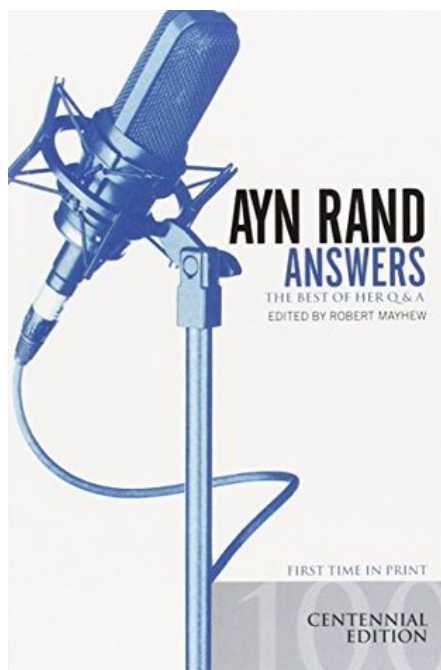




Ayn Rand Answers: The Best of Her Q & A

Robert Mayhew (Editor)

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After the publication of *Atlas Shrugged* in 1957, Ayn Rand occasionally lectured in order bring her philosophy of Objectivism to a wider audience and apply it to current cultural and political issues. These taped lectures and the question-and-answer sessions that followed not only added an eloquent new dimension to Ayn Rand's ideas and beliefs, but a fresh and spontaneous insight into Ayn Rand herself. Never before available in print, this publishing event is a collection of those enlightening Q & As.

This is Ayn Rand on: ethics, Ernest Hemingway, modern art, Vietnam, Libertarians, Jane Fonda, religious conservatives, Hollywood Communists, atheism, Don Quixote, abortion, gun control, love and marriage, Ronald Reagan, pollution, the Middle East, racism and feminism, crime and punishment, capitalism, prostitution, homosexuality, reason and rationality, literature, drug use, freedom of the press, Richard Nixon, New Left militants, HUAC, chess, comedy, suicide, masculinity, Mark Twain, improper questions, and more.

Ayn Rand Answers: The Best of Her Q & A Details

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Robin says

An easy read which is well organized and indexed. We're given exposure to some of Rand's less formally declared beliefs, notably about various artists and writers (some of whom are relatively obscure). A useful peek into the talks she gave, some in semi-private settings.

Amy says

I wish she was here now.....but her intellectual heirs are still fighting for rational values!

Sylvester Kuo says

Ayn Rand Answers: The Best of her Q & A is a wonder selection of her answers to questions that anyone is just dying for answers. From politics, philosophy to arts, Rand answered every single question with succinct, witty and clear explanation. Oh Rand, you make me laugh~

Rebecca F. says

The only problem with this book is that there are still so many questions that I'd like to ask Ayn Rand, especially about the world some 25 years after her death, the well-organized and concise log of her responses just isn't enough to satiate me.

Tatiana says

An easy read and insightful. You don't need to agree with Ayn Rand's ideology in order to enjoy the book. The q&a format makes it easy to skip around and ask yourself questions about topics you don't normally consider. It's a short "must read" if you want to get a broad view of Rand's opinions. This is also a good book for the purpose of "listening to others" without actually talking to that person.

Michael Kilpatrick says

This book is awfully biased toward her views but it still explains a lot. I'd love to chat with her about this century and see if any of her staunch objectivism would change.

Dave says

This is a collection of questions and answers drawn from post-lecture Q & A sessions. Reads like a magazine interview (well, a 200 page interview) where a short question is followed by a short answer. Rand's ideas do not come across all that well in this "soundbite" form. (I should note that this is a criticism of the Q & A format, not of Rand's philosophy.) There are a few interesting bits, like when she dresses down audience members who ask smart-assed questions or talks smack about public figures (especially Ronald Reagan and Jane Fonda), but this is not essential Rand by any stretch. In the introduction, the author (well, compiler, I suppose) says that this book was never viewed or edited by Rand (possibly because she had been dead for more than 20 years at the time it was released, but that's only a guess...) and therefore he does not know if she would have approved of it. I have my thoughts. This book is a passable way to kill a couple hours if you are already familiar with Rand, however I would strongly advise against using it as an introduction to her philosophy.

David Robins says

It is what it is: Ayn Rand's opinions on various matters from politics to literature, eloquently spoken and organized by categories.

Daniel S says

Even when circumstances beyond your control make you completely helpless existentially, you are still free intellectually and morally; and if you hang on to your moral conviction no matter what happens, you are saved, at least spiritually; that is ninety percent of the battle. [209:]

Ash Ryan says

A great compilation of the best of Ayn Rand's question and answer periods following her lectures.[return][return]Robert Mayhew's excellent editing organizes the questions and answers into chapters drawn around broad themes (e.g., politics, ethics, metaphysics and epistemology, and art), then into smaller sub-sections. This keeps the reading flowing, instead of jumping around from topic to topic almost at random as would occur in a live Q&A session.[return][return]While some of Ayn Rand's answers will be obvious to long-time students of Objectivism, many of them shed new light on her philosophy, and almost all of them give the reader a better picture of Ayn Rand as a person, whether it is her quick wit, her warm benevolence in giving the benefit of the doubt to most questioners and patiently explaining her philosophical principles to them, or her righteous indignation at genuinely dishonest, hostile, or insulting questions. Even her answers to questions on narrow, concrete issues at the time of the session (such as the Vietnam war) are applicable to events today (such as the Iraq war) because her answers address the deeper abstract principles involved (such as proper foreign policy).[return][return]On my first reading, I noticed only two drawbacks. First, a few of her answers leave you wanting more, and you wish that she were still alive and in the room with you so that you could ask her follow-up questions. That's not to say that she doesn't give a full enough answer to the question as asked, given the context of a live public Q&A session, but rather that her intriguing answers leave you feeling sad that you are merely reading a book and not actually in the room during one of those Q&A sessions. Second, if you've ever heard a recording of one of her Q&A's (or were lucky enough to have

attended one), you are aware of how much you are missing from the live setting--for example, from the audience reactions, as they audibly gasp in shock or indignation at some remark Ayn Rand makes, but by the end of her answer after she explains the comment, they are cheering. That's an added bonus of the live setting that the book format unfortunately can't reproduce, but if you're a student like me and can't yet afford to spend a few hundred dollars on recordings of all her lectures, this book is the next best thing.

Perry Kuipers says

If you are a fan of Ayn Rand and have read most of her books, then this book is a must-read. This helps to answer some questions that you still had after reading her nonfiction.

Sara says

Great collection of Q and A with Ayn Rand! Gives the reader added insights and glimpses into the Objectivist philosophy. Really liked her advice to writers and her sense of humor.
