

GEORGE
ORWELL

ANIMAL FARM



ORWELLWEB 

Animal Farm by George Orwell

Background information for George Orwell's *Animal Farm*

Animal Farm is a satirical novella (which can also be understood as a modern fable or allegory) by George Orwell, ostensibly about a group of animals who oust the humans from the farm on which they live. They run the farm themselves, only to have it degenerate into a brutal tyranny of its own. The book was written during World War II and published in 1945, although it was not widely successful until the late 1950s.

[Animal Farm](#) is a satirical allegory of Soviet [totalitarianism](#). Orwell based major events in the book on ones from the Soviet Union during the Stalin era. Orwell, a democratic socialist, and a member of the Independent Labour Party for many years, was a critic of Stalin, and was suspicious of Moscow-directed Stalinism

after his experiences in the [Spanish Civil War](#).

Synopsis

When the farm's prize-winning pig, Old Major, calls a meeting of all the animals of Manor Farm, he tells them that he has had a dream in which mankind is gone and animals are free to live in peace and harmony; his ideals can be compared to Anarchist Communism or even some aspects of Leninism. He compares the humans to parasites, and then proceeds to teach the animals a revolutionary song, "Beasts of England."

When Old Major dies a mere three days later, two pigs - Snowball and Napoleon - assume command, and turn his dream into a full-fledged philosophy. The starved animals suddenly revolt one night and drive the farmer, Mr. Jones, his wife, and his pet raven, Moses, from the farm. The farm is then renamed "Animal Farm."

The Seven Commandments of the new philosophy of Animalism are written on the wall of a barn for all to read. The seventh and most important is "all animals are equal." All animals work, but the workhorse, Boxer, does more than his fair share and adopts a maxim of his own — "I will work harder."

Animal Farm begins well: Snowball teaches the other animals to read and write (though few animals besides the pigs learn to read well), food is plentiful due to a good harvest, and the entire farm is organized and running smoothly. Meanwhile, Napoleon secretly takes the pups from the farm dogs and trains them privately. When Mr. Jones tries to re-take control of the farm, the animals defeat him at what they later call the "Battle of the Cowshed." However, Napoleon and Snowball begin a power struggle for leadership of the farm. When Snowball announces his idea for a windmill, Napoleon quickly opposes it. A meeting is held, and when Snowball makes his passionate and articulate speech in favour of the windmill, Napoleon retorts only briefly and then makes a strange noise to call in nine attack dogs, which burst in and chase Snowball off the farm. In Snowball's absence, Napoleon declares himself the leader of the farm and makes instant changes. He announces that meetings will no longer be held as before and a committee of pigs alone will decide what happens with the farm.

Napoleon changes his mind about the windmill, claiming (through Squealer, Napoleon's mouthpiece) that Snowball stole the idea from him and the animals begin to work. After a violent storm, the animals wake to find the fruit of their months of labour utterly annihilated. Though neighbouring farmers scoff at the thin walls, Napoleon and Squealer convince everyone that Snowball destroyed it. Napoleon begins to purge the farm, killing many animals he accuses of consorting with Snowball. In the meantime, Boxer takes a second mantra, "Napoleon is always right."

Napoleon begins to abuse his powers even more, and life on the farm becomes harder and harder for the rest of the animals; the pigs impose more and more controls on them while reserving privileges for themselves. The pigs rewrite history in a way that villainizes Snowball and glorifies Napoleon even further. Each step of this development is justified by the pig Squealer, who on several occasions alters the Seven Commandments on the barn in the dead of night — for example, "No animal shall drink alcohol" becomes "No animal shall drink alcohol to excess." The song "Beasts of England" is banned as inappropriate, now that the dream of Animal Farm has been realised, and is replaced by an anthem glorifying Napoleon, who begins to live more and more like a human. The animals, though cold, starving, and overworked, remain convinced that they are still better off than when they were ruled by Mr. Jones, the previous (human) owner of Manor Farm.

Mr. Frederick, one of the two neighbouring farmers, swindles Napoleon by buying lumber with forged banknotes, and then attacks the farm, using blasting powder to blow up the recently restored windmill. Though the animals of Animal Farm eventually win the battle, they do so at a great cost, as many of the animals, including Boxer, are wounded. However, Boxer continues to work harder and harder, until he finally collapses while working on the windmill. Napoleon sends for a van to take Boxer to the veterinarian, but as Boxer is loaded up and the van drives away, the animals read what is written on the side of the van: "Alfred Simmonds, Horse Slaughterer and Glue Boiler." Squealer quickly reports that the van with the old writing had been purchased by the hospital, and later that Boxer had died in the hospital, in spite of the best medical care. In reality, Boxer had been sent to his death so the pigs could get more money to buy whiskey.

