

December 2021

To All Atlas Society Donors,

When I was 10 years old, I played Alice in a school play of *Through the Looking Glass*. Looking back, I was fortunate to have only *play-acted* the experience of entering a world in which “Nothing would be what it is, because everything would be what it isn’t.”

I was lucky to merely *try on* the role of a child who reflects: “I know who I WAS when I got up this morning, but I think I must have changed several times since then.”

The children and young people living in 2021 aren’t so lucky. For them, it’s not a play or an act. They *live* in a world where nothing is what it is...and where they are made to live and learn in a world of what is *not*.

When they get up in the morning, the vast majority are normal children, adolescents and young adults, filled with energy and a desire to make friends, make things, play and learn. They are boys and girls. Their young bodies are endowed with an immunity against infections that will only grow stronger as they meet and overcome new pathogens, just as their young minds will grow stronger as they meet and overcome new challenges.

Then they are forced through a looking glass—or down a rabbit hole—into an ideologically warped world where they are changed from individuals to members of a group. They are “oppressors” made guilty—or “victims” made helpless—by the color of their skin, rather than the content of their character. They no longer have 10-year-old immune systems—they are treated like 90-year-olds who are extremely vulnerable to dying from COVID and likely to spread it. They must wear masks; and if, as in the case of one Down syndrome girl, they can’t manage that, string or tape will be used to force them.

The child who woke up as a boy could change into a girl and, upon gaining entry to the girls’ bathroom, could change back into a boy and attack a girl. *Curiouser, and curiouser*. Parents who follow their children into this strange world, and are alarmed by what they see, are no longer loving protectors but potential “domestic terrorists,” should they vent their outrage at school board meetings.

Is it any surprise that suicide attempts by teenage girls were up over 50% in February and March of this year, compared to the same period in 2020? Is it any surprise that 25% of 18 – to 24-year-olds of both genders reported contemplating suicide? Is it any surprise that rates of anorexia and other eating disorders, often a reaction to a loss of control, have dramatically risen?

*“Oh, how I wish I could shut up like a telescope! I think I could, if only I knew how to begin.”*



Instead of wanting to extend, to grow, to understand, young people want to retract, look away, disappear. Instead of nurturing them with hope, confidence, and curiosity—on a firm footing of reality—children are sent topsy-turvy with messages of fear, guilt, and shame.

As parents and grandparents, patriots and philanthropists, we too often feel helpless and hopeless. It's not just young people who are under attack—it's our businesses and our livelihoods. It's our cherished institutions of free speech, property, and civil liberties. It's our capitalist system, and the founding ideals of America itself, that are philosophically under attack.

The reality we see looks less like the pages of a children's book than scenes out of *Atlas Shrugged*. Boarded-up storefronts. Container ships idling up and down the coastline. Cancelled flights. Empty store shelves. Gasoline prices rising to \$7 a gallon in parts of the country. Skyrocketing rates of theft and violent crime. Caravans of migrants crossing our borders illegally in the hundreds of thousands. And instead of panhandlers asking, "Who is John Galt?," we find sidewalks clogged with addicts lying in their own filth among drug debris.

Yet according to the politicians who now have control of the presidency and Congress—according to most major news networks and newspapers, and according to the social media platforms that follow their cues—what are the biggest problems facing the country? White supremacy. Institutional racism. Climate change. Right-wing extremists. Transphobia. Income inequality. And resistance to being vaccinated against a virus which the majority of Americans have already beaten and against which they have acquired superior natural immunity.

And to question or reject acceptance of what left-wing politicians, the media, "the science," and the academic experts tell us is to court social ostracism and social media censure at best—and loss of professional standing and employment at worst. So we, whether as students or as adults, are too often left isolated, disconnected from sources of community, sources of truth, and opportunities to discuss and debate problems and solutions with others of like minds.

