

= Ayn Rand =

Ayn Rand ( / ʔaʔn ʔrænd / ; born Alisa Zinov 'yevna Rosenbaum , Russian : ??? ? ?? ????? ? ?????? ??????? ? ?? ; February 2 [ O.S. January 20 ] 1905 ? March 6 , 1982 ) was a Russian @-@ born American novelist , philosopher , playwright , and screenwriter . She is known for her two best @-@ selling novels , The Fountainhead and Atlas Shrugged , and for developing a philosophical system she called Objectivism . Educated in Russia , she moved to the United States in 1926 . She had a play produced on Broadway in 1935 ? 1936 . After two early novels that were initially unsuccessful in America , she achieved fame with her 1943 novel , The Fountainhead .

In 1957 , Rand published her best @-@ known work , the novel Atlas Shrugged . Afterward , she turned to non @-@ fiction to promote her philosophy , publishing her own magazines and releasing several collections of essays until her death in 1982 . Rand advocated reason as the only means of acquiring knowledge , and rejected faith and religion . She supported rational and ethical egoism , and rejected altruism . In politics , she condemned the initiation of force as immoral , and opposed collectivism and statism as well as anarchism , and instead supported laissez @-@ faire capitalism , which she defined as the system based on recognizing individual rights . In art , Rand promoted romantic realism . She was sharply critical of most philosophers and philosophical traditions known to her , except for Aristotle and some Aristotelians , and classical liberals .

Literary critics received Rand 's fiction with mixed reviews , and academia generally ignored or rejected her philosophy , though academic interest has increased in recent decades . The Objectivist movement attempts to spread her ideas , both to the public and in academic settings . She has been a significant influence among libertarians and American conservatives .

= = Life = =

= = = Early life = = =

Rand was born Alisa Zinov 'yevna Rosenbaum ( Russian : ??? ? ?? ????????????? ?????????? ) on February 2 , 1905 , to a Russian Jewish bourgeois family living in Saint Petersburg . She was the eldest of the three daughters of Zinovy Zakharovich Rosenbaum and his wife , Anna Borisovna ( née Kaplan ) , largely non @-@ observant Jews . Zinovy Rosenbaum was a successful pharmacist and businessman , eventually owning a pharmacy and the building in which it was located . With a passion for the liberal arts , Rand later said she found school unchallenging and she began writing screenplays at the age of eight and novels at the age of ten . At the prestigious Stoiunina Gymnasium , her closest friend was Vladimir Nabokov 's younger sister , Olga . The two girls shared an intense interest in politics and would engage in debates at the Nabokov mansion : while Nabokova defended constitutional monarchy , Rand supported republican ideals . She was twelve at the time of the February Revolution of 1917 , during which she favored Alexander Kerensky over Tsar Nicholas II .

The subsequent October Revolution and the rule of the Bolsheviks under Vladimir Lenin disrupted the life the family had previously enjoyed . Her father 's business was confiscated and the family displaced . They fled to the Crimean Peninsula , which was initially under control of the White Army during the Russian Civil War . She later recalled that , while in high school , she determined that she was an atheist and that she valued reason above any other human virtue . After graduating from high school in the Crimea at 16 , Rand returned with her family to Petrograd ( as Saint Petersburg was renamed at that time ) , where they faced desperate conditions , on occasion nearly starving .

After the Russian Revolution , universities were opened to women , allowing Rand to be in the first group of women to enroll at Petrograd State University , where , at the age of 16 , she began her studies in the department of social pedagogy , majoring in history . At the university she was introduced to the writings of Aristotle and Plato , who would be her greatest influence and counter @-@ influence , respectively . A third figure whose philosophical works she studied heavily was Friedrich Nietzsche . Able to read French , German and Russian , Rand also discovered the writers

Fyodor Dostoevsky , Victor Hugo , Edmond Rostand , and Friedrich Schiller , who became her perennial favorites .

Along with many other " bourgeois " students , Rand was purged from the university shortly before graduating . However , after complaints from a group of visiting foreign scientists , many of the purged students were allowed to complete their work and graduate , which Rand did in October 1924 . She subsequently studied for a year at the State Technicum for Screen Arts in Leningrad . For one of her assignments , she wrote an essay about the Polish actress Pola Negri , which became her first published work .

