

## Short Review: “Donovan’s Brain” (1953) by Dr. John L. Flynn



**Donovan’s Brain** (1953). Dowling Productions, b/w, 83 min. Director and Screenwriter: Felix Feist. Producer: Tom Gries. Based on the novel by Curt Siodmak. Cast: Lew Ayres, Gene Evans, Nancy Davis, Steve Brodie, Lisa K. Howard, and Michael Colgan.

“Donovan’s Brain” is pretty brainless. When a skilled brain surgeon named Cory (Ayres) attempts to save the life of millionaire industrialist Donovan (Colgan) but fails, he decides to keep the brain alive secretly in his laboratory. Never a good idea. Slowly, inexorably, Donovan’s brain takes him over and nearly forces him to strangle the future First Lady (Nancy Davis, future wife of Ronald Reagan). Well, then again, that may not have been a bad thing. Siodmak’s novel has been remade more times than a bed at the Chicken Ranch in Nevada, and not one of them was any good. Perhaps screenwriters should try transplanting one of Donovan’s other parts next time around, because his brain is simply dead on arrival.

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