

# Study Guide for *Unity in Epistemology and Ethics*

by Dr. Leonard Peikoff

## Lecture One

- Why are differentiation and integration always required together in cognition?
- What are the different integrations through the levels of knowledge?
- Explain an original example of these different types of integrations.
- What allows us to move from a single unity to a separate single unity at the other end of a process of integration?
- How did the Greek idea of the “one in the many” apply to both physical and intellectual worlds?
- What are the consequences of the modern philosophic sundering of the one and the many?
- What is the key to the Objectivist view of unity?
- Explain the metaphysical perspective on unity.
- What does it mean to say that knowledge is inherently relational?
- How does grasping one item of human knowledge imply grasping the totality?
- Using an original example, reconstruct a sketch of how an ordinary item of knowledge shows the integrative nature of knowledge.
- Does the ultimate integration of all knowledge require specific knowledge in a specific mind?
- Why is reification such a temptation for rationalists?
- What does it mean that there are no separate fields of knowledge, only cognition?

## Lecture Two

- Why is it convincing that either philosophy or history had to come first as a field of knowledge?
- How is it proper to say that history is the source of philosophic integrations?
- What is the difference between the implicit and explicit understanding of a philosophic principle?
- Explain the spiral theory of knowledge as it applies to the priority of history or philosophy.
- How does the philosophic validation of a rational politics depend on history?
- Indicate some of the ways that other abstract aspects of philosophy depend on history.
- How does one come to the conclusion that reason is man’s basic means of survival?

- Why did Rand hold that she could only formulate her philosophy after the Industrial Revolution?

## Lecture Three

- What is the typical process when we subdivide a concept?
- Provide an original example of how expanding contexts of knowledge lead to the refining of the definition of a single concept.
- What is the paradox behind the definition of value as that which one acts to gain and/or keep?
- Why does the refined, narrower definition of value not supplant the earlier definition?
- What is the difference between an added factual context and an added philosophic context in understanding a concept?
- Since the concept of value gives rise to the idea of life as the standard of value, why do we retain the concept of value in ordinary goal-directed action?
- Why is it necessary to keep the two definitions of value?
- Explain the role of unity in the reduction to reality and integration to more philosophic conclusions in understanding value.
- How do the two definitions unify the descriptive and normative integrations?
- Work through the same dual perspective that Dr. Peikoff uses with original contrasting virtues.
- Explain how altruism is both an example of morality and the destruction of it.
- What unifies all the concepts that Dr. Peikoff addresses that have these dual definitions?

## Lecture Four

- Why is it true that Objectivism considers morality primarily a question of mental processes?
- Explain how it is both easy and incredibly difficult to remain in contact with reality.
- Why is it impossible for it to become automatic to stay in focus?
- Is staying in focus the same as unceasing active mental effort on specific cognitive problems?
- Does full focus guarantee objectivity?
- Why can the process of staying in focus not be unremitting work that is exhausting?
- What is the nature of the difficulty in dealing with a truth that you have automated an action that doesn't fit with it?
- What does it mean that Rearden appears to act against his moral judgment?
- How does one deal with the problem holding an idea that would bring existential ruin or profound unhappiness?