

IN MEMORIAM • JOHN DAVID LEWIS • 1955–2012

From Yaron Brook, Executive Director of ARI

The Objectivist movement has lost an indefatigable fighter for all that is true, right and good. To change the world, we need both scholars and activists. We have both, in increasing measure. In John Lewis we had that rare joining of the two: gentleman scholar and firebrand activist in the same individual. I've said it before: If we had ten more Johns on our team, my confidence in our ability to achieve "nothing less than victory" would skyrocket. Tragically, cancer took him long before his time. But through his writings, his many recorded presentations, his students and the memories of those who knew and loved him, John David Lewis's legacy will live on—guiding and inspiring all of us to be the best we can be. We salute you, John, in earnest tribute and reluctant farewell.

It was with great sadness that the Ayn Rand Institute announced early last month the death on January 3, 2012, of Dr. John David Lewis after an extended battle with cancer. In these pages, we pay tribute to him by way of excerpts from his writings, a small gallery of photographs and remembrances from friends and colleagues. In due course, the material presented here will become part of the memorial web page already created by ARI in Dr. Lewis's honor at aynrand.org/johnlewis.

Dr. Lewis was born and grew up in Connecticut, and attended the University of Rhode Island as an undergraduate. After a successful twenty-five-year career in business, he returned to his first love, learning and scholarship. In 2001 he earned his PhD in classical studies at the University of Cambridge in Cambridge, England. He taught at the University of London during 2000–2001. From 2001 through 2008, he was on the faculty in the History and Political Science Department at Ashland University in Ashland, Ohio, where he earned tenure.

At the time of his death, Dr. Lewis was visiting associate professor in the Philosophy, Politics, and Economics Program at Duke University, a position funded by the Anthem Foundation for Objectivist Scholarship (see [related article](#) on this page) and by the BB&T Charitable Foundation. He was also adjunct

associate professor of business at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Holding these two positions concurrently, Dr. Lewis became the first Objectivist to teach at two top-twenty universities at the same time.

Dr. Lewis wrote three books—*Nothing Less than Victory: Decisive Wars and the Lessons of History* (Princeton University Press, 2010); *Early Greek Lawgivers* (Bristol Classical Press, 2007); and *Solon*



Delivering a rousing speech at the Boston Tea Party protest, July 4, 2009. Watch the video at aynrand.org/johnlewis



John David Lewis presenting "Individual Rights and Health Care Reform: A Patient's Perspective," his first—and last—Objectivist summer conference general session lecture, July 4, 2011, Fort Lauderdale, Florida
Photo courtesy of Ray Roberts

the Thinker: Political Thought in Archaic Athens (Duckworth Press, 2006)—as well as dozens of articles and book reviews in academia and in the popular press. He was a frequent lecturer at both Objectivist and non-Objectivist venues, including Tea Party events.

The Ayn Rand Institute is holding a memorial gathering during [Objectivist Summer Conference 2012](#) on Monday, July 2, at 8 PM. The location is the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina in San Diego, California. The event is open to all.

Dr. Lewis's wife, Casey Conn Lewis, is not planning to attend the ARI event. She has requested that anyone wishing to contact her to please do so via email at JohnDavidLewisMemorial@yahoo.com, or via postal mail to Kathy Cross at ARI, 2121 Alton Parkway, Suite 250, Irvine, California 92606, for forwarding to Mrs. Lewis.

A Message from Casey Conn Lewis

To everyone who has sent me cards, letters and emails, and posted tributes and remembrances online: I thank you for your heartfelt, warm condolences and support during a very difficult time. John touched so many people in so many ways. It has been a comfort to read your memories of the man I knew simply as my husband and best friend. We all honor his memory in our own personal way. His legacy will inspire many as time passes, and those of us who knew him personally will always be honored to have done so.

ANTHEM FOUNDATION for Objectivist Scholarship

A message from Debi Ghate, senior director of the Anthem Foundation for Objectivist Scholarship

The Anthem Foundation for Objectivist Scholarship is most grateful to the donors who have already sent contributions designated for Anthem's John David Lewis Memorial Fund. In expressing his wish that donations be made to such a fund after his death, Dr. Lewis wanted to help Anthem sponsor more academic fellowships like the one

that supported him. As the Fund grows and plans are made for a new fellowship, we will report the details to *Impact* readers and our donors.

On a more personal note, when I first heard of John Lewis, he was a student in the Objectivist Academic Center. I was looking at a picture of the class and noticed this older man among the college students. Here was a former businessman who'd decided to make a career change. He'd just finished his PhD, he was going to be a professor and he was going to do it right.

By the end of his career, John had accomplished this. Not only was he teaching at two top universities, he had written three books and was

a well-loved teacher. The Anthem Foundation is proud to have co-sponsored (with the BB&T Charitable Foundation) his position at Duke University for the past five years.

