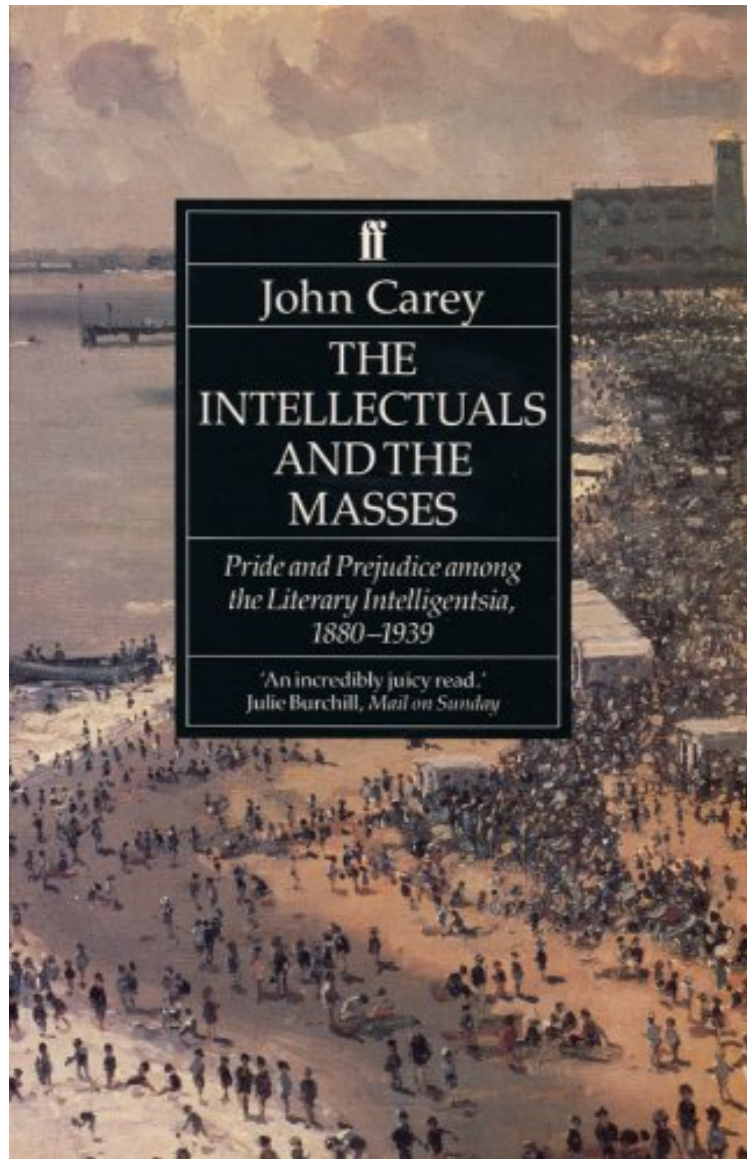


## The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice Among the Literary Intelligentsia 1880-1939

John Carey

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**John Carey : The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice Among the Literary Intelligentsia 1880-1939** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice Among the Literary Intelligentsia 1880-1939*:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Peels off layers of intellectual BS by CustomerIntellectuals seem to have the idea that they are not like the rest of us. Their arguments for promoting this idea are analyzed in this book.

The works of the intelligentsia are made to speak for themselves and the picture is frequently unpleasant. Generalizations are always problematic and feed into the kinds of false premises and observations Carey exposes in his analysis. The results are potentially as insidious as the programs of the intelligentsia discussed but that potential misuse doesn't detract from the author's opinions. Many artists and intellectuals are dangerously elitist, but so are the prejudices of the classes of people these intellectuals find so distasteful. This is a refreshing expose of ideas and the people who clung so fiercely to them. It is irrefutable that many people, thinkers of whatever quality, shared many of the same prejudices as Hitler and other Fascists. Revealing this unpleasant truth does not disqualify Carey's argument or his approach -- as another reviewer argues, saying merely mentioning a polarizing figure like Hitler prejudices the discussion and disqualifies the author because it seems a cheap tactic to demonize the intelligentsia by mentioning their affinities to the ideas of a monster. Carey lets the authors testify through their own writing. Recommended. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Who are the intelligentsia, and what do they read? By Chris Urago This book analyses the appeal of certain literature to different classes or groups of people. It is a novel survey of cultural tastes of the period. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A really fresh and radical overturning of our complacent view of writers great and small. By Richard Nunez This is an essay a very excellent one on a subject never covered before. I would very highly recommend it.

