**AYN RAND EXHIBIT OBJECTS & TEXT PANELS**

**Branding Title:**

Writing at the Ayn Rand Archives

**Exhibit Title / Gallery Name:**

A Writer’s Studio

**Introductory Statement**

Ayn Rand (1905 - 82) was a 20th century Russian-American novelist who published four novels that have developed a worldwide audience. As a novelist-philosopher, her Romantic Realist works and original philosophical ideas are known and discussed. And there is increasing interest in the physical circumstances in which she produced these works: her “writer studio.”

[Insert description of the VR experience and instruction reminders]

Ayn Rand wrote her four novels, as well as other fiction and nonfiction on a desk purchased for her in Los Angeles in [1929] by her husband, Frank O’Connor. The desk occupied apartments and a house in two cities, Los Angeles and New York between 1929 and 1982., where she wrote her novels and other works on a desk originally purchased for her by her husband, Frank O’Connor. cl provoked worldwide discussion. d a worldwide impact And she was unique. She thought that abstract, philosophical ideas have the most concrete, practical consequences in actual life. As a realistic novelist of ideas, her novels--*We the Living*, *Anthem*, *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*--along with her shorter works, presented stories depicting human beings living the consequences of their choices. And there was no greater, more consequential choice than the selection of one’s philosophy.

Ayn Rand’s own philosophy, an original system which she defined and called Objectivism, owes a great deal to the influence of Aristotle, which also shaped her approach to literature.

Ayn Rand held that a story concerned human beings and the events of their lives, and the events of people’s lives are dominated by the values they pursue in order to live. From the perspective of storytelling, the obstacles placed in the path of this pursuit gives rise to drama and literature. From Rand’s perspective, the most important literary esthetic issue was deciding to accept such obstacles as fated--or to challenge such obstacles as alterable. Volition and its exercise were the building blocks of her type of Romantic drama.

Ayn Rand considered herself a Romantic Realist. She believed that art should depict what is metaphysically important in actual life. In her paraphrase of Aristotle's *Poetics*, art is concerned not with human history~~,~~ reported journalistically, but human life recreated and portrayed as it could be and ought to be. This was Ayn Rand’s portal into the field of art.

*A Writer’s Studio* examines Rand’s art and the physical circumstances of her life while she was creating it. The exhibit incorporates artifacts from the Ayn Rand Archives, including ones selected from her personal papers and effects. These objects concretize her youthful decision to leave Soviet Russia and to establish herself in America in order to achieve “what ought to be” in her life and her art.

The central artifact on display is Ayn Rand’s writer’s desk. On its surface, she performed the bulk of her artistic activity, 1929 - 49. This 20 year period of creativity overlaps between New York and Los Angeles, two American cities in which her various “writer’s studios” were located.

The exhibit begins in Soviet Russia, during her post-university days, where, as an aspiring screenwriter and novelist, she enrolled in a Soviet film school. But her eyes were set toward America and achieving the freedom to write. The exhibit culminates in the Warner Bros. film studio adaptation of her breakthrough novel, *The Fountainhead*. A film studio, thus, supplements the writer’s studio. At this time, Rand was, simultaneously, drafting her literary-philosophic *magnum opus*, *Atlas Shrugged*.

Ayn Rand once said that if all philosophers were required to dramatize their ideas in fiction, there would be fewer but far better philosophers. Rand’s test of her ideas in fiction was a lifelong project. *A Writer’s Studio: Ayn Rand in Los Angeles* examines the various “studios” where this view was forged and then affirmed in “actual life.”

**Exhibit Credits**

Exhibit Designer: ?

Exhibit Curator: ?

Exhibit objects courtesy of the Ayn Rand Archives, the Library of Congress, the Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library, and Christian Esquevin.

Special thanks to the Ayn Rand Institute for making this exhibit possible.

**Section Texts (listed in sequence, I - VIII)**

I - Four Novels

[Text Panel]

Early in her writing career, Ayn Rand’s publishers assumed the responsibility for designing book covers. However, by the 1970s, Rand’s reputation was well established; and she was able to participate in the art direction of a series of new covers for her fiction and nonfiction works. These later covers, incorporating original paintings into fields of white, were executed by painter, Robert Heindel, an contemporary artist whose depictions of ballet dancers, athletes and scientists, aligned with Rand’s view of the ideal human figure.