By this time she had decided her professional surname for writing would be Rand , possibly as a Cyrillic contraction of her birth surname , and she adopted the first name Ayn , either from a Finnish name Aino or from the Hebrew word ??? ( ayin , meaning " eye " ) .

= = = Arrival in the United States = = =

In the autumn of 1925 , Rand was granted a visa to visit American relatives . She departed on January 17 , 1926 . When she arrived in New York City on February 19 , 1926 , she was so impressed with the skyline of Manhattan that she cried what she later called " tears of splendor " . Intent on staying in the United States to become a screenwriter , she lived for a few months with relatives in Chicago , one of whom owned a movie theater and allowed her to watch dozens of films for free . She then set out for Hollywood , California .

Initially , Rand struggled in Hollywood and took odd jobs to pay her basic living expenses . A chance meeting with famed director Cecil B. DeMille led to a job as an extra in his film *The King of Kings* as well as subsequent work as a junior screenwriter . While working on *The King of Kings* , she met an aspiring young actor , Frank O 'Connor ; the two were married on April 15 , 1929 . She became a permanent US resident in July 1929 , and became an American citizen on March 3 , 1931 . Taking various jobs during the 1930s to support her writing , she worked for a time as the head of the costume department at RKO Studios . She made several attempts to bring her parents and sisters to the United States , but they were unable to acquire permission to emigrate .

= = = Early fiction = = =

Rand 's first literary success came with the sale of her screenplay *Red Pawn* to Universal Studios in 1932 , although it was never produced . This was followed by the courtroom drama *Night of January 16th* , first produced by E.E. Clive in Hollywood in 1934 and then successfully reopened on Broadway in 1935 . Each night the " jury " was selected from members of the audience , and one of the two different endings , depending on the jury 's " verdict " , would then be performed . In 1941 , Paramount Pictures produced a movie loosely based on the play . Rand did not participate in the production and was highly critical of the result . *Ideal* is a novel and play written in 1934 which were first published in 2015 by her estate . The heroine is an actress who embodies Randian ideals .

Rand 's first published novel , the semi @-@ autobiographical *We the Living* , was published in 1936 . Set in Soviet Russia , it focused on the struggle between the individual and the state . In a 1959 foreword to the novel , Rand stated that *We the Living* " is as near to an autobiography as I will ever write . It is not an autobiography in the literal , but only in the intellectual sense . The plot is invented , the background is not ... " Initial sales were slow and the American publisher let it go out of print , although European editions continued to sell . After the success of her later novels , Rand was able to release a revised version in 1959 that has since sold over three million copies . In 1942 , without Rand 's knowledge or permission , the novel was made into a pair of Italian films , *Noi vivi* and *Addio , Kira* . Rediscovered in the 1960s , these films were re @-@ edited into a new version which was approved by Rand and re @-@ released as *We the Living* in 1986 .

Her novella *Anthem* was written during a break from the writing of her next major novel , *The Fountainhead* . It presents a vision of a dystopian future world in which totalitarian collectivism has triumphed to such an extent that even the word ' I ' has been forgotten and replaced with ' we ' . It was published in England in 1938 , but Rand initially could not find an American publisher . As with

We the Living , Rand 's later success allowed her to get a revised version published in 1946 , which has sold more than 3 @. @ 5 million copies .

= = = The Fountainhead and political activism = = =

During the 1940s , Rand became politically active . Both she and her husband worked full @-@ time in volunteer positions for the 1940 presidential campaign of Republican Wendell Willkie . This work led to Rand 's first public speaking experiences , including fielding the sometimes hostile questions from New York City audiences who had just viewed pro @-@ Willkie newsreels , an experience she greatly enjoyed . This activity also brought her into contact with other intellectuals sympathetic to free @-@ market capitalism . She became friends with journalist Henry Hazlitt and his wife , and Hazlitt introduced her to the Austrian School economist Ludwig von Mises . Despite her philosophical differences with them , Rand strongly endorsed the writings of both men throughout her career , and both of them expressed admiration for her . Once Mises referred to Rand as " the most courageous man in America " , a compliment that particularly pleased her because he said " man " instead of " woman " . Rand also developed a friendship with libertarian writer Isabel Paterson . Rand questioned the well @-@ informed Paterson about American history and politics long into the night during their numerous meetings and gave Paterson ideas for her only nonfiction book , The God of the Machine .

