

George Orwell Biography



George Orwell was born in 1903 in Bengal, India to British parents, but at age one, he moved to England with his mother. Despite his parents not being very wealthy, he went to prep (private) school, where corporal punishment was an acceptable practice in that day and age, and may have contributed to Orwell's later resentment of authority. Around the age of eighteen, he decided to follow in his father's footsteps and went to Burma to serve as a British policeman with the Indian Imperial Police in Burma. After 6 years, however, he became discouraged with the downtrodden life of the native Burmese, under British rule, and he decided to return to England and take up writing for a living. In order to make himself a better writer, he spent some time living among the homeless, and came to understand the inequalities between the rich and the poor. He began to develop a unique view of the world, which would later serve him well as a writer. In his writings, he criticizes virtually all forms of government that oppress people.

Orwell became fearful of what he saw as worldwide acceptance of communism in the Soviet Union, which was led by a dictator named Josef Stalin. He had lived in Spain, which was, at that time, a communist country heavily influenced by the government of the Soviet Union, and he knew how oppressive Stalin's reign had become. The reason he hated communism so much is because he distrusted the leaders who lived in mansions while the common folk slaved in the fields. He felt that communism was just another way for the upper classes to control the lower classes.

However, acceptance of communism was growing, even in England and the United States, because of the Soviet Union being allied with England and the United States against Nazi Germany in World War II. Therefore, *Animal Farm* was written at an unfortunate time, and in fact, its publication was even postponed until World War II was over.

Orwell died at age of 46 from lung disease, approximately four years after the publication of *Animal Farm*. It was not until after his death that his book rose to fame as an honest assessment of the communist form of government.