II - Russia

[FOCUS TEXT A]

Early Russian Writings

After completing her studies at the University of Leningrad in 1924, Ayn Rand enrolled at the State Technicum for Screen Arts, a film school established by Lenin for the development of Soviet cinema. Her objective was to study screenwriting, and in preparation she also began writing film reviews and short essays on Hollywood, some of which were published. She briefly thought about becoming a Soviet screenwriter, subtly incorporating her individualist ethical and political ideas into her scripts. But this early experiment with literary misdirection failed. The collectivist nature of Russian politics and culture was monolithic. And she realized her prospects for survival in Soviet Russia were nonexistent: “I would have been probably dead within one year,” she later concluded.

[FOCUS TEXT B]

During the Soviet period, Ayn Rand’s mother received a letter from a cousin living in Chicago who worked as a film exhibitor. A visit to America was proposed, which coincided with the easing of Soviet restrictions on students wishing to study abroad. The official purpose of Rand’s visit would be to study the American film industry first-hand and then to return and contribute the fruits of this research toward the development of Soviet film. The stated purpose was a ruse. Rand planned to make her American visit permanent. Her goal was to establish herself as a screenwriter, thereafter~~,~~ “graduating into literature” when her command of English had improved.

III - Early Hollywood Years

Ayn Rand arrived in New York City in February 1926. She spent the next six months with her relatives in Chicago, obtained an extension to her visa, and then left for Hollywood to pursue a career as a screenwriter.

On Rand's second day in Hollywood, Cecil B. DeMille saw her standing at the gate of his studio, offered her a ride to the set of his movie *The King of Kings*, and gave her a job, first as an extra, then as a script reader. During the next week at the studio, she met an actor, Frank O'Connor, whom she married in 1929; they were married until his death fifty years later.

After struggling for several years at various non writing jobs, including one in the wardrobe department at the RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., she sold her first screenplay, "Red Pawn," to Universal Pictures in 1932 and saw her first stage play produced in Hollywood as “Woman on Trial,” and then later on Broadway as “Night of January 16th.”

IV - New York Interlude

Ayn Rand’s first novel, *We the Living*, was completed in 1934 but was rejected by numerous publishers, until The Macmillan Company in the United States and Cassells and Company in England published the book in 1936. The most autobiographical of her novels, it was based on her years under Soviet tyranny. Its theme was the evil of dictatorship.

She began writing *The Fountainhead* in 1935. In the character of the architect Howard Roark, she presented for the first time the kind of hero whose depiction was the chief goal of her writing: the ideal man, man as "he could be and ought to be." *The Fountainhead* was rejected by twelve publishers but finally accepted by the Bobbs-Merrill Company. When published in 1943, it made history by becoming a best seller through word-of-mouth two years later, and gained for its author lasting recognition as a champion of individualism.

V - Return to Los Angeles

Ayn Rand returned to Hollywood in late 1943 to write the screenplay for the Warner Bros. film production of *The Fountainhead*, but wartime restrictions delayed production until 1948. Working part time as a screenwriter for Hal Wallis Productions, she began her final novel, *Atlas Shrugged*, in 1946.

VI - Von Sternberg House

Due to the rationing of materials during World War II, production on *The Fountainhead* film adaptation was delayed. When it became apparent that Rand and her husband would not return to New York City, O’Connor began looking for a residential/investment property. After considering Frank Lloyd Wright’s Storer House, located six blocks from the small West Hollywood apartment in which Rand has worked on *We the Living* in 1933, he selected a house by Richard Neutra. Originally built for director Josef von Sternberg, the steel-and-glass house was located on a thirteen acres property in the Chatsworth area of the San Fernando Valley. Thoroughly disenchanted with film and stage acting, O’Connor spent the following years developing the ranch into a commercial enterprise, growing alfalfa and cut flowers. O’Connor specialized in hybridizing gladiolus. In honor of the release of the film version of *The Fountainhead*, he would create a new hybrid called The Patricia Neal.

VII - A New Novel: *Atlas Shrugged*

Affixed in Hollywood and awaiting the production of *The Fountainhead*, Ayn Rand began a new novel.

