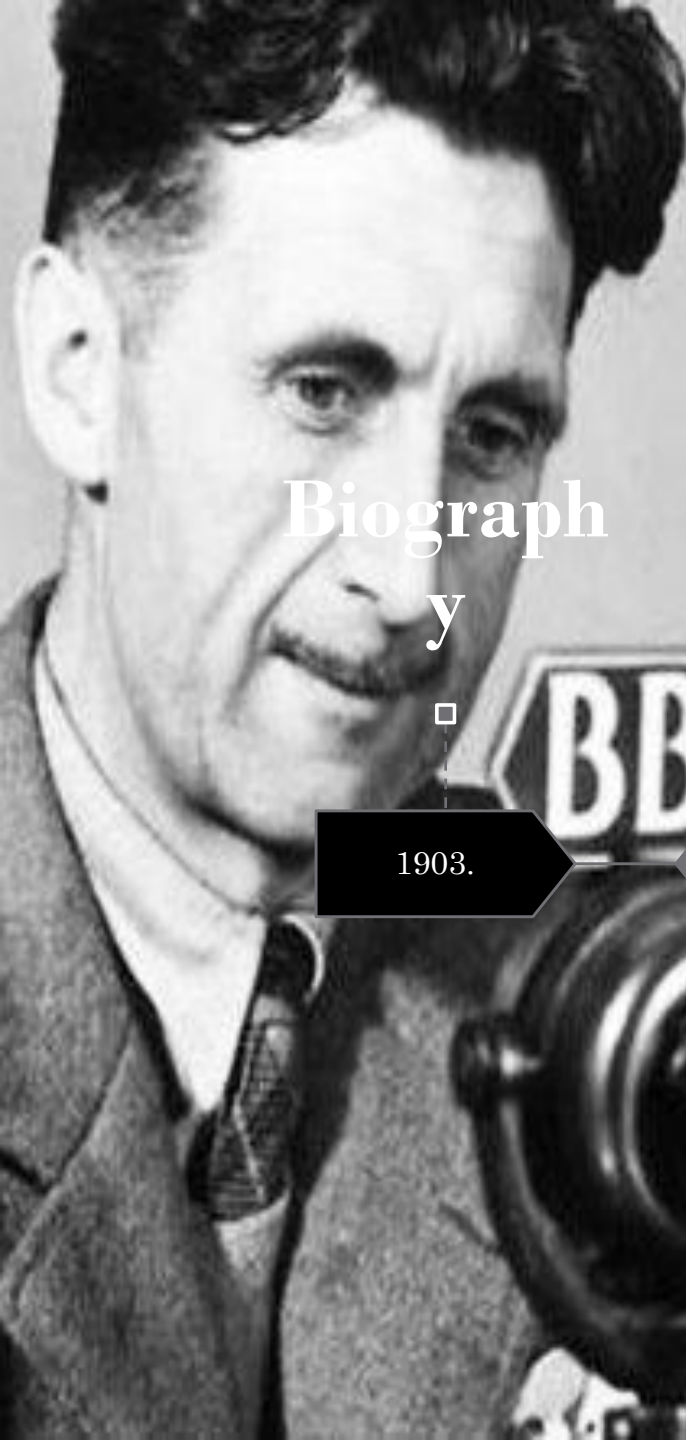


GEORGE ORWELL

1984



Biography

1903.

1933

Plot

1984.

1984.

