

Looking Back at a Landmark Year

This was a year full of milestones for the Ayn Rand Institute: from the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *Atlas Shrugged* to record-breaking attendance at Objectivist Summer Conference 2007, to an extensive list of new Institute initiatives. As we continue our efforts to promote Ayn Rand's works and ideas, *Impact* would like to take a look back at this landmark year.

At Objectivist Summer Conference 2007, more than 500 people joined us in Telluride, Colorado, for a week of talks and activities, including six path-breaking lectures by Dr. Leonard Peikoff on his book-in-progress, "The DIM Hypothesis."



Yaron Brook Gains Regular Slot on Fox Business Program

Dr. Yaron Brook, ARI's executive director, now has a regular slot on the new Fox Business Network (FBN, or Fox Business), which is distinct from the long-running Fox News Channel.

Dr. Brook will be interviewed every week on Wednesdays on the show *Fox Business News*. This is a three-hour show, from 2 to 5 pm, Eastern time, and Dr. Brook will usually be on during the second hour, 3 to 4 pm, Eastern (12 noon to 1 pm, Pacific), but, at the producer's discretion, he could appear at any other time in this three-hour period.

As of this writing, Dr. Brook has appeared eleven times on topics that include CEO pay, the Federal Reserve and the subprime mortgage crisis. Dr. Onkar Gbate, ARI senior fellow, filled in for Dr. Brook, appearing on November 7.

Fox is still negotiating to have FBN carried by some cable companies. So it is possible that your local cable company may not yet carry this new channel. Please check your local listings. Visitors to our Web page, www.aynrand.org, will soon be able to watch clips of Dr. Brook's appearances.

During the conference, Dr. Yaron Brook, ARI's executive director, announced that ARI will open an office in Washington, D.C., in 2008. The as-yet-unnamed center will work to increase the exposure of Objectivist ideas to the media, the public, and among other think tanks and policy institutes.

To celebrate the anniversary of *Atlas Shrugged*, ARI engaged in a number of activities, including working with the publisher to create an anniversary banner for the cover of the paperback, providing *Atlas*-themed posters for teachers and bookmarks for essay contests, as well as writing a series of op-eds on the novel, its ideas and its influence.

Sales of *Atlas Shrugged* and Ayn Rand's other novels, reached extraordinary numbers this year. The gross sales of the paperback editions of Ayn Rand's three novels, *Atlas Shrugged*, *The Fountainhead*, *We the Living* and the novelette, *Anthem*, in 2006 were 702,163—an all-time high, up 2 percent from 2005. If ARI's own orders of books in each year are excluded, trade sales otherwise increased by 8 percent from 2005. Paperback sales of *Atlas Shrugged* also increased by 2 percent to 127,352. If ARI orders are excluded from both years, trade sales increased by 10 percent over the previous year. Annual sales of *Atlas Shrugged*, for example, are higher than when the first hardcover or paperback editions were published. In recent years, each of three of the four novels has sold more than 100,000 copies a year—higher numbers than at any point in Ayn Rand's lifetime.

ARI mounted a library exhibit on the ideas of *Atlas Shrugged* at the Frances Howard Goldwyn Hollywood Regional Library, which was viewed by thousands of library patrons. The exhibit featured four talks by ARI intellectuals, on capitalism, ethics, foreign policy and environmentalism, as well as items from the Ayn Rand Archives, a special collection of the Institute.

This was also the first year ARI made available free copies of *Atlas Shrugged* to high school teachers under our Free Books to Teachers program. Thanks to funding made possible by the *Atlas Shrugged* Initiative, ARI was able to ship more than 25,500 copies of the novel to teachers across the country. In total, ARI has distributed more than 317,500 copies of *Atlas Shrugged*, *Anthem* and *The Fountainhead* to high school teachers during the 2006–07 school year. This brings the total number of books distributed to date to more than 800,000. Our aim is to reach more than one million books distributed by the end of the 2007–08 school year.

A record number of students entered ARI's annual *Anthem* and *Fountainhead* essay contests in 2007. *Anthem* garnered 14,106 entries—a 24

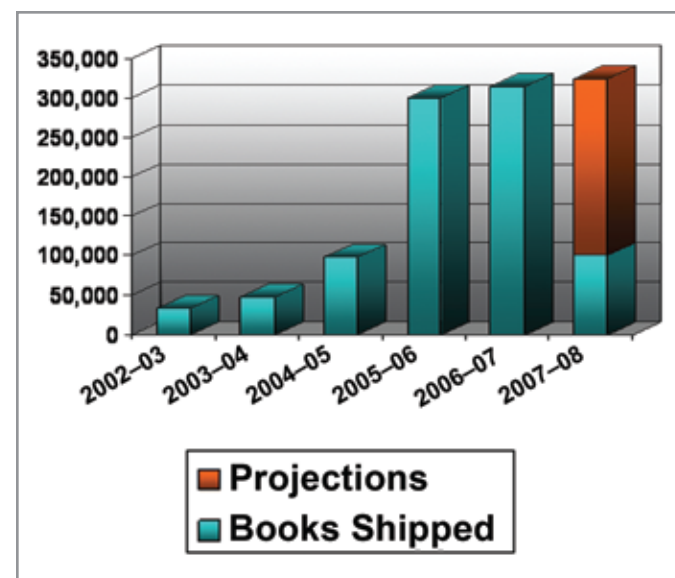
percent increase over the previous year—and *The Fountainhead* received 6,702 entries—a 9 percent increase. The *Atlas Shrugged* essay contest received 1,416 submissions, the second-largest number in the contest's history and a 25 percent increase over the previous year.

