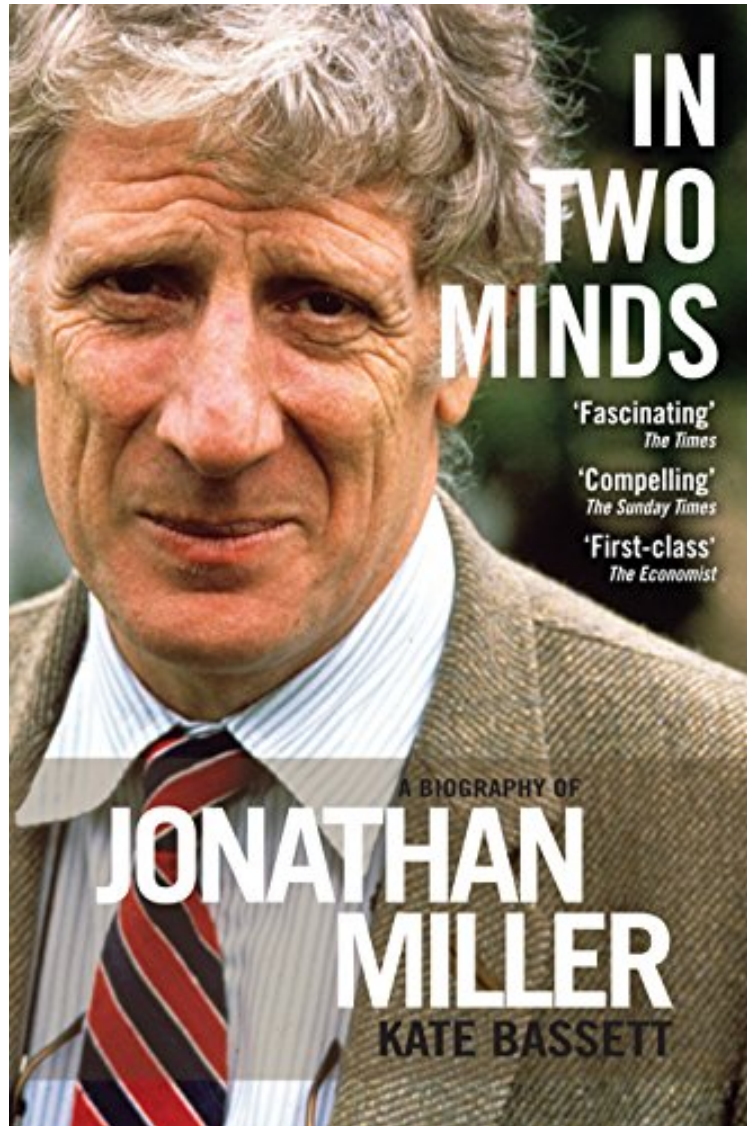


(Download) In Two Minds: a Biography of Jonathan Miller

## In Two Minds: a Biography of Jonathan Miller

*Kate Bassett*

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**Kate Bassett : In Two Minds: a Biography of Jonathan Miller** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In Two Minds: a Biography of Jonathan Miller:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Rambling biographyBy Prudence M. ThornerI found this biography of Jonathan Miller especially interesting for the first half of the book. His early years at a British public (I.e. private and rather snobbish) school and the friendships he formed there help to explain his later life. His family relationships and their attitudes to their Jewish background also speak volumes about Anglo-Jewry. (I'm not really a Jew, Miller is quoted as saying, just Jew-ish).The second part of the book, gleaned, it seems, from long rambling conversations between Miller and his biographer, is long and rambles all over the place. It seemed to me that his reminiscences were

not in chronological order. I began to lose interest in this over-long part of the story as Miller veered between producing BBC programs, operas, and falling out with old friends including his neighbor and former Fringe member Alan Bennett. I remain a staunch fan of Miller's brilliance in *Beyond the Fringe*, and did not regret wading through this book. The second half could have done with some judicious editing. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Elizabeth Wonderful brain, wonderful biography

*In Two Minds...* is the story of Jonathan Miller, one of post war Britain's most intriguing polymaths. Descended from immigrants who fled Tsarist anti-Semitism to become shopkeepers in Ireland and London's East End, Miller was born into an intellectual milieu, between Bloomsbury and Harley Street - the son of a novelist and a leading child psychiatrist. Miller trained as a doctor but then forged a career as a stellar comedian and as a world renowned theatre and opera director. He is a controversial humorist, public intellectual and TV personality. As a star in the groundbreaking satirical revue *Beyond the Fringe*, he shot to fame alongside Peter Cook, Dudley Moore and Alan Bennett. His expertise and interests encompass many areas, from medicine (he wrote and presented the hugely acclaimed BBC documentary series *The Body in Question*) to the history of art, Mozart, atheism and the nature of laughter. Jonathan Miller is one of the most multi-talented Britons of his generation, celebrated for his dazzling intelligence and anti-establishmentarian wit. This is the first comprehensive biography of him, written by leading arts journalist Kate Bassett (the *Independent on Sunday*). Drawing on in-depth interviews, it is an entertaining and illuminating portrait of a fascinatingly complex man. "I suppose it is true, my life does resemble a butterfly's existence, moving around from one flower to the next. But, of course, butterflies do pollinate. There is a point to their activity. I hope there is to mine." Jonathan Miller "He was always my idea of an impossible Renaissance man hellip; he has been a benign and hopeful presence in my life, and the life of my mind, from Cambridge until now." A.S. Byatt "He was groundbreaking, willing to take risks. His impact upon the opera world has been, without question, one of the most significant of any director in modern times hellip; part of all the schools of thought whose developments we are now experiencing." Thomas Hampson "If he'd been born French, there would be streets named after him." John Fortune

"A remarkable portrait of a complex and Coleridgean figure, a man in two minds about himself for most of his life." (Five stars) *Telegraph* "Scrupulously researched, always fascinating As Bassett says in her admirably measured book, there's bile and bitterness here. As she demonstrates, there's also genius." - *London Times* "Compelling.. a dense, exhaustively well-researched portrait... a persuasive, ultimately rather sad portrait of a North London Jewish boy." *Sunday Times* "Bassett is herself a fine, fierce theatre critic her write-ups of Miller's productions have verve and perceptive grace thorough entertaining." *Guardian* "An admirably thorough job of a biography: sympathetic, deeply researched, informed by long conversations with Miller and dozens of friends, colleagues and, occasionally, enemies." *Spectator* "Kate Bassett's fascinating book draws together the many strands that combine to make this renaissance man." *Jewish Chronicle* "Sir Jonathan Miller is a remarkable man. As one of the great egocentrics of his generation, he would not question this judgment... Ms Bassett's first-class biography does not mask Sir Jonathan's weaknesses, but she says that, in conversation, his flaws seem more tragicomic than intolerable the bile and bitterness never quite obliterate the man's warmth." *Economist* "Absorbing, in-depth and erudite Bassett, who clearly likes and respects her subject but isn't overawed by him, sensibly marshals the arguments on both sides and leaves it up to the reader how posterity will regard Miller." *Observer* "Kate Bassett's brilliant, exhaustively researched biography reminds us what a truly astonishing man he is. Just try to imagine post-war British culture without him." *Jewish Chronicle* "Intensively researched Kate Bassett pays a fantastic tribute to a great, if sometimes irascible man Where Kate Bassett really scores is in painting a rounded portrait of a man who has changed his direction more often than a frisky dodgem car at a funfair Whatever their interests, readers will find much to entertain." *British Theatre Guide*