When I last spoke to John on the phone a few weeks before his death, we were discussing a number of projects that he wanted to plunge into and complete as soon as he could because he knew his time had become more limited, and by great measure. He said to me that he felt that he had not had a chance to fully reach his potential as an academic—that he had much more scholarship in him that he wanted to complete and leave in written form.

He was right. We will miss you, John.

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Remembrances from Friends and Colleagues

John wrote to me shortly before the end of last year and made it clear things were terminal, but his spirit was undimmed and undiminished. Supervising John was one of the most life-enhancing experiences I've had in my academic career, and I was so proud when he went on to forge an academic career for himself in classics and to publish such excellent work. My memories of him will always be strong and bright.

—PAUL CARTLEDGE, A. G. LEVENTIS PROFESSOR OF GREEK CULTURE,
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



Mother's Day 2011, with Mrs. Lewis and her son Trevor Conn, who had flown to Durham to surprise Mrs. Lewis for the occasion

I always admired John for his courage in leaving behind a successful business career in order to reinvent himself as a scholar. I also appreciated the care and obvious affection he demonstrated toward my mother during their relationship. I was glad that she had finally found someone to share her life with who so closely represented her values. His battle with cancer was hugely inspiring to watch because he never retreated from

embodying his sense of life as best he could in the face of great adversity. John was a truly authentic human being. After knowing him for nearly twenty years, and now that he is gone, his memory says to me, "Cultivate the confidence to know what you want from life, then go for it with everything you've got. And don't wait another second before beginning your pursuit. Do it now!"

—TREVOR CONN, PRESIDENT, VOLITION SOFTWARE, INC.,
AND DR. LEWIS'S STEPSON

John and I first met through friends, when he started graduate school at Cambridge and I was an undergraduate in London. Early on, we exchanged emails about our interests and coursework; at one point I asked if he could recommend some books on ancient Greek and Roman culture. What he sent me was a bibliography annotated with insightful comments about the intellectual debates surrounding each book, era, thinker. I remember reading the bibliography and letting a heartening realization sink in fully: here is a man of real wisdom and thoughtfulness and passion. Reflecting on everything John went on to accomplish, I believe that although he left the business world, he brought to his academic career a distinctively capitalist can-do spirit and dedication to productive achievement.

—ELAN JOURNO, FELLOW AND DIRECTOR OF
POLICY RESEARCH, AYN RAND INSTITUTE

I came to know John when he was a professor at Ashland University and especially when he was a visiting scholar at the Social Philosophy and Policy Center at Bowling Green during the academic year 2007–2008. In addition to writing *Nothing Less than Victory* during this period, he was a team-teacher in two of my seminars, one on ancient Greek philosophical psychology and the other on ethics and political economy. He was an articulate and inspiring teacher who developed excellent rapport with the students.

After John got sick, I was in awe at his continuing positive sense of life and his determination to fight the disease while continuing to pursue a productive career as teacher and scholar. In addition to being an eloquent spokesman for Ayn Rand's philosophy, he practiced her principles in his own life with remarkable consistency and sincerity. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to know him and be his friend.

—FRED D. MILLER, JR., PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY CENTER, BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

John Lewis was my friend and colleague at Duke. His last conversation with me was an apology. He apologized to me, for not being able to fulfill his promise to teach a class in the spring semester. Given everything else John was dealing with, that may seem strange, but it is both the essence of the man and his Objectivist morality. It makes no sense to make promises unless you intend to carry them out. John the will, the living force, could do anything. But eventually his body let him down. It's sad, because he would have done so much more. But it was a joy to know him, because in his brief time he did so much.

—MICHAEL C. MUNGER, PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND DIRECTOR,
PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS, AND ECONOMICS PROGRAM, DUKE UNIVERSITY

I mourn the death of John Lewis. John was a dedicated, courageous, and truly happy man. He loved his work, at which he became expert—his wife—and his life. He always signed his email: Cheers!

John waged a heroic battle against cancer, never giving up, always focusing on trying to achieve a recovery in the future. When told a little while ago that it was the end and he had only several months, he wrote me words to the effect of: I am not concerned about death, which I will never know, but about life, which I intend to go ahead and live as long as I can.

At the end of his email he said how eager he was to read my forthcoming book. Of course, I sent him a copy of the manuscript.

I have met many people who claim to embody Ayn Rand's "benevolent universe" premise. John Lewis certainly did.

—LEONARD PEIKOFF, PHILOSOPHER



With good friend Richard Salsman, July 2010, in Las Vegas
Photo courtesy of Godfrey Joseph

always loved to battle for whatever was best in life—but he was also benevolent in his battles, truly the "happy warrior." It was such an honor and delight for me to have known and loved—albeit briefly (just five years)—a living, walking giant on this great Earth.