Rand “described the theme of *Atlas Shrugged* 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.’” The idea for the novel occurred to her in 1943, while discussing the philosophy of *The Fountainhead* with an acquaintance who insisted that Rand was obligated to enlighten her readers with a nonfiction version of her ethical philosophy. Rand countered she had already fulfilled the obligation and that her case was clear to any attentive reader of her fiction. However, she wondered aloud, “What would happen if every creative person went on strike against such obligations?” That, she exclaimed, would make a good novel. After the discussion ended, [her husband Frank] O’Connor, who was in the room at the time, turned to her and said: “It would make a good novel.”

“Rand thought that ‘The Mind on Strike’ would be a relatively short work dealing with economics, and that it would ‘illustrate [*The Fountainhead’s*] philosophy in action [and] merely show that capitalism and the proper economics rest on the mind.’” But as she further examined the mind’s role in human existence, the scope of the novel expanded. Eventually, the finished novel integrated a wide range of topics, including metaphysics, politics, and romantic love. She thought the novel would require two years to write; instead, it took fourteen years. *The Fountainhead*, as she later put it, was merely an overture to *Atlas Shrugged*.

“The story of *Atlas Shrugged* concerns men and women of ability in all fields, who are oppressed by a collectivist world that refuses to recognize their value. The background is modern industrial civilization. When the story opens, New York City is crumbling . . . . living conditions are getting worse. The world’s generator is running low, but no one knows why. Against this backdrop, Rand would present and dramatize her entire philosophy.”

From *Ayn Rand*

by Jeff Britting

The Overlook Press, 2004

VIII - A New Film: Adapting *The Fountainhead*

By 1949, Ayn Rand had managed to achieve her professional goal of establishing herself as a screenwriter, thereafter~~,~~ “graduating into literature” when her command of English had improved.

While the Warners Bros. film adaptation of *The Fountainhead--*directed by King Vidor and starring Patricia Neal and Gary Cooper--returned the novel to the best-seller lists, becoming the promotional vehicle she had hoped for, the production was a torturous experience. With the exception of her script and her initial enthusiasm for the casting of Cooper, Rand “disliked the movie from beginning to end.” After a contentious battle over the shooting script, Rand’s version was shot as written; however, on the night of the Hollywood premiere, she discovered that the studio had deleted a line from Roark’s final courtroom speech: “I came here to say that I am a man who does not exist for others.” This was enough to numb any joy or sense of triumph Rand experienced at the premiere.

**Object Text Panels**

I. Four Novels (4.24” by 7”)

1. √ *We the Living* 2 historic covers
2. √ *Anthem* 2 historic covers
3. √ *The Fountainhead* 2 historic covers
4. √ *Atlas Shrugged* 2 historic covers

[Object Text Panel]

Cover Art for Novels

1930s - 1970s

Miscellaneous graphic artists

Printing on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

II. Leaving Soviet Russia

~~√ Video Excerpt: “Soviet Russia”~~***(Let’s not use video for now)***

[Object Text Panel]

Soviet Russian Film Footage

c. 1920s.

Depicted is Leningrad’s Znamenskaya Square, an early neighborhood of Ayn Rand’s family

Video clip of film

Prelinger Archives

1. √ Ayn Rand as University Student 1 photograph (2” by 2”)

[Object Text Panel]

Ayn Rand

1921

University application photograph

Printing on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. √ Ayn Rand in FIlm School 1 photograph (2” by 2”)

[Object Text Panel]

Ayn Rand

c. 1924

Acting pose, while a student at the State Technicum for Screen Arts, 1924 - 25, where she also studied cinematography

Printing on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. √ Cinema Institute 1 photograph (sites book) (4” by 5”)

[Object Text Panel]

Ayn Rand

1921

“Film for us is the most important of the arts.” Attributed to Lenin by Anatoly Lunacharsky, the Bolshevik government’s first Commissar for Education. (John Green, *The Most Important of the Arts: Film After the Russian Revolution*)

Printing on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. √ Early Writings on Hollywood 2 booklets covers: Pola/City of Movies

(4” by 7”)

[Object Text Panel]

Early Writings on Hollywood

c. 1920s

First publications in Russian on film subjects, including an overview of Hollywood, *Hollywood: American City of Cinema* and, *Pola Negri,* a short profile on one of Rand’s favorite silent film actresses.

