



## An Enemy of the State: The Life of Murray N. Rothbard

By Justin Raimondo



**An Enemy of the State: The Life of Murray N. Rothbard** By Justin Raimondo

This is the first biography of one of the most interesting and controversial social theorists of our time. Murray N. Rothbard was the founder of the libertarian movement, a radical free marketeer who came of age in the era of collectivism and fought all his life for individualism and laissez-faire against overwhelming odds. The story of his life is at the same time a cavalcade of virtually all of the controversial events, ideas, and personalities of the latter part of the twentieth century.

The author of twenty-eight books and thousands of articles, Rothbard's life goal was to found a science of liberty, a comprehensive libertarian system of social thought encompassing philosophy, ethics, economics, and history. This book tells the story of the intellectual adventure that was Rothbard's life, his relationship with the great libertarian economist and philosopher Ludwig von Mises, and his intellectual growth and development as an economist and a thinker. While Rothbard's contributions to the history of social thought are important, his life story is interesting in itself: against almost impossible odds he managed to singlehandedly create the libertarian movement out of thin air at a time when such ideas were considered completely outside the pale.

An Enemy of the State traces Rothbard's ideological odyssey, from the Old Right of the Chicago Tribune and the "isolationist" America First Committee, to the conservative movement of the fifties and early sixties, to the New Left of the mid-sixties, and then on to the Libertarian Party and the post-Cold War return to his Old Right roots. Rothbard was that interesting combination, an intellectual system-builder and theorist who was also an intellectual street fighter, a scholar, and a man of action. Anyone interested in the history of ideas, whether or not they agree with Rothbard's ideology, is bound to be captivated by and drawn into the story of his fascinating life.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

". . . accessible and engaging." -- *Publishers Weekly*, June 12, 2000

"...one of the most interesting and controversial social theorists of our time. If ideas interest you, this biography sure will as well." -- *Bookviews*, August, 2000

#### From the Inside Flap

Although libertarianism entered the American political vocabulary sometime in the 1970s, and is now one of the categories of political thought right up there with liberalism, conservatism, and all the other "isms," the story of the movement's founder has never been told--until now. This is the first biography of Murray N. Rothbard, the intellectual godfather of libertarianism and the author of twenty-eight books, hundreds of articles, and a social theorist whose writings encompass not only economics but philosophy, political economy, history, and virtually all the realms of social thought.

As an economist, he not only carved out a place for the insights of the "Austrian" (or pure free market) school on American shores, but also expanded and elaborated on the innovations of his mentor and teacher, Ludwig von Mises, the dean of the Austrian school.

As a political economist, he mapped out the contours of a truly free society, based on natural law and the concept of self-ownership. As a historian, he rescued the hidden history of liberty, and exposed the underbelly of the power elite. As a student of economic history, he traced the development of economic ideas and showed the way forward to a new way of looking at the evolution of thought - and of human society. As a teacher to a whole generation of libertarian scholars and activists, Rothbard was not only a source of ideas but of inspiration. He was an innovator who fought for his vision of the world, pioneering liberty at a time when they were neither popular nor understood. He dared to speak truth to power-- and never shied away from controversy.

AN ENEMY OF THE STATE charts the intellectual odyssey of a man who went from the Old Right to the New Left, traveling through Ayn Rand's circle as well as William F. Buckley's before winding up at a position that transcends the traditional categories of Left and Right -- and point in an entirely new direction. His life was an intellectual adventure -- and an important chapter in the history of ideas. To anyone with an interest in the history of ideas in our time, AN ENEMY OF THE STATE is a must.

#### About the Author

Justin Raimondo is a senior fellow at the Center for Libertarian Studies, editorial director of Antiwar.com, and a longtime libertarian activist.

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