In order to build on the success of our free books program and essay contests, ARI launched two new Web sites: one for high school teachers (www.aynrandeducation.com) and one for high school and college students (www.aynrandnovels.com). These sites feature a growing amount of free content, including video courses by ARI senior fellow Dr. Onkar Gbate on *Atlas Shrugged* and by philosophy professor Dr. Andrew Bernstein on *The Fountainhead*.

The Objectivist Academic Center, ARI's program for educating future intellectuals, saw another successful year. The OAC undergraduate program accepted fifty new students into its freshman class, its maximum capacity. At Objectivist Summer Conference 2007 the OAC had its first graduation ceremony, recognizing the first three graduating classes of the undergrad program. To help promote the OAC, a new Web site, www.objectivistacademiccenter.org, was established. Nearly 150 students currently are enrolled in the OAC undergraduate and graduate programs.

The Institute held more than forty speaking events on college campuses, garnering a total attendance of more than three thousand. This included a panel discussion at UCLA on the threat of Islamic totalitarianism, which featured Dr. Brook and renowned Middle East experts Drs. Daniel Pipes and Wafa Sultan. The event drew a capacity crowd of about 450, with another hundred who had to be turned away at the door.

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Discovering Ayn Rand's Philosophy

Charity

Each month Impact suggests readings and other resources for fans of Ayn Rand's fiction who wish to learn more about her philosophy, Objectivism.

Opponents of capitalism often ask what will happen to the poor if social welfare programs are abolished. To this Ayn Rand answers, "The small minority of adults who are *unable* rather than unwilling to work, have to rely on voluntary charity; misfortune is not a claim to slave labor; there is no such thing as the *right* to consume, control, and destroy those without whom one would be unable to survive." ("What Is Capitalism?" in *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*) But this answer inevitably raises a further question: Isn't charity altruistic?

This question is often put more broadly: Doesn't egoism prohibit helping others? Ayn Rand rejected such an account of egoism: "The fact that a man has no claim on others (i.e., that it is not their moral duty to help him and that he cannot demand their help as his right) does not preclude or prohibit good will among men and does not make it immoral to offer or to accept voluntary, non-sacrificial assistance." ("The Question of Scholarships" in *The Voice of Reason*)

On Ayn Rand's view helping others, per se, is a morally neutral act. The question morality asks is not whether an action helps others, but whether it is to one's own interest. If so, it is

a selfish action. "The proper method of judging when or whether one should help another person," writes Miss Rand, "is by reference to one's own rational self-interest and one's own hierarchy of values: the time, money or effort one gives or the risk one takes should be proportionate to the value of the person in relation to one's own happiness." ("The Ethics of Emergencies" in *The Virtue of Selfishness*) Since other people can be a value to a rational person, helping others can be selfish.

Thus Ayn Rand did not oppose charity—she opposed *self-sacrificial* charity and altruism's attempt to make charity a dominant issue in ethics. "My views on charity are very simple. I do not consider it a major virtue and, above all, I do not consider it a moral duty. There is nothing wrong in helping other people, if and when they are worthy of the help and you can afford to help them. I regard charity as a marginal issue. What I am fighting is the idea that charity is a moral duty and a primary virtue." ("Playboy's Interview with Ayn Rand")

For further reading on this topic (in addition to the works already cited), see "The 'Conflicts' of Men's Interests" in *The Virtue of Selfishness*. Ayn Rand also addresses the issue of charity in a recorded interview, "Selfishness as a Virtue," available for free on the Institute's Web site, www.aynrand.org. All of the items cited in this column can be purchased from the Ayn Rand Bookstore. To order, please visit www.aynrandbookstore.com or call 1-800-729-6149.

Objectivism in Academia

ARI Co-Funds and Participates in Workshop
"Objectivism in Academia: Objectivism and Contemporary Philosophy"

In September seventeen Objectivist philosophers and philosophy graduate students came together at the University of Pittsburgh for a workshop titled "Objectivism in Academia: Objectivism and Contemporary Philosophy." The workshop was codirected by Dr. Onkar Ghate, ARI senior fellow, and Dr. Allan Gotthelf, a visiting professor at the University of Pittsburgh under the university's Fellowship for the Study of Objectivism.

The purpose of the conference was to discuss career development issues and opportunities for Objectivists in academic philosophy, with special sessions on ethics, publishing issues, epistemology and the history of philosophy. The aim was to identify areas within each field where there is potential to have some influence on non-Objectivist scholars and to expand the participants' understanding of the means by which Objectivists can have greater impact on academic philosophy. Session leaders were: Dr. Ghate, Dr. Gotthelf, Dr. Jim Lennox, Dr. Robert Mayhew, Mr. Jason Rheins and Mr. Greg Salmieri. Drs. Tara Smith and Darryl Wright, who participated by phone, helped lead a session.

The University of Pittsburgh Fellowship for the Study of Objectivism funded the participation of the session leaders. ARI provided an honorarium to the Pittsburgh locals and also provided scholarships for the remaining student participants, who are, or

were, enrolled in the Objectivist Academic Center.

