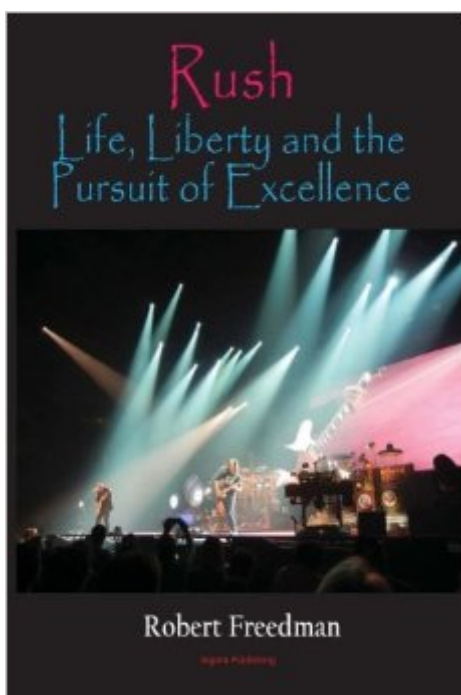


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Rush: Life, Liberty, And The Pursuit Of Excellence



Synopsis

Rush is often referred to as a libertarian rock band, but really, what the band is channeling is an Aristotelian individualism, a philosophy that strongly resonates with today's 40-somethings. This helps explain the band's resurgence in popularity, culminating in its 2013 induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. 'Rush: Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Excellence' brings together the excitement of the band's progressive music, performed by three musicians whose mastery of their instruments has won them the admiration of their peers, and the surprising philosophical sophistication of their music's lyrics. The book is a systematic look at the Aristotelian philosophy embedded in the band's lyrics over its 40-year recording career. Although the topic of the book is academic, the writing is sharp, down-to-earth, and leavened with a dry wit. As a cultural phenomenon, Rush is worthy of serious study, and although other books have looked at the philosophical character of the band's music, this is the first time the music over the band's entire 40-year career is demonstrated to fall under a single, unified theory: Aristotelian individualism. Anyone interested in the band's music, popular culture, and philosophical ideas simply explained will enjoy this entertaining and thought-provoking work. Even readers who have pored over earlier books on Rush will enjoy this unifying theme. While the work ethic and value structure of the middle class is part of the band's philosophy, that is just a subset of the band's Aristotelianism, as shown by Robert Freedman here. The unified Aristotelian philosophy is also different from what's discussed in 'Rush and Philosophy' (edited by Durrell Bowman and Jim Berti) looks at the band's music through multiple philosophical filters and no attempt is made to look at the music through a single, unifying lens. Rather, it approaches the lyrics as literary analysis and provides no overarching theoretical framework.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For many of us, the teenage years are a time for forming musical tastes that can last a lifetime. Driving this process is the rare band that cuts through the noise of the top hits of the day, and speaks to us on a personal level. Its songs encapsulate our own feelings, struggles and aspirations and become a touchstone for a lifetime. For Rob Freedman and scores of others, Rush is one of those bands. With an engaging writing style, Freedman takes stock of all of Rush's albums and aptly describes how the band so effectively conveys life's challenges, possibilities and problems. Fast forward to adulthood and the problems are no longer the same. But Freedman makes a solid case for why Rush's lyrics are still dead on and its music still resonates as much as it did in decades past.

A very in depth conversation from Rush's start to the present. It is not a lot read. You probably won't rifle through this in a single sitting, and the author will likely challenge a lot of your interpretations of many of the songs. But more than worth considering the impact on Rush lyrics far beyond Rand and Aristotle. Pick it up.

This is an excellent book. Here's my review (external site). If you love Rush and/or Neil Peart, this is a must own. I've been reading Freedman's work at his website, rushvault.com, for years. This book serves as a perfect chapter in his collected work.<http://progarchy.com/2014/11/30/the-saving-grace-of-neil-peart/>

Neil Peart is one of my favorite lyricists and this book focuses largely on Rush's lyrics and what they are trying to say. They are very good and this is an insight into how much thought they put to their work.

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