Many years pass, and the pigs learn to walk upright, carry whips, and wear clothes. The Seven Commandments are reduced to a single phrase: "ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL, BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS." Napoleon holds a dinner party for the pigs and the humans of the area (in the adjacent Foxwood Farm, run by Mr. Pilkington), who congratulate Napoleon on having the hardest-working animals in the country on the least feed. Napoleon announces his alliance with the humans, against the labouring classes of both "worlds."

The animals discover this when they overhear Napoleon's conversations, and finally realize that a change has come over the ruling pigs. During a poker match, an argument breaks out between Napoleon and Mr. Pilkington when they both play an Ace of Spades, and the animals realize that they cannot tell the difference between the pigs and the humans.

Characters

The events and characters in *Animal Farm* are all carefully drawn to represent the history of the Soviet Union; Orwell makes this explicit in the case of Napoleon, whom he directly connects to Stalin in a letter of 17 March 1945 to the publisher.

...when the windmill is blown up, I wrote 'all the animals including Napoleon flung themselves on their faces.' I would like to alter it to 'all the animals except Napoleon.' If that has been printed it's not worth bothering about, but I just thought the alteration would be fair to JS [Joseph Stalin], as he did stay in Moscow during the German advance.

The other characters have their parallels in the real world, but care should be taken with these comparisons as they do not always match history exactly and often simply represent generalised concepts.

Pigs

Napoleon is the leader of Animal Farm after the rebellion. Based on Joseph Stalin, he uses his military/secret police (of nine attack dogs) to cement his power. Napoleon uses force to drive out his opponent, Snowball, and instill fear in the other animals. He takes the role of a dictator over the farm and changes the original intent of the animal society.

Snowball is a rival of Napoleon who contends for control of the farm after the rebellion. Inspired by Leon Trotsky, Snowball is a passionate intellectual and is far more honest about his motives than Napoleon. However, he is far from perfect and agrees in the uniting of the apples by the pigs. This suggests that had Snowball triumphed the outlook for the animals would have been no better under his leadership than Napoleon's. Snowball wins the loyalty of most of the animals, but is driven out by Napoleon's attack dogs (Trotsky was driven into exile in Mexico, where he was assassinated). After his departure he is used as a scapegoat and blamed for everything that has gone wrong. Snowball fought bravely at the Battle of the Cowshed. However, after his departure, Squealer manages to convince the forgetful animals that Snowball was censured for cowardice. Later on, he convinces them that Snowball was the leader of the human forces in the battle.

Squealer serves as Napoleon's public speaker. Inspired by Vyacheslav Molotov and the Russian paper Pravda, Squealer twists and abuses the language to excuse, justify, and extol all of Napoleon's actions. In all of his work, George Orwell made it a point to show how politicians used language. Squealer limits debate by complicating it, and he confuses and disorients, making claims that the pigs need the extra luxury they are taking in order to function properly, for example. However, when questions persist, he usually uses the threat of Mr. Jones's return as justification for the pigs' privileges. "If this doesn't happen Jones will come back etc etc". Squealer uses statistics to convince the animals that life is getting better and better. Most of the animals have only dim memories of life before the revolution so they are convinced.

Minimus is a poetical pig who writes a song about Napoleon, representing admirers of Stalin both inside and outside the USSR such as Maxim Gorky.

Old Major is based upon both Lenin and Marx — Old Major is the inspiration which fuels the rest of the book. Though it is a positive image, Orwell does slip some flaws in Old Major, such as his admission that he has largely been free of the abuse the rest of the animals have suffered. As a socialist, Orwell agreed with some of Karl Marx's politics, and respected Vladimir Lenin. However, the satire in *Animal Farm* is not of Marxism, or Lenin's revolution, but of the corruption that occurred later. Old Major not only represents Karl Marx in the allegory, but also the power of speech and how it can and was used to evoke and inspire people. Old Major also represents the generation who were not content

with the old regime and therefore inspired the younger generations to rebel against the regime under which they were living.

Pinkeye is a small piglet who tastes Napoleon's food for poisoning.

Piglets are hinted to be the children of Napoleon (albeit not truly noted in the novel), and are the first generation of animals to actually be subjugated to his idea of animal inequality.

Rebel Pigs are pigs who complain about Napoleon's takeover of the farm but are quickly silenced and later executed.

Humans

Mr. Jones is the original owner of Manor Farm. He is probably based on Czar Nicholas II. There are also several implications that he represents an incompetent and autocratic capitalist.

Mr. Frederick is the tough owner of Pinchfield, a well-kept neighbouring farm. He represents Nazi Germany and Adolf Hitler.

Mr. Pilkington is the easy-going but crafty owner of Foxwood, a neighboring farm. He represents the western powers, such as Britain and the U.S. The card game at the very end of the novel is a metaphor for the Tehran Conference, where the parties flatter each other, all the while cheating at the game.

Mr. Whymper is a man hired by Napoleon to represent Animal Farm in human society. He is loosely based on George Bernard Shaw who visited the U.S.S.R. in 1931 and praised what he found.