At the close of the conference, Ms. Debi Ghate, ARI's vice president of academic programs, presented Dr. Gotthelf with a special gift in recognition of his lifetime effort at promoting Objectivism in academia, including his mentoring of OAC students.



Ms. Debi Ghate hands Dr. Allan Gotthelf a framed copy of a handwritten manuscript page by Ayn Rand of a scene from *Atlas Shrugged* that has personal significance for Dr. Gotthelf.

The gift was a framed copy of a handwritten manuscript page by Ayn Rand of a scene from *Atlas Shrugged* that has personal significance for Dr. Gotthelf.

Included with the gift was a letter from Dr. Yaron Brook, ARI's executive director, which recognized Dr. Gotthelf for his role in advancing Objectivism in academia, and for his mentoring of OAC students.

According to Ms. Ghate, "Dr. Gotthelf has always made himself available to students when they have questions, from applying to graduate school to how to handle a particular situation at their school—always with tremendous benevolence. Having spent three days discussing Objectivism in academia, offering students guidance on how to pursue their careers, it was a particularly appropriate occasion to honor Dr. Gotthelf for his achievements."

This workshop marked the first time a conference brought together Objectivist scholars and students in a single field to discuss opportunities for Objectivists in academia. We plan to do similar workshops in other fields.

OAC Scholarship Winners Announced

It is with great pleasure that I announce the winners of the 2006 Bloomfield Memorial Fund Scholarships for students in the Objectivist Academic Center. These awards are given to the top student in each OAC undergraduate class (by year.) For 2006, the winners are:



Sascha Settegast



Don Watkins



Ole Martin Moen



Alex Silverman

Year 1: Sascha Settegast
Year 2: Don Watkins
Year 3: Ole Martin Moen
Year 4: Alex Silverman

Each winner received a check for \$1,000.

The Bloomfield Memorial Fund is a special fund dedicated to supporting OAC students. Charles Bloomfield, who passed away in 2004, wanted to financially support promising OAC students because of their commitment to studying Objectivism. Thanks to this fund, we will continue to offer scholarships to the top students in each OAC undergraduate class. This year's winners will be announced next fall.

The OAC, ARI's program for the study of Objectivism, provides students with an unparalleled opportunity: to engage in a systematic study of Objectivism under the guidance of experts in Ayn Rand's philosophy. In turn, our students demonstrate an extraordinary commitment to the program, investing significant time and effort in their studies, while at the same time pursuing university degrees or their careers.

For students who excel in this challenging program, these rewards are well-deserved.

Once again, congratulations to this year's winners.

—Debi Ghate
Vice President, Academic Programs

To learn more about the OAC, please visit our Web site at www.objectivistacademiccenter.org.

Looking Back at a Landmark Year,

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This year ARI speakers appeared sixteen times on national television, including an appearance by Dr. Ghate on the *CBS Evening News* with Katie Couric. Dr. Brook gained a regular spot on the new Fox Business Network (see article on page 1). In addition, ARI op-eds were published more than five hundred times, reaching a total print and Web circulation of 14,700,000. This includes appearances in papers such as the *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today* and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. ARI's letters to the editor appeared in leading newspapers such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Los Angeles Times*, reaching a record number of readers—more than twenty-seven million.

ARI writers also contributed a number of longer essays to *The Objective Standard*: Dr. Brook and Mr. Elan Journo's "The 'Forward Strategy' for Failure"; Dr. Brook and Mr. Alex Epstein's "Neoconservative Foreign Policy: An Autopsy"; and Dr. Brook's "The Morality of Moneylending: A Short History."

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New Memorial Fund Established



In cooperation with the Institute, Roberta Zall has endowed

the **James G. Comer Memorial Scholarship Fund**, in memory of her late husband. Like ARI's other memorial funds, the Comer Fund will support scholarships and grants to Objectivist students and scholars.

Mr. Comer grew up in rural North Carolina. An avid reader, he first encountered Ayn Rand's writings at age twenty during his service in the Navy. Following his sixteen-year military career, he settled in northern California, where he met Ms. Zall in 1975, and enjoyed his work in public relations until his death in 2006. Ms. Zall commented: "Jim was a huge fan of Ayn Rand's philosophy. He could practically quote her chapter and verse. I know he would be pleased that scholarships to young Objectivist intellectuals will be awarded in his name by the Institute."



Above left: Mr. and Mrs. Comer [Ms. Roberta Zall]
Above right: Jim Comer at his favorite pastime: reading.

Contributions to the Comer Fund and/or to ARI's other memorial funds are welcome at any time. The other funds open for contributions are: the **Burton E. Berger Memorial Scholarship Fund**, established by Mr. Berger's wife, Leora Berger; the **George W. Brumley III Memorial Scholarship Fund**, established by Mr. Brumley's friend and business partner, David Carr; the **Anne Daw Memorial Scholarship Fund**, established by Mrs. Daw's husband, Stuart Daw; the **Stephen H. Goldman MD Memorial Scholarship Fund**, established by Dr. Goldman's wife, Marilyn Goldman; and the **Terry Radow Memorial Scholarship Fund**, established by Mrs. Radow's husband, Steven Radow. For more information, please contact Gift & Estate Planning Manager Kathy Cross at 310-876-1633 or kcross@aynrand.org.