Themes

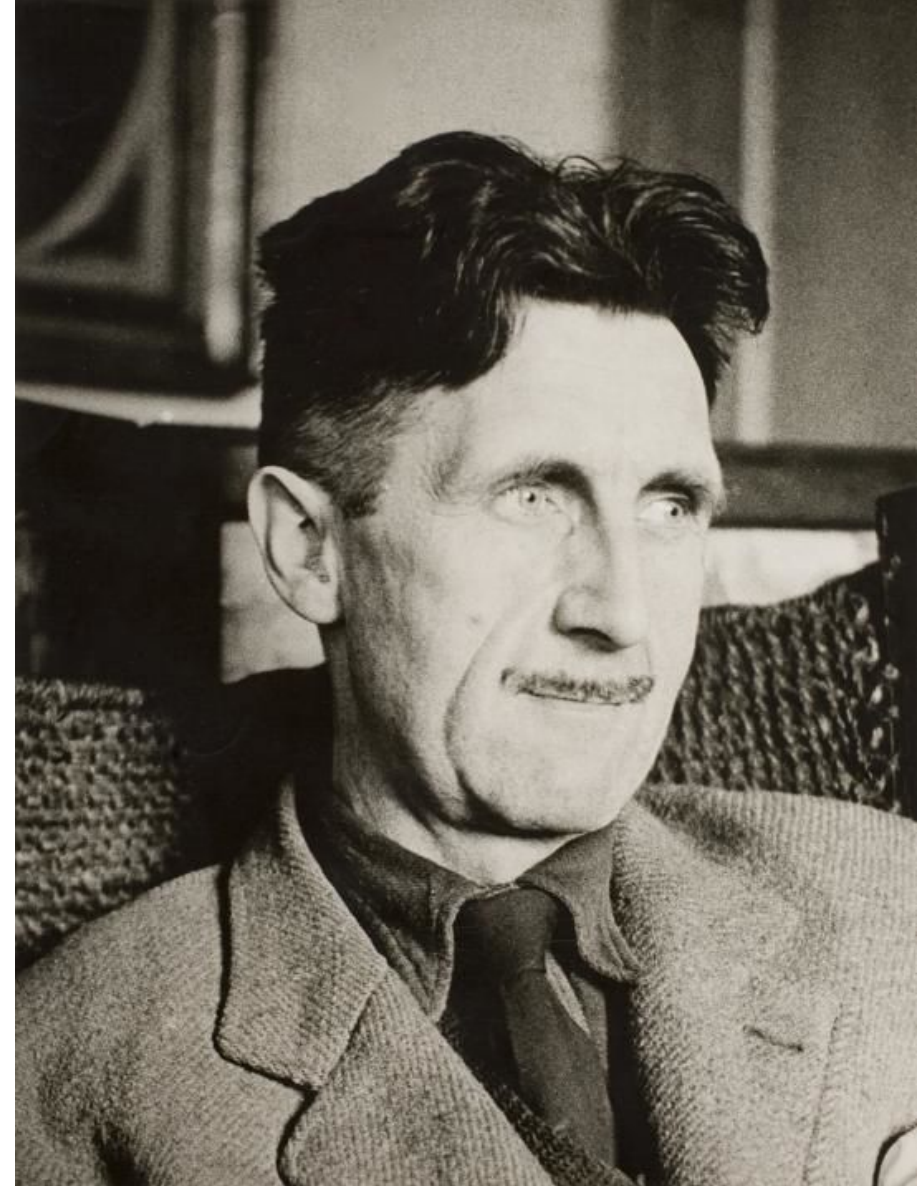
1984

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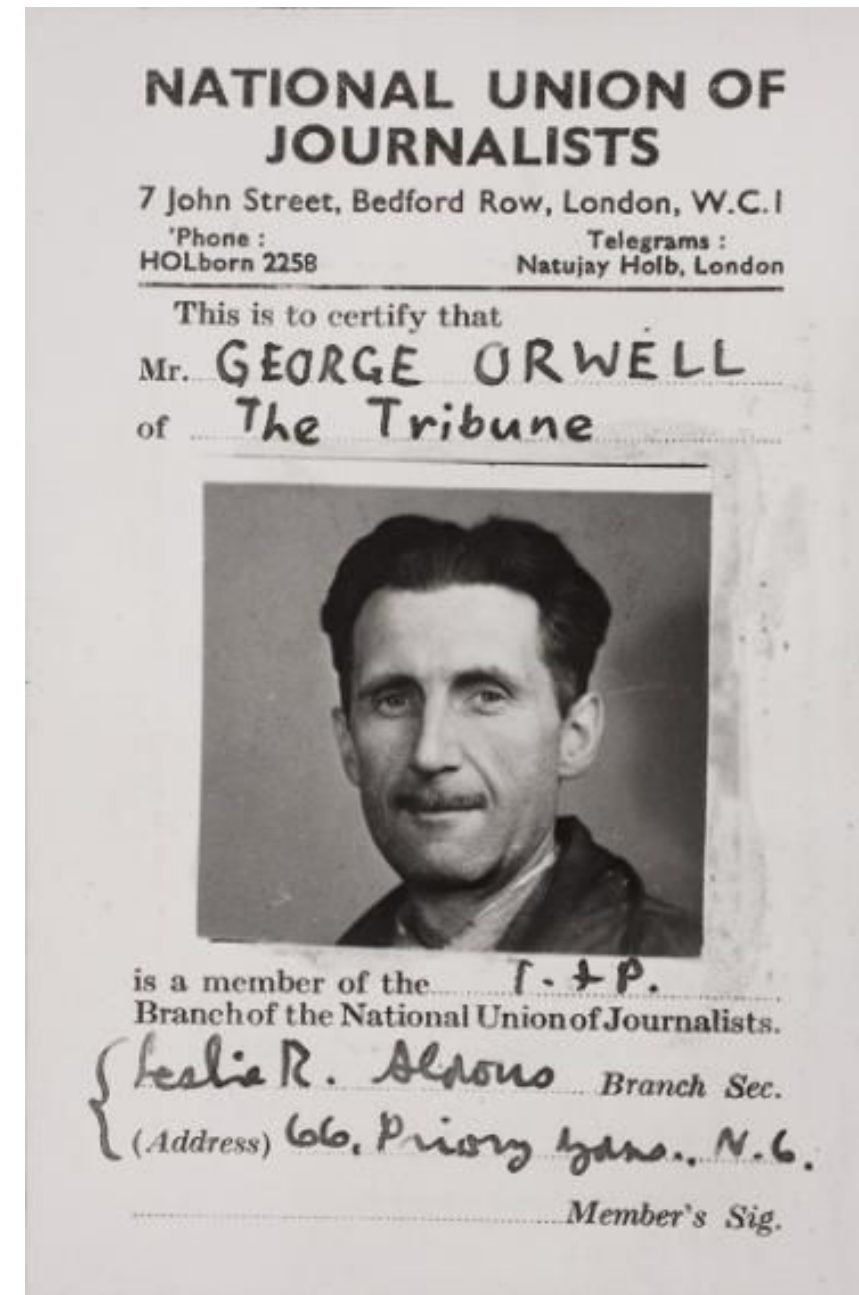
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BIOGRAPHY