Rand 's first major success as a writer came with The Fountainhead in 1943 , a romantic and philosophical novel that she wrote over a period of seven years . The novel centers on an uncompromising young architect named Howard Roark and his struggle against what Rand described as " second @-@ handers " ? those who attempt to live through others , placing others above themselves . It was rejected by twelve publishers before finally being accepted by the Bobbs @-@ Merrill Company on the insistence of editor Archibald Ogden , who threatened to quit if his employer did not publish it . While completing the novel , Rand was prescribed Benzedrine , a brand of amphetamine , to fight fatigue . The drug helped her to work long hours to meet her deadline for delivering the finished novel , but when the book was done , she was so exhausted that her doctor ordered two weeks ' rest . Her use of the drug for approximately three decades may have contributed to what some of her later associates described as volatile mood swings .

The Fountainhead eventually became a worldwide success , bringing Rand fame and financial security . In 1943 , Rand sold the rights for a film version to Warner Bros. , and she returned to Hollywood to write the screenplay . Finishing her work on that screenplay , she was hired by producer Hal Wallis as a screenwriter and script @-@ doctor . Her work for Wallis included the screenplays for the Oscar @-@ nominated Love Letters and You Came Along . This role gave Rand time to work on other projects , including a planned nonfiction treatment of her philosophy to be called The Moral Basis of Individualism . Although the planned book was never completed , a condensed version was published as an essay titled " The Only Path to Tomorrow " , in the January 1944 edition of Reader 's Digest magazine .

Rand extended her involvement with free @-@ market and anti @-@ communist activism while working in Hollywood . She became involved with the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals , a Hollywood anti @-@ Communist group , and wrote articles on the group 's behalf . She also joined the anti @-@ Communist American Writers Association . A visit by Isabel Paterson to meet with Rand 's California associates led to a final falling out between the two when Paterson made comments to valued political allies , which Rand considered rude . In 1947 , during the Second Red Scare , Rand testified as a " friendly witness " before the United States House Un @-@ American Activities Committee . Her testimony described the disparity between her personal experiences in the Soviet Union and the portrayal of it in the 1944 film Song of Russia . Rand argued that the film grossly misrepresented conditions in the Soviet Union , portraying life there as being much better and happier than it actually was . She wanted to also criticize the lauded 1946 film The Best Years of Our Lives for what she interpreted as its negative presentation of the business world , but she was not allowed to testify about it . When asked after the hearings about her feelings on the effectiveness of the investigations , Rand described the process as " futile " .

After several delays , the film version of The Fountainhead was released in 1949 . Although it used Rand 's screenplay with minimal alterations , she " disliked the movie from beginning to end " , complaining about its editing , acting , and other elements .

= = = Atlas Shrugged and Objectivism = = =

In the years following the publication of The Fountainhead , Rand received numerous letters from readers , some of whom the book profoundly influenced . In 1951 Rand moved from Los Angeles to New York City , where she gathered a group of these admirers around her . This group ( jokingly designated " The Collective " ) included future Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan , a young psychology student named Nathan Blumenthal ( later Nathaniel Branden ) and his wife Barbara , and Barbara 's cousin Leonard Peikoff . At first the group was an informal gathering of friends who met with Rand on weekends at her apartment to discuss philosophy . Later she began allowing them to read the drafts of her new novel , Atlas Shrugged , as the manuscript pages were written . In 1954 Rand 's close relationship with the younger Nathaniel Branden turned into a romantic affair , with the consent of their spouses .

Atlas Shrugged , published in 1957 , was considered Rand 's magnum opus . Rand described the theme of the novel as " the role of the mind in man 's existence ? and , as a corollary , the demonstration of a new moral philosophy : the morality of rational self @-@ interest . " It advocates the core tenets of Rand 's philosophy of Objectivism and expresses her concept of human achievement . The plot involves a dystopian United States in which the most creative industrialists , scientists , and artists respond to a welfare state government by going on strike and retreating to a mountainous hideaway where they build an independent free economy . The novel 's hero and leader of the strike , John Galt , describes the strike as " stopping the motor of the world " by withdrawing the minds of the individuals most contributing to the nation 's wealth and achievement . With this fictional strike , Rand intended to illustrate that without the efforts of the rational and productive , the economy would collapse and society would fall apart . The novel includes elements of romance , mystery , and science fiction , and it contains Rand 's most extensive statement of Objectivism in any of her works of fiction , a lengthy monologue delivered by Galt .