—RICHARD SALSMAN, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF MARKET STRATEGIST,
INTERMARKET FORECASTING, INC.

John Lewis has been on the faculty at every summer conference since ARI began presenting conferences in 2003. As a classics scholar, John eloquently and masterfully taught the history of ancient Greece. But as we all know, he did not limit his teaching and speaking to long-past historical events. In the aftermath of 9/11, he wanted everyone to learn what he had realized studying the history of warfare: how we can and must fight to win the "war on terror."

As an OCON faculty member, John was a delight. He never complained, and was always sunny in disposition and grateful to be included in the conference program. He once responded via email to my asking if he would need any audiovisual equipment with, "No AV equipment for me! I deal in facts and ideas, not images :-)."

John's courses and general sessions drew enthusiastic crowds. We soon learned to schedule him in classrooms with thick insulation, as his booming voice to a typically large audience could be heard in neighboring classrooms. I miss hearing that voice. Goodbye, John.

—ANU SEPPALA, DIRECTOR OF CULTURAL OUTREACH, AYN RAND INSTITUTE



With long-time friend Brad Thompson, July 2010, in Las Vegas
Photo courtesy of Godfrey Joseph

My friend, John Lewis, was a remarkable man who left an indelible impression on everyone he met. He was a brilliant scholar and teacher, a successful businessman, a gifted musician, an exceptional storyteller, an uproariously funny comedian, a loving husband, a devoted friend, and a tireless advocate for Ayn Rand's philosophy of Objectivism.

John's greatest gift to his many friends and students, though, was a truly benevolent sense of life that radiated to all those who knew him. He had a special ability for bringing out the best in other people. When we were colleagues at Ashland, I was always impressed with the extraordinary amount of time that he spent talking to students outside of class, and of course they loved him for it.

My fondest memories of John are of a personal nature, of the time we spent together talking, debating, and learning from each other. We spent hours at my kitchen table reading and discussing OPAR; we practiced all of our OCON courses on each other—just the two of us—in empty classrooms; we wrote and sent op-eds to each other late at night knowing that the other would read and edit them on a fifteen-minute turnaround; and we fought many battles together. But maybe most of all, we laughed together.

—C. BRADLEY THOMPSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
THE CLEMSON INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF CAPITALISM

John's explicit philosophy was as the air he breathed—a matter of fact—a matter of his life. He was an activist, an advocate, and a scholar. He was passionate. He loved his life and to him that meant acting on his values—all of his values. His music, his ancient Greek culture, his wife, and so much more. He spoke out—not only about his academic work, but on national defense and the war against Islamic totalitarianism, against the EPA, and most recently on the merits of free-market health care.

Over the past ten years, I heard John speak more than thirty times. He was always prepared and always looking to include new facts to keep his talks current and relevant to his audience. I always listened carefully, because afterwards, he would ask me as his friend to give him a point or two on how he could improve his talk. I loved that challenge because John was already one of the best speakers on a multitude of topics.

John was the kind of friend who was always interested in the world around him. He was always reaching to do his best. He bolstered my spirits just by living his life. I miss him dearly.

—LIN ZINSER, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC OUTREACH, AYN RAND INSTITUTE

John David Lewis in His Own Words

From *Nothing Less than Victory: Decisive Wars and the Lessons of History* (Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 288 and p. 294

The desire of the German people for their nation to rise again, anchored by claims to unjust treatment under the Versailles Treaty, was far more energetic than the desire of the British people to maintain a tranquil status quo. The British turned irrevocably against appeasement only when they saw Hitler take Prague, and the nature of the threat became clear. On this level, it was the relative commitment of each side to its moral cause, not the truth of that cause, that affected the outcome of the conflict.

But truth matters. On a deeper level, the examples in this book also show that the strongest power belonged to those who were, in fact, right, if those who were right knew it. This may be unfashionable to say today—in an intellectual climate that sunders fact and value, and understands moral claims as inherently contested matters of opinion—but it remains a demonstrable fact that the Spartan and Confederate slave systems were morally debased and that the freedom upheld by the Thebans and the Union was good. The political autonomy upheld by the Greeks, as well as the political relationships between Rome and its Italian allies, was superior to the alternatives presented by Persia and Carthage. Certainly, the war between America and Japan in 1945 was not fought over morally equivalent options—not if peace and prosperity for millions of people are valued. The tragedy of Munich is in the failure of the British to recognize that their own moral norms could become weapons when manipulated by a vicious dictator. The British and the Americans—like the Greeks—became truly unbeatable when they grasped how right they really were.