Eric Arthur Blair was born on 25 June 1903 in Motihari, India. His father, Richard Blair, worked in the opium department of the British colonial administration of India, a British secret service which produced and stored opium for sale to China. His mother, Ida Blair, grew up in Molamyaina, Burma, where her family ran a business - shipbuilding and the teak trade. Eric had two sisters, Marjorie, five years older than him, and Avril, five years younger. When Eric was one year old he moved to England with his mother and sister Marjorie.



He received his primary education at St Cyprian's School in Eastbourne. (Eastbourne) where he studied from the age of 8 to 13. In 1917 he received a named scholarship and attended Eton College until 1921. From 1922 to 1927 he served in the colonial police in Burma, and then spent a long time in Britain and Europe, living from odd jobs, at which time he began writing prose fiction and journalism. Already in Paris he came with the firm intention of becoming a writer. Starting with the autobiographical story Down and Out in Paris and London (1933), he published under the pseudonym "George Orwell", named after the Orwell River, one of his favourite places in England.





In 1936 Orwell married, and six months later he and his wife went to Spain, where the civil war had broken out, to fight on the side of the Republicans. He found himself on the Aragonese front and his wife Eileen worked in Barcelona as secretary to John McNair, leader of the Independent Labour Party, who co-ordinated the arrival of British volunteers in Spain. On 20 May 1937 he was shot in the throat by a Franco sniper in Huesca. After the POUM was banned in June 1937, Orwell and his wife risked arrest because the POUM party was anti-Stalinist and the left-wing camp was dominated by supporters or agents of the Stalinist USSR and left Spain in a hurry.

Already after that, the Barcelona Tribunal for espionage and treason brought the following charge against them: "Their correspondence shows that they are fierce Trotskyites... liaisons between the Independent Labour Party and POUM... took part in the May events"

Arriving in Britain from Spain as a left-wing opponent of Stalinism, Orwell joined the Independent Labour Party. He wrote of the developments in Spain: In the end, we will have a regime in which all opposition parties and newspapers will be banned and any significant dissident will be imprisoned. Of course such a regime would be fascist. It will not be like Franco's fascist regime, it will be better than Franco's - even better, to the point of being worth fighting for - but it will be a fascist regime. But because it will be installed by liberals and communists, it will be called by a different name.





In 1938 Orwell was diagnosed with tuberculosis.

During World War II he wanted to join the army but failed on health grounds, he hosted an anti-fascist programme on the BBC until 1943, then became a literary critic for the Tribune newspaper. In 1946 he settled on Jura Island.

In 1945 Eileen died.

Shortly before his death, in 1949, Orwell married editor Sonia Brownell.

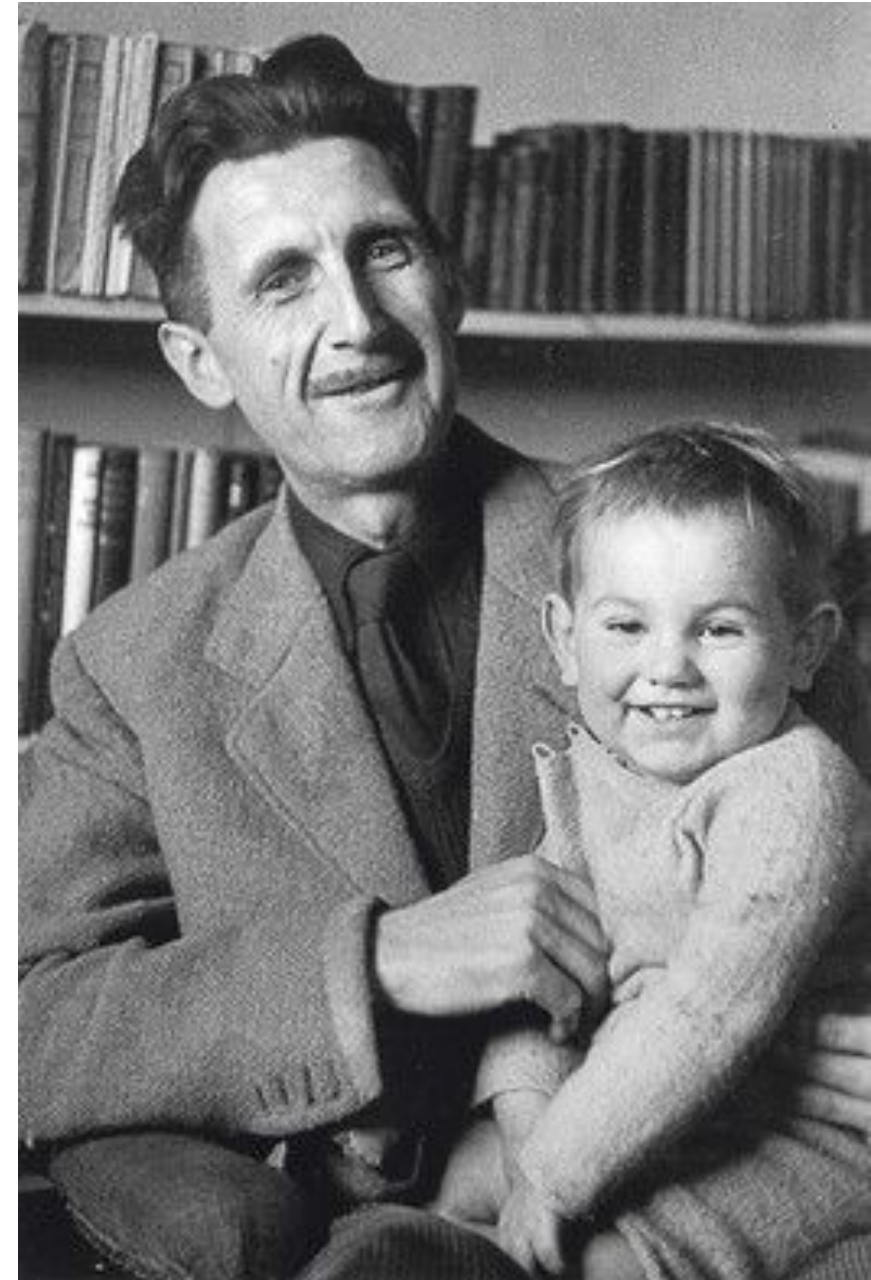
After Orwell's death his adopted child was brought up by Orwell's younger sister Avril, his older sister Marjorie died in 1946.