Despite many negative reviews , Atlas Shrugged became an international bestseller . In an interview with Mike Wallace , Rand declared herself " the most creative thinker alive " . After completing the novel , Rand fell into a severe depression . Atlas Shrugged was Rand 's last completed work of fiction ; a turning point in her life , it marked the end of Rand 's career as a novelist and the beginning of her role as a popular philosopher .

In 1958 Nathaniel Branden established Nathaniel Branden Lectures , later incorporated as the Nathaniel Branden Institute ( NBI ) , to promote Rand 's philosophy . Collective members gave lectures for NBI and wrote articles for Objectivist periodicals that she edited . Rand later published some of these articles in book form . Critics , including some former NBI students and Branden himself , have described the culture of NBI as one of intellectual conformity and excessive reverence for Rand , with some describing NBI or the Objectivist movement itself as a cult or religion . Rand expressed opinions on a wide range of topics , from literature and music to sexuality and facial hair , and some of her followers mimicked her preferences , wearing clothes to match characters from her novels and buying furniture like hers . Rand was unimpressed with many of the NBI students and held them to strict standards , sometimes reacting coldly or angrily to those who disagreed with her . However , some former NBI students believe the extent of these behaviors has been exaggerated , with the problem being concentrated among Rand 's closest followers in New York .

= = = Later years = = =

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s , Rand developed and promoted her Objectivist philosophy through her nonfiction works and by giving talks to students at institutions such as Yale , Princeton , Columbia , Harvard , and MIT . She received an honorary doctorate from Lewis & Clark College in 1963 . She also began delivering annual lectures at the Ford Hall Forum , responding afterward to

questions from the audience . During these speeches and Q & A sessions , she often took controversial stances on political and social issues of the day . These included supporting abortion rights , opposing the Vietnam War and the military draft ( but condemning many draft dodgers as " bums " ) , supporting Israel in the Yom Kippur War of 1973 against a coalition of Arab nations as " civilized men fighting savages " , saying European colonists had the right to develop land taken from American Indians , and calling homosexuality " immoral " and " disgusting " , while also advocating the repeal of all laws about it . She also endorsed several Republican candidates for President of the United States , most strongly Barry Goldwater in 1964 , whose candidacy she promoted in several articles for The Objectivist Newsletter .

In 1964 Nathaniel Branden began an affair with the young actress Patrecia Scott , whom he later married . Nathaniel and Barbara Branden kept the affair hidden from Rand . When she learned of it in 1968 , though her romantic relationship with Branden had already ended , Rand terminated her relationship with both Brandens , which led to the closure of NBI . Rand published an article in The Objectivist repudiating Nathaniel Branden for dishonesty and other " irrational behavior in his private life " . Branden later apologized in an interview to " every student of Objectivism " for " perpetuating the Ayn Rand mystique " and for " contributing to that dreadful atmosphere of intellectual repressiveness that pervades the Objectivist movement . " In subsequent years , Rand and several more of her closest associates parted company .

Rand underwent surgery for lung cancer in 1974 after decades of heavy smoking . In 1976 , she retired from writing her newsletter and , despite her initial objections , allowed Evva Pryor , a social worker from her attorney 's office , to enroll her in Social Security and Medicare . During the late 1970s her activities within the Objectivist movement declined , especially after the death of her husband on November 9 , 1979 . One of her final projects was work on a never @-@ completed television adaptation of Atlas Shrugged .

Rand died of heart failure on March 6 , 1982 , at her home in New York City , and was interred in the Kensico Cemetery , Valhalla , New York . Rand 's funeral was attended by some of her prominent followers , including Alan Greenspan . A 6 @-@ foot ( 1 @.@ 8 m ) floral arrangement in the shape of a dollar sign was placed near her casket . In her will , Rand named Leonard Peikoff the heir to her estate .

= = Philosophy = =

Rand called her philosophy " Objectivism " , describing its essence as " 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 . " She considered Objectivism a systematic philosophy and laid out positions on metaphysics , epistemology , ethics , political philosophy and aesthetics .

