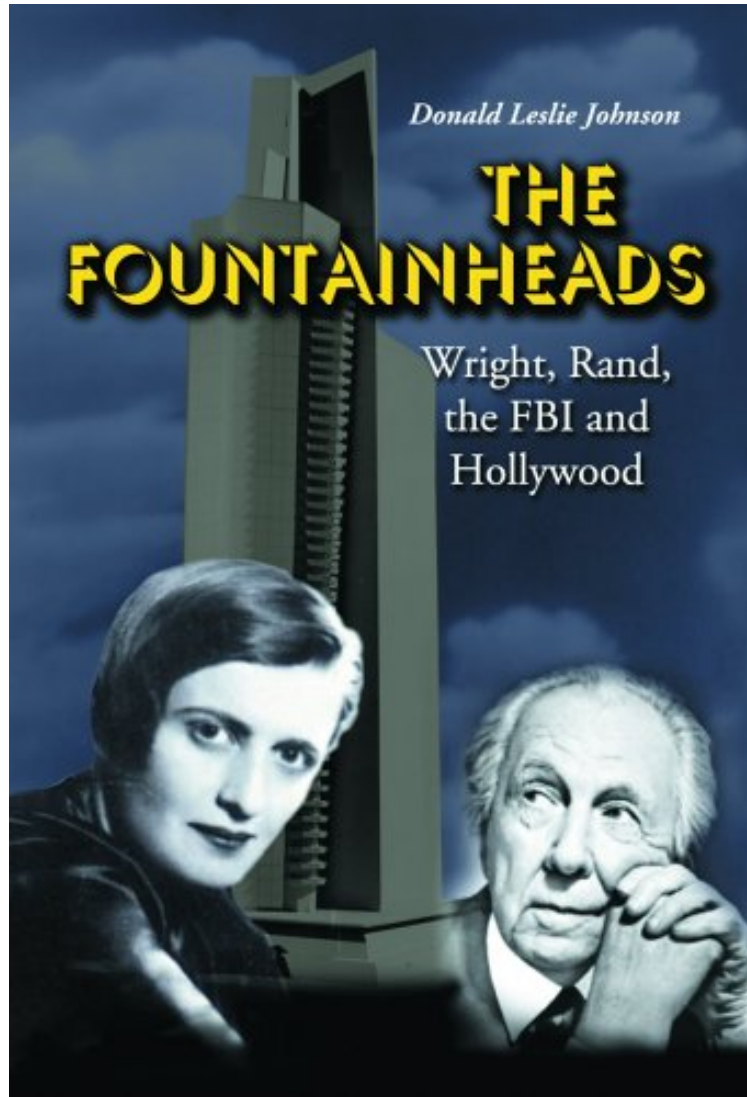


(Download free ebook) The Fountainheads: Wright, Rand, the FBI and Hollywood

The Fountainheads: Wright, Rand, the FBI and Hollywood

Donald Leslie Johnson
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Donald Leslie Johnson : The Fountainheads: Wright, Rand, the FBI and Hollywood before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Fountainheads: Wright, Rand, the FBI and Hollywood:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good read.By janThese two personalities seem to be connected in my mind. Enjoyed reading about their lives and how they were entwined. Also, and especially, reading the section on the Fountainhead which is one of my favorite books and movies.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. With so many errors, the original research can't be trustedBy David P. HayesThis book is on such a limited number of