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Matters of war and peace cannot be fully grasped without concern for moral ideas, which can lead one population into sacrificial slaughter for a leader, a cause, or a deity and can motivate another to defend their liberties with even greater violence. It is ideas that move people to act—and only widely held ideas of a fundamental moral nature can throw an entire continent into the chaos of war. The lives of soldier and civilians depend upon clear statements of the objectives to be achieved and a commitment to creating the resources necessary to prevail. *Sic vis pacem, para bellum*, in matter and in mind.

From “*Why Washington Resists Victory in a Post-9/11 World*,” a blog post on September 11, 2011, by Richard Salsman at Forbes.com in which he interviewed Dr. Lewis

Until and unless we recognize that we’re truly fighting for good, and that we ourselves are good, well worth defending for our own sakes, we’ll continue to hamstring our troops and undercut our own efforts with the apologetics of self-abnegation. Every passing day will bring our enemies closer to the moment when they’ll have the capacity to wreak even greater havoc on us. War is a terrible thing, but is it not far more terrible for an entire generation to grow up watching the slow bleed of a war that we selflessly refuse to win? And isn’t it worse that they see the bloodletting caused solely by the inability of their elders to recognize their own right to defend themselves—and their values—for their own sake?



Wearing his much-loved *Nothing Less than Victory* shirt, upon his release from hospital in December 2009. Mrs. Lewis designed the shirt and ordered half a dozen of them, worn by herself and friends when they visited Dr. Lewis in hospital after his surgery. Photo courtesy of Casey Conn Lewis

“The Day I Took Casey to the Power Plant” (1995; reprinted with permission from the Objectivist Study Group, an Internet discussion group)

June 16, 1995, was the day I took Casey to the power plant.

I had become aware of this project in 1993. Bechtel Power Corporation would convert the Manchester Street Power Station in Providence to three diesel fired combustion turbines, a \$600 million undertaking over two years. After presenting proposals and completing negotiations, I signed a contract whereby Simplex, my employer, would provide the site with a networked Fire Alarm System. Through 1994 and 1995 we engineered and delivered the system; final commissioning is under way. The plant will open on time, the basis for Bechtel’s well-deserved reputation in the industry.

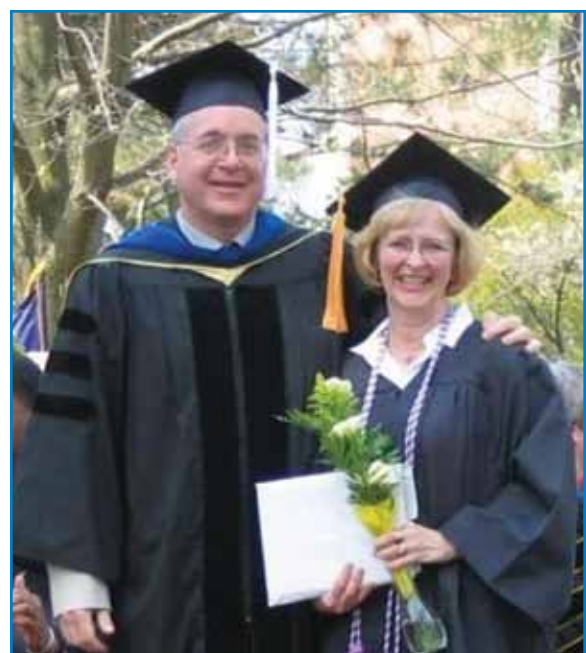
The early evening of June 16, 1995, was scheduled for operator training of the fire system. I am conducting this training; this next session, required for turnover of the power block to the owner, would be in the control room of the plant.

Being recently married, I have adjusted well to the practice of telling another person what I’m up to. Another woman might ask her husband what time he’d be home and could he try not to be late since she has plans. I ask Casey if she’d like to go. “O can I! This is so cool! I wanted to ask if I could get in there just once!” A healthy enthusiasm, since I go there more than once a week and don’t often take time to “stop and smell the diesel.” I told her we’d go right to the control room. Some people go to church; we prefer the control room of a power plant. The difference is whether one’s miracles are real or figmentary.

The huge turbines are awe inspiring; one can almost see the blood of the city being pumped through their piping, the power pulsing through the wiring. As the control circuitry, the multiplexed data transmission and the remote sensors of the color graphic control consoles act as extensions of man’s own senses, so the generators are extensions of his muscles. A single operator controls all three turbines, each on a single display. The power generation for a city, the work once done by thousands of feudal slaves now surpassed by two men who do not even work up a sweat.

Sometimes I think that the world needs a demonstration, a televised tour of such a plant followed by a 30-minute shut down, the consequences presented to all in the form of melting ice cream and dark homes. Then I remember that the world is receiving such a demonstration every day it uses this power; those who do not appreciate it would not react rationally to its removal. Contrast Bechtel’s on-time reputation in the industry with the conspiracy theories cyclically emergent in the liberal press.