In metaphysics , Rand supported philosophical realism , and opposed anything she regarded as mysticism or supernaturalism , including all forms of religion .

In epistemology , she considered all knowledge to be based on sense perception , the validity of which she considered axiomatic , and reason , which she described as " the faculty that identifies and integrates the material provided by man 's senses . " She rejected all claims of non @-@ perceptual or a priori knowledge , including " ' instinct , ' ' intuition , ' ' revelation , ' or any form of ' just knowing . ' " Rand argued that the requirements of cognition determine the objective criteria of conceptualization , which she summarized in the form of a philosophical razor . Known as " Rand 's razor , " it states that " concepts are not to be multiplied beyond necessity ? the corollary of which is : nor are they to be integrated in disregard of necessity . " In her Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology , Rand presented a theory of concept formation and rejected the analytic ? synthetic dichotomy .

In ethics , Rand argued for rational and ethical egoism ( rational self @-@ interest ) , as the guiding moral principle . She said the individual should " exist for his own sake , neither sacrificing himself to others nor sacrificing others to himself . " She referred to egoism as " the virtue of selfishness " in her book of that title , in which she presented her solution to the is @-@ ought problem by

describing a meta @-@ ethical theory that based morality in the needs of " man 's survival qua man " . She condemned ethical altruism as incompatible with the requirements of human life and happiness , and held that the initiation of force was evil and irrational , writing in *Atlas Shrugged* that " Force and mind are opposites . "

Rand 's political philosophy emphasized individual rights ( including property rights ) , and she considered laissez @-@ faire capitalism the only moral social system because in her view it was the only system based on the protection of those rights . She opposed statism , which she understood to include theocracy , absolute monarchy , Nazism , fascism , communism , democratic socialism , and dictatorship . Rand believed that natural rights should be enforced by a constitutionally limited government . Although her political views are often classified as conservative or libertarian , she preferred the term " radical for capitalism " . She worked with conservatives on political projects , but disagreed with them over issues such as religion and ethics . She denounced libertarianism , which she associated with anarchism . She rejected anarchism as a naïve theory based in subjectivism that could only lead to collectivism in practice .

Rand 's aesthetics defined art as a " selective re @-@ creation of reality according to an artist 's metaphysical value @-@ judgments . " According to Rand , art allows philosophical concepts to be presented in a concrete form that can be easily grasped , thereby fulfilling a need of human consciousness . As a writer , the art form Rand focused on most closely was literature , where she considered romanticism to be the approach that most accurately reflected the existence of human free will . She described her own approach to literature as " romantic realism " .

Rand acknowledged Aristotle as her greatest influence and remarked that in the history of philosophy she could only recommend " three A 's " ? Aristotle , Aquinas , and Ayn Rand . In a 1959 interview with Mike Wallace , when asked where her philosophy came from , she responded , " Out of my own mind , with the sole acknowledgement of a debt to Aristotle , the only philosopher who ever influenced me . I devised the rest of my philosophy myself . " However , she also found early inspiration in Friedrich Nietzsche , and scholars have found indications of his influence in early notes from Rand 's journals , in passages from the first edition of *We the Living* ( which Rand later revised ) , and in her overall writing style . However , by the time she wrote *The Fountainhead* , Rand had turned against Nietzsche 's ideas , and the extent of his influence on her even during her early years is disputed . Among the philosophers Rand held in particular disdain was Immanuel Kant , whom she referred to as a " monster " , although philosophers George Walsh and Fred Seddon have argued that she misinterpreted Kant and exaggerated their differences .

Rand said her most important contributions to philosophy were her " theory of concepts , [ her ] ethics , and [ her ] discovery in politics that evil ? the violation of rights ? consists of the initiation of force . " She believed epistemology was a foundational branch of philosophy and considered the advocacy of reason to be the single most significant aspect of her philosophy , stating , " I am not primarily an advocate of capitalism , but of egoism ; and I am not primarily an advocate of egoism , but of reason . If one recognizes the supremacy of reason and applies it consistently , all the rest follows . "

= = Reception and legacy = =

= = = Reviews = = =

During Rand 's lifetime , her work evoked both extreme praise and condemnation . Rand 's first novel , *We the Living* , was admired by the literary critic H. L. Mencken , her Broadway play *Night of January 16th* was both a critical and popular success , and *The Fountainhead* was hailed by a reviewer in *The New York Times* as " masterful " . Rand 's novels were derided by some critics when they were first published as being long and melodramatic . However , they became bestsellers largely through word of mouth .

