

An Intelligent Life



by Robert Jameson

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Preface

The narrator and central character in this book has no name, but, for the sake of convenience, let's call him Jack.

For much of this book, Jack rants and launches into one diatribe after another about the state of the world and the shitty people he meets in it. If this isn't the sort of thing you want to read, that's fine, but please don't be so fucking thick that you read this book and then complain that it's full of rants and diatribes. Yes, it is! That's the idea! This book is for people who enjoy that sort of thing.

I enjoy Jack's diatribes because, sometimes, I feel like he does. When God saw fit to make me, however, he made me remarkably sanguine. I take the same shit Jack takes, yet remain calm. Somehow it barely bothers me at all. Actually that's not quite right - it does bother me; it bothers me a great deal how shitty people are to each other and how obstinately stupid they choose to remain - I just don't take it personally.

I look around and I see a world plagued by selfish stupidity. I see it as a serious problem that needs to be dealt with, but I don't see it as a personal punishment or as a judgement on my past lives. I manage to remain largely above the worst of all the hate and anger - but I think there's a Jack inside and I wonder what it is that contains him so well.... and whether that containment is foolproof.

The central character in this book has, as you will discover, a tendency towards violence. I am drawn to Jack. I like him. I'm interested by his ideas and by the frustrations and anger that he feels. I even share his sense of satisfaction when something nasty happens to someone who has been asking for it. I don't, however, advocate any such hatred

or violence. I advocate kindness in all things. I wonder, nevertheless, how long it will be before Jack's methods and solutions are the only ones we have left.

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Intelligence

It is so abhorrent to some people that anyone should be deemed to be more intelligent than anyone else, that they seek to distort the entire concept of intelligence and render it utterly meaningless. One way in which they do this is by describing all sorts of dubious 'qualities' as 'forms of intelligence.'

It's offensive, apparently, to suggest that any particular person might be less intelligent than anyone else. So, when someone is clearly not intelligent in any sort of traditional way, they are described as being 'intelligent' in some other way. They are assigned a made-up form of intelligence so that they don't feel left out.

A person with musical talents might be described as having 'musical intelligence.' It's a marvellous sort of talent to have, but why can't we just call them 'musical'? Why do they have to have 'musical intelligence'?

And does it mean anything to say that someone has 'artistic intelligence'? They might be able to conjure up a remarkable likeness of my Aunt Harriet, using nothing but a blunt piece of charcoal and a scrap of paper, but does that really make them intelligent? What's wrong with just being a 'talented artist'?

Even when a person has no discernible talents, qualities or usefulness whatsoever, they can still be intelligent, apparently! They might, for example, be - and this is the most damning of all forms of intelligence - 'emotionally intelligent.'

Admittedly, it can be difficult to define what exactly intelligence is. It might be variously described as an ability to think rationally, to make logical deductions, to make rational decisions based on a

coherent set of values and principles or as an ability to conceptualise and solve problems - but what it fucking-well isn't is a tendency to obsess about your own or other people's feelings, pander to other people's sensitivities and fret about fitting in! Neither is it about being skilled in toadying up to people or having a desperate need to manipulate people into liking you. There is no such fucking thing as 'emotional intelligence'!

People can have other qualities - very important, admirable qualities - that are not dependent on them being intelligent. They can be reliable, patient or generous - but these aren't forms of intelligence.

As for being emotionally intelligent: Do me a fucking favour! It's little more than a term to describe witless, oversensitive, conformist pricks, too afraid of upsetting their own or other people's feelings to have anything interesting to say for themselves. Emotional intelligence? Fuck right off!

The reality is that intelligence is not a quality that is equally distributed - not even in different forms. Most people are not intelligent - their lives are not coordinated through rational thought.

Intelligent people are few and far between and the explanation for how they became so much more intelligent than the rest of the population is an interesting one. It is simply that they were the only ones who could actually be bothered to work at it. It turns out that thinking is something you have to practise if you want to be good at it. Who would have guessed?

Real intelligence is born of dedication to the art of thinking - you practise and you practise - and that's what puts you in a position to have intelligent ideas and opinions. Anyone who doesn't like this simple fact can pretend they have some other form of

intelligence if they want to, but that won't stop them being stupid - and it won't make them any less of a dipshit either!