Other animals

Boxer is one of the most popular characters. Boxer is the tragic avatar of the working class, or proletariat: loyal, kind, dedicated, and strong. He is not very clever and never progresses beyond the fourth letter of the alphabet. His major flaw, however, is his blind trust in the leaders, and his inability to see corruption. He is used and abused by the pigs more or less in the same manner as he was by Jones. He fights bravely in the Battle of the Windmill and the Battle of the Cowshed but is upset when he thinks he has killed a stable lad. His death serves to show just how far the pigs are willing to go — when he collapses after overstraining himself, the pigs supposedly send him to a vet, when in fact he was sent to the knacker's yard to be slaughtered in exchange for a case of whiskey for the pigs. A strong and loyal draft horse, Boxer played a huge part in keeping the Farm together prior to his death. Boxer could also represent a Stakhanovite. His name is a reference to the Boxer Rebellion. His two mottos "I will work harder" and "Napoleon is always right" sum up the double side of his character.

Clover is Boxer's close friend and a draft horse. She helped and cared for Boxer when he split his hoof. She blames herself for forgetting the original Seven Commandments when Squealer revises them. She represents the educated middle class people who acquiesce to the subversion of principles by the powerful. Clover is kind and good as is shown when she protects the baby ducklings during Major's speech. She is also upset when animals are executed by the dogs.

Mollie is a horse who likes wearing ribbons (which represent luxury) and being pampered by humans. She represents upper-class people, the Bourgeoisie who fled from the U.S.S.R. after the Russian Revolution. Likewise, she quickly leaves for another farm and is not mentioned for the rest of the story.

Benjamin is a donkey who is cynical about the revolution — and just about everything else. In general, he represents the skeptical people in and out of Russia who believed that Communism would not help the people of Russia. More specifically, he represents the Jewish population in Russia who were there before the Revolution and fully expected to be there after the Soviet Union fell (which they were). "None of you have ever seen a dead donkey" is a nicely allegorical way of expressing the Jewish community's attitude towards changes in national politics. His penchant for pessimism and occasional self-deprecation is also in keeping with Jewish forms of humor. He is the wisest animal on the farm, and is able to "read as well as any pig". However, this is an ability he does not exercise until the end of the book.

Moses is a tame raven who spreads stories of Sugarcandy Mountain, the "animal heaven." These beliefs are denounced by the pigs. Moses represents religion (specifically the Russian Orthodox Church), which has always been in conflict with Communism. It is interesting to note that, while Moses initially leaves the farm after the rebellion, he later returns and is supported by the pigs. This represents the cynical use of religion by the state to anaesthetise the minds of the masses. Moses also shows some characteristics of Grigori Rasputin. The acceptance of Moses by the pigs could be seen to represent Stalin's relaxed attitude towards the Russian Orthodox Church during WWII, as the Church was a way to raise funds for the Russian war effort.

Muriel is a goat who reads the edited commandments. She may represent intelligent labour.

Jessie and **Bluebell** are two dogs who give birth in [Chapter III](#). Their puppies are nurtured by Napoleon to inspire fear, representing the formation of the NKVD.

The **Hens** represent the Kulaks, landed peasants persecuted by Stalin. They had refused to give up their eggs, the way the Kulaks had strongly resisted surrendering their lands in the Soviet Union of the 1930s. Napoleon promptly starved the hens to death — the exact same punishment Stalin had inflicted upon the Kulaks.

The **Dogs** are Napoleon's secret police and bodyguards (inspired by Cheka, NKVD, OGPU, MVD).

The **Sheep** show the dumb animal following of the proletariat in the midst of the Russian Civil War, and the masses during Stalin's reign. ("Four legs good, two legs bad!").

The **Cat** shows the unethical, silent rejections of the new order — unwilling to work, yet encouraging others to do so, and acting bravely in the face of threats, but disappearing when there is danger. Some say the cat represents the flaws in Animalism or Communism.

Significance

The allegory that the book employs allows it to be read on a variety of different levels.



CHARLES' GEORGE ORWELL LINKS

Orwell wrote the book following his experiences during the Spanish Civil War, which are described in another of his books, [Homage to Catalonia](#). He intended it to be a strong condemnation of what he saw as the Stalinist corruption of the original socialist ideals. For the [preface of a Ukrainian edition](#) he prepared in 1947, Orwell described what gave him the idea of setting the book on a farm.

..I saw a little boy, perhaps ten years old, driving a huge carthorse along a narrow path, whipping it whenever it tried to turn. It struck me that if only such animals became aware of their strength we should have no power over them, and that men exploit animals in much the same way as the rich exploit the proletariat.

This Ukrainian edition was an early [propaganda](#) use of the book. It was printed to be distributed among the Soviet citizens of Ukraine who were just some of the many millions of displaced persons throughout Europe at the end of the Second World War. The American occupation forces considered the edition to be propaganda printed on illegal presses, and handed 1,500 confiscated copies of *Animal Farm* over to the Soviet authorities. The politics in the book also affected Britain, with Orwell reporting that Ernest Bevin was "terrified" that it may cause embarrassment if published before the 1945 general election.

