



## The Fourth Estate

*Jeffrey Archer*

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**Fourth Estate**

**Jeffrey Archer** Richard Armstrong narrowly escaped Hitler's atrocities in Eastern Europe on his courage and his wits—skills that served him well in peacetime. Having turned a struggling Berlin newspaper into a success story seemingly overnight, Armstrong made a name for himself—and more than a few enemies along the way...Meanwhile, young Keith Townsend enters the international arena, armed with a world-class education and a sense of entitlement to match. Charged with growing his father's newspaper business into a global media force, he and Armstrong are bound to become sworn rivals—until they arrive at the edge of collapse and will do whatever it takes to stay alive in the game...or die trying.

## The Fourth Estate Details

Date : Published February 26th 2013 by St. Martin's Paperbacks (first published May 7th 1996)

ISBN :

Author : Jeffrey Archer

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## From Reader Review The Fourth Estate for online ebook

### Raven and Beez says

Read on blog!!

This is another one of Jeffrey Archers great books but if you have read A Prisoner of Birth before then I don't think this will interest you. It is not as fast paced as his other books that I have read. The thing that reeled me into this book was the rivalry among newspaper companies. I had never given a second thought to the way the newspaper industry works but if it's anything like this book then it must be one hell of a roller coaster. It's got humor in the most unexpected situations which makes the reading fun.

I liked the female characters that accompany the protagonists. They are smart, cunning and beautiful. This is also another reason why I love reading Jeffrey Archer books, he never degrades women by insulting them or making fun of them. He portrays them as someone who are smarter than men. Love you Mister Archer!

I rate this a 3.5 because compared to his other works, I know he can do better.

Lots of love and pasta,  
Raven

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### Arun Divakar says

It has all the markings of vintage Archer. Two men : one rich and one poor start building global empires and come face to face against each other. Long winded story line of greed, money and the race for power. The makings are very similar to Kane and Abel but here the business empire is narrowed to only the media. Pretty fast read and beyond entertaining you for a few hours, there isn't much to it.

Now that we are on the topic, it is also the tale of two first class, solid gold, shining as bright as the pole star and exceptionally despicable assholes: Keith Townsend and Richard Armstrong ! To quote the author's very own title : Not a penny more, not a penny less (in this novel that is !)

*Finis.*

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### Mrs. Midnight Reader says

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### **Beejay says**

I find myself giving this book three stars primarily because of the "How on earth did Archer get away with this" factor. I don't think anybody holds Jeffrey Archer up as a great writer, but he is an excellent story-teller, and therefore a provider of some very good entertainment.

"The Fourth Estate" tracks the lives - successes, failures, treachery - of two media barons, Richard Armstrong and Keith Townsend. The parallels with Robert Maxwell and Rupert Murdoch are uncanny in the extreme, to the point where I believe legal action was instigated to prevent the publication of this book. That alone makes it an intriguing read. The book is a fantastic insight into the wheelings, dealings and outright deceit employed by "Armstrong" and "Townsend" to reach their goals. And the bottom line? What a couple of sad men. I think that Archer could easily have named his characters Faustus A and Faustus B, for these are indeed a couple of extremely nasty - amoral would probably be not too strong a word - characters who seemingly have no redeeming traits whatsoever.

And as I say: how on earth did Archer get away with it?

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### **Cathy says**

Despite his somewhat dubious personal integrity and a lack of any literary gravitas to his novels, I've always found Jeffrey Archer to be a consummate storyteller and weaver of gripping tales ... until now that is. The Fourth Estate traces the lives and fortunes of its two protagonists, who are destined to become rival newspaper barons. Predictably, one is born with the proverbial silver spoon firmly ensconced in his mouth, while the other begins life in abject poverty. Their changing fortunes throughout their childhoods, WW2 and later rivalry are laboriously recorded in minute detail and one cannot help but breathe a sigh of relief upon coming to the end of this very long-winded novel.

Unless you have a strong interest in newspaper publishing and/or banking, I'd give this one a miss.

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### **Eddie Owens says**

I am going through a Jeffrey Archer period after buying a load of books in a charity shop.

Never heard of this one before but it's quite good. It's a fictionalised biography of Murdoch and Maxwell; only the names have been changed to protect the guilty.

I was really interested to see how these two crooks made it big and Archer, as ever, tells a riveting story.

He's not big on prose or descriptions, but he knows how to tell a story that keeps you interested.

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### **Darren says**

I had this book at my house. Not sure where it came from. It is a older book by this author. I enjoyed reading it. It had a good story to it. I like the variety of characters in it. I hope to read more books by this author.

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### **Chinmay Bhattachar says**

Interesting read. Has a very very slow start and a lot of buildup. But second half more than makes up for it. The narration style is different than the usual Archer novels and how the two separate stories merge eventually at the end is really awesome.

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### **Veronica says**

I gave up on this half way through.... how many times can you rewrite Kane & Able?

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### **Addy says**

#### THE FOURTH ESTATE

I've said it many times that when it comes to story telling, Jeffrey Archer is the undisputed 'First Among Equals'. 'The Fourth Estate' is another signature Archer masterpiece which will keep you glued to the pages late into the night. The story of two Print Media barons, hailing from two completely different backgrounds with an insatiable appetite for owning as many newspapers in the world as possible. While one is a survivor from a small village in Poland which has been ravaged by Hitler's Germany, the other is born with the proverbial silver spoon. Both follow dramatically different paths encountering a lot of challenges and ultimately and inevitably face off against each other in a battle of wits, guile, ruthlessness and power of epic proportions. Although both of them seem deplorable at times and hardly display any humane behaviour, I definitely liked Keith Townsend more than Richard Armstrong and perhaps that's why I liked the ending a lot. It is only Jeffrey Archer who can make an otherwise mundane sounding topic of mergers and acquisitions seem like the most interesting thing in the world, even for the uninitiated. It's right up there in the class of 'Kane and Abel'

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### **Luffy says**

It's been a long time in coming, but at last I've got my first 5/5 book of the year. Jeffrey Archer's books, unlike most authors', had always been available to me when I was growing up in the mid 90's. I remember those times. Curiously, though I had been aware of some of his writings (Kane and Abel), I naively thought that writers like him were common in the world. How wrong was I. So, instead of saving up my money to

buy his books, I bought instead French and Belgian comics. Stuff like Gaston Lagaffe and Lucky Luke and Asterix.