Ignorance

If somebody gives an opinion, ask them why they hold that opinion. Often, it quickly becomes clear that they have never really thought about it and cannot give an intelligent response. It's just what they believe and that's it! They cannot give any rational justification for their opinion because they've never sought to develop one. In such a case, we might say that they are zero degrees away from ignorance. There is no rational thought-process at work - either before they formed their opinion or afterwards.

If they do manage to give some sort of logical and intelligent answer, but when this explanation is questioned, cannot offer a second level of justification, then they may be said to be one degree from ignorance. Even on an issue on which they have actually bothered to form an opinion, their rational defence of their opinion is little more than a facade. It is paper-thin and disintegrates during the very first stage on the most basic level of rational scrutiny.

A slightly more thoughtful person might be 'two degrees from ignorance' - and so on. This is a useful way to sift the amoebas from the semi-humans. More importantly, however, a person's intellectual potential depends upon how they react when their relative ignorance is exposed.

Some people, for example, may be only one or two steps away from ignorance. However, when it is made clear to them how fragile the foundations of their opinions are, they are, despite their ignorance

and shallowness, still willing to learn. They may be willing to change their opinion in the face of an argument they are unable to find flaws in. Perhaps they will at least soften their opinions and withhold judgement on an issue once they realise that they have neglected to think about it in any depth or when the flaws in their arguments are exposed. Or perhaps their failure to rationally defend their opinions will at least encourage them to put a little more effort into exploring issues in the future!

Such people may still be largely ignorant - but at least they have potential. With most people, however, this is not the case. Even if they are several steps away from total ignorance, if they have no inclination to recognise the inadequacies of their arguments and are totally closed to the idea of accepting new ones, if they will not change or soften their opinions even when they cannot justify them, then this casts doubt on their value as a human being.

I remember one particular conversation I had with some shallow bitch who worked as a teacher (A 'Head of Department' no less - and boy did she keep going on about it!).

She was sharing her disgust concerning a fellow teacher who, in the course of speaking to a pupil, had said something she most decidedly disapproved of. "You mustn't call a child an idiot!" she concluded, clearly expecting a sympathetic response and nodding confirmation of her view.

I confess I was impertinent in my response. I simply asked her 'why' you mustn't call a child an idiot. Thanks partly to the limp expression on her face, it quickly became obvious that she'd never actually thought about it before. It had simply never occurred to her that she might ever be required to justify her shallow, thoughtless opinion.

She scabbled for ideas: "It's just totally inappropriate!" she said. "You just can't call a child an idiot."

It's inappropriate? What does that actually mean? It's a trite phrase lacking in any real moral meaning. 'Inappropriate' just means you're wearing a fur coat during a heatwave. No evidence of actual wrongdoing is being offered. Saying something is 'inappropriate' does not constitute an argument as to why the action in question should be considered to be 'wrong' in any way. I explained this to her!

"It's degrading." she said. In response, I suggested that being an idiot was what was really degrading and that if you don't want to be called an idiot, perhaps the best solution is to stop *being* an idiot. Trying to gag everyone else in the world to stop them *calling* you an idiot seems like rather an extreme solution!

"What's an idiot?" I then asked her.

"Someone who does idiotic things," she replied. (This was possibly the most direct and intelligent answer she would ever come to give!)

"So," I asked, "if this child consistently does idiotic things, why shouldn't they be described as an idiot, given that the description is clearly accurate? Even as far as being called an idiot might be degrading, doesn't the use of such a 'degrading' description at least give them an incentive not to be an idiot in the first place?"

She babbled a bit more, took offence at her arguments being dissected and exposed as utter bullshit and then just asked if we could change the conversation. She had begun the conversation as a total idiot. My coaxing dragged her into at least trying to justify her opinions, but - funny thing is - she never thanked me for doing her the inestimable service of exposing her bullshit

arguments and giving her the opportunity to amend them. And, despite all her arguments being exposed as vaginal discharge, she never had the courtesy to retract or even qualify her opinion. But of course such people do not change their ideas either openly or privately. They never say, "Oh yes, you're right! I don't believe that any more because, thanks to you, I can now see my reasoning was deeply flawed." And there's never the slightest hint of gratitude that you've taken the time to show them where they've gone wrong. There's not even a hint that they recognise you were trying to help them - just, basically, resentment. They don't change - they might as well spit in your face - fucking cunts!

