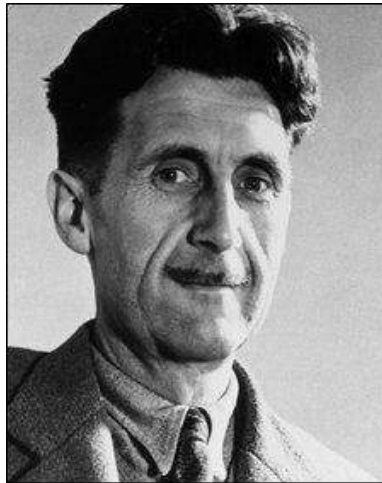


GEORGE ORWELL

QUOTATIONS



Eric Arthur Blair (George Orwell)
(25 Jun 1903 – 21 Jan 1950),

Compiled by

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(This material was compiled from various unverified sources of George Orwell's works)

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George Orwell Quotations

During times of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act.
(George Orwell)

Advertising is the rattling of a stick inside a swill bucket.
(George Orwell)

All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.
(George Orwell)

Early in life I had noticed that no event is ever correctly reported in a newspaper.
(George Orwell)

Enlightened people seldom or never possess a sense of responsibility.
(George Orwell)

All political thinking for years past has been vitiated in the same way. People can foresee the future only when it coincides with their own wishes, and the most grossly obvious facts can be ignored when they are unwelcome.
(George Orwell)

A dirty joke is a sort of mental rebellion.
(George Orwell)

A family with the wrong members in control; that, perhaps, is as near as one can come to describing England in a phrase.
(George Orwell)

A tragic situation exists precisely when virtue does not triumph but when it is still felt that man is nobler than the forces which destroy him.
(George Orwell)

All the war-propaganda, all the screaming and lies and hatred, comes invariably from people who are not fighting.
(George Orwell)

As I write, highly civilized human beings are flying overhead, trying to kill me.
(George Orwell)

As with the Christian religion, the worst advertisement for Socialism is its adherents.
(George Orwell)

At fifty everyone has the face he deserves.
(George Orwell)

Big Brother is watching you.
(George Orwell)

But if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought.
(George Orwell)

Dickens is one of those authors who are well worth stealing.
(George Orwell)

Doublethink means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them.
(George Orwell)

Each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it.
(George Orwell)

Every war when it comes, or before it comes, is represented not as a war but as an act of self-defence against a homicidal maniac.
(George Orwell)

For a creative writer possession of the "truth" is less important than emotional sincerity.
(George Orwell)

Four legs good, two legs bad.
(George Orwell)

Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four. If that is granted, all else follows.
(George Orwell)

Freedom is the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.
(George Orwell)

Good writing is like a windowpane.
(George Orwell)

Happiness can exist only in acceptance.
(George Orwell)

He was an embittered atheist, the sort of atheist who does not so much disbelieve in God as personally dislike Him.
(George Orwell)

I doubt whether classical education ever has been or can be successfully carried out without corporal punishment.
(George Orwell)

I sometimes think that the price of liberty is not so much eternal vigilance as eternal dirt.
(George Orwell)

If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.
(George Orwell)

If you have embraced a creed which appears to be free from the ordinary dirtiness of politics - a creed from which you yourself cannot expect to draw any material advantage - surely that proves that you are in the right?
(George Orwell)

If you want a vision of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face - forever.
(George Orwell)

I'm fat, but I'm thin inside... there's a thin man inside every fat man.
(George Orwell)

In a time of universal deceit - telling the truth is a revolutionary act.
(George Orwell)

In our age there is no such thing as 'keeping out of politics.' All issues are political issues, and politics itself is a mass of lies, evasions, folly, hatred and schizophrenia.
(George Orwell)

In our time political speech and writing are largely the defence of the indefensible.
(George Orwell)

In times of universal deceit, telling the truth will be a revolutionary act.
(George Orwell)

It is almost universally felt that when we call a country democratic we are praising it; consequently, the defenders of every kind of regime claim that it is a democracy, and fear that they might have to stop using the word if it were tied down to any one meaning.
(George Orwell)

It is also true that one can write nothing readable unless one constantly struggles to efface one's own personality. Good prose is like a windowpane.
(George Orwell)

Joyce is a poet and also an elephantine pedant.
(George Orwell)

Language ought to be the joint creation of poets and manual workers.
(George Orwell)

Liberal: a power worshipper without power.
(George Orwell)

Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. He does not give milk, he does not lay eggs, he is too weak to pull the plough, he cannot run fast enough to catch rabbits. Yet he is lord of all the animals.