The first reviews Rand received were for *Night of January 16th* . Reviews of the production were largely positive , but Rand considered even positive reviews to be embarrassing because of

significant changes made to her script by the producer . Rand believed that her first novel , We the Living , was not widely reviewed , but Rand scholar Michael S. Berliner says " it was the most reviewed of any of her works " , with approximately 125 different reviews being published in more than 200 publications . Overall these reviews were more positive than the reviews she received for her later work . Her 1938 novella Anthem received little attention from reviewers , both for its first publication in England and for subsequent re @-@ issues .

Rand 's first bestseller , The Fountainhead , received far fewer reviews than We the Living , and reviewers ' opinions were mixed . There was a positive review in The New York Times that Rand greatly appreciated . The reviewer called Rand " a writer of great power " who wrote " brilliantly , beautifully and bitterly " , and stated that " you will not be able to read this masterful book without thinking through some of the basic concepts of our time " . There were other positive reviews , but Rand dismissed most of them as either not understanding her message or as being from unimportant publications . Some negative reviews focused on the length of the novel , such as one that called it " a whale of a book " and another that said " anyone who is taken in by it deserves a stern lecture on paper @-@ rationing " . Other negative reviews called the characters unsympathetic and Rand 's style " offensively pedestrian " .

Rand 's 1957 novel Atlas Shrugged was widely reviewed , and many of the reviews were strongly negative . In the National Review , conservative author Whittaker Chambers called the book " sophomoric " and " remarkably silly " . He described the tone of the book as " shrillness without reprieve " and accused Rand of supporting a godless system ( which he related to that of the Soviets ) , claiming " From almost any page of Atlas Shrugged , a voice can be heard , from painful necessity , commanding : ' To a gas chamber ? go ! ' " Atlas Shrugged received positive reviews from a few publications , including praise from the noted book reviewer John Chamberlain , but Rand scholar Mimi Reisel Gladstein later wrote that " reviewers seemed to vie with each other in a contest to devise the cleverest put @-@ downs " , calling it " execrable claptrap " and " a nightmare " ; they said it was " written out of hate " and showed " remorseless hectoring and prolixity " . Author Flannery O 'Connor wrote in a letter to a friend that " The fiction of Ayn Rand is as low as you can get re fiction . I hope you picked it up off the floor of the subway and threw it in the nearest garbage pail . "

Rand 's nonfiction received far fewer reviews than her novels had . The tenor of the criticism for her first nonfiction book , For the New Intellectual , was similar to that for Atlas Shrugged , with philosopher Sidney Hook likening her certainty to " the way philosophy is written in the Soviet Union " , and author Gore Vidal calling her viewpoint " nearly perfect in its immorality " . Her subsequent books got progressively less attention from reviewers .

On the 100th anniversary of Rand 's birth in 2005 , Edward Rothstein , writing for The New York Times , referred to her fictional writing as quaint utopian " retro fantasy " and programmatic neo @-@ Romanticism of the misunderstood artist , while criticizing her characters ' " isolated rejection of democratic society " . In 2007 , book critic Leslie Clark described her fiction as " romance novels with a patina of pseudo @-@ philosophy " . In 2009 , GQ 's critic columnist Tom Carson described her books as " capitalism 's version of middlebrow religious novels " such as Ben @-@ Hur and the Left Behind series .

= = = Popular interest = = =

In 1991 , a survey conducted for the Library of Congress and the Book @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Month Club asked club members what the most influential book in the respondent 's life was . Rand 's Atlas Shrugged was the second most popular choice , after the Bible . Rand 's books continue to be widely sold and read , with over 29 million copies sold as of 2013 ( with about 10 % of that total purchased for free distribution to schools by the Ayn Rand Institute ) . In 1998 , Modern Library readers voted Atlas Shrugged the 20th century 's finest work of fiction , followed by The Fountainhead in second place , Anthem in seventh , and We the Living eighth ; none of the four appeared on the critics ' list . Although Rand 's influence has been greatest in the United States , there has been international interest in her work . Rand 's work continues to be among the top

sellers among books in India .