In recent years the book has been used to compare new movements that overthrow heads of a corrupt and undemocratic government or organization, only to eventually become corrupt and oppressive themselves as they succumb to the trappings of power and begin using violent and dictatorial methods to keep it. Such analogies have been used for many former African colonies such as Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo, whose succeeding African-born rulers were accused of being as corrupt as, or worse than, the European colonists they supplanted.

The book also clearly ponders whether a focus of power in one person is healthy for a society. The book leaves the ending slightly ambiguous in this regard.

In addition, the book encourages the reader to ponder whether rebellion will eventually resort to a sort of dictatorship — whether that particular power in society is merely part of human nature. This is shown in the way that the pigs, through their own power, lack of equality, and their domination become indistinguishable from the old regime in creating layers of power and concentrating power at the top.

Allusions to history, geography and current science

- The ousting of the humans after the farmers forget to feed the animals is an allusion to the Russian Revolution of 1917 that led to the removal of the Czar after a series of social upheavals and wars and ultimately resulted in famine and poverty.
- The refusal of the Humans to refer to Animal Farm by its new name (still calling it Manor Farm) may be indicative of the diplomatic limbo in which the Soviets existed following their early history.
- Mr. Jones' last ditch effort to re-take the farm (The Battle of the Cowshed) is analogous to the Russian Civil War in which the western capitalist governments sent soldiers to try to remove the Bolsheviks from power.
- Napoleon's removal of Snowball is like Stalin's removal of Leon Trotsky from power in 1927 and his subsequent expulsion and murder.

- Squealer constantly changing the commandments may refer to the constant line of adjustments to the Communist theory by the people in power. Also, his lies to animals of past events they cannot remember refers to the revision of history texts to glorify Stalin during his regime.
- After Old Major dies, his skull is placed on display on a tree stump. Similarly, Lenin's embalmed body was put on display in Lenin's Tomb in Red Square postmortem, where it still remains. It should also be noted that the tomb of Karl Marx is adorned by an extremely huge bust of his likeness which lends more credibility to Old Major being a closer reference to Karl Marx than to Lenin. Marx's tomb is located in Highgate Cemetery, London.
- When Napoleon steals Snowball's idea for a windmill, the windmill can be considered a symbol of the Soviet Five-Year Plans, a concept developed by Trotsky and adopted by Stalin, who, after banning Trotsky from the Soviet Union, claimed them to be his idea. The failure of the windmill to generate the expected creature comforts and subsequent search for saboteurs is probably a reference to accusations and a show trial against British engineers who were working on electrification projects in the USSR.
- Moses the raven leaving the farm for a while and then returning is similar to the Russian Orthodox Church going underground and then being brought back to give the workers hope.
- Boxer's motto, "Napoleon is always right" is strikingly similar to "Mussolini is always right," a chant used to hail Benito Mussolini during his rule of Italy from 1922 to 1943.
- During the rise of Napoleon, he ordered the collection of all the hens' eggs. In an act of defiance, the hens destroyed their eggs rather than give them to Napoleon. During Stalin's collectivization period in the early 1930s, many Ukrainian peasants burned their crops and farms rather than handing them over to the government.
- Napoleon's mass executions, of which many were unfair for the alleged crimes, is similar to Stalin executing his political enemies for various crimes after they were tortured and forced to falsify confessions.
- The four pigs that defy Napoleon's will are comparable with the purged party members during the Great Purge — Bukharin, Rykov, Zinoviev, Kamenev and many others.
- Napoleon replaces the farm anthem "Beasts of England" with an inane composition by the pig poet Minimus ("Animal Farm, Animal Farm / Never through me / Shall thou come to harm"). In 1943, Stalin replaced the old national anthem "the Internationale" with "the Hymn of the Soviet Union." The old Internationale glorified the revolution and "the people." The original version of the Hymn of the Soviet Union glorified Stalin so heavily that after his death in 1953, entire sections of the anthem had to be replaced or removed. Orwell could have also been referring to Napoleon Bonaparte's banning of the French national hymn, La Marseillaise in 1799.
- Napoleon works with Mr. Frederick, who eventually betrays Animal Farm and destroys the windmill. Though Animal Farm repels the human attack, many animals are wounded and killed. This is similar to Stalin's Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with Nazi Germany in 1939, which was later betrayed in 1941 when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. Though the Soviet Union won the war, it came at a tremendous price of roughly 8.5-15 million Soviet soldiers (unconfirmed) and many civilians, resulting in an incredible estimated 20 million dead, as well as the utter destruction of the Western Soviet Union and its prized collective farms that Stalin had created in the 1930s. The detonation of the windmill and the battle that ensued there could also be a reference to the Battle of Stalingrad. The selling of the farm's excess timber supply could represent the offering of raw materials to the United States in exchange for weapons of war under the Lend-Lease.
- Napoleon's later alliance with the humans is like Stalin's non-aggression pact with Hitler in the early years of WWII.