Printing on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

III. Early Hollywood Years

1. √ Hollywood panoramic image

(Just keep the aspect ratio and enlarge as you wish)

[Object Text Panel]

Panorama of Hollywood

c. 1920s

Look toward downtown Hollywood and the Hollywood Hills

Digital reproduction

Library of Congress

~~Ayn Rand as an Film Extra 1 photograph~~

~~Video Excerpt:~~ *~~The King of Kings~~* ~~video clip [David Hayes]~~

1. √ Wardrobe D., RKO Radio Pictures 1 Ayn Rand rooftop (3” by 5”)

[Object Text Panel]

Ayn Rand

c. 1930s

On the rooftop of her apartment building overlooking the studio wardrobe building at RKO Radio Pictures ~~studio~~

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. √ Wardrobe: Walter Plunkett, Marie Ree 1 photograph (8.5” by 11”)

[Object Text Panel]

Walter Plunkett, Costume Designer, RKO

c. 1930s

Walter Plunkett, shown with Marie Ree, the wardrobe department’s head cutter-fitter. Plunkett was a major Hollywood costume designer who worked at RKO Radio Pictures and served as Ayn Rand’s boss. Plunkett was best man at Rand’s 1929 marriage to actor~~,~~ Frank O’Connor.

Digital reproduction

Christian Esquevin, “Silver Screen Modes”

Ayn Rand Archives

1. *√ Woman on Trial* 1 photograph (8.5” by 11”)

[Object Text Panel]

Ayn Rand

1934

Ayn Rand standing before a sign affixed to the The Hollywood Playhouse during the initial run of her play, *Woman on Trial*

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. *√* Writing *We the Living* 1 photograph - ARPhC: 30-73

(8.5” by 11”)

~~Video Excerpt:~~ *~~Ayn Rand: A Sense~~* ~~video clip [RKO era]~~

[Object Text Panel]

Ayn Rand

c. 1933

An early portrait photograph of Ayn Rand at her writing desk. The location is believed to be her apartment in what is currently West Hollywood, California, where Rand began the final draft of her novel, *We the Living*, in 1933.

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

IV. New York Interlude

√ ~~Video Excerpt: New York City, 1930s, stock~~ ***(Let’s not use video for now)***

[Object Text Panel]

Lower Manhattan

c. 1930s

The skyline of New York City from the Hudson River.

Video clip of film

Archives.org

1. *√ Night of January 16th* 1 photograph (3” by 5”)

[Object Text Panel]

*Night of January 16th*

c. 1936

A poster from the 1936 Broadway production of Ayn Rand’s first play in which actress Doris Nolan portrayed Karen Andre

Digital reproduction

Billy Rose Theatre Collection, New York Public Library

1. *√* Publishing *We the Living* 1 book cover (5” by 8”)

[Object Text Panel]

*We the Living*, original cover

c. 1936

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. *√* Writing *Anthem* 1 book cover (5” by 8”)

[Object Text Panel]

*Anthem,* original cover

c. 1937

Taking a break from writing *The Fountainhead*, Rand wrote a novella entitled, *Anthem*. Originally conceived as a play, the work depicts a futuristic society in which the word “I” has been dropped from the vocabularies (and minds) of human beings. Its theme is the meaning of man’s ego.

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

~~Researching “Second Hand Lives~~*~~”~~* ~~1 typescript~~

~~ARP 067-02B~~

1. *√ The Unconquered* on Broadway 1 program (5” by 8”)

[Object Text Panel]

*The Unconquered*

c. 1940

Poster for the George Abbott production of Rand’s adaptation of her novel, *We the Living.* Shown left to right: John Emery as Leo; Helen Craig as Kira and Dean Jagger as Leo. The critical response--even from those sympathetic to Rand’s ideas--was uniformly negative, and the play closed after six performances.

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. *√* Writing *The Fountainhead* 2 manuscript pages, first/last

(8.5” by 11”)

[Object Text Panel]

*The Fountainhead*, first and last pages

June 26, 1938

November 29, 1942

Rand’s breakthrough novel, published on May 8, 1943. The theme was collectivism versus individualism, not in politics but in man’s soul. The *New York Times* wrote: Ayn Rand “has written a hymn in praise of the individual . . . you will not be able to read this masterful book without thinking through some of the basic concepts of our times.”