Rand 's contemporary admirers included fellow novelists , such as Ira Levin , Kay Nolte Smith and L. Neil Smith , and later writers such as Erika Holzer and Terry Goodkind have been influenced by her . Other artists who have cited Rand as an important influence on their lives and thought include comic book artist Steve Ditko and musician Neil Peart of Rush . Rand provided a positive view of business , and in response business executives and entrepreneurs have admired and promoted her work . John Allison of BB & T and Ed Snider of Comcast Spectacor have funded the promotion of Rand 's ideas , while Mark Cuban , owner of the Dallas Mavericks , and John P. Mackey , CEO of Whole Foods , among others , have said they consider Rand crucial to their success .

Rand and her works have been referred to in a variety of media : on television shows including animated sitcoms , live @-@ action comedies , dramas , and game shows , as well as in movies and video games . She , or a character based on her , figures prominently ( in positive and negative lights ) in literary and science fiction novels by prominent American authors . Nick Gillespie , editor in chief of Reason , has remarked that " Rand 's is a tortured immortality , one in which she 's as likely to be a punch line as a protagonist ... " and that " jibes at Rand as cold and inhuman , run through the popular culture " . Two movies have been made about Rand 's life . A 1997 documentary film , Ayn Rand : A Sense of Life , was nominated for the Academy Award for Documentary Feature . The Passion of Ayn Rand , a 1999 television adaptation of the book of the same name , won several awards . Rand 's image also appears on a 1999 U.S. postage stamp designed by artist Nick Gaetano .

= = = Political influence = = =

Although she rejected the labels " conservative " and " libertarian " , Rand has had continuing influence on right @-@ wing politics and libertarianism . Jim Powell , a senior fellow at the Cato Institute , considers Rand one of the three most important women ( along with Rose Wilder Lane and Isabel Paterson ) of modern American libertarianism , and David Nolan , one of the founders of the Libertarian Party , stated that " without Ayn Rand , the libertarian movement would not exist " . In his history of the libertarian movement , journalist Brian Doherty described her as " the most influential libertarian of the twentieth century to the public at large " , and biographer Jennifer Burns referred to her as " the ultimate gateway drug to life on the right " .

She faced intense opposition from William F. Buckley , Jr. and other contributors for the National Review magazine . They published numerous criticisms in the 1950s and 1960s by Whittaker Chambers , Garry Wills , and M. Stanton Evans . Nevertheless , her influence among conservatives forced Buckley and other National Review contributors to reconsider how traditional notions of virtue and Christianity could be integrated with support for capitalism .

The political figures who cite Rand as an influence are usually conservatives ( often members of the United States Republican Party ) , despite Rand taking some positions that are atypical for conservatives , such as being pro @-@ choice and an atheist . A 1987 article in The New York Times referred to her as the Reagan administration 's " novelist laureate " . Republican Congressmen and conservative pundits have acknowledged her influence on their lives and recommended her novels .

The late @-@ 2000s financial crisis spurred renewed interest in her works , especially Atlas Shrugged , which some saw as foreshadowing the crisis , and opinion articles compared real @-@ world events with the plot of the novel . During this time , signs mentioning Rand and her fictional hero John Galt appeared at Tea Party protests . There was also increased criticism of her ideas , especially from the political left , with critics blaming the economic crisis on her support of selfishness and free markets , particularly through her influence on Alan Greenspan . For example , Mother Jones remarked that " Rand 's particular genius has always been her ability to turn upside down traditional hierarchies and recast the wealthy , the talented , and the powerful as the oppressed " , while equating Randian individual well @-@ being with that of the Volk according to Goebbels . Corey Robin of The Nation alleged similarities between the " moral syntax of Randianism " and fascism .



== Academic reaction ==

During Rand 's lifetime her work received little attention from academic scholars . When the first academic book about Rand 's philosophy appeared in 1971 , its author declared writing about Rand " a treacherous undertaking " that could lead to " guilt by association " for taking her seriously . A few articles about Rand 's ideas appeared in academic journals before her death in 1982 , many of them in *The Personalist* . One of these was " On the Randian Argument " by libertarian philosopher Robert Nozick , who argued that her meta @-@ ethical argument is unsound and fails to solve the is ? ought problem posed by David Hume . Some responses to Nozick by other academic philosophers were also published in *The Personalist* arguing that Nozick misstated Rand 's case . Academic consideration of Rand as a literary figure during her life was even more limited . Academic Mimi Gladstein was unable to find any scholarly articles about Rand 's novels when she began researching her in 1973 , and only three such articles appeared during the rest of the 1970s .