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In an effort to increase the presence of Objectivist ideas on the Web, ARI has made available, for free, to registered users of our Web site, nearly all Ayn Rand recordings, including the entire series of her Ford Hall Forum talks, as well as video recordings of the complete ARI Lecture Series. We also launched a new Web site, www.aynrandlexicon.com, which contains the entire text of *The Ayn Rand Lexicon*, a "mini-encyclopedia" of Objectivism (compiled and edited by Dr. Harry Binswanger), containing Ayn Rand's own statements on more than four hundred topics in philosophy, economics, psychology and history, making it the largest collection of Ayn Rand's writings available on the Web.

These activities were made possible thanks to the generous contributions of our donors, who helped us reach a record level of funding this year, with more than \$7.8 million in contributions (including Ayn Rand Bookstore and Objectivist Conferences revenue). The Ayn Rand Institute would like to thank our donors for their support as we embark on another successful year.

2007 at a Glance

These highlights indicate not only ARI's accomplishments, but also the range of our projects. Unless otherwise stated, the data cited here and in the accompanying story refer to ARI's fiscal year, which runs from October through September.

High Schools and Colleges

- About 317,500 copies of Ayn Rand's novels were sent to high schools during the 2006–07 school year as part of our Free Books to Teachers program. This included 25,500 copies of *Atlas Shrugged*. The total number of books distributed to date is more than 800,000!
- A record number of students entered ARI's annual *Anthem* and *Fountainhead* essay contests. *Anthem* garnered 14,106 entries—a 24 percent increase over last year—and *The Fountainhead* received 6,702 entries—a 9 percent increase over last year. The *Atlas Shrugged* essay contest received 1,416 submissions, the second-largest number in the contest's history and a 25 percent increase over last year.
- ARI sponsored forty campus speaking events, drawing a total attendance of 3,360. Among those events was a panel discussion at UCLA with Drs. Yaron Brook, Daniel Pipes and Wafa Sultan on the threat of Islamic totalitarianism, which drew a capacity crowd of over 450.
- ARI launched two new Web sites: one for students (www.aynrandnovels.com) and one for high school teachers (www.aynrandeducation.com).

The Objectivist Academic Center

- The OAC undergraduate program celebrated its sixth anniversary.
- The OAC held its first-ever graduation ceremony to honor students who have completed the OAC undergraduate program.
- Two OAC courses continue to be offered for college credit through Chapman University.
- The OAC now has more than 150 students enrolled in our undergraduate and graduate programs, the largest number ever.
- The OAC launched a new Web site, www.objectivistacademiccenter.org
- The OAC began releasing promotional YouTube videos, the first featuring selections from Dr. Onkar Ghate's talk "Ayn Rand's Ideas—an Introduction."

Scholarship and Academia

- ARI cosponsored an academic workshop titled "Objectivism in Academia: Objectivism and Contemporary Philosophy" at the University of Pittsburgh.
- ARI cosponsored the Clemson Institute for the Study of Capitalism's second annual conference for BB&T professors.
- ARI intellectuals taught at the Clemson Institute for the Study of Capitalism's first student conference.
- ARI representatives appeared at a number of academic conferences, such as the American Philosophical Association, Modern Language Association and the Association of Private Enterprise Education.

Public and Professional Outreach

- Objectivist Summer Conference 2007 was the largest summer conference ever, drawing more than 500 attendees. The conference featured a series of six lectures by Dr. Leonard Peikoff on his book-in-progress, "The DIM Hypothesis."
- ARI announced the creation of an East Coast office, to open in Washington, D.C., in 2008.
- ARI created a special exhibit at the Frances Howard Goldwyn Hollywood Regional Library to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *Atlas Shrugged*. The exhibit included four lectures by ARI staff intellectuals.
- Seven lectures were presented as part of ARI Lecture Series 2007 in Orange County, California.
- ARI made available on the Web, for free, a collection of Ayn Rand audio and video recordings. In addition, video recordings of the complete collection of the ARI Lecture Series were made available on the Registered User section of our Web site, www.aynrand.org.
- ARI launched the *Ayn Rand Lexicon* Web site at www.aynrandlexicon.com, which contains many passages from Ayn Rand's own writings, organized by topic.

Media

- ARI speakers were interviewed on national television sixteen times.
- Dr. Brook was given a regular spot on the Fox Business Network.
- ARI op-eds were published more than five hundred times in print and Web media; the total print and Web circulation was 14,700,000. Papers included *USA Today*, *Orange County Register*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, *Tampa Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times*.
- ARI letters to the editor saw a record-breaking year, achieving the greatest number of hits in major newspapers (forty-eight) and the largest print circulation (twenty-seven million) in ARI's history. Among the largest papers and magazines that published our letters were the *New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *USA Today*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *New York Post*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, *International Herald Tribune*, *The Independent* (UK) and the *Financial Times* (UK).

Publishing

- *Essays on Ayn Rand's "The Fountainhead,"* edited by Dr. Robert Mayhew, contains essays by ARI's Mr. Jeff Britting, Dr. Onkar Ghate and Mr. Richard E. Ralston.
- A paperback edition of Dr. Tara Smith's latest book, *Ayn Rand's Normative Ethics: The Virtuous Egoist*, published by the prestigious Cambridge University Press, was released. ARI provided Dr. Smith with a grant to support the writing of the book.
- ARI writers contributed three articles to *The Objective Standard*, a journal of culture and politics written from an Objectivist perspective.

