

George Orwell

Eric High Blair

(1903-1950)

Image from:
<http://students.ou.edu/C/Kara.C.Chiodo-1/orwell.jpg>

Biographical Information

Date of Birth: June
25, 1903

Place of Birth: India

Died: at age 46 in England



Image from: <http://www.zardoz.net/orwell/110-Headstone.html>

Buried in "country churchyard," in an Oxfordshire village where the Astors had an estate

Schooling

- Sent to the expensive Normal English preparatory school in England
- Accepted at a reduced tuition rate because he was considered lower-upper-middle class and was treated as a “charity case” by his snobby peers and the head master
- Created a feeling that the rich and powerful made all of the rules in life
- Began to identify with the underdog and sympathize with victims of poverty

Schooling Continued.....

- Won a scholarship to Eton College in England – graduated in 1921
- Got involved with popular liberal and socialist ideals



Image from:
<http://images.encarta.msn.com/xrefmedia/sharemed/targets/images/pho/t235/T235499a.jpg>

Political Work

- Served as a policeman
- Disliked his role because he was exercising power over the people
- Returned to Europe to become a writer
- Lived for several years in poverty among the working-class

Propaganda

Image from: <http://www.ww1-propaganda-cards.com/home3.JPG>



- During the Second World War, Orwell wrote a weekly radio political commentary
- Used propaganda to make Russia's Communist ways look good

Orwell the Author



Image from:
http://www.biblioforum.de/images/buecher/george_orwell_2.jpg

- Feeling let down by the Communists, Orwell figured that revolutions failed, because those who get power are corrupted by it – a theme found in all his writings
- Orwell's best-known books reflect his opposition to totalitarianism: *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In an article entitled, "Why I Write" Orwell would explain:
 - *"Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism...Animal Farm was the first book in which I tried, with full consciousness of what I was doing, to fuse political purpose and artistic purpose into one whole."*

Orwell's Idea

*"Power always corrupts,
and therefore,
revolutions always fail.
New masters are
always corrupted by
new power. In other
words: **ABSOLUTE
POWER CORRUPTS
ABSOLUTELY.**"*



Image from:
<http://products.listal.com/images/nodrop/180/0140278737/books/animal-farm-essential-penguin.jpg>

Orwell's Style

- Uses lots of literary devices such as similes, metaphors, personification, onomatopoeia and especially irony, symbolism, and satire
- Honest writing – stories are told straightforwardly and logically; tells it like it is and reader has to accept it or not
- Uses propaganda techniques
- Humorous and sarcastic

Animal Farm

"All Animals are created equal. But some animals are created more equal."

Animal Farm, George Orwell

- Written in closing years of WWII
- Published in 1945 – got rejected several times before because of content and theme

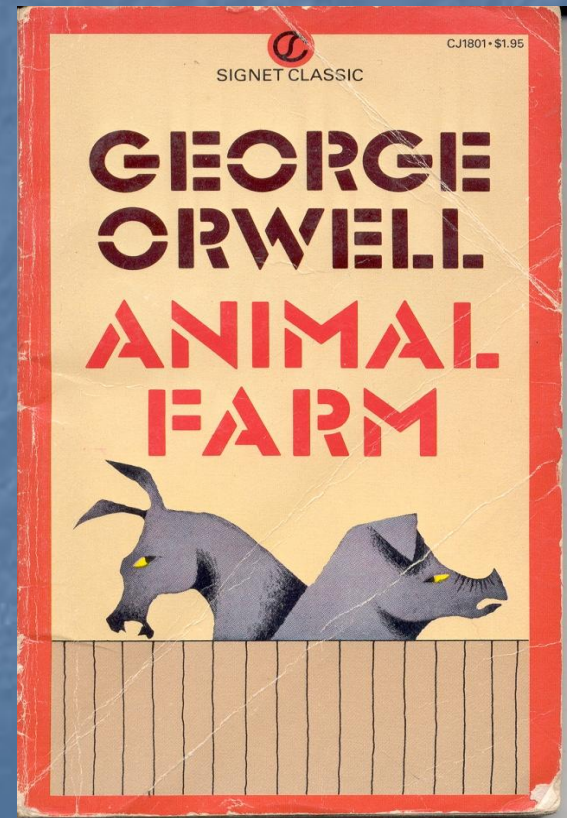


Image from:
<http://www.luminist.org/images/049.jp>

Animal Farm Continued.....

- Not just a simple animal fable

Has 3 levels:

- 1.) An animal story
 - 2.) A history of the Soviet Union
 - 3.) A general discussion on the political and social revolutions that take place all over the world at anytime and how abuse of power follows in all revolutions
- Purpose of writing *Animal Farm* was to warn the world about the dangers of totalitarianism and to poke fun of people who think a perfect society is possible – Uses the literary device of **Satire** to do this.

Why Should We Read *Animal Farm*???

- Develops VERY important critical thinking skills and learn how to critically evaluate information instead of blindly accepting what we are told
- We are inspired to challenge injustices and not be intimidated by slogans, fear, etc.
- Orwell reminds us that the weak get exploited or taken advantage of by the strong everywhere in the world

What Can I Gain from Reading

Animal Farm?

- The question is NOT "Could this happen again?" but, "Do you realize it still is happening today?"

Studying this book will help you:

- critically evaluate info,
- avoid being manipulated, and
- challenge you to base decisions on facts instead of emotions and "group think"



What to Expect from *Animal Farm*

- On the surface *Animal Farm* may seem childish and unrealistic (like the movie *Babe*)
- but it's certainly NOT kids' stuff

Be prepared to be:

- Surprised
- Challenged
- Moved
- Intrigued
- Enlightened