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

~~Publishing~~ *~~The Fountainhead~~* ~~1 clipping,~~ *~~New York Times~~*

**Object List, *cont.***

V. Return to Los Angeles

1. √ What Los Angeles is Reading 2 photographs

(2” by 3”) (12” by 14”)

[Object Text Panel]

“What Los Angeles is Reading”

August 19, 1945

Unknown newspaper clipping reporting on a list compiled by the Los Angeles Public Library. The clipping from the *Ayn Rand Papers* is from a file of regional best-seller lists.

Newsprint

*Ayn Rand Papers*

Ayn Rand Archives

1. √ Hollywood Studio Employment 2 photographs (8.5” by 11”)

[Object Text Panel]

Hollywood Studio Employment

1944, 1945

Ayn Rand with Jean Negulesco, director of *The Conspirators* (Warner Bros. 1944) and with Hal Wallis, producer of *Love Letters* (Paramount 1945)

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. √ Hollywood and Politics 1 photograph (8.5” by 11”)

[Object Text Panel]

Ayn Rand

October 20, 1947

Rand testified before the House Committee on Un-American Activities October 20, 1947. Earlier she was voted onto the board of the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals, an organization of conservatives and liberals that exposed the subtle use of totalitarian propaganda in films.

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

√ ~~Video Clips: Hollywood and Politics clips to cut and loop~~

[Object Text Panel]

Hollywood and Politics

October 1947

When asked in 1976 to comment on Lillian Hellman’s Hollywood blacklist memoir, *Scoundrel Time*, Ayn Rand replied, in part: “I’ll say only this. All those filthy god dammed Communists are boasting about their courage, such as Lillian Hellman, who was a member of the Communist Party. How many people died in this country, and in Russia, or Russian occupied countries because of Miss Hellman’s ideas, god only knows. Nobody could compute the evil of what those Communists in the 1930s did.”

Video of film; newsreel footage

Ayn Rand Archives

1. ~~Adapting~~ *~~The Fountainhead~~* ~~1 typescript~~
2. ~~Excerpt:~~ *~~Ayn Rand: A Sense of Life~~* ~~video clip [1943 Love Letters]~~

VI. Von Sternberg House

√ ~~Video Clip: San Fernando Valley plates~~

[Object Text Panel]

San Fernando Valley

c. 1940s

Plates of country roads in the vicinity of von Sternberg House produced by Warners Bros.

Video of film

Ayn Rand Archives

1. √ Neutra’s von Sternberg House 5 photographs (10” by 18”)

[Object Text Panel]

Richard Neutra’s von Sternberg House

1947

Photographs of von Sternberg House during Ayn Rand’s occupancy, which were taken by noted architectural photographer, Julius Shulman

Prints on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. √ Life at the Ranch 5 photographs (3” by 5”)

[Object Text Panel]

Life at the Ranch

c. 1940s

Hi?

Informal snapshots of Ayn Rand and her husband, Frank O’Connor. At von Sternberg House. O’Connor raised peacocks. Peacock blue was a favorite color of Rand’s.

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. √ A Writer’s Studio 3 photographs

(10” by 18”)

[Object Text Panel]

A Writer’s Studio

c. 1940s

Ayn Rand’s office at von Sternberg House where she began writing *Atlas Shrugged*. The garden chair visible in the patio was designed by Richard Neutra especially for this house. A large chest of drawers and storage in front of the writing desk--and partially on view--was a piece of blonde wood, mid-century modern furniture, which Ayn Rand nicknamed “the entity.”

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

VII. A New Novel: *Atlas Shrugged*

1. The Ayn Rand Writing Desk 3D display

[Object Text Panel]

The Ayn Rand Writing Desk

c. 1940s

An early 20th century pedestal desk, which was a gift from Frank O’Connor to Ayn Rand. On this desk, Ayn Rand wrote the bulk of her literary and philosophical works. O’Connor purchased the desk from a Hollywood store that sold furniture, lighting and studio expendables to the film industry.

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. *√* Mss. pages from *Atlas Shrugged* 10 manuscript pages (8.5” by 11”)

**[FOCUS TEXT PANEL]**

The manuscript pages on display here cover a period of twelve years. They include the earliest written notes on the novel (January 1, 1945) and the final handwritten page of the novel (March 20, 1957). These selections contain some of the earliest extant pages of the manuscript. What emerges from these selections is the breadth of Ayn Rand’s philosophical thinking. Those familiar with the published novel will find many recognizable ideas in earlier forms. Those unfamiliar with Atlas Shrugged will find an introduction to the novel’s philosophical scope and literary means.