Being Right

One of the most offensive things about being intelligent is that you tend to be right an awful lot of the time. Even when you might not be provably right, no-one has the capacity to clearly demonstrate that you are wrong. You're always ahead of the game, because you have the capacity to think through your opinions and arguments and see for yourself where they might need improving before anyone else does.

Being right nearly all the time annoys the living crap out of people! One of the reasons for this is that many people nowadays seem to believe that there is some sort of United Nations-sanctioned human right that guarantees that they are allowed to be right at least as much as anybody else. No matter how ill-considered, illogical, prejudiced and downright facile their ideas and beliefs are, no-one is allowed to so much as suggest that their ideas and beliefs are any less 'right' or 'valid' than anyone else's.

"It's my opinion," they say, "and I'm entitled to it!" This is true, of course - they are entitled to their opinion (wherever they borrowed it from). This doesn't make them right, of course - the ignorant cunts! It may be their opinion, but they can still be blatantly and obviously wrong and the intelligent person has the annoying ability to be able to prove it.

It is true that there are many issues on which there appears to be no absolute, definitive proof as to what is right and wrong. Annoyingly, for most people, however, the intelligent person is still capable of proving someone wrong simply by applying some basic logic. In most cases, a little questioning and probing, and it becomes clear that

the opinion held is often contradictory to various premises or assumptions that the person themselves is not only readily willing to accept, but is actually relying on as part of their own argument. The idiot in question is found to be contradicting themselves.

The uncomfortable fact is that intelligent people have a much greater 'right' than anyone else to be right - or, at least, not obviously wrong - because it is they who have put in the effort to analyse their own opinions, test them using logic and reason and adjust their arguments and opinions for any inaccuracies or inconsistencies that are found. When the discussion or argument arrives, they are simply better-equipped and better-prepared than the other people involved.

I have my own, patented system for ensuring nobody ever wins an argument against me: If someone comes up with a logical, rational point, then I acknowledge and accept it. "That's a good point," I say. I just take on board their logical point and encompass it into my own argument. In this way, no-one can 'win' an argument against me. People 'win' arguments when the other person refuses to accept a point even though it is perfectly rational and obvious.

With my way of doing things, everyone wins, because we can all benefit from having identified rational arguments, regardless of who came up with them. In practice, however, most people are fiercely reluctant to accept criticism or accept their own mistakes and the flaws in their own irrational arguments. Such people 'lose' arguments before they have even begun. They are so incredibly arrogant that, from the outset, they are set against the idea that they might be wrong in any way or that they might have anything at all to learn about

anything.

Being right is the result of combining thinking ability with effort, a willingness to learn and a sound sense of principle and morality. We are not all entitled to rightness in equal measure and this really pisses a lot of people off. And yet the intelligent person has done nothing wrong. It is not wrong to think through your opinions and arguments before blurting them out, and just because most people don't do it, doesn't make it wrong! It's not wrong. Hell - never mind wrong - it isn't even illegal! Although it is staggeringly offensive - apparently!

Semantics

There are some people who, when they have clearly been proven wrong, when you have dissected their arguments and demonstrated them to be irrational and full of holes, have one last, pathetic throw of the dice by saying, "Oh, well if you want to engage in semantics!"

What the fuck? "Yes - I do fucking-well want to engage in semantics, you ignorant fuck, if, by 'semantics,' you mean clarifying what the fuck you are talking about! You want to make out that you're not really wrong - you're only wrong in the sense of your argument not making any sense if one assumes it was being expressed in English rather than in the made-up wankerland language you were actually using, in which 'black' means 'white' and poo refers to some sweet-smelling, fragrant substance! It isn't really a matter of semantics at all - it's just a matter of you being a cunt! That's C. U. N. T.. Cunt! Meaning: Cunt (noun) - Someone like you... you utter cunt!"