- Napoleon changing Animal Farm back to Manor echoes the Red Army's name change from the "Workers' and Peasants' Red Army" to the "Soviet Army" to appear as a more appealing and professional organization rather than an army of the common people.
- Squealer may be an allegory of the Soviet Newspaper in which Stalin often wrote many of the articles anonymously to give the impression the country was far better off than it was.
- The dogs may be an allegory to the NKVD (KGB), the elite police force who ruled by terror under Stalin's hand.
- Boxer, in the allegory of the novel, directly relates to the working class who laboured under strenuous and exceedingly difficult conditions throughout the Communist regime with the hope that their work would result in a more prosperous life. Boxer represents this clearly at points when he utters such quotes as "I will work harder" in response to any sort of difficulty. In the context of the story, this also allows Boxer to become a tool of propaganda to be used by Napoleon and his regime later on once Boxer has been murdered to pay for a crate of whisky for the pigs.
- When Napoleon and Snowball argue about how Animal Farm should be ruled--Napoleon favored the harvest, Snowball favored getting other farms (countries) to rebel. This is similar to Stalin wanting "Socialism in one country" and Trotsky's theory of "Permanent Revolution."
- The term "four legs good, two legs bad" could be symbolic for the simplification of the April theses, for workers to understand it better.

British censorship and suppressed preface

During World War Two it became apparent to Orwell that anti-Russian literature was not something which most major publishing houses would touch — including his regular publisher Gollancz. One publisher he sought to sell his book to rejected it on the grounds of government advice — although the assumed civil servant who gave the order was later found to be a Soviet spy.

Orwell originally prepared a preface which complains about British government suppression of his book, self-imposed British self-censorship and how the British people were suppressing criticism of the USSR, their World War II ally. "The sinister fact about literary censorship in England is that it is largely voluntary. ... [Things are] kept right out of the British press, not because the Government intervened but because of a general tacit agreement that 'it wouldn't do' to mention that particular fact." Somewhat ironically, the preface itself was censored and is not published with most copies of the book.

Animal Farm Character Profiles

Mr. Jones: Mr. Jones is Orwell's chief (or at least most obvious) villain in *Animal Farm*. Of course Napoleon is also the major villain, however much more indirectly. Orwell says that at one time Jones was actually a decent master to his animals. At this time the farm was thriving. But in recent years the farm had fallen on harder times (symbol of the world-wide Great Depression of the 30's) and the opportunity was seen to revolt. The world-wide depression began in the United States when the stock market crashed in October of 1929. The depression spread throughout the world because American exports were so dependent on Europe. The U.S. was also a major contributor to the world market economy. Germany along with the rest of Europe was especially hit hard. The parallels between crop failure of the farm and the depression in the 1930's are clear. Only the leaders and the die-hard followers ate their fill during this time period.

Mr. Jones symbolizes (in addition to the evils of capitalism) Czar Nicholas II, the leader before Stalin

(Napoleon). Jones represents the old government, the last of the Czars. Orwell suggests that Jones (Czar Nicholas II) was losing his "edge." In fact, he and his men had taken up the habit of drinking. Old Major reveals his feelings about Jones and his administration when he says, "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. He sets them to work, he gives back to them the bare minimum that will prevent them from starving and the rest he keeps for himself."

So Jones and the old government are successfully uprooted by the animals. Little do they know, history will repeat itself with Napoleon and the pigs.

Old Major: Old Major is the first major character described by Orwell in *Animal Farm*. This "purebred" of pigs is the kind, grand fatherly philosopher of change—an obvious metaphor for Karl Marx. Old Major proposes a solution to the animals' desperate plight under the Jones "administration" when he inspires a rebellion of sorts among the animals. Of course the actual time of the revolt is unsaid. It could be the next day or several generations down the road. But old Major's philosophy is only an ideal.

After his death, three days after the barn-yard speech, the socialism he professes is drastically altered when Napoleon and the other pigs begin to dominate. It's interesting that Orwell does not mention Napoleon or Snowball anytime during the great speech of old Major. This shows how distant and out-of-touch they really were; the ideals old Major proclaimed seemed to not even have been considered when they were establishing their new government after the successful revolt. It almost seemed as though the pigs fed off old Major's inspiration and then used it to benefit themselves (a interesting twist of capitalism) instead of following through on the old Major's honest proposal. This could be Orwell's attempt to dig Stalin, who many consider to be someone who totally ignored Marx's political and social theory.

Using old Major's seeming naivety, Orwell concludes that no society is perfect, no pure socialist civilization can exist, and there is no way to escape the evil grasp of capitalism. (More on this in the Napoleon section.) Unfortunately when Napoleon and Squealer take over, old Major becomes more and more a distant fragment of the past in the minds of the farm animals.