In 1949 Orwell was approached by Celia Kerwan, to whom Orwell had been engaged shortly before. She asked for a recommendation for someone to work in the Foreign Office's Information Research Department. The role of the office was to counter Soviet propaganda, Orwell refused to work himself but recommended several people.

Orwell also offered to draw up a list of people who should not be employed by the bureau because of their sympathies for the USSR and communism. From his personal

notebook there was a list of 135 people, including B. Shaw, J. Steinbeck, J.B. Priestley, C. Chaplin and others.

Orwell died at 47 in London of tuberculosis on 21 January 1950.





George Orwell is considered one of the major figures of 20th century literature. His work is known to be a very intelligent mirror of the world, and has been appreciated for its attention to detail.

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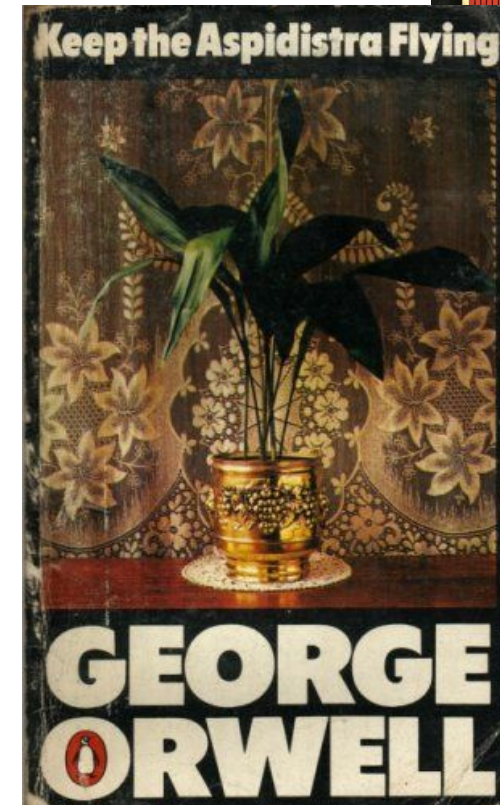
MAJOR WORKS

