

Prudence & Egoism

Instructions

When doing the reading for this class, there are the two basic kinds of information you need to understand:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, it is *information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible position on an issue, rather than another.

Reading

Rand, A. (1957). *Atlas shrugged*. Random House.

Questions

As you read, keep these questions in mind:

1. These excerpt from *Atlas Shrugged* are from a long radio speech by John Galt, the hero of the book, to the American public. This speech is the vehicle that Ayn Rand, the author of *Atlas Shrugged*, uses to deliver her views about ethics.

According to this speech, what is the purpose of your life and how should you make decisions about how to live it? What is the argument justifying these claims?

2. While Rand does not specifically talk about business in this excerpt from *Atlas Shrugged*, this book and her other writing have been extremely influential on how many business professionals understand the purpose and goals of business.

Based on your answer to the previous question, what might be the purpose of business according to Rand?

To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.