " to let these refugees return and reclaim the property taken from them . " He took negative views of the two state solution for the Israeli @-@ Palestinian conflict , saying :

On the one hand there are the Palestinian Arabs , who have tilled the soil or otherwise used the land of Palestine for centuries ; and on the other , there are a group of external fanatics , who come from all over the world , and who claim the entire land area as " given " to them as a collective religion or tribe at some remote or legendary time in the past . There is no way the two claims can be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties . There can be no genuine settlement , no " peace " in the face of this irrepressible conflict ; there can only be either a war to the death , or an uneasy practical compromise which can satisfy no one . That is the harsh reality of the Middle East .

= = = Historical revisionism = = =

Rothbard embraced " historical revisionism " as an antidote to what he perceived to be the dominant influence exerted by corrupt " court intellectuals " over mainstream historical narratives . Rothbard wrote that these mainstream intellectuals distorted the historical record in favor of " the state " in exchange for " power , prestige , and loot " from the state . Rothbard characterized the revisionist task as " penetrating the fog of lies and deception of the State and its Court Intellectuals , and to present to the public the true history " . He was influenced by and a champion of the historian Harry Elmer Barnes , a Holocaust denier . Rothbard endorsed Barnes 's revisionism on World War II , favorably citing his view that " the murder of Germans and Japanese was the overriding aim of World War II " . In addition to broadly supporting his historical views , Rothbard promoted Barnes as an influence for future revisionists .

Rothbard 's endorsing of World War II revisionism and his association with Barnes and other Holocaust deniers have drawn criticism from within the political right . Kevin D. Williamson wrote an opinion piece published by National Review which condemned Rothbard for " making common cause with the ' revisionist ' historians of the Third Reich " , a term he used to describe American Holocaust deniers associated with Rothbard , such as James J. Martin of the Institute for Historical Review . The piece also characterized " Rothbard and his faction " as being " culpably indulgent " of Holocaust denial , the view which " specifically denies that the Holocaust actually happened or holds that it was in some way exaggerated " .

In an article for Rothbard 's 50th birthday , Rothbard 's friend and Buffalo State College historian Ralph Raico stated that Rothbard " is the main reason that revisionism has become a crucial part of the whole libertarian position . "

= = = Children 's rights and parental obligations = = =

In the Ethics of Liberty , Rothbard explores issues regarding children 's rights in terms of self @-@ ownership and contract . These include support for a woman 's right to abortion , condemnation of parents showing aggression towards children , and opposition to the state forcing parents to care for children . He also holds children have the right to run away from parents and seek new guardians as

soon as they are able to choose to do so . He asserted that parents have the right to put a child out for adoption or sell the rights to the child in a voluntary contract in what Rothbard suggests will be a " flourishing free market in children " . He believes that selling children as consumer goods in accord with market forces , while " superficially monstrous " , will benefit " everyone " involved in the market : " the natural parents , the children , and the foster parents purchasing " .

In Rothbard 's view of parenthood , " the parent should not have a legal obligation to feed , clothe , or educate his children , since such obligations would entail positive acts coerced upon the parent and depriving the parent of his rights . " Thus , Rothbard stated that parents should have the legal right to let any infant die by starvation , and should be free to engage in other forms of child neglect . However , according to Rothbard , " the purely free society will have a flourishing free market in children " . In a fully libertarian society , he wrote , " the existence of a free baby market will bring such ' neglect ' down to a minimum " .

Economist Gene Callahan of Cardiff University , formerly a scholar at the Rothbard @-@ affiliated Mises Institute , observes that Rothbard allows " the logical elegance of his legal theory " to " trump any arguments based on the moral reprehensibility of a parent idly watching her six @-@ month @-@ old child slowly starve to death in its crib . "