Control

Most people feel distinctly uncomfortable when faced with an intelligent person - and one of the key reasons for their discomfort is the helplessness they feel when they are unable to control someone. Intelligence requires a distinct capacity to think for yourself. As an intelligent person, your ideas and opinions will have a rational basis built upon sound principles. The opinions of other people will influence you only in so much as they contain well-reasoned, rational thoughts - you are not one to pick up an idea merely because it is popular. Independence of mind, however, is something that makes other people feel most uncomfortable.

The thing is that most people are used to having control over other people. By signalling various degrees of approval or disapproval, they can influence the opinions (voiced and otherwise) and behaviour of those people in their peer group. This sense of control affirms their importance within the peer group. Some members of a group may exert more control than others, but all are reassured that others are, to some extent, seeking their approval in some way. This reassures them about their position and status and helps them to feel comfortable.

Similarly, they show deference to the social group as a whole by allowing others to gain some degree of control over them. By demonstrating their own need to be approved of by other members of their peer group, as well as offering ready approval of others, they, in turn, help others to feel comfortable and feel they have a place within their social grouping. This manipulation and openness to manipulation marks each individual off as a member of the group; of the community of peers.

It's all so very, very lovely!

It was also a system used extensively in Nazi Germany. Imagine this pretty little scene from pre-war Germany: "Jews are very nice..." (Signals of disapproval!!) "...er.. .. I mean...nice people ...to murder. Oh yes, and I can show you how good a Nazi I am by showing that I hate Jews even more than you do." And so the conversation continues until strong bonds of friendship and mutual appreciation form. How lovely indeed!

By definition, however, the intelligent, decent person doesn't behave in this way. When he expresses his opinions and ideas, the peer group he is talking amongst start to notice that these opinions are affected not at all by their increasingly desperate and forthright signals of disapproval - or even approval! The intelligent, decent person generally goes right ahead and says what he believes to be right, based on intelligent analysis and moral principles.

People are perplexed by such independently-minded, intelligent people. They cannot understand them. In particular, they have no experience of what it is like to be immune to social pressure.

Quickly following on from this initial perplexity, they get annoyed and upset. It upsets them that they have no means of control over such a person. Furthermore, this person, it seems, is being disrespectful to them by having the temerity to question their bullshit opinions.

As far as the group is concerned, the point of conversation is mutual back-slapping - to try to make each other feel good and to make everyone feel that their views are valued (even when they are not thought through or are merely the products of some selfish bigotry) and that they are all valued and accepted members of the group.

For the intelligent person, a conversation should be a learning experience, enabling each person to learn from the good ideas and criticisms of others - but this sort of thing is, of course, deeply frowned upon in polite society.

You're not playing by the rules! You're not playing to the crowd! You're not open to manipulation! In short; you're not wanted! You're just not enough of a brainless cunt to be acceptable to normal, 'polite' society! Most of all, people will hate you because you are not susceptible to the pathetic social pressures that they meekly enslave themselves to every hour of every day.

* * * * *

End of sample!

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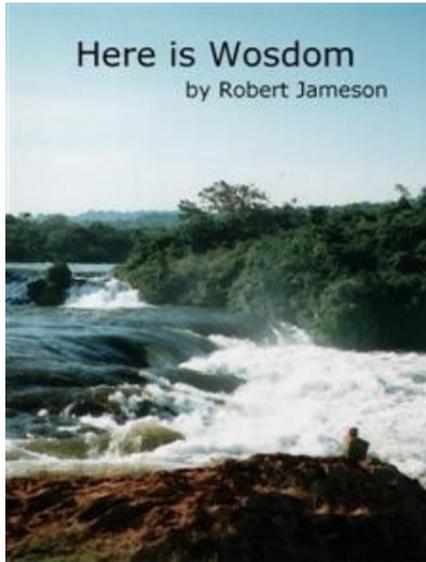
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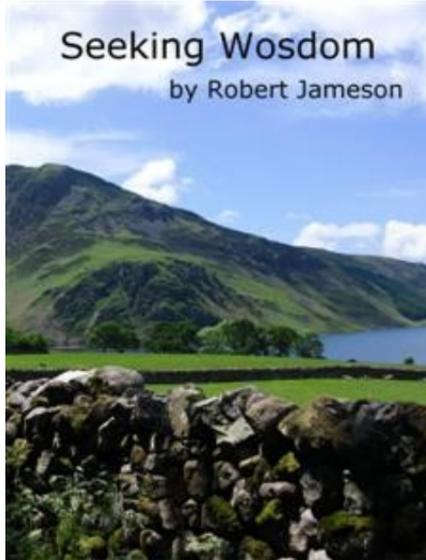