Moses: Moses is perhaps Orwell's most intriguing character in *Animal Farm*. This raven, first described as the "especial pet" of Mr. Jones, is the only animal who doesn't work. He's also the only character who doesn't listen to Old Major's speech of rebellion.

Orwell narrates, "The pigs had an even harder struggle to counteract the lies put about by Moses, the tame raven. Moses, who was Mr. Jones's especial pet, was a spy and a tale-bearer, but he was also a clever talker. He claimed to know of the existence of a mysterious country called Sugarcandy Mountain, to which all animals went when they died. It was situated somewhere up in the sky, a little distance beyond the clouds, Moses said. In Sugarcandy Mountain it was Sunday seven days a week, clover was in season all the year round, and lump sugar and linseed cake grew on the hedges. The animals hated Moses because he told tales and did no work but some of them believed in Sugarcandy Mountain, and the pigs had to argue very hard to persuade them that there was no such place."

Moses represents Orwell's view of the Church. To Orwell, the Church is just used as a tool by dictatorships to keep the working class of people hopeful and productive. Orwell uses Moses to

criticize Marx's belief that the Church will just go away after the rebellion. Jones first used Moses to keep the animals working, and he was successful in many ways before the rebellion. The pigs had a real hard time getting rid of Moses, since the lies about Heaven they thought would only lead the animals away from the equality of socialism. But as the pigs led by Napoleon become more and more like Mr. Jones, Moses finds his place again. After being away for several years, he suddenly returns and picks up right where he left off. The pigs don't mind this time because the animals have already realized that the "equality" of the revolt is a farce. So Napoleon feeds Moses with beer, and the full-circle is complete.

Orwell seems to offer a very cynical and harsh view of the Church. This proves that *Animal Farm* is not simply an anti-communist work meant to lead people into capitalism and Christianity. Really Orwell found loop-holes and much hypocrisy in both systems. It's interesting that recently in Russia the government has begun to allow religion again. It almost seems that like the pigs, the Kremlin officials of today are trying to keep their people motivated, not in the ideology of communism, but in the "old-fashioned" hope of an after-life.

Snowball: Orwell describes Snowball as a pig very similar to Napoleon— at least in the early stages. Both pigs wanted a leadership position in the "new" economic and political system (which is actually contradictory to the whole supposed system of equality). But as time goes on, both eventually realize that one of them will have to step down. Orwell says that the two were always arguing. "Snowball and Napoleon were by far the most active in the debates. But it was noticed that these two were never in agreement: whatever suggestion either of them made, the other could be counted to oppose it." Later, Orwell makes the case stronger. "These two disagreed at every point disagreement was possible."

Soon the differences, like whether or not to build a windmill, become too great to deal with, so Napoleon decides that Snowball must be eliminated. It might seem that this was a spontaneous reaction, but a careful look tells otherwise. Napoleon was setting the stage for his own domination long before he really began "dishing it out" to Snowball. For example, he took the puppies away from their mothers in efforts to establish a private police force. These dogs would later be used to eliminate Snowball, his arch-rival.

Snowball represents Trotsky, the arch-rival of Stalin in Russia. The parallels between Trotsky and Snowball are uncanny. Trotsky too, was exiled, not from the farm, but to Mexico, where he spoke out against Stalin. Stalin was very weary of Trotsky, and feared that Trotsky supporters might try to assassinate him. The dictator of Russia tried hard to kill Trotsky, for the fear of losing leadership was very great in the crazy man's mind. Trotsky also believed in Communism, but he thought he could run Russia better than Stalin. Trotsky was murdered in Mexico by the Russian internal police, the NKVD—the pre-organization of the KGB. Trotsky was found with a pick axe in his head at his villa in Mexico.

Napoleon: Napoleon is Orwell's chief villain in *Animal Farm*. The name Napoleon is very coincidental since Napoleon, the dictator of France, was thought by many to be the Anti-Christ. Napoleon, the pig, is really the central character on the farm. Obviously a metaphor for Stalin, Comrade Napoleon represents the human frailties of any revolution. Orwell believed that although socialism is good as an ideal, it can never be successfully adopted due to uncontrollable sins of human nature. For example, although Napoleon seems as first to be a good leader, he is eventually overcome by greed and soon becomes power-hungry. Of course Stalin did too in Russia, leaving the original equality of socialism behind, giving himself all the power and living in luxury while the common peasant suffered. Thus, while his national and international status blossomed, the welfare of Russia

remained unchanged. Orwell explains, "Somehow it seemed as though the farm had grown richer without making the animals themselves any richer--except, of course for the pigs and the dogs."

The true side of Napoleon becomes evident after he slaughters so many animals for plotting against him. He even hires a pig to sample his food for him to make certain that no one is trying to poison him. Stalin, too, was a cruel dictator in Russia. After suspecting many people in his empire to be supporters of Trotsky (Orwell's Snowball), Stalin systematically murders many.

By the end of the book, Napoleon doesn't even pretend to lead a socialist state. After renaming it a Republic and instituting his own version of the commandments and the Beasts of England, Comrade Napoleon, he quickly becomes more or less a dictator who of course has never even been elected by the animals.