= = = Retributive theory of criminal justice = = =

Rothbard consistently advocated for abolition of the subpoena power , court attendance , contempt of court powers , coerced testimony of witnesses , compulsory jury duty , and the bail system , arguing that all these functions of the judiciary were violations of natural rights and American common law . He instead advocated that until a defendant is convicted he or she should not be held in prison or jails , writing " except in those cases where the criminal has been caught red @-@ handed and where a certain presumption of guilt therefore exists , it is impossible to justify any imprisonment before conviction , let alone before trial . And even when someone is caught red @-@ handed , there is an important reform that needs to be instituted to keep the system honest : subjecting the police and the other authorities to the same law as everyone else . If everyone is supposed to be subject to the same criminal law , then exempting the authorities from that law gives them a legal license to commit continual aggression . The policeman who apprehends a criminal and arrests him , and the judicial and penal authorities who incarcerate him before trial and conviction ? all should be subject to the universal law . " Rothbard argued that police who make wrongful arrests or indictments should be charged with kidnapping . In *The Ethics of Liberty* , Rothbard advocates for a " frankly retributive theory of punishment " or a system of " a tooth (or two teeth) for a tooth " . Rothbard emphasizes that all punishment must be proportional , stating that " the criminal , or invader , loses his rights to the extent that he deprived another man of his " . Applying his retributive theory , Rothbard states that a thief " must pay double the extent of theft " . Rothbard gives the example of a thief who stole \$ 15 @,@ 000 , and says he not only would have to return the stolen money , but also provide the victim an additional \$ 15 @,@ 000 , money to which the thief has forfeited his right . The thief would be " put in a [temporary] state of enslavement to his victim " if he is unable to pay him immediately . Rothbard also applies his theory to justify beating and torturing violent criminals , although the beatings are required to be proportional to the crimes for which they are being punished .

= = = = Torture of criminal suspects = = = =

In chapter twelve of *Ethics* , Rothbard turns his attention to suspects arrested by the police . He argues that police should be able to torture certain types of criminal suspects , including accused murderers , for information related to their alleged crime . Writes Rothbard , " Suppose ... police beat and torture a suspected murderer to find information (not to wring a confession , since obviously a coerced confession could never be considered valid) . If the suspect turns out to be guilty , then the police should be exonerated , for then they have only ladled out to the murderer a parcel of what he deserves in return ; his rights had already been forfeited by more than that extent . But if the suspect

is not convicted , then that means that the police have beaten and tortured an innocent man , and that they in turn must be put into the dock for criminal assault " . Gene Callahan examines this position and concludes that Rothbard rejects the widely held belief that torture is inherently wrong , no matter who the victim . Callahan goes on to state that Rothbard 's scheme gives the police a strong motive to frame the suspect , after having tortured him or her .

= = = Science and scientism = = =

In an essay condemning " scientism in the study of man " , Rothbard rejected the application of causal determinism to human beings , arguing that the actions of human beings , as opposed to those of everything else in nature , are not determined by prior causes but by " free will " . He argued that " determinism as applied to man , is a self @-@ contradictory thesis , since the man who employs it relies implicitly on the existence of free will . " Rothbard opposed what he considered the overspecialization of the academy and sought to fuse the disciplines of economics , history , ethics , and political science to create a " science of liberty . " Rothbard described the moral basis for his anarcho @-@ capitalist position in two of his books : For a New Liberty , published in 1973 , and The Ethics of Liberty , published in 1982 . In his Power and Market (1970) , Rothbard describes how a stateless economy might function .

= = Political activism = =

As a young man , Rothbard considered himself part of the Old Right , an anti @-@ statist and anti @-@ interventionist branch of the Republican Party . In the 1948 presidential election , Rothbard , " as a Jewish student at Columbia , horrified his peers by organizing a Students for Strom Thurmond chapter , so staunchly did he believe in states ' rights . "

By the late 1960s , Rothbard 's " long and winding yet somehow consistent road had taken him from anti @-@ New Deal and anti @-@ interventionist Robert Taft supporter into friendship with the quasi @-@ pacifist Nebraska Republican Congressman Howard Buffett (father of Warren Buffett) then over to the League of (Adlai) Stevensonian Democrats and , by 1968 , into tentative comradeship with the anarchist factions of the New Left . " Rothbard advocated an alliance with the New Left anti @-@ war movement , on the grounds that the conservative movement had been completely subsumed by the statist establishment . However , Rothbard later criticized the New Left for supporting a " People 's Republic " style draft . It was during this phase that he associated with Karl Hess and founded Left and Right : A Journal of Libertarian Thought with Leonard Liggio and George Resch , which existed from 1965 to 1968 .

From 1969 to 1984 he edited The Libertarian Forum , also initially with Hess (although Hess 's involvement ended in 1971) . The Libertarian Forum provided a platform for Rothbard 's writing . Despite its small readership , it engaged conservatives associated with the National Review in nationwide debate . Rothbard rejected the view that Ronald Reagan 's 1980 election as President was a victory for libertarian principles , and he attacked Reagan 's economic program in a series of Libertarian Forum articles . In 1982 , Rothbard called Reagan 's claims of spending cuts a " fraud " and a " hoax " , and accused Reaganites of doctoring the economic statistics in order to give the false impression that their policies were successfully reducing inflation and unemployment .