**An advisory to readers unfamiliar with Atlas Shrugged: the pages displayed here contain “plot spoilers,” i.e., details that will diminish the suspense of the story.** Further, these pages contain provisional statements of ideas presented out of their original context. The definitive statement of Ayn Rand’s ideas can be found in the many books, essays and periodicals that she published (or approved) during her lifetime.

[**OBJECT TEXT PANEL:** AS319.jpg] 6.2.1

January 1, 1945, “The Strike,” p. 1

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

From the earliest extant notes stating the theme and meaning of “The Strike,” the original title of Atlas Shrugged.

In the 1940s, strikes initiated by organized labor were a well-known tactic of the American liberal left.

Rand thought that it would be both dramatic and ironic to present a strike by industrialists — the “prime movers” — against a moral code that branded them as evil exploiters. Eventually, Rand dropped the original title, “The Strike,” as too journalistic sounding.

[**OBJECT TEXT PANEL:** AS419.jpg]6.2.2

June 20, 1946, Notes, p. 1

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

This note concerns Rand’s view of man and his relationship to physical nature. As depicted in the novel, “the parasites,” i.e., those who feed off of industrialists while morally condemning them, are beginning to live in fear of “natural phenomena and disasters.” This note presents an idea first presented in *The Fountainhead* but expanded in *Atlas Shrugged*: that “man cannot exist (or survive) at the mercy of nature — his basic existence (his ‘means of survival’) is the fact that he must exist through mastering nature, through controlling it for his purposes . . .”

[**OBJECT TEXT PANEL:** AS519.jpg]6.2.3

September 2, “The Calendar,” p. 1

Handwritten notes on Atlas Shrugged

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

The opening page of the novel is dated September 2, 1946. The expression “Who is John Galt?” — which occurs throughout the novel — evokes the despair and futility of a world in decline.

Rand wrote her fiction in longhand. After a typist created a typescript of each sequence, Rand made further revisions by hand. Of the more than 12,000 pages contained in the final handwritten manuscript, she estimated that each page was rewritten, on average, five times.

[**OBJECT TEXT PANEL:** AS619.jpg]6.2.4

March 29, 1947, Note:

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

In this note Rand considers railroad language as a means to communicate symbolic “danger signals.” Throughout the story the phrase “Stop, Look, Listen” calls the reader’s attention to the “poverty, discomfort and self-denial” of the present. However, as presented in the novel, these signals of collapsing civilization are, in fact, considered “signs of virtue” by the intellectual status quo. Historically, the moral philosophy that regards poverty and self-denial as virtuous is altruism. Rand defined altruism as the view that

“man has no right to exist for his own sake, that service to others is the only justification of his existence, and that self-sacrifice is his highest duty, virtue and value.”

(*Philosophy: Who Needs It*, 1982)

The final line of the note ends with Rand’s statement that altruism is “the morality of death.” As the novel unfolds, Rand dramatizes the alternative, which she calls “the morality of life.”

[**OBJECT TEXT PANEL:** AS719.jpg]6.2.5

July 14, 1948, p. 21

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

This 1948 page is from the sequence introducing Dagny Taggart, the operational vice-president of Taggart Transcontinental. Dagny is a businesswoman of outstanding ability who struggles to keep her railroad in operation despite mounting government intervention. This page depicts Dagny’s affirmative response to the music of her favorite composer, Richard Halley. Halley has disappeared mysteriously at the height of his fame. Soon Dagny discovers a pattern of similar disappearances and wonders if a destroyer is removing the men of ability from the world.

[**OBJECT TEXT PANEL:** AS819.jpg]6.2.6

October 6, 1949, p. 6

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

The underlined sentence in this 1949 note summarizes Rand’s philosophic goal in writing *Atlas Shrugged*: “My most important job is the formulation of a rational morality of and for man, of and for his life, of and for this earth.”

Following the 1943 publication of *The Fountainhead*, Rand attempted to write a nonfiction treatise on her moral philosophy, but abandoned the attempt in favor of writing *Atlas Shrugged*. Rand’s interest in philosophy arose primarily out of her interest in portraying the ideal man in fiction. She wanted to define the philosophical premises that would make such a character possible. *Atlas Shrugged* and its theme of “the mind on strike” would provide Rand further motivation to develop her philosophy. The novel would combine abstract statement, concretizing drama and the portrayal of new heroic characters.