Happy Holidays from the Staff at the Ayn Rand Institute



Sitting, left to right: Anu Seppala, Julie Ferguson, Onkar Ghatge, Yaron Brook, Debi Ghatge, Mark Chapman

Standing, left to right: Don Watkins, Matt Ludin, Thomas A. Bowden, Donna Montrezza, Larry Benson, Elan Journo, Meg Sullivan, Chris Elsee, Marilee Dragsdahl, Keith Lockitch, Kara Devar, Kurt Kramer, Arthur Lechtholtz-Zey, Rachel Knapp, Steven Dougherty, David Arceneaux, Kathy Cross, David Gulbraa, Bryan Olive, Stacy Smith, Simon Federman, David Antonacci

Absent: Shawn Banks, Jeff Britting, Eric Brunner, Alex Epstein, David Holcberg, Rebecca Knapp, Duane Knight, Richard E. Ralston, Willie Shultz

A Note from the Executive Director—ARI's Impact on Public Policy

I have outstanding news that I wanted to make you aware of.



As you may already know, ARI analyst Tom Bowden's op-ed "Deep-Six the Law of the Sea" appeared in the November 20 edition of the *Wall Street Journal*. The impact of that op-ed has been extremely

encouraging. Both Sen. James Inhofe of Oklahoma and Sen. John Kyl of Arizona have referenced Mr. Bowden's article.

This is a major milestone for the Institute—not only for having our views make the editorial pages of one of the nation's most prestigious newspapers, but also for having that editorial cited approvingly by two prominent U.S. senators.

I believe that this is clear evidence of the extraordinary potential that we now have to make an impact on policy issues. Who would have thought, five or ten years ago, that something like this would have been possible?

Our ability to continue to produce articles such as Tom Bowden's—and to get them published in the nation's leading newspapers, where they come to the attention of key policymakers—is directly related to the support we receive from donors such as you.

Likewise, your continued backing of our media and advocacy efforts is vital to our success; so I hope you will consider a special contribution to ARI to allow us to keep this momentum going.

Thank you again for your support of our efforts!

Best,

Yaron Brook

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books/audio/videos... for the rational mind™

SPOTLIGHT ON THE BOOKSTORE

Affirmative Action: A Diversity of Criticisms

A panel discussion featuring Peter Schwartz,
Ward Connerly and Richard Sander
(ARI Lecture Series, November 5, 2007)

In 1996, California voters, in a blow to advocates of Affirmative Action, passed Proposition 209, banning public entities from discriminating on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, and national origin.

Opponents of the proposition responded with claims that, far from promoting discrimination, Affirmative Action provides just compensation for past harms done to minorities and is an important tool for creating racial equality and promoting diversity.

What are the actual effects of Affirmative Action programs? And what are the ideas and ideals that lead many to support it? What should be the government's role in fighting discrimination or promoting diversity?

In this discussion, held on the 11th anniversary of the passing of Proposition 209, a distinguished panel of speakers delivers a variety of critical perspectives on Affirmative Action.



(2 hrs., 1 min., with Q & A)
DVD: \$18.95
Audio CD: 2-CD set: \$16.95

To order, please visit www.aynrandbookstore.com.

It's not too late to place your holiday bookstore order. We also have available Ayn Rand Bookstore gift certificates. We will send a catalog with each gift certificate. Bookstore gift certificates are available in any denomination. Order now!

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Editor: Don Watkins

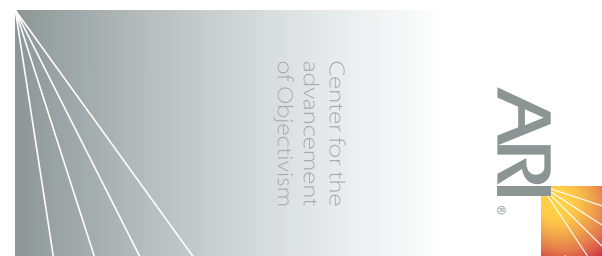
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Sustaining the Intellectual Battle: A Conversation with Jim Brown and Sidney Gunst, Jr.

In the series “*The New Intellectuals*,” Impact interviews Objectivist scholars and writers who—with the help of ARI’s training or support, and often both—are working to spread Ayn Rand’s ideas in academia and in the culture. As a complement to those profiles, our “*Sustaining the Intellectual Battle*” series profiles ARI donors. Our aim is to recognize and acknowledge some of the people whose generous contributions make possible and sustain ARI’s projects—including our cultivation of the *New Intellectuals*. The series focuses on longtime Benefactors.

* * *

In this special installment of our “*Sustaining the Intellectual Battle*” series, Impact talks to two donors who are helping to make possible ARI’s East Coast office, scheduled to open in Washington, D.C., in 2008.

Mr. Jim Brown, a longtime ARI donor, is a partner and a voting member of the Large Cap Investment Committee of Brandes Investment Partners. He also leads the firm’s research efforts in the financial institutions and utilities sectors. Mr. Brown earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Air Force Academy and an MBA from Harvard Business School. He has twenty-two years of investment experience.