1. Down and Out in Paris and London.

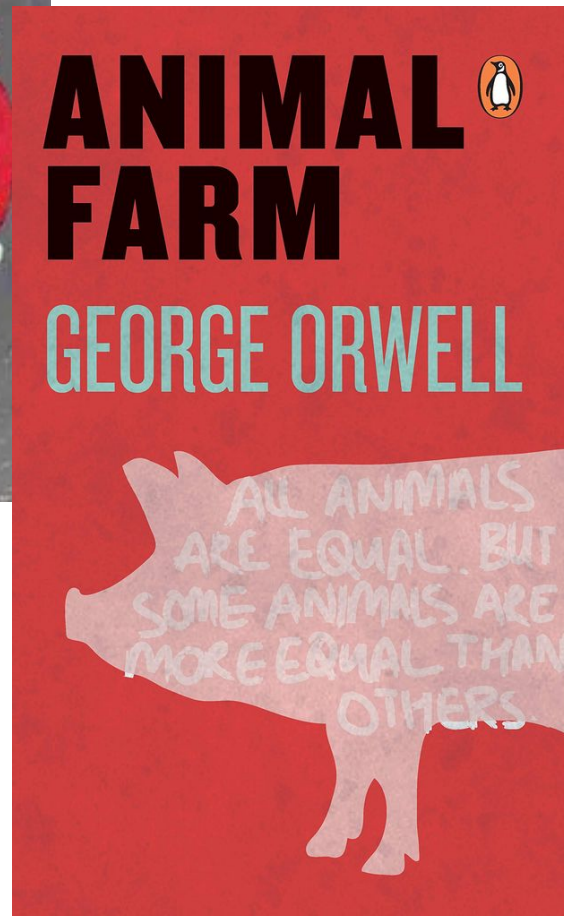
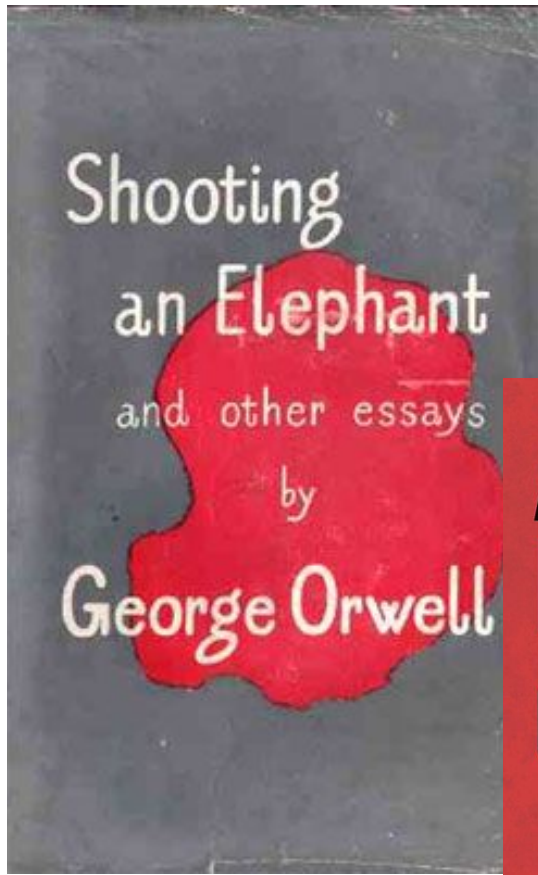
This was George Orwell's first published book-length work, in 1933. It's a memoir of Orwell's time spent living in London. The book was designed to reveal the hidden poverty of working-class (and even lower-class) life to middle-class readers.

2. Keep the Aspidistra Flying.

George Orwell also wrote well about petty poverty, the writer's life (see his 'Confessions of a Book Reviewer', also from 1946), and the English obsession with money, usually with having too little of it. And he did all of these in his 1936 novel *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*, which focuses on Gordon Comstock, a struggling poet, who has dreams of making it big in



MAJOR WORKS



3. 'Shooting an Elephant'.

This is a 1936 essay by George Orwell. In it, he recalls his experiences as a police officer in Burma, where he had to shoot an escaped elephant. Orwell reflects from this event (which may or may not have been fictional) to see it as a perfect example of imperialism, in which the colonizer loses his humanity and freedom by oppressing others.

4. Animal Farm.

Animal Farm is, after Nineteen Eighty-Four, George Orwell's most famous book. Was published in 1945. Curiously, the book very nearly didn't make it into print at all. First, not long after Orwell completed the first draft in February 1944, his flat on Mortimer

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GEORGE ORWELL



"SOCIALISM AND THE ENGLISH GENIUS"

**THE LION AND
THE UNICORN**

MAJOR WORKS

5. 'The Lion and the Unicorn'.

Subtitled 'Socialism and the English Genius', this is an essay Orwell wrote about Britain in the wake of the outbreak of the Second World War. Published in 1941, this essay takes its title from the heraldic symbols for England (the lion) and Scotland (the unicorn). Orwell argues that some sort of socialist revolution is needed to wrest Britain out of its outmoded ways and an overhaul of the British class system will help Britain to defeat the Nazis.