[**OBJECT TEXT PANEL:** AS919.jpg]6.2.7

October 6, 1949, p. 8

Handwritten notes on Atlas Shrugged

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

This note on the “social” foundation of morality continues Rand’s critique of altruism. By making morality “not an individual matter” but rather “a code for the relation of man to man,” morality collapses into collectivism. Collectivists fail because they place “the standard of their code of values outside of man.” This criticism applies to both “religious morality” (e.g., Judeo-Christian) and “any attempt at a ‘social’ morality, like communism.”

[**OBJECT TEXT PANEL:** AS1019.jpg]6.2.8

July 19, 1950, “For the passengers:

Main philosophical points,” p. 1

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

In preparation for writing a sequence describing a train accident, Rand noted the philosophical views of the victims. Included among them are: “collectivism,” “anti-reason,” “materialism.” As depicted in the novel, the accident is shown to be a consequence of these views put into practice. The sequence is a dramatic illustration of the practical, life-and-death nature of philosophical ideas.

[**OBJECT TEXT PANEL:** AS1119.jpg]6.2.9

January 5, 1951, Notes for Part II, p. 1

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

This note discusses the “death principle” of altruism and its expression in economics. The thinkers, the industrialists and creators in every field face a fundamental threat from the “looters’ laws.” Governmental controls over the entire economy have effectively criminalized every action necessary for human survival. The regulated economy depicted in the novel demonstrates altruism’s contempt for human life. “You have to pay for the right to live — existence is now a crime.”

[**OBJECT TEXT PANEL:** AS1219.jpg]6.2.10

Undated, p. 190

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

From an early draft of the novel — this page of dialogue dramatizes both the theme of the novel and Rand’s final title. Hank Rearden, an industrialist struggling under the world’s moral code, listens to Francisco d’Anconia, a former copper magnate. The decision to “shrug,” and thereby let the world fall, requires a moral sanction — a sanction permitted by a radical, new code of morality. Rearden’s discovery of this new morality is dramatized in the remainder of the novel.

[**OBJECT TEXT PANEL:** AS1318.jpg]6.2.11

Undated, p. 257

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

At this point in the novel, John Galt, the novel’s main hero, is revealed as the originator and force behind the strike. In this passage Galt explains how a strike by the men of ability merely complies with the world’s moral code. He states:

“We accept no job that requires the exercise of an independent rational judgment. Ability is a selfish evil that leaves no chance to those who are less able? We have withdrawn from the competition and left the field open to all comers, to get along as they may without us. The pursuit of wealth is greed, the root of all evil? We have abandoned that pursuit and do not seek to make fortunes any longer.”

**[OBJECT TEXT PANEL: AS1419.jpg]**6.2.12

July 29, 1953, Main subjects of Galt’s speech

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

This note outlines the main subjects of Galt’s speech, a 35,000 word summary of Rand’s philosophy and its morality of life. The outline here covers four branches of philosophy: Metaphysics (the nature of reality); Epistemology (the nature of knowledge and its validation); Ethics (the good); Politics (the nature of a proper social system). She also lists economics, which is not a branch of philosophy. In her speech Galt explains the moral foundations of a capitalist economic system.

Rand’s defense of the prime movers

“required that she formulate her own views on numerous philosophical issues, including the origin of values, the nature of volition, the law of identity as the bridge between metaphysics and epistemology, the finitude of space and time, and the nature of universals. When a philosophical issue arose during the writing of the novel, she would think about it for several days and then, in one or two attempts, resolve the problem.”

(*Ayn Rand*, by Jeff Britting, 2004)

**[OBJECT TEXT PANEL: AS1519.jpg]**6.2.13

January 9, 1954, The Morality of Death, p. 1

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

In an earlier note from *Atlas Shrugged*, Rand wrote that evil “cannot remain stationary: it must either be eliminated entirely or it will grow (like ‘a few’ controls in a free economy.)” In this 1954 note created during the writing of Galt’s Speech, Rand analyzes the full flowering of evil in philosophical terms. In its final form, the speech will attack original sin, the soul-body dichotomy, sacrifice and altruism.