Friday, June 16, 1995: some men took their wives to the disco, or put up with the visit of half-welcomed relatives, or went to a reluctant shopping destination; I took Casey to the power plant. Afterwards, we had ice cream.



With Mrs. Lewis on the occasion of her 2005 graduation with a Bachelor’s degree from the nursing program at Ashland University in Ashland, Ohio (she had been a practicing RN for many years). Dr. Lewis was on the faculty and, unknown to Mrs. Lewis, had arranged with the university president to personally present her diploma to her. She recalled, “It was a joyous day and a wonderful surprise.” Photo courtesy of Trevor Conn



At Objectivist Summer Conference 2009 in Boston, improvising a jazz tune on the Seaport Hotel’s piano. Photo courtesy of D. Rafner



November 2011, at home in his favorite easy chair, where each day he read every word of the *Wall Street Journal*, flanked by the Lewises’ beloved Shih Tzu puppies, Bella (left) and Bentley. Photo courtesy of Casey Conn Lewis

John David Lewis Memorial Funds



It was Dr. Lewis’s wish that in lieu of customary gestures of condolence, those wishing to honor his memory should send contributions to the John David Lewis Memorial Fund at the Anthem Foundation for Objectivist Scholarship (see related article on [page 1](#)) and/or the John David Lewis Memorial Fund at the Ayn Rand Institute. The Institute’s Kathy Cross is assisting those who wish to contribute to either of these funds. Please contact her at 732-242-9408 or by email at kcross@aynrand.org.

Leonard Peikoff to Host Q&A at Objectivist Summer Conference!



Impact is pleased to report that Leonard Peikoff will host a general Q&A session at the Objectivist summer conference, scheduled to take place June 30–July 8 in San Diego, California, at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina.

Dr. Peikoff’s session will be held on Friday, July 6, from 11 AM to 12:15 PM. ARI will solicit written questions in advance. As of now, this event will take place via live video, but Dr. Peikoff may attend the event in person. Keep up with *Impact* and the Objectivist summer conference Facebook page (facebook.com/objectivistconferences)



to find updates regarding this event and how to submit questions. A close associate of Ayn Rand’s for thirty years, Dr. Peikoff is Rand’s legal heir. He is author of *Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand* and *The Ominous Parallels: The End of Freedom in America* and is editor of numerous Ayn Rand anthologies. He hosts a weekly podcast show on his website (peikoff.com), in which he answers listeners’ questions about Ayn Rand’s philosophy. His latest book,

objectivistconferences) to find updates regarding this event and how to submit questions.

The DIM Hypothesis: Why the Lights of the West Are Going Out, hits stores later this year.

On his website, Dr. Peikoff describes the book as follows: “Integration is the process by which people interrelate concrete data to make a connected whole, data such as individual facts, values, laws, the events in a novel, the provisions of the Constitution and so on. In all these contexts and more, *The DIM Hypothesis* identifies three different methods of integration and their consequences for the West’s past—and for America’s future.”

To register for Dr. Peikoff’s Q&A session and to check out the full conference schedule, visit objectivistconferences.com.

ARI Speakers to Participate in Free-Market Conference

Several ARI staff members will speak at this year’s Association of Private Enterprise Education (APEE) conference, which will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada, in April. This annual event brings together several hundred scholars and public intellectuals to discuss free-market ideas and how to teach them.

“The APEE conference draws hundreds of pro-free-market professors, students and think tank intellectuals,” commented ARI vice president of Education and Research Debi Ghate, “The fact that ARI is able to participate in several panels at this conference is a terrific opportunity to engage open-minded scholars and other educators in economics and related fields in serious discussion about Rand’s unique defense of capitalism.”

ARI has organized two sessions at the conference. One is a panel discussion titled “Ayn Rand’s *We the Living* and Communism,” featuring, among others, ARI senior fellow Onkar Ghate, whose talk is titled “The Plight of Leo Kovalensky.” Dr. Ghate will draw from his essay in the second edition of *Essays on Ayn Rand’s “We the Living,”* edited by Robert Mayhew and released this month.

The second session ARI organized is a panel

discussion titled “How Ideas Drive the Growth of the State,” in which ARI fellow Don Watkins will give a talk titled “Why the Entitlement State Keeps Growing.” Mr. Watkins will discuss the historical record of life in America before the entitlement state and will examine the clash between the morality of wealth redistribution and the ideal of the pursuit of happiness. The talk draws from material in Mr. Watkins and ARI executive director Yaron Brook’s forthcoming book, *Free Market Revolution: How Ayn Rand’s Ideas Can End Big Government*, which will hit stores on September 18.

