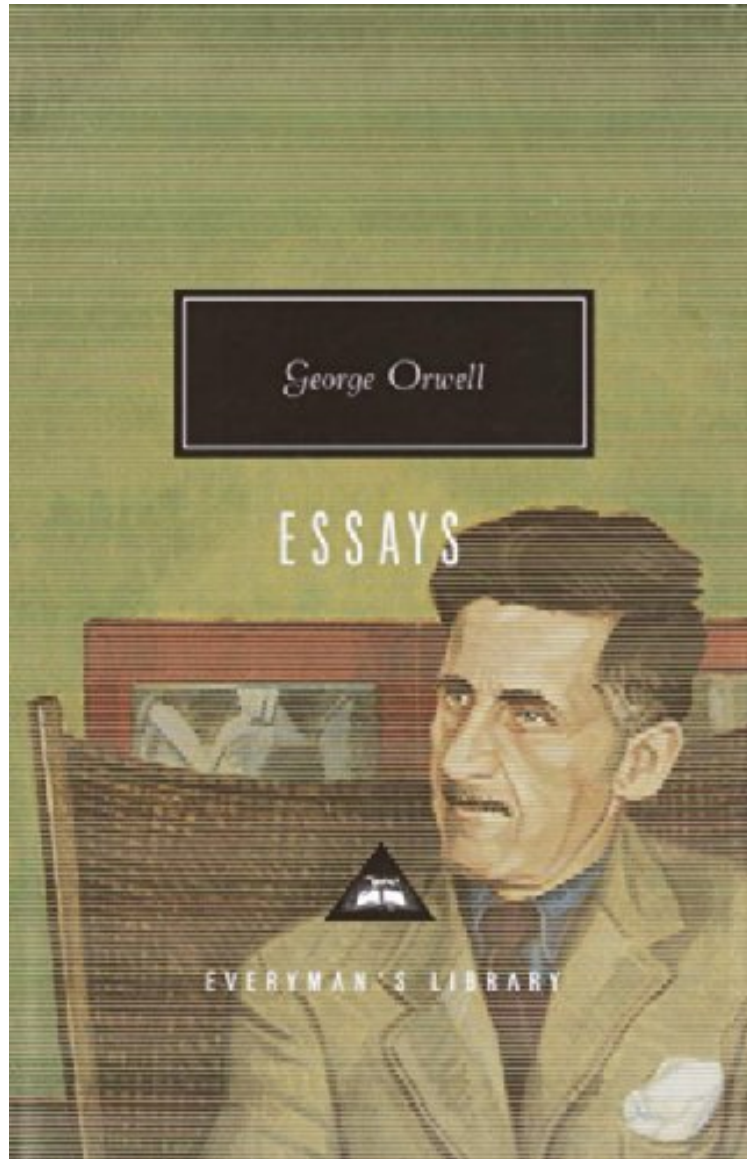


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Essays (Everyman's Library Contemporary Classics Series)

George Orwell

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George Orwell : Essays (Everyman's Library Contemporary Classics Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Essays (Everyman's Library Contemporary Classics Series):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. It's daunting in its size, but the content is terrificBy Kurt ConnerI read and loved 1984 (Signet Classics) (Mass Market Paperback) and Animal Farm: Centennial Edition in high school,

but I knew almost nothing more about their author until I found this Everyman's Library collection. I love the books in this collection, with the elegant covers and the little gold bookmarks and the low prices, so I picked out this book, more or less on a whim. I loved it. It's a hulking monster of a collection, with 1300+ pages of Orwell's observations during, just before, and just after WWII. Orwell's devotion to socialism is pervasive but practical, as he passes up few opportunities to dismiss either the movement's opponents or the more idealistic members of the movement itself (he has special revulsion toward pacifists, which makes sense when a reader considers his background in voluntary military service). The content of these essays runs the gamut from a dogmatic piece about the right way to make tea, to some deeply insightful long essays about Dickens and Swift, to a very personal work about why he once shot an elephant, to some fascinating examinations of life in boarding schools for boys (both personal observations and analyses of the way these settings present themselves in the written work of others). As a reader in 2010, I was especially interested in the way that Orwell could rattle off long passages of poetry from memory, his encyclopedic grasp of every character ever sketched by Dickens, and his frequently stated presumption that the belief in an afterlife is completely dead (sometimes he seems to limit the view to educated persons, or Europeans, but basically he thinks that even those who profess to be Christians don't really believe in a heaven or hell, and he seems almost deliberately unaware of the potentially provocative nature of this view - I don't think a writer in the United States today could ever profess such a view in such a casual way, and I was intrigued every time it surfaced in Orwell's essays). I don't recommend this whole collection to everyone - its massive size will put off anyone with just a casual interest in George Orwell - but there are some phenomenal essays in this book, and I'm thankful that I had the opportunity to slowly absorb the whole thing.