**That may explain why The Atlas Society has enjoyed a renaissance in the past couple of years—as longtime donors draw closer, as new members find us, and as students flock to the new seminars, new discussion groups, new book clubs, and new social media platforms offered by The Atlas Society and our growing staff.**

The name "The Atlas Society" pays tribute, of course, to *Atlas Shrugged*, Ayn Rand's *magnum opus* dramatizing the struggle of heroic, productive creators against the parasitic forces of grasping bureaucrats and hapless cronies. But the word "society" speaks to the community we provide, for donors, viewers, and listeners—young and old. **I like to think of our society as less of a refuge from reality than a refuge OF reality.**

Our society is a Galt's Gulch where you can go to escape from the propagandized "fake reality" and connect with others in the *actual* reality, to discuss real root causes of our current woes from a philosophical perspective, with a growing roster of Senior Scholars and Senior Fellows, and to hear from leading intellectuals on issues ranging from race relations to free speech, to COVID, and to the environment.

Two hundred members of our society recently traveled from far and wide for our 5th Annual Gala in Malibu, California, to honor Peter Thiel with our Lifetime Achievement Award, to hear from Oculus founder Palmer Luckey, to meet previous honorees Peter Diamandis and Chip Wilson, and to celebrate the ideas of Ayn Rand and the innovative ways The Atlas Society is engaging young people with those ideas—through graphic novels, animated videos, and

unconventional, edgy social-media content.

At a time when our event planners tell us that most liberty organizations are seeing gala attendance at 50% of that of previous years, we welcomed 60% more attendees than in 2020, which in turn had attracted 40% more attendees than in 2019.

**If we missed you at our annual gala, let us fill you in on some of our most exciting accomplishments of 2021:**

**Webinars and Podcasts:** Building on the success of **The Atlas Society Asks**—a webinar series launched in March of 2020—we’ve featured and scheduled 45 interviews this year, with Chip Wilson’s and venture capitalist Tim Draper’s interviews drawing 120,000 and 177,000 viewers, respectively, on Facebook alone. Other guests have included Steve Forbes, Victor Davis Hanson, Art Laffer, Whole Foods founder John Mackey, Microstrategy’s Michael Saylor, leading thinkers on race like Kmele Foster and Wilfred Reilly, and climate anti-alarmists Michael Shellenberger and Steve Koonin. Not only are these interviews live-streamed on Zoom, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram, they’re also available for download as podcasts on Apple podcasts, Google, and Spotify.

**New Platforms:** Clubhouse is a new audio-only conversation app where “The Atlas Society Club” now hosts twice-a-week discussion with our scholars, trustees, and other special guests like Grover Norquist, Steve Moore and John Fund.

TikTok is the fastest-growing social media app, particularly among 13- to 18-year-olds. These short-form videos are punchy—sometimes literally, like with our mash-up of Ayn Rand knocking out Bernie Sanders. Other clips feature Ayn Rand from interviews and speeches, and other thinkers like Milton Friedman, Thomas Sowell, and Jordan Peterson.

**New Scholars and Fellows:** In just the last four months, we have added *two* experts to our roster of intellectual fire power.

***Professor Jason D. Hill, Ph.D.***

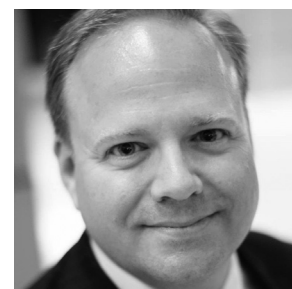
Professor Hill is a Jamaican-American professor of philosophy at DePaul University in Chicago. At the age of 20, he immigrated to the United States and found not intractable racial bigotry but “a land of bountiful opportunity”—a place where he could get a college education, earn a doctorate in philosophy, and eventually become a tenured professor at a top university.



*“The spirit of openness and innovation I’ve witnessed at The Atlas Society resonates with my own approach to teaching and is well suited to introduce students to the ideas of Objectivism.”*

***Robert Tracinski***

Robert Tracinski will provide his unique perspective in the spheres of politics, national policy, and Objectivism. Author of *The Tracinski Letter*, Rob is also editor of *Symposium*, a journal of political liberalism, and a columnist for *Discourse Magazine*. His book, *So Who Is John Galt, Anyway? A Reader’s Guide to Ayn Rand’s Atlas Shrugged*, was recently featured in our Student Book Club.