ARI speakers will also participate in other sessions. In a talk titled “Why Bad Economics Won’t Go Away,” Dr. Brook will discuss the reasons people find the free market difficult to accept. He will also chair a panel on issues in socialism. In “Ayn Rand on Economic Issues: A Survey,” ARI analyst Doug Altner will survey Rand’s discussion of economic issues and identify points of contact between Rand’s ideas and those of other free-market thinkers. In addition, Ms. Ghate will discuss Ayn Rand Institute Campus at a panel on how to teach the principles of limited government and will chair and present at another session on academic networking.

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Editor: Rituparna Basu
Editorial Advisers: Yaron Brook, Mark Chapman, Julie Ferguson, Debi Ghate, Elan Journo, Anu Seppala, Lin Zinser
Designer: Simon Federman
Printing: David Antonacci **Copy Editor:** Donna Montrezza
Headquarters: 2121 Alton Parkway, Suite 250
Irvine, CA 92606-4926 **Phone:** 949-222-6550 **Fax:** 949-222-6558

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Press Release: *Atlas Shrugged* App Takes Top Prize

The following press release was issued by ARI on January 24, 2012.

WASHINGTON—Digital Book World Conference 2012 is the site of this year’s Publishing Innovation Awards, and the prize for best entry in the App Fiction category has been awarded to Ayn Rand’s *Atlas Shrugged*.

It is remarkable for a classic novel to receive such a leading-edge award fifty-five years after publication.

Curated by New American Library/Penguin Group editors and the Ayn Rand Institute, the app brings together the classic, unabridged text, and rarely seen archival materials to add a new dimension to the reader’s experience of the work, author’s life, and philosophy, in a truly unique immersive literary experience.

The *Atlas Shrugged* amplified edition for the iPad is available now for \$14.99 at the [iTunes store](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/atlas-shrugged/id1144444444?mt=8).



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There is no monetary contribution, but those who wish to receive the print edition of the newsletter must contribute \$35 or more annually.

☐ If you wish to help ARI reduce costs and provide more funding for its programs, check here to receive the electronic version of the newsletter only, and clearly write your email address in the space below.

Happy Birthday, Ayn Rand—Why Are You Still So Misunderstood?

The following article was written for [FoxNews.com](#) by ARC fellow Don Watkins to commemorate Ayn Rand’s birthday. The article was published on February 2, 2012.

In the summer of 1921, a young Ayn Rand saw Moscow for the first time. “I remember standing on a square,” she would later recall. “And it suddenly struck me. . . . ‘How enormous it is, and how many people, and it’s just one city’ I suddenly had the concrete sense of how many large cities there were in the world—and I had to address all of them. All of those numbers had to hear of me, and of what I was going to say. And the feeling was marvelously solemn.”

Today, on the 107th anniversary of her birth, it’s hard to doubt that the world has indeed heard of Ayn Rand. Her books—including titles like *The Fountainhead* and *The Virtue of Selfishness*—have sold nearly 30 million copies, with sales of her 1,100-page opus, *Atlas Shrugged*, surpassing a million copies in the last three years alone.

Rand has clearly inspired millions. But a debate has emerged over the question of Rand’s political influence, with many commentators claiming her ideas have played a key role in shaping the political landscape. As former Maryland Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend said in 2011, “Ayn Rand has a large and growing influence on American politics.”

But to gauge Rand’s influence, we need to know more about her views than the sound bites we’re typically offered.

Rand is usually thought of as a political philosopher, but that is not how she viewed herself. “I am primarily the creator of a new code of morality,” she once said. Whereas previous moral codes bestowed sainthood on those who served and sacrificed for others, Rand’s morality extolled “the concept of man as a heroic being, with his own happiness as the moral purpose of his life, with productive achievement as his noblest activity, and reason as his only absolute.”

This is the philosophy embodied by fictional characters such as Hank Rearden, the industrialist in *Atlas Shrugged*, who—in the tradition of Thomas Edison—creates a new metal that’s stronger and cheaper than steel, and who—in the tradition of countless entrepreneurs—struggles to produce his revolutionary product in the face of government obstacles. At one point, Rearden is brought to trial for violating the government’s economic edicts, and he proudly defends his right to produce and prosper:

“I work for nothing but my own profit,” he says, “which I make by selling a product they need to men who are willing and able to buy it. I do not produce it for their benefit at the expense of mine, and they do not buy it for my benefit at the expense of theirs. . . . I made my money by my own effort, in free exchange and through the voluntary consent of every man I dealt with. . . .

I refuse to apologize for my ability—I refuse to apologize for my success—I refuse to apologize for my money.”

It is this moral outlook that underlies Rand’s advocacy of free markets, and it suggests where those looking for Rand’s influence on today’s politics can see it.

Above all, you can see it in the moral outrage of the Tea Party activists, many of whom carry signs championing Rand’s works and ideas.

Recall the Rick Santelli rant that started it all: “This is America. How many of you people want to pay for your neighbor’s mortgage that has an extra bathroom and can’t pay their bills, raise their hand? . . . We’re thinking of having a Chicago Tea Party in July. All you capitalists that want to show up to Lake Michigan, I’m going to start organizing. . . . at the end of the day, I’m an Ayn Rander.”