Mr. Sidney Gunst, Jr. is a real estate developer in Richmond, Virginia. He helped found *The Objective Standard*, a journal of culture and politics written from an Objectivist perspective, edited by Mr. Craig Biddle.

Please note that the East Coast project is still in its early planning stages, and that any specific plans are tentative and subject to change.

* * *

Interview with Jim Brown

Impact: Tell us about your career background and your background in Objectivism.

Jim Brown: I grew up in Texas. I entered the military via the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1967, which is where, on the recommendation of a freshman English teacher, I first discovered Ayn Rand. I read *The Fountainhead* and immediately became interested in Objectivism.

Impact: What about Ayn Rand’s ideas appealed to you?

JB: I was raised a Catholic, and was always interested in philosophical ideas. As a young man, I was very taken with the elegant theology of the Catholic Church, but the more I thought about it the more doubts I had. The minute I read *The Fountainhead*—it didn’t even take *Atlas Shrugged* for me—I was able to guiltlessly drop religion entirely and never look back. Her philosophy identified in abstract terms what I had observed in life, and provided compelling answers to the questions that I had. Reading *The Fountainhead* was like a bolt from the blue; it was a “road to Damascus” experience, to coin a bad analogy.

Following the Air Force Academy, I went on to a career as a pilot in the Air Force, which I left in 1976 in order to pursue an MBA at Harvard. During that time I became more active in promoting Objectivism: I sponsored various Objectivist tape lecture courses and sponsored Allan Gotthelf to speak at MIT, among other activities.

In the mid-1980s, after changing jobs a few more times, I became a stock broker, which was a long-standing interest of mine, and gradually moved into various aspects of the investment management business. For the last eleven years I’ve been at Brandes Investment Partners in San Diego. I’m now a partner there, where I head the financials research team, the utilities research team and where I sit as a voting member on our big cap investment committee. We manage a lot of money, \$125 billion, in equity for various clients around the world.

Impact: How did you become involved in ARI’s East Coast office project?

JB: I have always been interested in intellectual activism. In the last five years or so, I’ve been

in a position to contribute monetarily in a fairly significant way to ARI, and it’s given me a lot of satisfaction to be able to do that.

As for this specific project, it was first mentioned to me by Yaron Brook a while back. Then, at the Objectivist Summer Conference 2007 in Teluride, I heard much more about the project, both from Yaron and from Sidney Gunst [see interview below]. It became clear in those discussions that if this project was going to be successful, it had to have a good start. I’m in the investment management business and one thing I know is that new businesses must be properly capitalized. I thought that if I could jump-start this project, we could eliminate the question of whether it had adequate start-up funding and focus on properly executing it.

I do not have the talent to do what Yaron does—to speak in front of the media and in front of groups. I would never be as good at that as him. But what I can do and what I have had success doing is investing, and I thought how exciting it would be to use that success to help get this venture started.

Impact: What about this particular project made you want to support it?

JB: I would say its potential to help hasten the realization of ARI’s goals.

One of the things ARI has been very good at is increasing the number of students, teachers and intellectuals exposed to Ayn Rand’s views. The East Coast center can build on that success by specializing in promoting her views in the media, to journalists, to politicians and to the general public. It will be able to do so in two ways. First, it will allow ARI to expand its media efforts to provide the Objectivist perspective on the political, economic and cultural events of the day in a way that is compelling and timely. Second, the plan is that the center will eventually become similar to a think tank, supplying rational solutions in various areas of government policy, forming ad hoc alliances on specific issues with other think tanks, and generally being at the forefront of America’s policy debates.

Which leads me to the long-term goals I believe the center will help Objectivism achieve. Looking out ten years from now, I want to reach a point in American culture where reason, individualism and capitalism are widely viewed as competing alternatives to irrationalism, altruism and collectivism.

Until recently, I have seen the ideas I embraced dismissed and laughed at. That is not true anymore. We are getting to a point where we are gaining legitimacy in the eyes of the public, and I think that’s for two reasons. One is that there’s a big cultural vacuum out there and nobody else has any good ideas. And on the positive side, when you have a revolutionary new philosophy, it takes decades for it to percolate—it takes thousands of articles, and letters, and speeches, and books in order for you to start to influence professors, writers and other opinion makers. Objectivists have done that—indeed, much of that work is being done by ARI—so I think we are now in the position to be able to offer solutions to today’s economic and political problems and get a fair hearing. And once that happens, I think in a sense we will have won, because I have enormous confidence in the power of Objectivist ideas. So that is my long-term vision, which I think the East Coast center will help us reach.

Impact: What is the selfish value you get from supporting ARI?

JB: I guess I would sum it this way. Peter Drucker has a famous saying: “The best way to predict the future is to create it.” And I think that goes nicely with Ayn Rand’s point that “anyone who fights for the future, lives in it today.” Changing the culture is deeply, personally important to me. I don’t care how old I get, I will never be ready to resign myself to a declining civilization. So for me there is a very profound satisfaction I get from using my hard earned wealth to serve this deeply, personally important value of changing the culture. What could be more selfish than that?

Interview with Sidney Gunst, Jr.

Impact: Can you tell us about your background?