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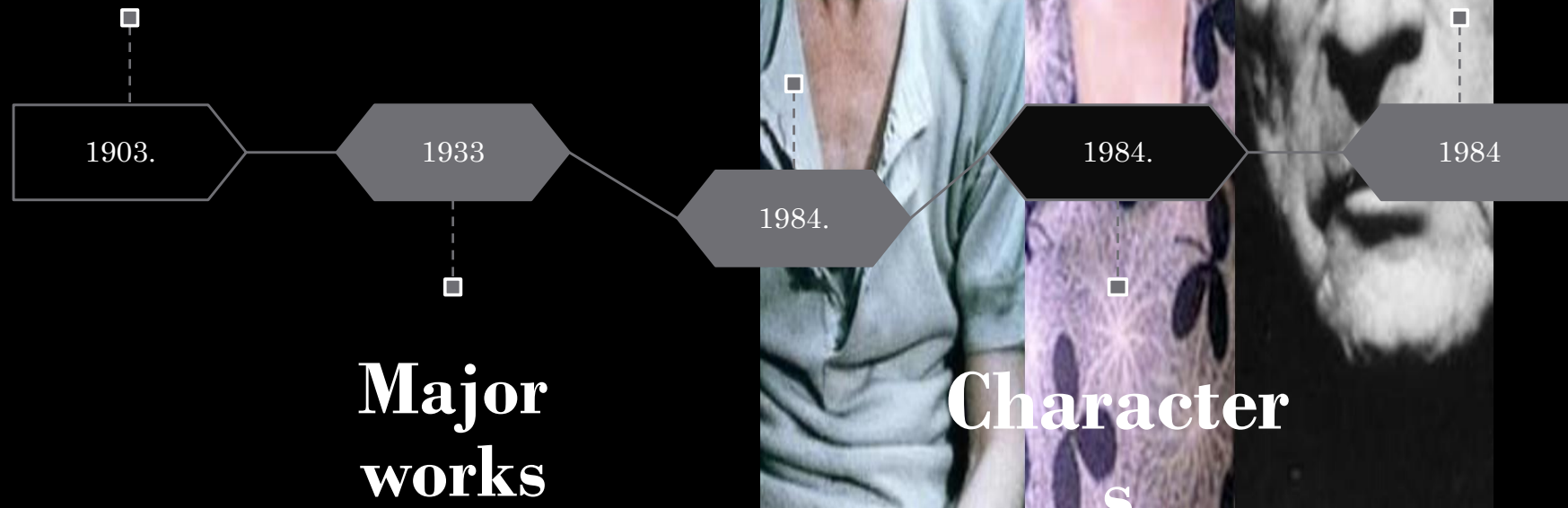








Biograph
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WINSTON SMITH

– the protagonist who is a phlegmatic everyman and is curious about the past before the Revolution.





JULIA

– Winston's lover who is a covert "rebel from the waist downwards" who publicly espouses Party doctrine as a member of the fanatical Junior Anti-Sex League.

O'BRIEN

– a member of the Inner Party who poses as a member of The Brotherhood, the counter-revolutionary resistance, a spy intending to deceive, trap, and capture Winston and Julia. O'Brien has a servant named Martin.



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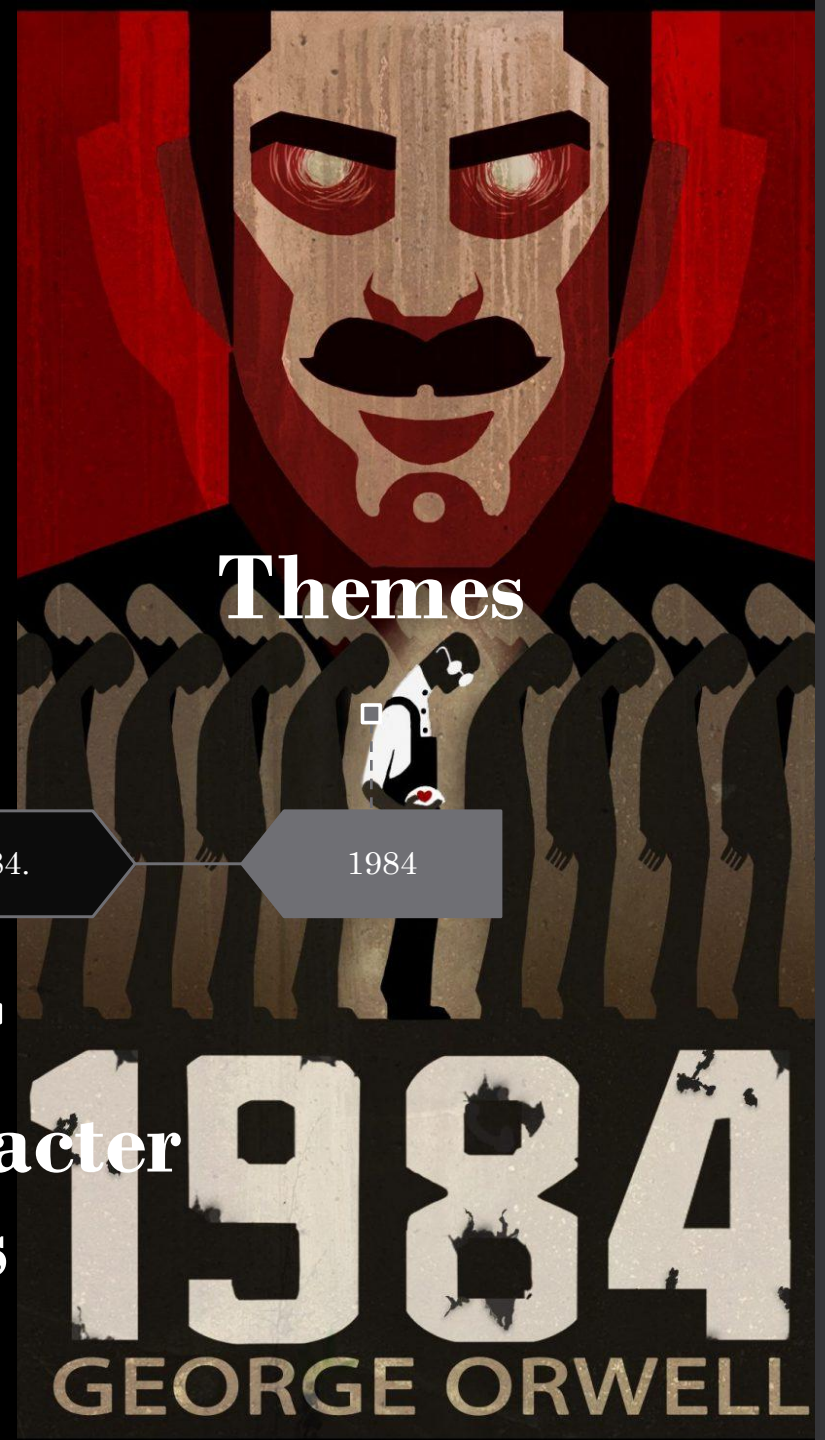
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THE INHERENT DESTRUCTION IN TOTALITARIANISM