But what you don’t yet see is large numbers of people who have actually grasped the moral and political position Rand defined. Even among the Tea Party activists, there exists no positive, principled platform challenging today’s status quo.

This is why you also find at their gatherings signs like “Keep Your Government Hands Off My Medicare.” Apparently, paying for your neighbor’s mortgage is bad, but paying for his health care is just fine.

Rand has helped many people see that something has gone wrong in America. But they haven’t yet understood the source of the problem or Rand’s radical solution.

A political movement truly shaped by Rand’s ideas would not flinch, as Republicans and Tea Partiers do, from charges that it is the mouthpiece of the rich and the mean-spirited. It would declare that it is a movement for all producers, proudly embracing the innovative rich, the ambitious poor, and everyone in between. If you earn your wealth through production and voluntary trade, a Rand-inspired political movement would affirm that it is yours by right.

And instead of looking at programs like Social Security and Medicaid only from the recipients’ point of view, a Rand-inspired political movement would point to the great injustice committed against those who are forced to provide retirement and medical care to others. It would ask: By what right does the government seize wealth from some people so it can dole out unearned rewards to others? Nothing, it would declare, is more mean-spirited than depriving an individual of his property and liberty.

In other words, a Rand-inspired political movement would be a principled movement. It would champion laissez-faire capitalism—the total separation of state and economics—as the only system that fully protects the rational and productive individual, securing his moral and political right to pursue his own happiness.

To what extent has Ayn Rand shaped our political landscape? So far, not nearly enough.

Free Books Program Numbers Soaring



ARI’s Free Books to Teachers program provides free sets of Ayn Rand’s novels to teachers for their classrooms. ARI has distributed more than two million books as part of this program and estimates that, as a result, nearly six million students have been introduced to Rand’s ideas since the program’s inception in 2002.

This year alone, we have received requests for more than 285,000 copies of Ayn Rand’s novels. This midyear figure is already some 10,000 more than the total number of books that were requested during the entirety of the 2010–2011 school year.

These outstanding results, however, pose an immediate challenge. There are thousands of books on back order; teachers have requested classroom sets but we are not able, for budgetary reasons, to fulfill all of these requests in a timely manner. Moreover, we certainly expect to receive more requests from teachers in the four months remaining in this school year. To ensure that we can promptly fulfill all of the already pending requests—not to mention the thousands of additional requests we anticipate between now and the end of the school year—we are seeking to raise \$400,000 as soon as possible.

If you would like to contribute to the Free Books to Teachers program so more high school students are exposed to Ayn Rand’s ideas in the classroom, please visit [aynrand.org/freebooks](#) to learn how you can make a difference.

Over the last decade, many teachers have written us in thanks and to report on the excitement they observed in their students who read the books. *Impact* is happy to share with readers a selection of recent comments we received about the program.

“We have adopted Rand across the curriculum and it has been a huge success. Our freshmen read *Anthem*, our sophomores read *We the Living*, our AP juniors read *The Fountainhead* and our honors seniors read *Atlas Shrugged*. We also require honors students to read *The Virtue of Selfishness*. We have now decided to expand *The Fountainhead* to a non-AP-level junior English course to see if they can handle it. I can’t thank you enough for helping us with this project. We are in a small school district with 2/3 of our students living at or below the poverty line. If any group of kids needs to know the real story of individualism, productivity and capitalism, these are those kids. Thank you so very much!”

—High School English Teacher,
Dawson Springs, KY

“Thank you for this wonderful opportunity! With the financial climate of education today, it is a blessing to have help from outside sources. Being able to expose my students to literature that inspires thought and self-reflection opens them to a new world. With class numbers over 40, buying sets of novels has become too costly to do as an individual teacher. These novels will be read and appreciated for years to come!”

—High School English Teacher,
La Habra, CA

“I taught *The Fountainhead* last year to one of my classes and it was so successful that I need to teach it to all of my 11th-grade classes. Similarly, I taught *Atlas Shrugged* to my AP students and will now teach it to ALL of my seniors. These books are life changers. Thank you!”

—High School English Teacher,
Spanish Fork, UT



Recent PJTV and Other Media Appearances

Every week ARC intellectuals appear on the PJTV.com news show Front Page with Allen Barton. Visit [ARC-TV.com](#) regularly to keep up with these and other ARC media appearances.