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A great teacher of writing and critical thinking

By Acontius

As a lit major very interested in politics, I find this collection to be fascinating and instructive. Mr. Orwell's views on what corporations would do to the news media and the stifling effects of politically correct speech are vital today, and should be required in civics and political science classes. Mr. Orwell managed to anger and inform both liberals and conservatives by exposing hypocrisy and dull-minded dogma. His writing style is sharp and free of tiresome twists and turns. In fact, "Politics and the English Language" (954) targets academic writing that is puffed up for no reason other than to hide the fact that the writer has little to say. (And this article should be required reading in graduate literature classes!) The power of his insights and imagery can be seen in "How the Poor Die," a sad, upsetting essay that made me want a shower and a drink when I finished reading it. (Again, this is current today with the horribly neglected and virtually unregulated "assisted living facilities"--and even the Walter Reed outpatient scandal.) So few writers have had such vision that it is worth repeating the cliché: George Orwell was a social prophet--a genuine one. Because of Mr. Orwell's deep understanding of political systems and human nature, his excellent style, and the breadth of his subject matter, I think it would not be over-praising him to say that this volume ranks with Montaigne's collected essays. This volume is lovely, both in binding and text size; however, as other reviewers have pointed out, the publisher should have taken the trouble to include an index at the end of 1363 pages of essays! (Write to Knopf/Random House to complain!) I'm going to contact my county library to arrange donating a copy of this; it is a shame this book isn't on the shelves!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Voice to be heard and understood.

By Robert L Helvey

George Orwell was the most incisive observer of society in the 20th century and he had a felt need to explain those insights to the reader. This book contains commentaries to inform and possibly motivate us to be careful about thinking that what is on the surface is all that matters.

A generous and varied selection the only hardcover edition available of the literary and political writings of one of the greatest essayists of the twentieth century. Although best known as the author of *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-four*, George Orwell left an even more lastingly significant achievement in his voluminous essays, which dealt with all the great social, political, and literary questions of the day and exemplified an incisive prose style that is still universally admired. Included among the more than 240 essays in this volume are Orwell's famous discussion of pacifism, *My Country Right or Left*; his scathingly complicated views on the dirty work of imperialism in *Shooting an Elephant*; and his very firm opinion on how to make *A Nice Cup of Tea*. In his essays, Orwell elevated political writing to the level of art, and his motivating ideas his desire for social justice, his belief in universal freedom and equality, and his concern for truth in language are as enduringly relevant now, a hundred years after his birth, as ever. (Book Jacket Status: Jacketed)

Orwell is the most influential political writer of the twentieth century He gives us a gritty, personal example of how to engage as a writer in politics. New York of Books [Orwell] evolved, in his seemingly offhand way, the clearest and most compelling English prose style this century But of course he was more than just a great writer. We need him today because [of] his passion for the truth. The *Sunday Times* (London) Had Orwell lived to a full term, he might well have gone on to become the greatest modern literary critic in the language. But he lived more than long enough to make writing about politics a branch of the humanities, setting a standard of civilized response to the intractably complex texture of life. The *New Yorker* The real reason we read Orwell is because his own fault-line, his fundamental schism, his hybridity, left him exceptionally sensitive to the fissure which is everywhere apparent between what ought

to be the case and what actually is the case. He says the unsayable. Financial Times Orwell was the conscience of his generation. V. S. Pritchett From the Inside Flap A generous and varied selection--the only hardcover edition available--of the literary and political writings of one of the greatest essayists of the twentieth century. Though best known as the author of "Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-Four," George Orwell left an even more lastingly significant achievement in his voluminous essays, which dealt with all the great social, political, and literary questions of the day and exemplified an incisive prose style that is still universally admired. Included among the more than 240 essays in this volume are Orwell's famous discussion of pacifism, "My Country Right or Left," his scathingly complicated views on the dirty work of imperialism in "Shooting an Elephant," and his very firm opinion on how to make "A Nice Cup of Tea." In his essays, Orwell elevated political writing to the level of art, and his motivating ideas--his desire for social justice, his belief in universal freedom and equality, and his concern for truth in language--are as enduringly relevant now, a hundred years after his birth, as ever. From the Back Cover "Orwell is the most influential political writer of the twentieth century . . . He gives us a gritty, personal example of how to engage as a writer in politics." New York of Books "[Orwell] evolved, in his seemingly offhand way, the clearest and most compelling English prose style this century . . . But of course he was more than just a great writer. We need him today because [of] his passion for the truth." The Sunday Times (London) "Had Orwell lived to a full term, he might well have gone on to become the greatest modern literary critic in the language. But he lived more than long enough to make writing about politics a branch of the humanities, setting a standard of civilized response to the intractably complex texture of life." The New Yorker "The real reason we read Orwell is because his own fault-line, his fundamental schism, his hybridity, left him exceptionally sensitive to the fissure which is everywhere apparent between what ought to be the case and what actually is the case. He says the unsayable." Financial Times "Orwell was the conscience of his generation." V. S. Pritchett