Boxer: The name Boxer is cleverly used by Orwell as a metaphor for the Boxer Rebellion in China in the early twentieth century. It was this rebellion which signalled the beginning of communism in red China. This communism, much like the distorted Stalin view of socialism, is still present today in the oppressive social government in China. Boxer and Clover are used by Orwell to represent the proletariat, or unskilled labour class in Russian society. This lower class is naturally drawn to Stalin (Napoleon) because it seems as though they will benefit most from his new system. Since Boxer and the other low animals are not accustomed to the "good life," they can't really compare Napoleon's government to the life they had before under the czars (Jones). Also, since usually the lowest class has the lowest intelligence, it is not difficult to persuade them into thinking they are getting a good deal.

The proletariat is also quite good at convincing each other that communism is a good idea. Orwell supports this contention when he narrates, "Their most faithful disciples were the two carthorses, Boxer and Clover. Those two had great difficulty in thinking anything out for themselves, but having once accepted the pigs as their teachers, they absorbed everything that they were told, and passed it on to the other animals by simple arguments."

Later, the importance of the proletariat is shown when Boxer suddenly falls and there is suddenly a drastic decrease in work productivity. But still he is taken for granted by the pigs, who send him away in a glue truck. Truly Boxer is the biggest poster-child for gullibility.

Squealer: Squealer is an intriguing character in Orwell's *Animal Farm*. He's first described as a manipulator and persuader. Orwell narrates, "He could turn black into white." Many critics correlate Squealer with the Pravda, the Russian newspaper of the 1930's. Propaganda was a key to many publications, and since there was no television or radio, the newspaper was the primary source of media information. So the monopoly of the Pravda was seized by Stalin and his new Bolshevik regime. In *Animal Farm*, Squealer, like the newspaper, is the link between Napoleon and other animals. When Squealer masks an evil intention of the pigs, the intentions of the communists can be carried out with little resistance and without political disarray. Squealer is also thought by some to represent Goebbels, who was the minister of propaganda for Germany. This would seem inconsistent with Orwell's satire, however, which was supposed to metaphor characters in Russia.

Mollie: Mollie is one of Orwell's minor characters, but she represents something very important. Mollie is the animal who is most opposed to the new government under Napoleon. She doesn't care much about the politics of the whole situation; she just wants to tie her hair with ribbons and eat sugar, things her social status won't allow. Many animals consider her a trader when she is seen being petted

by a human from a neighbouring farm. Soon Mollie is confronted by the "dedicated" animals, and she quietly leaves the farm. Mollie characterizes the typical middle-class skilled worker who suffers from this new communism concept. No longer will she get her sugar (nice salary) because she is now just as low as the other animals, like Boxer and Clover.

Orwell uses Mollie to characterize the people after any rebellion who aren't too receptive to new leaders and new economics. There are always those resistant to change. This continues to dispel the belief Orwell hated that basically all animals act the same. The naivety of Marxism is criticized—socialism is not perfect and it doesn't work for everyone.

Benjamin: Old Benjamin, an elderly donkey, is one of Orwell's most elusive and intriguing characters on *Animal Farm*. He is described as rather unchanged since the rebellion. He still does his work the same way, never becoming too excited or too disappointed about anything that has passed. Benjamin explains, "Donkeys live a long time. None of you has ever seen a dead donkey."

Although there is no clear metaphoric relationship between Benjamin and Orwell's critique of communism, it makes sense that during any rebellion there are those who never totally embrace the revolution—those so cynical they no longer look to their leaders for help. Benjamin symbolizes the older generation, the critics of any new rebellion. Really this old donkey is the only animal who seems as though he couldn't care less about Napoleon and Animal Farm. It's almost as if he can see into the future, knowing that the revolt is only a temporary change, and will flop in the end.

Benjamin is the only animal who doesn't seem to have expected anything positive from the revolution. He almost seems on a whole different maturity level compared to the other animals. He is not sucked in by Napoleon's propaganda like the others. The only time he seems to care about the others at all is when Boxer is carried off in the glue truck. It's almost as if the old donkey finally comes out of his shell, his perfectly fitted demeanour, when he tries to warn the others of Boxer's fate. And the animals do try to rescue Boxer, but it's too late. Benjamin seems to be finally confronting Napoleon and revealing his knowledge of the pigs' hypocrisy, although before he had been completely independent.

After the animals have forgotten Jones and their past lives, Benjamin still remembers everything. Orwell states, "Only old Benjamin professed to remember every detail of his long life and to know that things never had been, nor ever could be much better or much worse—hunger, hardship, and disappointment being, so he said, the unalterable law of life."

Muriel: Muriel is a knowledgeable goat who reads the commandments for Clover. Muriel represents the minority of working class people who are educated enough to decide things for themselves and find critical and hypocritical problems with their leaders. Unfortunately for the other animals, Muriel is not charismatic or inspired enough to take action and oppose Napoleon and his pigs.