A major purpose of 1984 being written was to warn people of the dangers of totalitarian revolutions. Orwell witnessed the overthrow of several major empires to socialism and communism and felt frightened that it could happen to him and anyone else—especially with the rise of violent technologies and weapons. In the novel, Orwell shows the effects that such a government can have on the people, showing them living intellectually and emotionally stifled lives. If anyone dares to try and live outside of these constrictions, they are punished and tortured into submission. Brainwashing and absolute control are The Party's tactics to stay in power and they do this by manipulating technology to be tools for oppression.



PROPAGANDA

Propaganda is defined as information, typically biased, used to support a certain point of view. Through the use of telescreens, slogans, and other pieces of propaganda, the loyalty of the Oceania citizens is controlled and manipulated by the Party. Unbeknownst to themselves, the citizens lose their ability to think on their own and live in a world full of devotion and patriotism. Much like the World War I Uncle Sam poster, which is a United States staple piece of propaganda, the Party uses posters of Big Brother as a patriotic symbol.

The Ministry of Truth, where the protagonist, Winston Smith, works, is responsible for dispersing all information to its people. The Ministry distorts history and facts, regardless of their accuracy, to support and promote the ideology behind the Party. This form of propaganda is just one of many that diminish the individualistic freedoms of Oceania.

The propaganda used in Orwell's dystopia defines what it means to be a loyal citizen to the Party. The propaganda influences the citizen's perception of what is real and what isn't.