topics, and is by an author who contends he is a big fan of the creators and institutions that he is writing about, that it is astonishing that the book is full of errors. Not only is author Donald Leslie Johnson guilty of mistaken interpretations on matters where a more careful writer would have worded with more precision, but he has goofs on some of the most often-cited facts, such as on movies that even newcomer movie aficionados would know. "Citizen Kane" tops lists of best films ever made, and histories of Hollywood discuss it as making a pivotal change in film history upon its release in 1941, after shooting in secrecy in 1941. The author of "The Fountainheads: Wright, Rand, the FBI and Hollywood" states the year as 1939 (pg. 44 and again in a list of films, pgs. 215-220). The original version of "The Jazz Singer" is a landmark film mentioned in every history of film as starting the revolution in talking feature films in 1927; Johnson has the year as 1929. (film list) "It Happened One Night" won the Best Picture Oscar for 1934; Johnson lists it as 1936 (pgs. 215-220) "House on Haunted Hill" is in the text because its exteriors were shot at Frank Lloyd Wright's Ennis house. Though Johnson mentions the movie "starring Vincent Price," and though this movie was part of the late-1950s horror cycle, Johnson is off by two decades, giving the year as 1939 (pg. 139 and again in the film list). Johnson gives the studio abbreviation for it as that of United Artists, when the actual company was Allied Artists. Discussing filming done at the same Ennis house, Johnson mentions the 1933 "Female" using the exterior there, "after installation of a swimming pool." (pg. 139) The swimming pool was in fact at the Warners lot, merely made to appear as though alongside the house; the addition of a swimming pool to the actual house came later. The "Cimarron" remake has the year "1964" on pg. 125 but "1960" (which is correct) in the film list. "The Adventures of Robin Hood" is stated to be a 1939 film (pg. 153) and 1938 (correct) in the film list. "The Pride of the Marines" (1945) starred John Garfield, but Johnson names John Wayne, who is not in it. (pg. 55) Though "Gentleman's Agreement" and "Around the World in 80 Days" won Oscar Best Pictures for specific years, Johnson gives the following year for each film, just as he does on "Woman of the Year." "Hello, Dolly!" is identified as "Fox, 1964" although that is five years early; Johnson provided the year of the stage version, which was not a Fox production; he also left out the punctuation in the title. (pg. 126) The famous German epic "Metropolis" is listed once as "Universal Film, distributed by Studio Real" (pg. 136) and then as "Universum Film/Studio Real (Germany)" (pgs. 215-220). Both are wrong. Ufa made the film and released it in Germany; the original American distributor (and investor) was Paramount. The fact-checking wasn't any better when dealing with a film made of an Ayn Rand novel. Discussing "Noi Vivi" (the Italian-language adaptation of Rand's "We the Living"), Johnson has the American distributor of the 1980s said to have released the movie in 1942. (pg. 56) Should readers expect better when the author discusses the central film of this book -- the movie referenced in the book's title? Unfortunately, readers can't. In a caption on pg. 148, one man in the photo is identified as "Toohey (Robert Douglas) offering changes." No, he is Moroni Olsen as the chairman of the bank board. The movie is only 114 minutes long. It has been available on home video for decades. How difficult would it have been to check the movie for the action that matches the still (to determine where characters are positioned) or even to look at other pictures of the actors? Too much effort for Johnson, apparently. Likewise, on pg. 139 the caption accompanying a photo of Roark's office mentions that "drawings hung on the wall by Roark of proposed buildings" even though dialogue in this scene indicates that Roark has done four buildings since starting on his own, so a viewer mindful of what occurs in this scene would surmise that these aren't "proposed buildings" but actual ones. Though errors about Ayn Rand as a person have to be expected from an author whose track record is what Johnson's is, his errors tend so often make his subject look bad that he seems to distort her biographical details maliciously. Other times, he didn't bother to draw from the same biographies he cites. He writes, "neither she nor her biographers have said why there was such a compulsion to write screenplays" when she was new to America (pg. 35), even though biographies have stated that Rand's inexperience with the English language decided her on writing screenplays before she could feel comfortable with writing novels. Johnson writes "her first novel, *We the Living* ... is about a young girl who is sentenced to imprisonment in Siberia knowing she will never return" (pg. 38), which shows that Johnson has confused the main storyline with that of a secondary character or was recalling instead Rand's screenplay "Red Pawn." And: "Around 1934 Frank and Ayn O'Connor moved to an apartment high above Manhattan Island, certain that he would obtain theater work and she could more easily freelance." (pg. 41) The move in fact occurred because Rand's first play was already contracted to be produced on Broadway. When Johnson's subject becomes Rand's screenplay for "The Fountainhead," it's reported, "Rand's completed preliminary adaptation, presented on 20 June 1944, was an unwieldy 300 typewritten pages in length. (When her final screenplay was completed in 1948, it was 56 pages.)" (pg. 60) The latter is off by a hundred pages. Rand's screenplay "Top Secret," Johnson writes, "remains unproduced (a fate that irritated Rand), perhaps because of Oppenheimer's opposition in the 1950s to the H-bomb and his communist tendencies." (pg. 61) Other books discussing "Top Secret" have mentioned its production was cancelled owing to its similarities to "The Beginning or the End" (MGM, 1947); having seen that movie and read the synopsis of what Rand wrote, I can attest that the main storylines of both (each depicts a succession of historic events) are fundamentally the same. Writing about the delayed production of "The Fountainhead" movie, Johnson mentions the oft-reported reason of the War Production Board being unwilling "to sanction materials for sets" but then goes on to opine, "that decision must also have been influenced by Rand's literary works, so many of which were seen as patently anti-Russian. ..." (pg. 80) Where's the evidence? He doesn't do better when he writes of Rand that she was

