

WHY ORWELL MATTERS

Coordinator: John Becker

George Orwell was one of the most consequential writers of the 20th Century. As a novelist, journalist, literary critic and essayist, he exhibited an extraordinary range of interests. More effectively than any of his contemporaries, he posed questions about English society and politics that are still relevant, while also addressing the controversial history of the Russian Revolution and the Spanish Civil War. In this one-semester study group, we read the most famous works (*Animal Farm*, 1984) a 1930's novel (*Keep The Aspidistra Flying*), essays (some dealing with his role in the British colonial system), and excerpts from lesser-known works.

Readings and other Required Materials:

Animal Farm (Signet Classics, ISBN 978-0-451-52634-2, \$9.99)

1984 (Signet Classics, ISBN 978-451-52493-5, \$9.99)

Keep The Aspidistra Flying (A Harvest Book - Harcourt, Inc., ISBN 978-0-15-646899-2, \$14.95)

Coursepack (under \$10.00)

John Becker has coordinated study groups in history (American Civil War, World War I), cinema (French and Italian, Film Noir) and literature (Marcel Proust, William Faulkner).

******* Syllabus *******

Week 1	Biography; Shooting An Elephant, A Hanging
Week 2	<i>Down and Out in Paris and London</i> , England Your England
Week 3	<i>Keep The Aspidistra Flying</i> - the story of a failed poet who must resolve the conflict between the dangers of a commercial civilization and the pull of family responsibilities and middle class values
Week 4	<i>Keep the Aspidistra Flying</i>
Week 5	<i>Keep the Aspidistra Flying</i>
Week 6	<i>Homage to Catalonia</i> (excerpts), Inside the Whale
Week 7	<i>Animal Farm</i>
Week 8	1984
Week 9	1984
Week 10	1984

Week 11 1984

Week 12 1984

Week 13 Politics and the English Language, Such, Such Were The Joys...