I queerly don't regret the time I let elapse to discover Archer's works. I am now in a position to fully savor Archer's storytelling prowess. The Fourth Estate, throughout its length duped us into thinking that the struggle between two press magnates would end up in a draw - in the end, if not during their blow by blow account. The end was stunning. The wordsmith that is Archer has had me hooked these past few days when I was engrossed in reading this book. But it's not a universally acclaimed novel.

It's a novel that was maybe meant for people who appreciate raw, page turning fun. I appreciated the small cares gone into the book...such as giving some lines to describing Townsend's and Hoch's first sexual experiences, then ditching the lurid details as they grew up in maturity and sophistication. I liked how Archer made two unlikable characters be heroes of this book. I was not even once against these chaps and their actions. For me that happens very rarely. I enjoyed the chapters switching alternatively between Armstrong and Townsend, then merging these two arcs so that I had to pay attention as to what was happening. Most of all I liked the style of the book. I had once been physically sick while reading a book. Well, with the Fourth Estate, aesthetically, it was like having ice cream for every meal. Archer is fast gaining to become my favorite writer. Baldacci better beware. I need to ration these books so they don't get read too fast. Truly the 90's were a treasured decade for authors. Simply because the generation that saw out WW2, could have the conclusion of their lives based in that special decade. Can't wait to read more of Jeffrey Archer's books.

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### **Carlos says**

El tema principal del libro me llamó mucho la atención y me gustó. Historia bien planteada, con un principio del libro un poco incierto, pero que tiene su propósito.

El poder de la prensa, como lo podemos ver en esta historia, es enorme y peligroso. Lo que rescato es que ni Armstrong ni Townsend tenían como propósito principal controlar todas las noticias de sus periódicos para hacerlo como una dictadura, ellos sólo querían poder, poder y más poder. ¿La consecuencia de aquello? Quedarse sin vida y sin familia, incluso sin nacionalidad. En mi opinión personal, uno de los protagonistas (no diré quién) pasó de héroe a villano.

Para mí el libro se divide en tres partes: Cuando eran niños, cuando ambos comenzaron a descubrir su talento innato en el mundo del periodismo y cuando llegan a la cima del poder. Me gustó mucho la primera parte, especialmente por Armstrong, pero después me hice totalmente fan de Townsend.

Es un libro muy largo, pero en muchos pasajes no podía dejar de leer. Se hacía adictiva a ratos. Me encanta esa adicción. Eso sí, el final me decepcionó un poco. Pudo haber sido mejor.

Dos personas que vienen de estratos sociales totalmente diferentes, y se puede apreciar en la forma de ser de ambos. No me gusta hacer *spoiler*, así que creo que omitiré algunos comentarios.

Mensaje del libro: tener ambición y obsesión es bueno, pero siempre de forma controlada.

¿Recomendable? Sí, sobre todo para los lectores interesados en materias de prensa y política.

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### **Wsm says**

This is a plodding effort by Archer. He has tried this formula before, the story of two men who become competitors. Didn't particularly interest me.

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### **Sammie says**

If anyone is considering reading this, save yourself the time and just read (or re-read) Kane and Abel instead. The Fourth Estate has the same premise, only without any charm.

The characters are unlikable. The plot is boring and repetitive. I have read several of Jeffrey Archer's novels and this is the first one to disappoint me.

If you start to read it and force yourself to continue just because you hope it gets better, believe me, it doesn't!

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### **Yunee Ryan says**

i just finished reading the book yesterday. like in his first three books that i have read, the fourth estate revolves around lawyers, money and the loopholes in laws created by human.

when i read the first and second chapter, i dont have any ideas where the story is going to take me. when i move on, then i know the chapters are actually the ending of the story. this is the first time i ever read a book with two main characters that are put separately, and the characters didnt even meet face to face, and towards the ending, they met face to face directly with each other. i must admit that archer skillfully narrated his story about the two media tycoons.

another skill of archer is that, i dont know about other readers, but the next chapter is always a surprise for me. very unpredictable and very unexpected. normally, the last sentence of each chapter will give a clue that something 'unexpected' will happen in the next chapter, and that is one reason i cannot put the book down!

however, i give 4 stars to the fourth estate because i dont like the ending of townsend's story. when i read the phrase "im sorry e.b" i was thinking that he is saying sorry because he just realized his mistake. but how disappointed i am when the next phrase is "i lied". most likely he will end up just like armstrong :( but i guess that is reality and that's the way it goes when someone is 'addicted' with money.

lastly, this is just my opinion based on what i read and know about jews. a jew normally will help another jew. i dont think, that in reality, armstrong will be left alone by other jews no matter how big his debts are. but again, this is just an opinion, ok?

i was never into business or broadcasting or newspaper world so this is my first 'experience' of 'walking' in their world. life is so hectic and 'on-call' most of the time. i am not a business person as well but through this book i see business world is very cruel. when i think about outstanding businessmen on the top of the world, it makes me wonder, did they go through the same 'process' (like in this book) as well? i dont have the answer :)

overall, i enjoy reading the fourth state!

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