Since Rand 's death , interest in her work has gradually increased . Historian Jennifer Burns has identified " three overlapping waves " of scholarly interest in Rand , the most recent of which is " an explosion of scholarship " since the year 2000 . However , few universities currently include Rand or Objectivism as a philosophical specialty or research area , with many literature and philosophy departments dismissing her as a pop culture phenomenon rather than a subject for serious study .

Gladstein , Chris Matthew Sciabarra , Allan Gotthelf , Edwin A. Locke and Tara Smith have taught her work in academic institutions . Sciabarra co @-@ edits the *Journal of Ayn Rand Studies* , a nonpartisan peer @-@ reviewed journal dedicated to the study of Rand 's philosophical and literary work . In 1987 Gotthelf helped found the Ayn Rand Society with George Walsh and David Kelley , and has been active in sponsoring seminars about Rand and her ideas . Smith has written several academic books and papers on Rand 's ideas , including *Ayn Rand 's Normative Ethics : The Virtuous Egoist* , a volume on Rand 's ethical theory published by Cambridge University Press . Rand 's ideas have also been made subjects of study at Clemson and Duke universities . Scholars of English and American literature have largely ignored her work , although attention to her literary work has increased since the 1990s .

Rand scholars Douglas Den Uyl and Douglas B. Rasmussen , while stressing the importance and originality of her thought , describe her style as " literary , hyperbolic and emotional " . Philosopher Jack Wheeler says that despite " the incessant bombast and continuous venting of Randian rage " , Rand 's ethics are " a most immense achievement , the study of which is vastly more fruitful than any other in contemporary thought . " In the *Literary Encyclopedia* entry for Rand written in 2001 , John David Lewis declared that " Rand wrote the most intellectually challenging fiction of her generation " . In a 1999 interview in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* , Sciabarra commented , " I know they laugh at Rand " , while forecasting a growth of interest in her work in the academic community .

Libertarian philosopher Michael Huemer has argued that very few people find Rand 's ideas convincing , especially her ethics , which he believes is difficult to interpret and may lack logical coherence . He attributes the attention she receives to her being a " compelling writer " , especially as a novelist . Thus , *Atlas Shrugged* outsells not only the works of other philosophers of classical liberalism such as Ludwig von Mises , Friedrich Hayek , or Frederic Bastiat , but also Rand 's own non @-@ fiction works .

Political scientist Charles Murray , while praising Rand 's literary accomplishments , criticizes her claim that her only " philosophical debt " was to Aristotle , instead asserting that her ideas were derivative of previous thinkers such as John Locke and Friedrich Nietzsche .

Although Rand maintained that Objectivism was an integrated philosophical system , philosopher Robert H. Bass has argued that her central ethical ideas are inconsistent and contradictory to her central political ideas .

== Objectivist movement ==

In 1985 , Rand 's heir Leonard Peikoff established the Ayn Rand Institute , a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting Rand 's ideas and works . In 1990 , philosopher David Kelley founded the Institute for Objectivist Studies , now known as The Atlas Society . In 2001 historian John McCaskey organized the Anthem Foundation for Objectivist Scholarship , which provides grants for scholarly work on Objectivism in academia . The charitable foundation of BB & T Corporation has also given grants for teaching Rand 's ideas or works . The University of Texas at Austin , the University of Pittsburgh , and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are among the schools that have received grants . In some cases these grants have been controversial due to their requiring research or teaching related to Rand .

= = Selected works = =

Novels :

1936 We the Living

1943 The Fountainhead

1957 Atlas Shrugged

Other fiction :

1934 Night of January 16th

1938 Anthem

2015 Ideal

Non @-@ fiction :

1961 For the New Intellectual

1964 The Virtue of Selfishness

1966 Capitalism : The Unknown Ideal

1969 The Romantic Manifesto

1971 The New Left : The Anti @-@ Industrial Revolution

1979 Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology

1982 Philosophy : Who Needs It