Sidney Gunst: I am a real estate developer. I primarily do office park development in central Virginia. In fact, that’s what got me interested in ideas. I was embroiled in various environmental battles and I became fascinated about the erosion of my property rights. I wanted to understand why I was being assaulted by various laws, regulations, rules and zoning requirements. I do high-quality work and I couldn’t believe how my rights were being trampled on, yet I was totally unprepared to defend myself.

Then in 1995 I met Craig Biddle [editor of *The Objective Standard*, a journal of culture and politics written from an Objectivist perspective], expressed my interest in ideas, and was exposed to Ayn Rand’s ideas.

I was attracted to her ideas immediately because I had all the concretes; I just didn’t have a conceptual framework to understand them. Of course it took me a while to grasp the nature and origin of rights and of the entire system of philosophical principles underlying them, but, thankfully, having Craig there and being able to bombard him with questions made the process much easier.

Since then I have attended the summer conferences regularly, and am now enrolled as a student in the Objectivist Academic Center.

Impact: What has been your experience in the OAC?

SG: Right now I’m taking Intro to Philosophy with Dr. Onkar Ghate. It’s an online class where you are required to argue, in writing, for and against various philosophical positions—not just defend the Objectivist view. I have found it to be really enjoyable and extraordinarily demanding. You can read all the books you want, but only when you’re on the front line, thinking and writing on these issues, can you really integrate the ideas. I have been exposed to all of these ideas before, but Onkar’s class is teaching me to think about them more deeply and carefully.

Impact: How did you become involved with the East Coast office project?

SG: I am Craig Biddle’s backer on *The Objective Standard*, and I have been involved with ARI for years as a contributor. But I’ll tell you what attracted me to this project in particular.

It was not primarily the location of the office—although there are important reasons to have a presence on the East Coast. Instead, it was the idea to focus on dealing with current issues, applying Objectivist principles to them in a way that would grasp the attention of the media, of the public and, importantly, of businessmen. That very much appealed to me and got me excited.

I would like to see the center as an outreach extension of ARI, dealing quickly with current events, and cultivating a much broader involvement of the business community so it can see the benefits we can bring to the table.

Impact: What has your involvement consisted of?

SG: To a large extent, giving Yaron Brook my two cents worth about what I feel he ought to do [laughs]. As we move forward, my aim would be to help cultivate new relationships with people in the business community and prospective donors, as well as people whose rights may have been violated and who we may want to get involved with to highlight a given issue. I see myself as being more “in the field,” so to speak.

I am not a professional intellectual; I’m a businessman first and foremost. But I have utmost respect for the necessity of the intellectual and the philosophic, and so it is satisfying to be able to participate in a non-intellectual capacity, and make a very real, very tangible impact on promoting rational ideas.

Matching-Gift Employers in 2007

Impact is pleased to announce that 2007 was a year of great success for many ARI contributors trying to secure matching gifts from their employers.

Many employers sponsor “matching gift” programs and will match dollar-for-dollar the charitable contributions made by their employees. By taking advantage of such a program from your employer, you could effectively double your support of ARI. In fact, some companies will even match contributions made by retirees and/or their spouses.

In addition to the many small and medium-sized companies which have matched gifts so far in 2007, some of the largest U.S. employers have participated, thanks to the efforts of ARI contributors who work for them. In some cases, gifts were matched on behalf of multiple donors who work for the same company:

These large companies include:

American Express

AT&T

Cingular

ExxonMobil

Google

Merrill Lynch

Microsoft

Pfizer

Verizon

Wachovia

Wells Fargo

Although these companies can change their matching-gift approval guidelines at any time, at this time ARI is considered a qualifying nonprofit organization. So if you are an employee of one of these companies, you can easily participate in employer matching gift programs with ARI pre-approved. This is one of the most important ways that you can help support ARI, with minimal effort and at no additional cost to you.

To find out if your company has such a program, contact the personnel department at your place of work. Or, you can tell us the name of your employer, and we will attempt to find out on your behalf; please send us your details by e-mail to matchinggifts@aynrand.org.

Year-End Tax Alert

Fight bad government programs—don't finance them! If you itemize deductions on your tax return, you can “contribute” less to the government at tax time by donating cash or other assets to ARI now.

Contributions of appreciated securities held more than one year offer double tax savings: they are fully deductible at current market value, and capital gain tax is also avoided; for details, visit www.aynrand.org/stock.

As always, consult your tax advisor before arranging a transfer of non-cash property to the Institute.

Gifts must be completed by December 31 to qualify for a deduction on your 2007 tax return. For assistance with your year-end gifts to ARI, contact Kathy Cross at 310-876-1633 or kcross@aynrand.org.

Op-Ed: Why Businessmen Love Atlas Shrugged

By Alex Epstein



If you ask any hundred successful businessmen chosen at random to name the book that has most inspired them, you will undoubtedly hear one title repeated over and over: *Atlas Shrugged*—Ayn Rand's epic novel, which

celebrates its 50th anniversary this month. Why do businessmen love *Atlas Shrugged*?

Because, in the form of a thrilling novel with inspiring heroes, it does something no other book has ever done: it presents the pursuit of profit, the essence of business, as a profoundly *moral* activity.