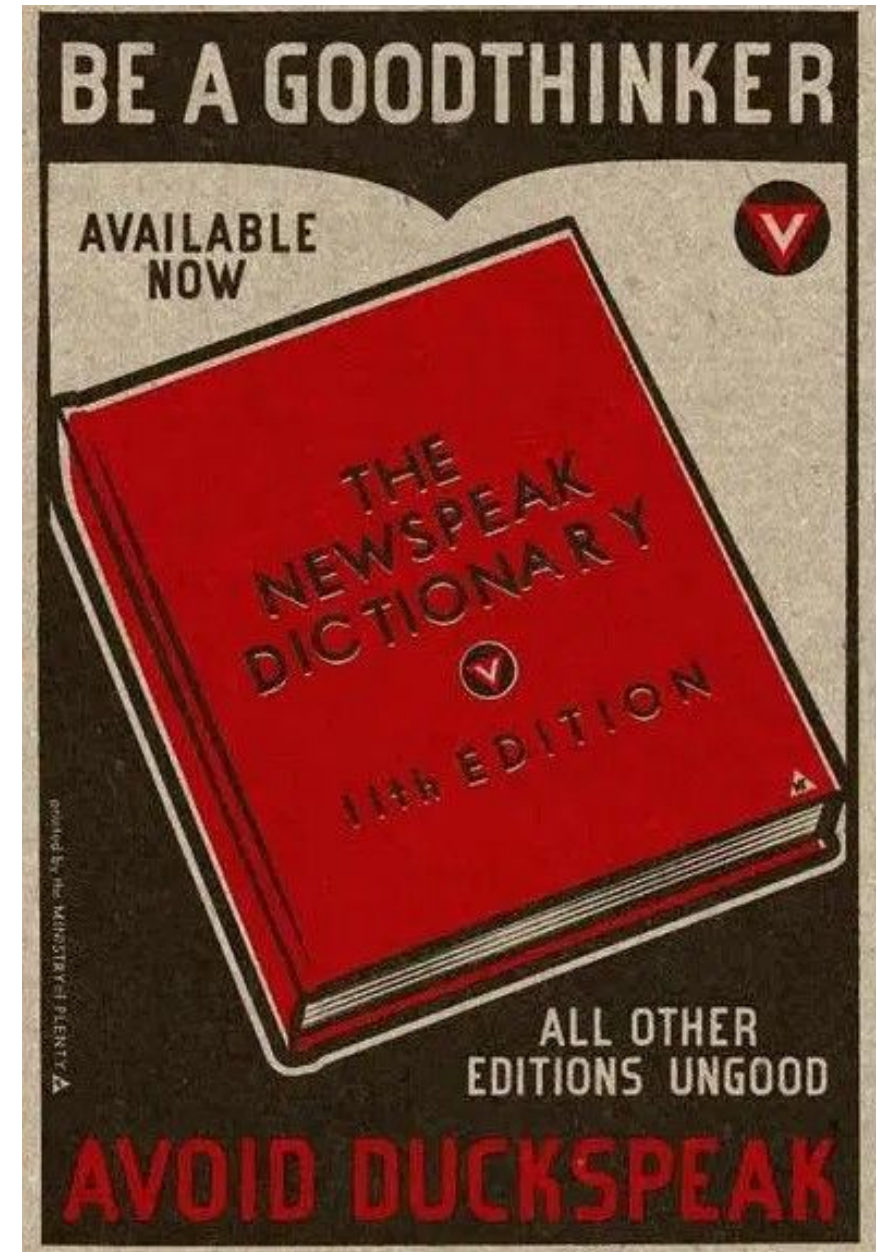
Propaganda posters for the Ministry

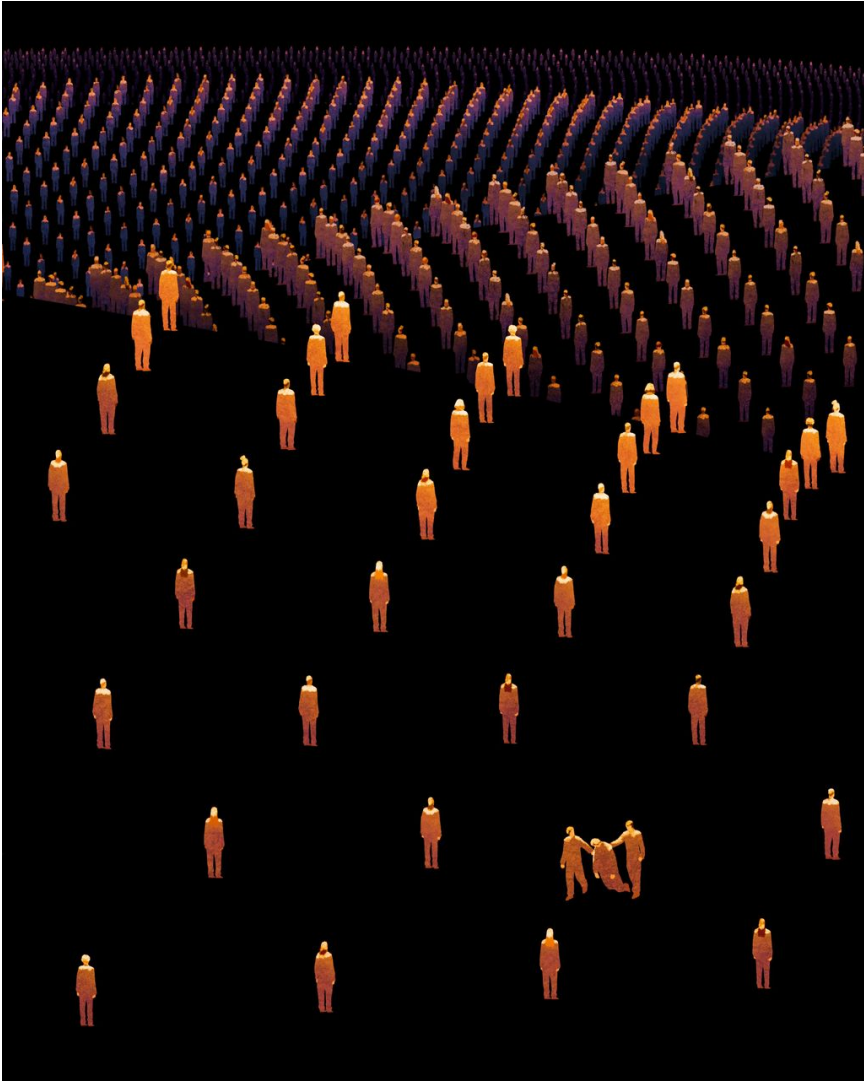
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LANGUAGE

Another of Orwell's creations for 1984 is Newspeak, a form of English that the book's totalitarian government utilizes to discourage free thinking. Orwell believed that, without a word or words to express an idea, the idea itself was impossible to conceive and retain. Thus Newspeak has eliminated the word "bad," replacing it with the less-harsh "ungood." The Party is constantly refining and perfecting Newspeak, with the ultimate goal that no one will be capable of conceptualizing anything that might question the Party's absolute power.

The author's point was that government can control us through the words.





04

INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY

Since acts of individuality are forbidden, Winston finds ways to express himself since it becomes too uncomfortable for him not to, but he has to do so in secret. He buys items from an antique shop in the prole district that inspire him, such as a journal. After he writes in his journal a few times, he finds himself automatically beginning to write anti-Party things. This leads him to feel freer, but he knows that he can be punished extremely harshly for this.

Citizens of Oceania are not able to express their individuality and The Party favors people who are dull and impressionable and punishes people who are individualistic. Party members wear **the same clothes, eat the same foods, and drink the same drinks.**