### **New Projects & Publications:**

- *Red Pawn: The Graphic Novel*
- *Pocket Guide to The Fountainhead*
- *Pocket Guide to Philosophies of Education*
- *Romanticism Reborn*
- *Truth and Toleration* in Portuguese
- *Pocket Guide to Objectivism* in Portuguese
- *Ayn Rand and Altruism* in Spanish
- 365 Days of Ayn Rand Inspiration

**“Draw My Life Videos”:** We’ve released 10 new “Draw My Life” videos *this year*, which have drawn more than 6 million views across all platforms!

#### **“My Name is Free Speech”**

**“My Name is Postmodernism”** — Born in the shadow of Doubt, Postmodernism (nicknamed PoMo) learns distrust from his mother, Cynicism, and deep class hatred from his father, Socialism. He meets his nemesis, Reality, who reveals his insecurities and resentments; and PoMo, now disguised, sets off to undermine reality, reason, and beauty on his destructive rampage through academia, art, and politics.

#### **“My Name is Peter Diamandis”**

#### **“My Name is Kira Argounova”**

#### **“My Name is New York City”**

**“My Name is Mars”** — From a lonely red planet to a new home for humanity? This Draw My Life video imagines a future in which Mars becomes the most advanced, prosperous planet in the solar system. At first, Mars looks with longing upon Earth’s good fortune: seas, life, man, innovation. As men-of-the-mind set their sights on civilizing Mars, collectivists continue their quest to subjugate men.

#### **“My Name is Cancel Culture”**

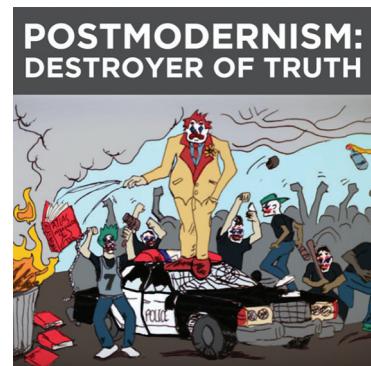
#### **“My Name is Howard Roark”**

#### **“My Name is Capitalism”**

#### **“My Name is Objectivism”**

**Sociedad Atlas:** After experimenting with Spanish-language interviews and videos in 2020, we formally launched Sociedad Atlas in May of this year under the leadership of Antonella Marty. She curates Spanish-language memes for social media, answers questions in video format on weekly Instagram Takeovers, hosts weekly interviews, and partnered with FEE to host a day-long seminar, “Quien es John Galt?” with 450 students attending and hundreds of students viewing it online later.

We’re building upon our success in Latin America with new translated publications and videos in languages including Portuguese, Arabic, Hebrew, French, Vietnamese, Japanese, and Hindi!



This is just a fraction of what we've achieved in the past year with your support. Many of you marvel at the productivity of our small team, and the “bang for the buck” you get for your investment. It's true that we operate more like a start-up than a legacy liberty organization, but as Jay Lapeyre, Chairman of the Board of The Atlas Society, observed at our gala:

“In the life of every start-up, there comes a time when you've got to move out of the garage, to stop postponing the too-expensive changes that would allow you to scale, to move beyond trading favors and recruiting volunteers, to build capacity to afford a sustainable workflow in which all-nighters and 70-hour work weeks are the exception rather than the rule, ***to seek out and secure the investment for the next stage in your organization's growth.***”

That's where we find ourselves today. It's time to scale up. **And we're asking you to step forward—to partner with us so we can take the next step on our shared journey, to multiply the results we've achieved to double our distribution, and bring our content and programming to an even wider audience.**

Looking back at the 2021 goals laid out in last year's letter, we have reached them, and then some. We dominated new social-media platforms, we DOUBLED our goal of reaching an average of 10,000 engagements per social-media post on Facebook, now averaging well beyond 20,000 likes, comments, and shares *on every piece of content we post*—with a new record of 27,000 engagements just last month. On the international front, we more than doubled our global audience, largely in Latin America, but increasingly in the Middle East.

