

Merit of English Section

Senior Division

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Book title : Animal Farm

Author : George Orwell

Publisher : Secker and Warburg

Animal Farm is a novel by George Orwell, first published in 1945. It is a political allegory that tells the story of a group of farm animals who rebel against their human owner to create a society where they can live free from oppression. The animals successfully overthrow their owner, Mr. Jones, and establish a system of animal-led governance. The animals then

establish their society, which they call Animal Farm, where all creatures are treated equally and cooperate for the benefit of all.

At first, the new society seems to be working well. The animals are happy and productive, and the pigs, who take on the role of leaders, are seen as wise and just. However, as time goes on, the pigs start to seize more authority and control, using their intelligence to manipulate the other animals. They alter the Animal Farm's Seven Commandments to suit their own interests, and to control the other animals, they resort to violence and intimidation. They begin to adopt human-like behaviours and eventually become even more oppressive than their former human owner.

One of the key themes of *Animal Farm* is the corrupting influence of power. The pigs, who start as idealistic revolutionaries and construct an egalitarian system, end up being

just as evil and selfish as the people they overthrew. They claim that they are acting in the animals' best interests by using their intelligence to justify their actions, but in truth, they are only interested in preserving their own privilege and power. In the end, this creates a society that is much more oppressive than the one they sought to overthrow.

One of the most striking examples of the corruption of power in the novel is the transformation of the pig Napoleon. He starts out as a clever and strategic leader, fighting for animal rights and working with Snowball to overthrow their human oppressors, but he ends up becoming a tyrant who oppresses the other animals for his own gain. Napoleon is manipulative and uses propaganda and fear to maintain his power over the other animals, and creates a cult surrounding himself, portraying himself as a benevolent leader, when in reality, he is a brutal

dictator. He also uses violence and intimidation to keep the other animals obedient, such as when he orders the executions of animals he deems disloyal. In the end, Napoleon becomes so corrupt that he is indistinguishable from the humans he overthrew, and the other animals are left in a much worse state than when they were under the human's regime. Napoleon serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of allowing individuals to gain too much power.

Another main theme of the book is propaganda and manipulation. The pigs use their control of the media to spread their message to the other animals. They use slogans and propaganda to convince the animals that they are better off under their rule than under Mr. Jones' rule. They also use fear and intimidation to keep the other animals in line, and they resort to violence to punish those who oppose them.

For instance, the pigs changed the Seven Commandments of Animalism to suit their needs, such as when they changed the commandment "All animals are equal" to "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others". Since the other animals are illiterate, just by changing the Seven Commandments, the pigs can justify their actions, twist reality, and maintain their power over the other animals, such as the horses, who represent the working class, and the sheep who represent the masses who blindly follow their leaders.

There have been many examples of propaganda being used to control people throughout history. Let me take the target of criticism of Animal Farm, namely the Soviet Union, as an example. Propaganda was used to promote their communist ideology and justify their

actions. This included creating a cult-like following around Soviet leaders like Joseph Stalin, creating art and literature that supported the communist cause, and controlling the media to ensure that the Soviet message was the only one heard. A more modern example would be the case of North Korea, whose government uses propaganda to control its citizens and promote the ideology of the ruling party. This includes creating a cult of personality around the Kim family, controlling the media to ensure that only the government's message is heard, and using slogans, posters, and even statues to promote the ruling party's message. Moreover, both Animal Farm and North Korea depict a society in which individual freedoms are severely restricted. In Animal Farm, the other animals are oppressed and controlled by the pigs, while in North Korea, citizens are subject to strict government control and surveillance.

To sum up, *Animal Farm* is a powerful book that unveils the perils of political power and dictatorship. It emphasizes the value of independent thought, critical thinking, and active engagement in the political process and serves as a reminder that even the most noble and well-intentioned revolutions are susceptible to being tainted by those who are power-hungry. The book serves as a reminder of the dangers of blindly following charismatic leaders who provide simple solutions to difficult challenges as well.

Overall, *Animal Farm* is a must-read book for anyone interested in politics, history, or social justice. It is a timeless classic that continues to resonate with readers nowadays, and it offers important lessons about the dangers of political extremism and

the importance of standing up for what is right, even in the face of overwhelming opposition.

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