- **February 3:** Don Watkins on *Front Page* (“[Are the President’s Policies Really Guided by the Gospels?](#)”; “[Federal Deficit to Top \\$1 Trillion for Fourth Year](#)”; “[Progressive Group Questions Benefits of Economic Growth](#)”)
- **January 27:** Elan Journo on *Front Page* (“[State of the Union](#)”; “[Fed Promises More Cheap Money](#)”; “[Made in China](#)”)
- **January 26:** Harry Binswanger on *Freedom Watch* (Fox Business Network; video not yet available on ARC-TV)
- **January 20:** Don Watkins on *Front Page* (“[The Final Four in South Carolina](#)”; “[SOPA on the Ropes?](#)”; “[Union Excess Alive and Well](#)”)

Romantic Love

By Jeff Britting



Jeff Britting is manager of the Ayn Rand Archives, a Special Collection of the Ayn Rand Institute. In this feature, to commemorate Valentine's Day, Mr. Britting discusses Ayn Rand's view of romantic love and the bond between Miss Rand and her husband, Frank O'Connor. The images that accompany this feature are from the Archives collection.

Among the personal papers of Ayn Rand is a single valentine greeting, dated February 12, 1970. It was addressed to Ayn Rand from her young friend and fellow stamp col-

lector, Tammy Vaught, daughter of the family who hosted Miss Rand and her husband, Frank O'Connor, while they attended the *Apollo 11* launch at Cape Kennedy. Miss Rand accepted Tammy's greeting, replying: "It has been a long time since anyone sent me a Valentine, and it pleased me very much."

The printed valentine is an American tradition, whose European origin is rooted in pagan antiquity, very likely as a celebration of fertility. Today, the exchange of valentines occurs on February 14, a day set aside to celebrate romantic love.

As her works make clear, Miss Rand regarded romantic love as a profound value. Elaborating on the nature of one's response to a romantic partner, she writes:

It is with a person's sense of life that one falls in love—with that essential sum, that fundamental stand or way of facing existence, which is the essence of a personality. One falls in love with the embodiment of the values that formed a person's character, which are reflected in his widest goals or smallest gestures, which create the *style* of his soul—the individual style of a unique, unrepeatable, irreplaceable consciousness. . . . [W]hen love is a conscious integration of reason and emotion, of mind and values, then—and only then—is it the greatest reward of man's life.

("Philosophy and Sense of Life" in *The Romantic Manifesto*)

Miss Rand achieved such a bond with her husband, Frank O'Connor. Nowhere was their deep affinity for each other more evident than in their responses to each other's creative work.

Reflecting on her husband after his death in 1979, Ayn Rand said:

We were really, I would say, spiritually, collaborators. I have always told him I could not have written without him. He denies it; he thinks I would have broken through, but I know too well, and perhaps that's the only tribute I can pay him with my readers, that it is impossible to hold a benevolent universe view consistently, the way I had to hold it to write what I have written, and to project an ideal life, when the actual life around us was getting worse and worse; when it was all going in the direction of Ellsworth Toohey, and I was writing about John Galt. I couldn't have done it if it weren't for the fact that I knew one person who did live up to my heroes and my view of life.

(Objective Communication course; Q&A, 1980)

Perhaps Miss Rand's most dramatic and public expression of her view is in the twenty-fifth-anniversary edition of *The Fountainhead*. The introduction explains how her husband helped her through a night of extreme discouragement. Thereafter, she broke her rule against book dedications, dedicating the work to her husband, who had saved the novel-in-progress. Fittingly, the twenty-fifth-anniversary edition displays an oil painting by Frank O'Connor titled *Man Also Rises*.

There are also personal dedications Ayn Rand inscribed in the private copy she presented to her husband of each book she wrote. Miss Rand's goal in fiction was the portrayal of an ideal man. In her husband, Frank O'Connor, she found the qualities of character that made the depiction of a Howard Roark and John Galt possible. And

her book inscriptions reflect her gratitude. The inscriptions begin in 1936 with her first novel, *We the Living*. As tokens of appreciation, these inscriptions celebrate a lifelong "spiritual collaboration."

The text of the inscriptions can be found below and are offered without further comment.



A painting by Frank O'Connor which was reprinted in the twenty-fifth-anniversary edition of Ayn Rand's novel *The Fountainhead*

To Frank—
my only inspiration—
our book and my first
temple to him
Ayn
3-19-1936

Ayn Rand's dedication to her husband, Frank O'Connor, in his personal copy of *We the Living*

To 'Francisco'—
—your fourth temple—
—for being alive and alive, for
everything you are, for the sum of
our thirty years and forever—
—with all my love—
Ayn
August 15, 1957

Ayn Rand's dedication in the copy of *Atlas Shrugged* she presented to her husband, Frank O'Connor



Ayn Rand and Frank O'Connor on the roof of Rockefeller Center

To Frank—
—Your Sixth Temple, or, rather, the
foundation for all the others—
With all my most selfish love—
Ayn
(1965)

Ayn Rand's dedication to her husband, Frank O'Connor, in *The Virtue of Selfishness*