

# Which Ayn Rand Villain is Donald Trump?

[www.theobjectivestandard.com/2016/04/which-ayn-rand-villain-is-donald-trump/](http://www.theobjectivestandard.com/2016/04/which-ayn-rand-villain-is-donald-trump/)



Image: [Evan Guest](#)

I haven't written about Donald Trump yet because the subject is so damn painful. But by taking a somewhat humorous approach—by letting Trump provide us with *huuuuuge* comic relief—we can examine the situation less painfully, and possibly with a few laughs.

Below are a several statements from Trump that are simultaneously nightmarish and hilarious. They also bring to mind a flood of characters from [Ayn Rand's](#) novels, especially [The Fountainhead](#) and [Atlas Shrugged](#). So the game is: Which character (or characters) from Rand's novels does Trump sound like in these passages?

Feel free to mix characters and form hybrids, as Trump's (ahem) richness may warrant that. You also might need to incorporate characters from other fictional sources, given that some of Trump's word salads go beyond anything Rand could have conjured even for Lois Cook. In any event, be sure to share your thoughts in the comment section below.

1. Trump recently [advised](#) college students at St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin, as follows:

*When you become very successful, the people that you will like best are the people that are less successful than you, because when you go to a table you can tell them all of these wonderful stories, and they'll sit back and listen. Does that make sense to you? OK? Always be around unsuccessful people because everybody will respect you. Do you understand that?*

Which character or combination of characters does that sound like?

2. [The Washington Post](#) editorial board recently [interviewed](#) Trump, and among the questions asked and (strictly speaking not) answered was a question from the *Post's* publisher, Fred Ryan. The correspondence proceeded as follows:

*RYAN: You mentioned a few minutes earlier here that you would knock ISIS. You've mentioned it many times. You've also mentioned the risk of putting American troops in a danger area. If you could substantially reduce the risk of harm to ground troops, would you use a battlefield nuclear weapon to take out ISIS?*

*TRUMP: I don't want to use, I don't want to start the process of nuclear. Remember the one thing that everybody has said, I'm a counterpuncher. Rubio hit me. Bush hit me. When I said low energy, he's a low-energy individual, he hit me first. I spent, by the way he spent 18 million dollars' worth of negative ads on me. That's putting [MUFFLED] . . .*

*RYAN: This is about ISIS. You would not use a tactical nuclear weapon against ISIS?*

*TRUMP: I'll tell you one thing, this is a very good looking group of people here. Could I just go around so I know who the hell I'm talking to?*

*HIATT: Sure, then I'd like to let a couple of them get in questions.*

*LEWANDOWSKI: We have got five minutes, hard out.*

*HIATT: Okay.*

*TRUMP: Oh is it?*

*LEWANDOWSKI: Yeah. You have a meeting you have to get to.*

*TRUMP: Okay we do.*

In case you're wondering, that portion of the interview is not an anomaly. That is the level of clarity, eloquence, and focus Trump exhibits throughout the entire [conversation](#) (more below). But that passage works particularly well for the game: Which character from an Ayn Rand novel or other fictional source does Trump sound like there?

3. As *The Washington Post* interview continued, the subject turned to China—well, sort of. Jackson Diehl, the *Post's* deputy editorial page editor, tried to ask Trump a question about China. It went like this:

*DIEHL: What about China and the South China Sea. What do you think they're up to and—*

*TRUMP: I think it's a terrible situation, I think it's terrible they have no respect for—*

*DIEHL: —and what should we do about it?*

*TRUMP: Well look, we have power over China and people don't realize it. We have trade power over China. I don't think we are going to start World War III over what they did, it affects other countries certainly a lot more than it affects us. But—and honestly, you know part of—I always say we have to be unpredictable. We're totally predictable. And predictable is bad. Sitting at a meeting like this and explaining my views and if I do become president, I have these views that are down for the other side to look at, you know. I hate being so open. I hate when they say—like I said get rid of the oil, keep the oil, different things over the years, when people are saying what would you do with regard to the Middle East, when we left—We should have never been in Iraq. It was a horr- it was one of the worst decisions ever made in the history of our country. We then got out badly, then after we got out, I said, "Keep the oil. If we don't keep it Iran's going to get it." And it turns out Iran and ISIS basically—*