(George Orwell)

Mankind is not likely to salvage civilization unless he can evolve a system of good and evil which is independent of heaven and hell.

(George Orwell)

Many people genuinely do not want to be saints, and it is probable that some who achieve or aspire to sainthood have never felt much temptation to be human beings.

(George Orwell)

Men are only as good as their technical development allows them to be.

(George Orwell)

Men can only be happy when they do not assume that the object of life is happiness.

(George Orwell)

Most people get a fair amount of fun out of their lives, but on balance life is suffering, and only the very young or the very foolish imagine otherwise.

(George Orwell)

Myths which are believed in tend to become true.

(George Orwell)

Nationalism is power hunger tempered by self-deception.

(George Orwell)

No advance in wealth, no softening of manners, no reform or revolution has ever brought human equality a millimetre nearer.

(George Orwell)

No one can look back on his schooldays and say with truth that they were altogether unhappy.

(George Orwell)

Not to expose your true feelings to an adult seems to be instinctive from the age of seven or eight onwards.

(George Orwell)

Oceania was at war with Eurasia; therefore Oceania had always been at war with Eurasia.

(George Orwell)

On the whole, human beings want to be good, but not too good, and not quite all the time.

(George Orwell)

One can love a child, perhaps, more deeply than one can love another adult, but it is rash to assume that the child feels any love in return.

(George Orwell)

One cannot really be a Catholic and grown up.

(George Orwell)

One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes a revolution in order to establish a dictatorship.

(George Orwell)

Part of the reason for the ugliness of adults, in a child's eyes, is that the child is usually looking upwards, and few faces are at their best when seen from below.

(George Orwell)

Patriotism is usually stronger than class hatred, and always stronger than internationalism.
(George Orwell)

People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf.
(George Orwell)

Political chaos is connected with the decay of language... one can probably bring about some improvement by starting at the verbal end.
(George Orwell)

Political language... is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.
(George Orwell)

Power is not a means, it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship.
(George Orwell)

Probably the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton, but the opening battles of all subsequent wars have been lost there.
(George Orwell)

Progress is not an illusion, it happens, but it is slow and invariably disappointing.
(George Orwell)

Prolonged, indiscriminate reviewing of books is a quite exceptionally thankless, irritating and exhausting job. It not only involves praising trash but constantly inventing reactions towards books about which one has no spontaneous feeling whatever.
(George Orwell)

Saints should always be judged guilty until they are proved innocent.
(George Orwell)

Serious sport has nothing to do with fair play. It is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence. In other words, it is war minus the shooting.
(George Orwell)

Serious sport is war minus the shooting.
(George Orwell)

So much of left-wing thought is a kind of playing with fire by people who don't even know that fire is hot.
(George Orwell)

Society has always seemed to demand a little more from human beings than it will get in practice.
(George Orwell)

Sometimes the first duty of intelligent men is the restatement of the obvious.
(George Orwell)

The aim of a joke is not to degrade the human being, but to remind him that he is already degraded.
(George Orwell)

The atmosphere of orthodoxy is always damaging to prose, and above all it is completely ruinous to the novel, the most anarchical of all forms of literature.
(George Orwell)

The atom bombs are piling up in the factories, the police are prowling through the cities, the lies are streaming from the loudspeakers, but the earth is still going round the sun.
(George Orwell)

The best books... are those that tell you what you know already.
(George Orwell)

The Catholic and the Communist are alike in assuming that an opponent cannot be both honest and intelligent.
(George Orwell)

The essence of being human is that one does not seek perfection.
(George Orwell)

The essential act of war is destruction, not necessarily of human lives, but of the products of human labour.
(George Orwell)