Rothbard criticized the " frenzied nihilism " of left @-@ wing libertarians , but also criticized right @-@ wing libertarians who were content to rely only on education to bring down the state ; he believed that libertarians should adopt any moral tactic available to them in order to bring about liberty .

Imbibing Randolph Bourne 's idea that " war is the health of the state " , Rothbard opposed all wars in his lifetime , and engaged in anti @-@ war activism . During the 1970s and 1980s , Rothbard was active in the Libertarian Party . He was frequently involved in the party 's internal politics . He was one of the founders of the Cato Institute , and " came up with the idea of naming this libertarian think tank after Cato 's Letters , a powerful series of British newspaper essays by John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon which played a decisive influence upon America 's Founding Fathers in fomenting

the Revolution . " From 1978 to 1983 , he was associated with the Libertarian Party Radical Caucus , allying himself with Justin Raimondo , Eric Garriss and Williamson Evers . He opposed the " low @-@ tax liberalism " espoused by 1980 Libertarian Party presidential candidate Ed Clark and Cato Institute president Edward H Crane III . According to Charles Burris , " Rothbard and Crane became bitter rivals after disputes emerging from the 1980 LP presidential campaign of Ed Clark carried over to strategic direction and management of Cato . "

Rothbard split with the Radical Caucus at the 1983 national convention over cultural issues and aligned himself with what he called the " right @-@ wing populist " wing of the party , notably Lew Rockwell and Ron Paul , who ran for President on the Libertarian Party ticket in 1988 . " Rothbard worked closely with Lew Rockwell (joined later by his long @-@ time friend Burt Blumert) in nurturing the Ludwig von Mises Institute , and the publication , The Rothbard @-@ Rockwell Report ; which after Rothbard 's 1995 death evolved into the website , LewRockwell.com. "

= = = Paleolibertarianism = = =

In 1989 , Rothbard left the Libertarian Party and began building bridges to the post @-@ Cold War anti @-@ interventionist right , calling himself a paleolibertarian , a conservative reaction against the cultural liberalism of mainstream libertarianism . Paleolibertarianism sought to appeal to disaffected working class whites through a synthesis of cultural conservatism and libertarian economics . According to Reason , Rothbard advocated right @-@ wing populism in part because he was frustrated that mainstream thinkers were not adopting the libertarian view and suggested that former KKK Grand Wizard David Duke and Wisconsin U.S. Senator Joseph McCarthy were models for an " Outreach to the Rednecks " effort that could be used by a broad libertarian / paleoconservative coalition . Working together , the paleo coalition would expose the " unholy alliance of ' corporate liberal ' Big Business and media elites , who , through big government , have privileged and caused to rise up a parasitic Underclass . " Rothbard blamed this " Underclass " for " looting and oppressing the bulk of the middle and working classes in America . " Rothbard noted that David Duke 's substantive political program in a Louisiana governor 's race had " nothing " in it that " could not also be embraced by paleoconservatives or paleo @-@ libertarians ; lower taxes , dismantling the bureaucracy , slashing the welfare system , attacking affirmative action and racial set @-@ asides , calling for equal rights for all Americans , including whites . "

Rothbard supported the presidential campaign of Pat Buchanan in 1992 , and wrote that " with Pat Buchanan as our leader , we shall break the clock of social democracy . " When Buchanan dropped out of the Republican primary race , Rothbard then shifted his interest and support to Ross Perot , who Rothbard wrote had " brought an excitement , a verve , a sense of dynamics and of open possibilities to what had threatened to be a dreary race . " Rothbard ultimately supported George Bush over Bill Clinton in the 1992 election .

Like Buchanan , Rothbard opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) . However , by 1995 , Rothbard had become disillusioned with Buchanan , believing that the latter 's " commitment to protectionism was mutating into an all @-@ round faith in economic planning and the nation state . "

After Rothbard 's death in 1995 Lew Rockwell , President of the von Mises Institute , told The New York Times that Rothbard was " the founder of right @-@ wing anarchism " . William F. Buckley , Jr. wrote a critical obituary in the National Review criticizing Rothbard 's " defective judgment " and views on the Cold War . The Ludwig von Mises Institute published Murray N. Rothbard , In Memoriam which included memorials from 31 individuals , including libertarians and academics . Journalist Brian Doherty summarizes Buckley 's obituary as follows : " when Rothbard died in 1995 , his old pal William Buckley took pen in hand to piss on his grave . " Hoppe , Rockwell and Rothbard 's colleagues at the Mises Institute took a different view , arguing that he was one of the most important philosophers in history .

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