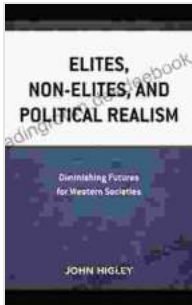


# Elites, Non-Elites, and Political Realism: A Comprehensive Analysis



## Elites, Non-Elites, and Political Realism: Diminishing Futures for Western Societies by John Higley

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

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The relationship between elites and non-elites has been a central theme of political science and political philosophy for centuries. Elites are typically defined as those individuals who occupy positions of power and influence in society, while non-elites are those who do not. Political realism is a school of thought that emphasizes the importance of power in politics, and that views the state as the primary instrument of power.

In this article, we will explore the complex relationship between elites, non-elites, and political realism. We will first discuss the historical development of the concept of elites and non-elites, and then examine the different theoretical approaches to understanding this relationship. Finally, we will consider the practical implications of this relationship for public policy and political practice.

## **Historical Development**

The concept of elites and non-elites has been around for centuries. In ancient Greece, Plato argued that the best form of government was one ruled by a philosopher-king, who was an elite individual who possessed the knowledge and virtue necessary to rule justly. Aristotle, on the other hand, argued that the best form of government was one ruled by a mixed constitution, which included both elite and non-elite elements.

In the Middle Ages, the concept of elites and non-elites was closely tied to the feudal system. The feudal elite consisted of the nobility and clergy, while the non-elite consisted of the peasantry and serfs. The feudal system was a highly stratified society, with the elite having almost complete power over the non-elite.

The rise of capitalism in the early modern period led to a gradual decline in the power of the feudal elite. However, the concept of elites and non-elites remained important, as the new capitalist elite gained increasing power and influence.

## **Theoretical Approaches**

There are a number of different theoretical approaches to understanding the relationship between elites and non-elites. One approach is the elite theory, which argues that elites are a small, cohesive group of individuals who control political power and use it to their own advantage. Elite theorists typically argue that elites are not accountable to the non-elite, and that they often use their power to suppress non-elite interests.

Another approach to understanding the relationship between elites and non-elites is the pluralist theory, which argues that power is dispersed

throughout society, and that elites do not have a monopoly on power. Pluralist theorists typically argue that non-elite groups can influence political decision-making through various means, such as voting, lobbying, and protest.

A third approach to understanding the relationship between elites and non-elites is the Marxist theory, which argues that the relationship between elites and non-elites is based on class conflict. Marxist theorists typically argue that elites are a class of capitalists who own and control the means of production, while non-elites are a class of workers who sell their labor for wages. Marxist theorists argue that the relationship between elites and non-elites is a zero-sum game, in which the gains of one class are always at the expense of the other class.

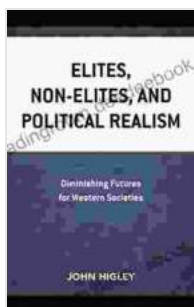
## **Practical Implications**

The relationship between elites and non-elites has a number of important implications for public policy and political practice. One implication is that elites are more likely to have their interests represented in the political process than non-elites. This is because elites have greater access to resources, such as money and power, which they can use to influence political decision-making.

Another implication of the relationship between elites and non-elites is that elites are more likely to be insulated from the consequences of their actions than non-elites. This is because elites have greater access to resources, such as wealth and power, which they can use to protect themselves from the consequences of their actions.

The relationship between elites and non-elites is a complex and multifaceted one. There is no single theory that can fully explain this relationship. However, by understanding the different historical, theoretical, and practical aspects of this relationship, we can better understand how it shapes political power and decision-making.

The relationship between elites and non-elites is a central theme of political science and political philosophy. This relationship has been shaped by a number of historical, theoretical, and practical factors. By understanding the different aspects of this relationship, we can better understand how it shapes political power and decision-making.



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