*HIATT: How do you keep it without troops, how do you defend the oil?*

*TRUMP: You would . . . You would, well for that—for that, I would circle it. I would defend those areas.*

*HIATT: With U.S. troops?*

*TRUMP: Yeah, I would defend the areas with the oil. And I would have taken out a lot of oil. And, uh, I would have kept it. I mean, I would have kept it, because, look: Iran has the oil, and they're going to have the oil, well, the stuff they don't have, because Iran is taking over Iraq as sure as you're sitting there. And I've been very good on this stuff. My prognostications, my predictions have become, have been very accurate, if you look.*

*HIATT: So what do you think China's aims are in the South China Sea?*

*TRUMP: Well I know China very well, because I deal with China all the time. I've done very well. China's unbelievably ambitious. China is, uh . . . I mean, when I deal with China, you know, I have the Bank of America building, I've done some great deals with China. I do deals with them all the time on, you know, selling apartments, and, you know, people say "oh that's not the same thing." The level of . . . uh, the largest bank in the world, 400 million customers, is a tenant of mine in New York, in Manhattan. The biggest bank in China. The biggest bank in the world.*

*China has got unbelievable ambitions. China feels very invincible. We have rebuilt China. They have drained so much money out of our country that they've rebuilt China. Without us, you wouldn't see the airports and the roadways and the bridges; I mean, the George Washington Bridge is like, that's like a trinket compared to the bridges that they've built in China. We don't build anymore, and it, you know, we had our day. But China, if you look at what's going on in China, you know, they go down to seven percent or eight percent and it's like a national catastrophe. Our GDP is right now zero. Essentially zero.*

*DIEHL: Could you use trade to cause them to retreat in the South China Sea?*

*TRUMP: I think so, yeah. I think so.*

*DIEHL: What would you do?*

*TRUMP: We, well, you start making it tougher. They're selling their products to us for . . . you know, with no tax, no nothing. By the way, we can't deal with them, but they can deal with us. See, we are free trade. The story is, and I have so many people that deal with China—they can easily sell their product here. No tax, no nothing, just "come on, bring it all in, you know, bring in your apples, bring in everything you make" and no taxes whatsoever, right? If you want to deal with China, it's just the opposite. You can't do that. In other words, if you want to, if you're a manufacturer, you want to go into China? It's very hard to get your product in, and if you get it in you have to pay a very big tax.*

*HIATT: So, if they occupied what the Japanese call the Senkaku Islands, is that something the United States—*

*TRUMP: —Well, I, you know, again, I don't like to tell you what I'd do, because I don't want to . . . You understand what I'm saying, Fred? If I . . . Okay, if I say "Well, we should go in and do this or that or that," I don't want to, I don't want to sort of . . . red flag all over it. I do think this: It's an unbelievable thing that they've done, it's unbelievable aggression, it's unbelievable lack of respect for this country.*

Who does Trump sound like there? (If that passage is simply too incoherent to ascribe to a villain in a Rand novel, feel free to think in the direction of James Joyce or the like.)

4. At a rally in Fort Worth, Texas, with his kindred spirit Chris Christie, Trump [said](#):

*If I become president, they [the media] will have such problems. . . . One of the things I'm going to do . . . and I've never said this before . . . is open up our libel laws, so when they write purposely negative and horrible and false articles we [presumably the Trump administration] can sue them and win lots of money. . . . When The New York Times writes a hit piece which is a total disgrace, or when The Washington Post . . . writes a hit piece, we can sue them and win money instead of having no chance of winning because they're totally protected. You see, with me there not protected because I'm not like other people.*

Who does Trump sound like there?

In addition to providing your thoughts on the above instances in the comment section below, feel free to add other remarks from Trump that fit the bill. There's no dearth of them. And he's somewhere spewing more right now.

One final query: If Ayn Rand had assigned the words or "thoughts" above to a presidential candidate in a novel she'd written, how would America's leading intellectuals have reacted? Would they have acknowledged that this is the kind of thing that can happen when anti-intellectual intellectuals steer a culture for decades into the dismal depths of irrationalism and emotionalism? Or would they have accused her of fabricating an "unbelievable" villain and mocked her for "hyperbole"?

We know the answer. And, to those "intellectuals," there is only one thing to say: Brothers, you asked for it.