Professor John Carey shows how early twentieth-century intellectuals imagined the 'masses' as semi-human swarms, drugged by popular newspapers and cinema, and ripe for extermination. Exposing the revulsion from common humanity in George Bernard Shaw, Ezra Pound, D. H. Lawrence, E. M. Forster, Virginia Woolf, H. G. Wells, Aldous Huxley, W. B. Yeats and other canonized writers, he relates this to the cult of the Nietzschean Superman, which found its ultimate exponent in Hitler. Carey's assault on the founders of modern culture caused consternation throughout the artistic and academic establishments when it was first published in 1992.

From Publishers Weekly This scathing critique argues that modernist literature and art arose as a reaction against popular culture and the mass reading public created by late 19th-century educational reforms. Oxford English professor Carey shows how intellectuals like D. H. Lawrence, Ezra Pound, W. B. Yeats, Knut Hamsun, George Gissing and Wyndham Lewis scorned "the masses" as vulgar and trivial while exalting the artist as a natural aristocrat and transmitter of timeless values. T. S. Eliot predicted that the spread of education would lead to barbarism. Charles Baudelaire condemned photography as a distraction for the "vile multitude," while other intellectuals expressed contempt for newspapers and popular entertainments. H. G. Wells proposed measures to restrict parenthood as a means to curb the "black and brown races" whom he considered inferior to whites. Carey's razor-sharp analysis is an antidote to snobbery and class prejudice in all forms. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Carey (English, Oxford Univ.) contends that the modernist literature of some prominent English authors writing from the 1880s through 1939 was a hostile reaction to the newly educated mass reading public and its popular culture. These writings were in styles designed to exclude semiliterate readers and buttress the self-esteem of literary intellectuals as part of a natural aristocracy. After World War II, confronted by television and other popular media, intellectuals were driven to create other literary modes to shield high culture from the reach of the majority. Separate chapters on George Gissing, H.G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, and Wyndham Lewis reinforce Carey's general thesis. Published last year in England, this is a closely reasoned and stimulating discussion. Recommended for academic libraries and large public libraries. - Harry Frummerman, formerly with Hunter Coll., CUNY Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus s The obscurities of modern art and literature, according to Carey (English/Oxford; John Donne, 1981), were devised by the intelligentsia to exclude the new reading public for whom they had contempt--a thesis that Carey applies here to, among others, George Gissing, H.G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, and Wyndham Lewis. Nietzsche, Yeats, Shaw, Flaubert, Ibsen, Ortega y Gasset, E.M. Forster, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce--indeed the entire modernist movement, says Carey, depicted the "masses" and the popular culture they generated with disdain. These writers, the author contends, worshiped the lofty, isolated, high-minded artist who produced an alienating art without human or narrative content to which the masses could relate. Followers of Freud, the intelligentsia feared crowds and condemned their suburban refuges as culturally impoverished ecological disasters. Gissing concluded that the masses were ineducable, while Wells considered them manifestations of a "biological catastrophe." Meanwhile, Bennett, the "hero" of Carey's study, believed that the people could be redeemed through the study of literature, although Wyndham Lewis--whom Carey compares to Hitler--felt that the democracy they believed in was effeminate. The author attempts to demonstrate how Mein Kampf was firmly rooted in the intelligentsia's orthodoxy--and how the incineration of Jews was an extension of it. Members of The intelligentsia, he says, believed that they formed a natural aristocracy united by an esoteric body of knowledge that protected them from the herd. Concluding with a chilling analogy, Carey suggests that the influence and style of the turn-of-the-century intelligentsia survives in the obfuscations of contemporary criticism. Provocative, courageous, certainly stimulating--and reflecting a profound understanding of the often invisible yet potentially insidious relationship between aesthetics and politics, as well as of how art can be used to camouflage the most repugnant ideas. -- Copyright copy; 1993, Kirkus Associates,

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