In 2022, we aim to double the number of young people attending our student-facing programs like Morals & Markets and our Book Club. This includes doubling the number of students who entered our pilot Ayn Rand Story Contest, with increased incentives and outreach. We also aim to double the size of our Clubhouse audience, and double the audience for our weekly webinars.

For the past three decades, the biggest obstacles to progress facing The Atlas Society weren't financial, or even organizational; our biggest obstacles were indifference, irrelevance and, frankly, incredulity.

Too many didn't believe our warnings about the incompetence of big government. Too many disregarded our warnings about the very real dangers of tribalism. Too many discounted our warnings about the very real prospects of authoritarianism and collectivism in our times. All those warnings fell on deaf ears. That has changed, that can change, that must change now.

We have a teachable moment. And The Atlas Society has the team, the tools, the imagination, the energy, the momentum and, most importantly, the message that young people need to hear today.

As the Duchess remarked to Alice: “Everything's got a moral, if only you can find it.” And the moral of our current crisis is that sanctioning the looking-glass logic of pretending things are what they are not results in a shattered reflection of reality. Politically correct catchphrases obscure the essence of real things or are advanced as complete fabrications. And real things—like debt, or inflation, or rising crime—are dismissed as transitory ephemera, or blamed on the bogeyman of the day.

“Are you seeking to know what is wrong with the world?” John Galt asked us in *Atlas Shrugged*. “All the disasters that have wrecked your world, came from your leaders' attempt to evade the fact that A is A. All the secret evil you dread to face within you, and all the pain you have ever endured, came from your own attempt to evade the fact that A is A. The purpose of those who taught you to evade it, was to make you forget that Man is Man.”



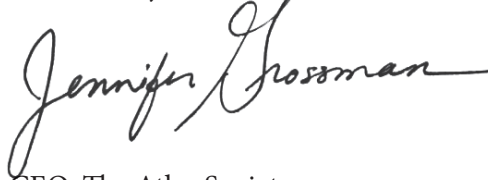
The purpose of The Atlas Society is to make you, and the young people we reach, *remember*. To remind them that they are heroic beings, with their own happiness as the moral purpose of their lives, with productive achievement as their noblest activity, and reason as their only absolute.

Will you help us? **Support us in amplifying Ayn Rand's message of individualism, reason, and purpose by supporting our work today. We have set an ambitious goal to double our budget by 2024. Help us build on the momentum we've achieved in the past two years to reach our goals in the next two!**

*This year in particular is an opportunity to make the biggest impact at The Atlas Society. Our Board of Trustees will match all NEW donor gifts, all lapsed donor gifts, and all current donors' increased support.* Make double the impact with a special year-end gift! Achieving our fundraising goals translates directly to reaching more minds with the ideas of Ayn Rand, creatively and artistically presented in technologically cutting-edge formats. It will mean more videos produced, more webinars and podcasts, more publications, more translations, and vastly expanded distribution. It means more events, greater scholar contributions, and continued global expansion. Thank you for your consideration, your support, and your commitment.

With renewed commitment of my own,

Jennifer Anju Grossman (JAG)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Grossman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jennifer" and last name "Grossman" clearly legible.

CEO, The Atlas Society

P.S. Follow The Atlas Society on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Clubhouse and TikTok —and make our website, [atlassociety.org](https://atlassociety.org), a regular stop for updates on our events (virtual and in person) as well as commentary!

P.P.S. Your tax-deductible contribution is a direct investment in the future of this nation. We must ensure the next generation has access to the philosophy of reason, achievement, individualism, and freedom. To make a gift today, please use the enclosed reply form—or donate online through our secure portal at [atlassociety.org/donate](https://atlassociety.org/donate).