**[OBJECT TEXT PANEL: AS1619.jpg]**6.2.14

October 13, 1955, p. 493

Handwritten notes on *Atlas Shrugged*

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

This 1955 draft is the earliest extant, final page of Galt’s Speech, which includes the oath taken by all the strikers:

*I swear — by my life and my love of it — that I shall never live for the sake of another man nor ask another man to live for mine.*

**[OBJECT TEXT PANEL: AS1719.jpg]**6.2.15

March 20, 1957, p. 87

Handwritten notes on Atlas Shrugged

Reproduction on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

This 1957 page is Rand’s last and final handwritten page of the novel. The work had taken almost fourteen years to complete. As to Ayn Rand’s personal reaction to completing the final page of the manuscript, she recounts:

I was too dazed, in a way, to remember anything except walking into the kitchen and Frank [O’Connor] was there, and I held the last page, with the words, “The End” and the date on it.

1. ~~Excerpt:~~ *~~Ayn Rand: A Sense of Life~~* ~~video clip [AR/F OC driveway]~~

VIII. A New Film: Adapting  *The Fountainhead*

1. √ The Script 1 manuscript (8.5” by 11”)

[Object Text Panel]

The Script

c. 1940s

A page from a draft of the script featuring the beginning of Roark’s courtroom speech, one of the longest speeches in film history

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. √ The Film 6 images (3” by 5”)

[Object Text Panel]

The Film

c. 1940s

Clippings from Ayn Rand’s papers covering aspects of the Warner Bros. film from its pre-release and exhibition phases

Print on paper

Ayn Rand Archives

1. √ ~~Video Excerpt:~~ *~~The Fountainhead~~* ~~Film Trailer~~

[Object Text Panel]

*The Fountainhead* film trailer

1949

*The Fountainhead* is a 1949 American, black-and-white drama film from Warner Bros., produced by Henry Blanke, directed by King Vidor, that stars Gary Cooper, Patricia Neal, Raymond Massey, Robert Douglas, and Kent Smith. The film is based on the bestselling 1943 novel of the same name by Ayn Rand, who also wrote the screenplay adaptation. Although Rand's screenplay was used with minimal alterations, she later criticized the film's editing, production design, and acting.

The film's and novel's story are concerned with the life of Howard Roark, an individualistic young architect who chooses to struggle in obscurity rather than compromise his artistic and personal vision, following his battle to design what the public sees as modern architecture, which he believes is superior to other forms, despite resistance from a traditionally minded architectural establishment. Roark's complex relationships with the individuals who assist or hinder his progress, or both, allow the film to be both a romantic drama and a philosophical work. Roark represents Rand's embodiment of the human spirit, and his struggle represents the struggle between individualism and collectivism.

From Warner Bros. Fandom Site

Video of film

Ayn Rand Archives

[FINAL FOCUS TEXT]

In 1951, Ayn Rand was through with Hollywood. She and her husband, Frank O’Connor, returned to New York City, which was the setting for her next novel.

After the publication of *Atlas Shrugged* in 1957, Rand devoted her life to writing nonfiction, explaining her philosophy and its applications to the culture and current events. Rand directed her effort towards human beings and their need of “a philosophy for living on earth”:

In order to live, man must act; in order to act, he must make choices; in order to make choices, he must define a code of values; in order to define a code of values, he must know what he is and where he is — i.e., he must know his own nature (including his means of knowledge) and the nature of the universe in which he acts — i.e., he needs metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, which means: philosophy.

Objectivism, as she explained it in her first *Los Angeles Times* column in 1962, advocates reality, reason, self-interest, and capitalism. “Reality,” she wrote, “exists as an objective absolute — facts are facts, independent of man’s feelings, wishes, hopes or fears.” Reason is man’s only source of knowledge and guide to action, and his basic means of survival. Survival requires an ethics of rational self-interest, where every man “must exist for his own sake, neither sacrificing himself to others nor others to himself.” Politically, this requires laissez-faire capitalism, a complete separation of government and economics, where the only purpose of government is to protect man’s individual rights. In esthetics, she wrote, art is a concretization of “metaphysical abstractions,” and she defined a theory of “romantic realism.”

The writing desk, originally purchased in Hollywood, would remain Rand’s “writing studio” and an important fixture of her residences until the end of her life. In 1982, Rand died in her New York City apartment while working on a television adaptation of *Atlas Shrugged*--a project she vowed to complete, while anticipating her ~~own~~ return to Hollywood where she planned on producing the film herself.

**# # # #**