"a chain smoker (it led to her death from lung cancer)." (pg. 70) Though Rand had surgery for lung cancer, she survived another eight years, dying instead from pulmonary reasons (weakened by pneumonia). Not surprisingly, Johnson repeats the discredited story of Ayn Rand choosing her name from a brand of typewriter. (pg. 34) I don't know enough about Frank Lloyd Wright to catch errors about him and his work (exception: the one concerning the Ennis house), but understandably I have no confidence about what's in this book. That's a shame, because the author cites archives as his sources. Johnson cites Warner Bros. correspondence for some information about production of "The Fountainhead" movie, yet says of that film, "The viewing public made known their opinion by poor attendance." (pg. 106) He gives no source. I've examined movie trade papers, and found that the major paper's comparative list for film grosses for all releases of 1949 has the "The Fountainhead" doing better than nine of every ten 1949 releases. Elsewhere, there are week-by-week reports on new releases, showing "The Fountainhead" typically doing 116%-136% of normal business for theaters. (I placed online a web page titled "The Fountainhead movie success at the box office in 1949" that documents these facts.) If Johnson hadn't revealed his sympathies with such made-up accusations, his sympathies might be inferred from a remark about Charlie Chaplin suffering "expulsion" in the post-WWII anti-communist investigations. (pg. 90) In fact Chaplin was already outside the U.S. when he received word he would have to testify to HUAC upon his return, and chose to remain abroad. In the last pages of the book before the summaries and appendices, Johnson writes, "There is another true story that needs telling." (pg. 175) He launches into a defense of the 1953 leftist production "Salt of the Earth." Never mind that a movie about its making was made in year 2000, Johnson decides it's worthy of a place in a book about its political opposite. There are more things wrong about it, and unless a potential reader is a scholar who wants to get citations so he can follow up with accurate research, this book is a wasted opportunity where a niche might have been filled.

8 of 14 people found the following review helpful. THE RIGHT WRIGHT AND RAND BY BOB WHITE BEING FAMILIAR WITH THE SOURCE OF THE NAME (FOUNTAINHEAD) FOR ONE OF FLW'S PREMIER RESIDENTIAL WORKS IN MY STATE, AND THE MOVIE OF THE SAME NAME, THIS WORK PROVIDES MUCH INSIGHT INTO THE RELATIONSHIP OR LACK OF WITH AYN RAND, HOLLYWOOD PERSONALITIES, AND THE ANTI-COMMUNIST MOVEMENT OF THE LATE 1940'S AND EARLY 1950'S. RAND SHEDS LIGHT ON HER RUSSIAN HERITAGE AND THE BASIS FOR MANY OF HER PERSONAL VIEWS - WHICH COINCIDENTALLY ARE SHARED - TO A GREAT DEGREE - BY FLW. THERE ARE SOME "NO HOLDS BARRED" OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS ON MR. WRIGHT AND HIS CALIFORNIA WORK AND ACQUAINTANCES. ALL IN ALL A VERY INFORMATIVE BOOK.

Speculation abounds about the relationship between Frank Lloyd Wright and Ayn Rand. Was Wright the inspiration for Howard Roark, the architect hero of Rand's *The Fountainhead*? What can be made of their collaboration on the book's failed 1944 movie adaptation, and what can be gleaned from the 1949 Hollywood production of *The Fountainhead*? Where does the FBI - Wright was dubbed a communist sympathizer, and Rand was called before the House Un-American Activities Committee - fit into the story? Art, architecture, philosophy, film and politics come together in this exploration, which relies on the writings of Wright and Rand, FBI files, visual evidence and more to cement their connection. Chapters are devoted to Wright and Rand, the two together, their parts in both the failed production of *The Fountainhead* and the successful one, and the effect FBI harassment had on the movie and on their lives. Subsequent chapters discuss Wright's place as a Hollywood architect, and offer telling set designs and architectural images from the 1949 production of *The Fountainhead*. Several appendices supplement the illustrated text, and there is a filmography of movies mentioned in the book. A bibliography and index are also included.

"Carefully researched...thoroughly engaging analysis." --Architecture Australia "[This book] needed to be written...extensive research." --Curledup.com About the Author Donald Leslie Johnson taught at Flinders University until his retirement and is presently Adjunct Professor of architectural history at the University of South Australia. He is the author of several books and numerous articles on architectural history.