Intelligence is born out of the willingness to question what we are told - whatever it may be! Each chapter in this book asks us to do just that - question accepted ideas and popular opinions - and through questioning them, develop the ability to overcome the prejudices that stand between us and greater intelligence.

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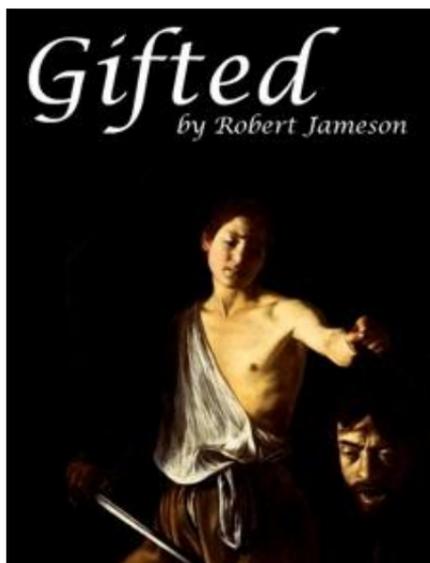


The key to intelligence is to be able to overcome the prejudices of the society we live in and thus free our minds to think beyond what society assumes to be correct and beyond what it deems to be 'acceptable.' Please note that the Wosdom books can be read in any order.

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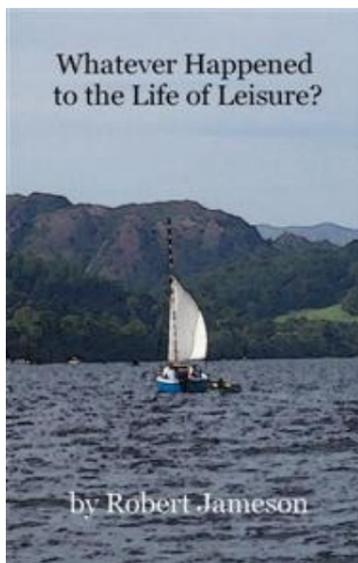
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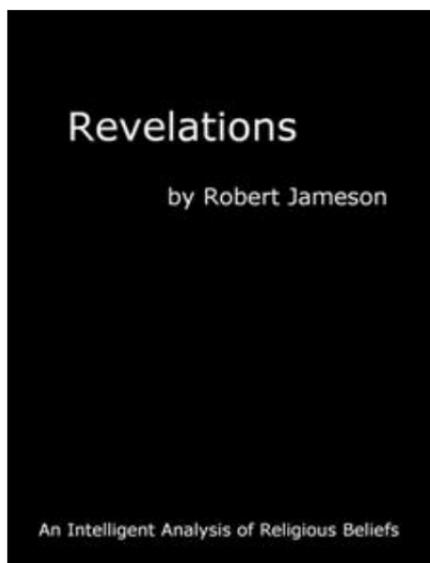


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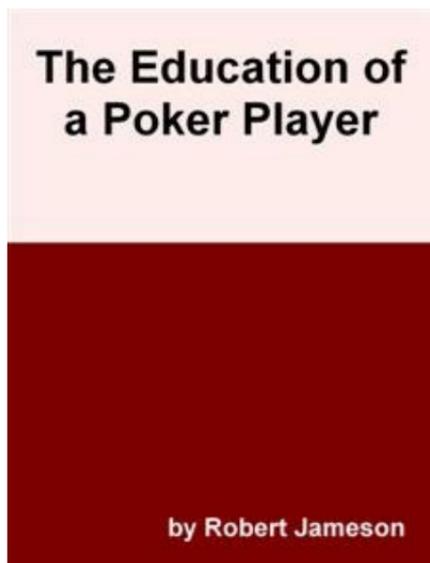


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