The great enemy of clear language is insincerity. When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims, one turns, as it were, instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish squirting out ink.
(George Orwell)

The idea really came to me the day I got my new false teeth.
(George Orwell)

The intellectual is different from the ordinary man, but only in certain sections of his personality, and even then not all the time.
(George Orwell)

The nationalist not only does not disapprove of atrocities committed by his own side, but he has a remarkable capacity for not even hearing about them.
(George Orwell)

The quickest way of ending a war is to lose it.
(George Orwell)

The very concept of objective truth is fading out of the world. Lies will pass into history.
(George Orwell)

There are some ideas so wrong that only a very intelligent person could believe in them.
(George Orwell)

There is hardly such a thing as a war in which it makes no difference who wins. Nearly always one side stands more or less for progress, the other side more or less for reaction.
(George Orwell)

To an ordinary human being, love means nothing if it does not mean loving some people more than others.
(George Orwell)

To survive it is often necessary to fight and to fight you have to dirty yourself.
(George Orwell)

To walk through the ruined cities of Germany is to feel an actual doubt about the continuity of civilization.
(George Orwell)

War against a foreign country only happens when the moneyed classes think they are going to profit from it.

(George Orwell)

War is a way of shattering to pieces... materials which might otherwise be used to make the masses too comfortable and... too intelligent.

(George Orwell)

War is evil, but it is often the lesser evil.

(George Orwell)

War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength.

(George Orwell)

War is war. The only good human being is a dead one.

(George Orwell)

We have now sunk to a depth at which restatement of the obvious is the first duty of intelligent men.

(George Orwell)

We may find in the long run that tinned food is a deadlier weapon than the machine-gun.

(George Orwell)

We of the sinking middle class may sink without further struggles into the working class where we belong, and probably when we get there it will not be so dreadful as we feared, for, after all, we have nothing to lose.

(George Orwell)

We sleep safe in our beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would do us harm.

(George Orwell)

What can you do against the lunatic who is more intelligent than yourself, who gives your arguments a fair hearing and then simply persists in his lunacy?

(George Orwell)

Whatever is funny is subversive, every joke is ultimately a custard pie... a dirty joke is a sort of mental rebellion.

(George Orwell)

When it comes to the pinch, human beings are heroic.

(George Orwell)

Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.

(George Orwell)

Whoever is winning at the moment will always seem to be invincible.

(George Orwell)

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Appendix

Works by George Orwell

Novels

Burmese Days (1934)
A Clergyman's Daughter (1935)
Keep the Aspidochelone Flying (1936)
Coming Up for Air (1939)
Animal Farm (1945)
Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949)

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Nonfiction

Down and Out in Paris and London (1933)
The Road to Wigan Pier (1937)
Homage to Catalonia (1938)

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Essays

A Hanging (1931)
The Spike (1931)
Bookshop Memories (1936)
Shooting an Elephant (1936)
Spilling the Spanish Beans (1937)
Boys' Weeklies (1940)
Inside the Whale (1940)
My Country Right or Left (1940)
The Art of Donald McGill (1940)
England Your England (1941)
The Lion and the Unicorn: Socialism and the English Genius (1941)
Poetry and the Microphone (1943)
Raffles and Miss Blandish (1944)
Good Bad Books (1945)
Notes on Nationalism (1945)
Books v. Cigarettes (1946)
Confessions of a Book Reviewer (1946)
Decline of the English Murder (1946)
A Good Word for the Vicar of Bray (1946)
How the Poor Die (1946)
The Moon Under Water (1946)
A Nice Cup of Tea (1946)
Pleasure Spots (1946)
Politics and the English Language (1946)
The Politics of Starvation (1946)
Politics vs. Literature: An Examination of Gulliver's Travels (1946)
The Prevention of Literature (1946)
Riding Down from Bangor (1946)
Second Thoughts on James Burnham (1946)
Some Thoughts on the Common Toad (1946)
Why I Write (1946)
Lear, Tolstoy and the Fool (1947)
The English People (1947)
Such, Such Were the Joys (1952)

End

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