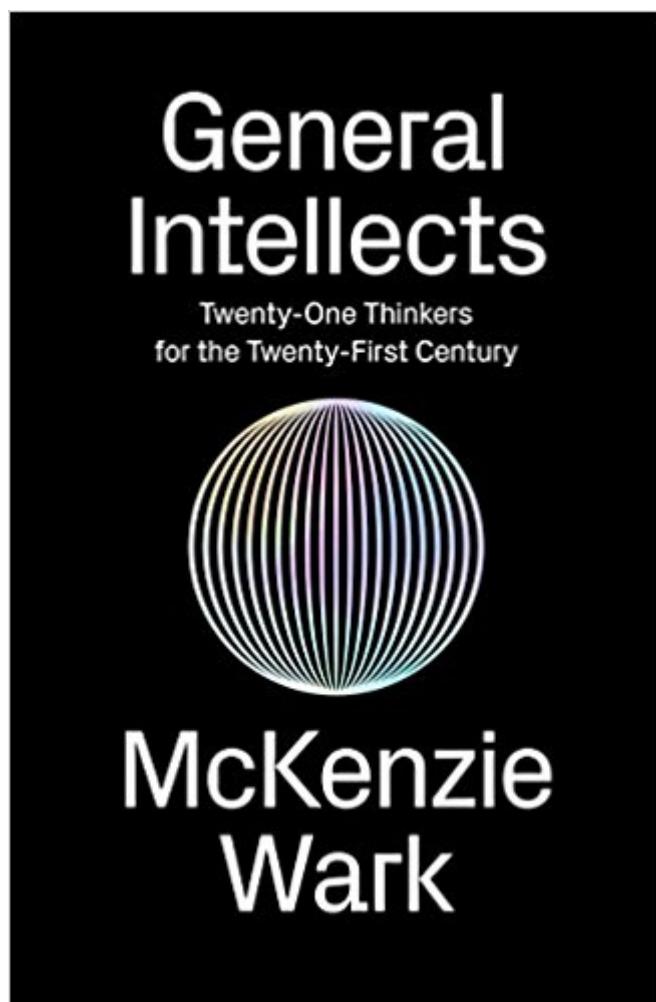


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General Intellects: Twenty-Five Thinkers For The Twenty-First Century



Synopsis

A guide to the thinkers and the ideas that will shape the futureWhat happened to the public intellectuals that used to challenge and inform us? Who is the Sartre or De Beauvoir of the internet age? General Intellects argues that we no longer have such singular figures, but we do have general intellects whose writing could, if read together, explain our times. Covering topics such as culture, politics, work, technology, and the Anthropocene, each chapter is a concise account of an individual thinker, providing useful context and connections to the work of the others. McKenzie Wark's distinctive readings are appreciations, but are also critical of how neoliberal universities militate against cooperative intellectual work to understand and change the world. The thinkers included are Amy Wendling, Kojin Karatani, Paolo Virno, Yann Moulier Boutang, Maurizio Lazzarato, Franco Bifo Berardi, Angela McRobbie, Paul Gilroy, Slavoj Žižek, Jodi Dean, Chantal Mouffe, Wendy Brown, Judith Butler, Azumio Hiroki, Paul B. Preciado, Wendy Chun, Timothy Morton, Quentin Meillassoux, Isabelle Stengers, and Donna Haraway.

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"A wonderful book ... informative and moving ... a great recovery of an instructive life and literary effort. The book makes the case for a kind of political vision and action we need to recognize and enact. A true pleasure to read." - Kim Stanley Robinson, [for Molecular Red] "A very imaginative, historically smart, politically generative thesis ... that I think we urgently need." - Donna Haraway, [for Molecular Red] "Wark is a fine aphorist ... Playful, angry, depressed, celebratory, this is a book

for anyone not convinced that there is no alternative to the way we live now." - Observer, [For The Beach Beneath the Streets] "Brings to the task a necessary sympathy, an encyclopedic knowledge, and a certain stylistic irrepressibility" - Times Literary Supplement, [For The Beach Beneath the Streets]

McKenzie Wark is the author of A Hacker Manifesto, The Beach Beneath the Street, and Molecular Red, among other books. He teaches at the New School for Social Research and the Eugene Lang College in New York City.

I think I misunderstood the project of this book when I initially chose to read it. The book seems, at its core, to be about updating the concept of labor by passing it through twenty-one thinkers-as-transformations. Some chapters critique their subjects, others celebrate, and some make known thinkers you may not be familiar with. Along the way, Wark also updates and comments on thoughts that he has expressed in previous books, such as Molecular Red, A Hacker Manifesto, and Gamer Theory. While his twenty one thinkers are certainly of the twenty-first century, it's not always apparent how the book is written for the twenty-first century, as the preoccupation with labor and disappointing departure from the low-theory that Wark preaches make the intended audience of this book unclear. If you're attached to Wark's previous work, this is an enjoyable (if twisty) addition to that stack of texts; however, I fear that you may be better off elsewhere if you're not already attached to McKenzie Wark and are simply looking for applied theory for the twenty-first century.

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