

Ayn Rand Revisited

Nobody asked but ...

This is I, revisiting my mental homestead of thoughts on Ayn Rand. It has been about 8 years since I read (listened to audio books of) *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Fountainhead*.

Today I heard a podcast from Skyler Collins in which he interviewed Derek Porter. Derek had listened to *Atlas Shrugged*, and I am not clear on whether he had also listened to *The Fountainhead*. It caused me to think about Ayn Rand again. I find 8 years later that I still have a higher opinion of *The Fountainhead*.

- *Atlas* is set as the Individual vs. the State.
- *Fountainhead* pits the Individual against the human tendency toward Collectivism, and mediocrity.
- In *Atlas*, John Galt butts heads with politicians who have discovered how to use the state to manipulate matters to their own interests, but Galt fights back with a collective of his own, using the manipulation of technology to abandon the state (and many of its subjects).
- Although, Howard Roark tries mightily, more than once, to abandon all, he keeps coming back to take on the arbiters of taste who are trying to gain vicarious control of the field of architecture.

I suppose I regard the message of *Fountainhead* to be more elemental than that of *Atlas*. I think, I hope, that we are nearing the end of the short run in which statism will have run its course. In the long run, the challenge to humanity will be to use its imagination, its reason, its logic to overcome its limitations. The state is just one limitation. And since the state is nothing but a limitation, it must eventually fall. The direction of evolution is toward the optimum, as it tends to preserve strengths and eliminate weaknesses. Limitations will fall as the species rises above particular ones.

— Kilgore Forelle