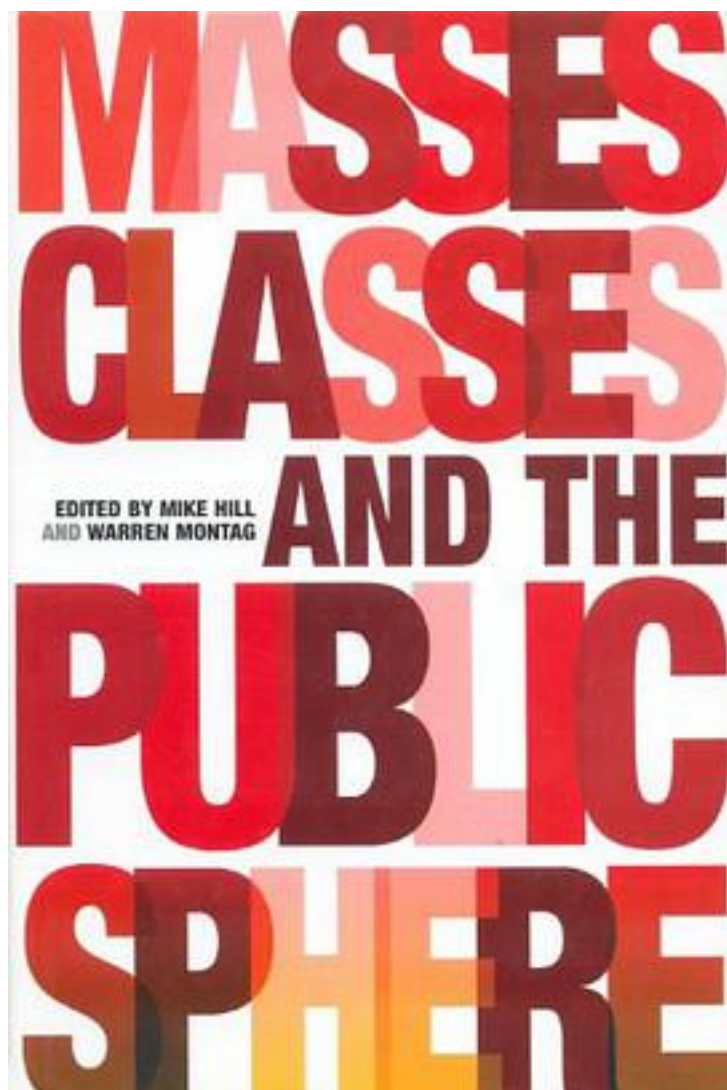


Masses, Classes and the Public Sphere



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Despite the passing of some forty years since the original publication of Jürgen Habermas's *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, the fundamental concepts that informed the book remain prominent and distinctly influential. So much so that the term 'public sphere', as Habermas introduced it, has today become an ultimately foundational concept for assessing everything from intellectual debate and 'public access' criticism, to the function of race, gender, and sexual difference on contemporary civil society. As new demands have been made on the concept, so people have refined and extended them, positing the idea of a plurality of "counter-public spheres" (proletarian, bourgeois, feminine, national, global, for instance), and continually addressing the philosophical concept of the public sphere itself. This volume attempts to move beyond these debates to pose fundamental questions about the function and continued relevance of the public sphere today, both politically and practically. A set of distinguished essays, ranging from the philosophical foundations of the Enlightenment to contemporary struggles over civil rights and public policy, seek to highlight the internal conflicts that have marked the progressive development of Habermas's original concept. Contributors: Stanley Aronowitz, Étienne Balibar, Crystal Bartolovich, Jamie Owen Daniel, Mike Davis, Henry A. Giroux, Michael Hardt, Mike Hill, David McNerney, Warren Montag, You-Me Park, Ted Stolze, Raul H. Villa, Gayle Wald.

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