Observe that while profit-seeking is widely recognized as economically indispensable, it is also widely regarded as morally tainted, if not outright immoral. This applies, not just to attempts to “profit” via theft or fraud, but to the pursuit of profit *as such*. For example, pharmaceutical companies who successfully develop and sell life-saving drugs, oil companies who explore the ends of the earth to extract a vital resource, and financiers who efficiently invest wealth through our dynamic financial markets are all routinely castigated for their high profits. And those who defend profit-seeking do so, not on moral grounds, but as an amoral means to a noble end: the “public good”—i.e., the good of everyone besides businessmen themselves.

To the extent honest, productive businessmen absorb this view of their profession—and most do, to some extent—they experience unearned guilt over their work, and are unable to morally challenge the ever-increasing taxes and regulations foisted on them for the “public good.” *Atlas Shrugged* rocks their world.

The heroes of *Atlas Shrugged* are a group of great achievers, mostly businessmen, who, like businessmen today, live in a world that damns, shackles, and drains them. But these achievers refuse to accept this treatment; they fight back. They go on strike, refusing to work in a society that at once depends on their achievements but brands them immoral for seeking to profit from those achievements. They let the world see what happens when their “immorality” is removed. “We are evil, according to your morality,” the leader of the strike, John Galt, tells the world in a radio address, “We have chosen not to harm you any longer. . . . We are dangerous and to be shackled, according to your politics. We have chosen not to endanger you, nor to wear the shackles any longer.”

Without the great, profit-seeking industrialists, what remains is, as Galt puts it, “a world without mind”—a world without the thinker-creators who forge steel by the megaton, direct intricate transcontinental train networks, and bring new inventions to the masses—a world that quickly spirals downward into poverty and destruction.

As readers witness how the world treats the Atlases who carry it on their shoulders, and what happens when Atlas shrugs, they gain a new appreciation for these “dollar chasers,” and begin to question the premise that the profit motive is immoral. Readers are joined in this moral-intellectual journey by one of the leading characters in the story, metal magnate Hank Rearden, who is one of the last to learn about the strike.

We meet Rearden at the triumphant culmination of his 10-year quest to revolutionize the industrial world with Rearden Metal: an alloy far lighter, stronger, and cheaper than steel. When he succeeds, he expects to profit handsomely from sales to

grateful customers eager to buy his magnificent new product. Instead, he is punished for his efforts—first by slander and denunciation from a society that damns Rearden Metal as a fraud (“a lethal product of greed”)—then by the destruction of his profits by regulations that dictate, in the name of the “public good,” how much he can produce and whom he must sell to—and finally by outright nationalization of his product. As his business is destroyed, the world suffers destruction with him—yet his critics still mindlessly damn his pursuit of profit, and demand “wider powers” for the government to curb it.

As Rearden suffers through all this for the sin of trying to make money by creating incredible value, he is led, with the help of the strike's leaders, to a profound moral realization. The selfish pursuit of profit that he so excels at—pursuing his own well-being by his own independent thought, production, and trade—is the essence of what human life requires, and therefore, the highest of moral virtues. “They had known,” says Galt of Rearden and the other strikers, “that theirs was the power. I taught them that theirs was the glory.”

Armed with, as Galt puts it, “the knowledge of [his] own moral value,” Rearden is able to defend himself from government predations like never before. In response to accusations that he “works for nothing but his own profit,” Rearden responds defiantly, “I work for nothing but my own profit—which I make by selling a product they need to men who are willing and able to buy it. . . . I do not sacrifice my interests to them nor do they sacrifice theirs to me; we deal as equals by mutual consent to mutual advantage—and I am proud of every penny that I have earned in this manner. . . . I refuse to apologize for my ability—I refuse to apologize for my success—I refuse to apologize for my money.”

Unfortunately, while Rearden experiences a lifelong moral transformation from the story of *Atlas*, most of the readers of *Atlas Shrugged* do not. While many businessmen derive lasting inspiration from *Atlas*, they do not attain or pursue an enduring understanding of the moral virtue of profit—and certainly do not proudly defend their right to practice it freely. Thus, many of *Atlas Shrugged*'s most vocal admirers at once proclaim adoration for the novel, while simultaneously attempting to justify their existence by appealing to some “higher cause” (“the environment,” “diversity,” “the community”)—and certainly do not proudly stand up for their right to pursue profit in a free market. They engage in the same tried-and-failed tactics of behind-the-scenes lobbying and appeals to the “public good” that have led to the shrinking of economic freedom in the last 50 years, just as they did in the 50 years before *Atlas Shrugged*.

On the 50th anniversary of *Atlas Shrugged*, businessmen should make a point of rereading the novel. But this time, in addition to being inspired to greatness by its heroes, they should pay special attention to the book's radical moral philosophy—a philosophy that has the potential to truly change how they look at their lives and enable them to fight successfully for their freedom.

Alex Epstein has a BA in philosophy from Duke University and is an analyst at the Ayn Rand Institute. He was the editor and publisher of The Duke Review for two years. He is a contributing writer for The Objective Standard, a quarterly journal of culture and politics. His articles there include “‘Just War Theory’ vs. American Self-Defense,” co-authored with Yaron Brook. His op-eds have appeared in such publications as the Detroit Free Press, Houston Chronicle, San Francisco Chronicle, Philadelphia Inquirer, Chicago Sun-Times, Atlanta Journal and Constitution, Arizona Republic, Canada's National Post, Indianapolis Star, Orange County Register, Tampa Tribune and the Washington Times. Mr. Epstein has been a guest on numerous nationally syndicated radio programs.