

Ideas in Empathy

Making Sense, Moving On

James Kelman and Noam Chomsky

"The world is full of information. What do we do when we get the information, when we have digested the information, what do we do then? Is there a point where you say, yes, stop, now I shall move on."

James Kelman here offers something of why a book such of this is in front of the public. The State relies on our suffocation, that we cannot hope to learn "the truth." But whether we can or not is beside "the point." Finally, there is no "point." We must grasp the nettle, we assume control and go forward.

Kelman says, "I wanted to convey some of that sensibility with the idea of being in conversation with Noam Chomsky, of being in his presence, a sort of seminar. It is not influence. I don't see it as 'being influenced' by Chomsky. He belongs to the great tradition of teaching, of learning. We learn from him through what he does."

At its core, this exhilarating collection of essays, interviews, and correspondence—spanning the years 1988 through 2018, and reaching back a decade or more previous—is about the simple concept that ideas matter. And not only that ideas matter. But that ideas—in this case, through the lens of two engaged intellectuals—mutate, inform, inspire, and ultimately provide more fuel for thought, the actions that follow such thought, and for carrying on, and doing the work.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

James Kelman is a Scottish novelist, short story writer, playwright, and essayist whose many literary awards include the Booker and James Tait Black prizes. He was born in Glasgow in 1946 and left school in 1961, moving around and passing through Los Angeles for a brief period in the mid-1960s then in various jobs in various places in England. He started writing at the age of twenty-two: ramblings, musings, sundry phantasmagoria, stories, whatever. In 1969 while working in London he met and married Marie Connors from South Wales. They settled in Glasgow, where he has lived as writer, father, and grandfather. Kelman has been a vocal supporter of the Kurdish people and campaigns regularly with Scottish Solidarity with Kurdistan. For further information go to jameskelman.net.

Noam Chomsky is a laureate professor at the University of Arizona and professor emeritus in the MIT Department of Linguistics and Philosophy. His work is widely credited with having revolutionized the field of modern linguistics and Chomsky is one of the foremost critics of US foreign policy. He has published numerous groundbreaking books, articles, and essays on global politics, history, and linguistics. His recent books include *Who Rules the World?* and *Hopes and Prospects*.

ACCOLADES

"Kelman has always been a true and honest writer; which is why he is one of the fairly few who really matter."

—Scotsman

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and Interviews*

NOAM CHOMSKY and
JAMES KELMAN

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