

[PDF] The Art Of Nonfiction: A Guide For Writers And Readers

Ayn Rand, Peter Schwartz - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: The Art of Nonfiction: A Guide
Author: Ayn Rand, Peter Schwartz
Released: 2001-02-01
Language:
Pages: 208
ISBN: 0452282314
ISBN13: 978-0452282315
ASIN: 0452282314

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Description:

In *The Art of Nonfiction*, Ayn Rand spends six pages explaining why something she wrote about the launching of *Apollo II* is far superior to something Loudon Wainwright wrote about it; throughout the book, she uses her own work as examples of exemplary writing. Somehow, though, Rand's robust ego is less unbearable here than it is in, say, her *Art of Fiction*.

This book is a frank demystification of the writing process that originated as a series of lectures given in 1969 to friends and other potential contributors to Rand's magazine, *The Objectivist*. "Any person who can speak English grammatically can learn to write nonfiction," Rand declares. All you need "is what you need for life in general: an orderly method of thinking." Rand values clarity above all else in nonfiction writing, and it is her own clearheadedness that makes this book appealing. Within these pages, Rand discusses subject and theme, audience, philosophy, outlines, writing, and editing. She takes swipes at *The New Yorker* for its "'brilliant' essays that say nothing," and at William Buckley, whose "trademark is to use words he probably spends half his time looking up in the dictionary." She rails against disruptions ("When I was writing *Atlas Shrugged*, I accepted neither day nor evening appointments, with rare exceptions, for roughly thirteen years"). And she is an exacting taskmaster who demands that you not choose a lesser aspect of a subject than "the deepest one that interests you and that you can do." Finally, says Rand, you must write from a position of complete confidence and omnipotence. "While you are writing," she says, "you must be God's perfect creature (if there were a God)." --Jane Steinberg

From Library Journal In 1969, Rand gave a series of lectures to followers who wished to write for her Objectivist magazine. Best known for her novels *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*, Rand later wrote extensively on the philosophy that underlay her fiction. This is a transcript of her lectures on writing nonfiction, edited by Rand scholar Mayhew, who previously edited Rand's *Marginalia*. Though frequently sound, Rand's advice is obscured by philosophical jargon and has little to offer to the general reader seeking guidance on how to write. Moreover, readers may be put off by Rand's dogmatic style, her use of examples from her own writing, and her assumption that readers share her political beliefs. One of Rand's more helpful hints is to avoid misleading titles; given her view of writing as a technical process that anyone can learn, the editors clearly ignored her advice. Recommended for libraries where there is strong interest in Rand's life and work. Susan M. Colowick, North Olympic Lib. Syst., Port Angeles, WA
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