Pigs: Orwell uses the pigs to surround and support Napoleon. They symbolize the communist party loyalists and the friends of Stalin. The pigs, unlike other animals, live in luxury and enjoy the benefits of the society they help control. The inequality and true hypocrisy of communism is expressed here by Orwell, who criticized Marx's oversimplified view of a socialist, "utopian" society. Obviously George Orwell doesn't believe such a society can exist. Toward the end of the book, Orwell emphasizes, "Somehow it seemed as though the farm had grown richer without making the animals themselves any richer—except, of course, the pigs and the dogs."

Dogs: Orwell uses the dogs in his book, *Animal Farm*, to represent the KGB or perhaps more accurately, the bodyguards of Stalin. The dogs are the arch-defenders of Napoleon and the pigs, and although they don't speak, they are definitely a force the other animals have to contend with.

Orwell almost speaks of the dogs as mindless robots, so dedicated to Napoleon that they can't really speak for themselves. This contention is supported as Orwell describes Napoleon's early and suspicious removal of six puppies from their mother. The reader is left in the dark for a while, but later is enlightened when Orwell describes the chase of Snowball. Napoleon uses his "secret dogs" for the first time here; before Snowball has a chance to stand up and give a counter-argument to Napoleon's disapproval of the windmill, the dogs viciously attack the pig, forcing him to flee, never to return again.

Orwell narrates, "Silent and terrified, the animals crept back into the barn. In a moment the dogs came bounding back. At first no one had been able to imagine where these creatures came from, but the problem was soon solved: they were the puppies whom Napoleon had taken away from their mothers and reared privately. Though not yet full-grown, they were huge dogs, and as fierce-looking as wolves. They kept close to Napoleon. It was noticed that they wagged their tails to him in the same way as the other dogs had been used to do to Mr. Jones."

The use of the dogs begins the evil use of force which helps Napoleon maintain power. Later, the dogs do even more dastardly things when they are instructed to kill the animals labelled "disloyal." Stalin, too, had his own special force of "helpers." Really there are followers loyal to any politician or government leader, but Stalin in particular needed a special police force to eliminate his opponents. This is how Trotsky was killed.

Animals: The sheep and other animals are very similar to Boxer and Clover. Both the horses and sheep represent in many ways the proletariat, or working class of unskilled labourers. These animals depend on their backs, not their brains, to do work. Thus, they fall into the bottom of society and are the focal point of politicians' brainwashing. The animals are stubborn and easily swayed. Orwell points out repeatedly that if it wasn't for the bleating of the sheep, "Two legs bad, four legs good," which was strategically inspired by the pigs, Napoleon wouldn't have the power and control that he eventually came to enjoy and then abuse.

Frederick: The theme of the gun and flag rituals performed by the animals at the urging of Napoleon is strengthened through Orwell's description of Mr. Frederick, the neighbour of Animal Farm. Frederick, through the course of the book, becomes an enemy and then a friend and then an enemy again to Napoleon, who makes many secret deals and treaties with him. One of the major problems the two farms have is the issue of the timber. Napoleon sells the wood to Frederick for bank notes, only to find that they are worthless. During the world wide depression, countries were forced by necessity to trade with other countries. One country would have a product or natural resource another country would not; therefore to survive, the country would trade. Many times the trades were unfair and fraudulent. This created many international problems. So you can see the parallels are clear.

Pilkington: Orwell uses Pilkington, another neighbour of Animal Farm, as a metaphor for the Allies of World War II (excluding, of course Russia). Like the Soviet Union before World War II, Animal Farm wasn't sure who their allies would be. But after losing the relationship with Frederick (Germany), Napoleon (Stalin) decides to befriend Pilkington, and ally with him. Napoleon and the

other pigs even go as far as to invite him over for dinner at the end of the book. Here Mr. Pilkington and his men congratulate Napoleon on the efficiency of Animal Farm.

Orwell narrates, "Mr. Pilkington once again congratulated the pigs on the low rations, the long working hours, and the general absence of pampering which he had observed on Animal Farm." Russia's allies, after the war, also admired its efficiency. But soon the cold war would begin between the United States and Russia. This is unbelievably also referred to in the book (published in 1946) when Orwell writes, "An uproar of voices was coming from the farmhouse...a violent quarrel was in progress. There were shouting, banging on the table, sharp suspicious glances, furious denials." Amazingly Orwell seemed to sense the start of American-Russian tension for years to come.

Rats: Orwell's rats (and the other wild animals, like rabbits, for that matter) represent the opposition to the Bolsheviks. They too, had to be included in the rebellion, although for the longest time they sided with the another party. The rats and rabbits symbolize other political parties. Although the communist party took off with Lenin, there were still others around. These are the wild animals.

Pigeons: The pigeons symbolize Soviet propaganda, not to Russia, but to other countries, like Germany, England, France, and even the United States. Russia had created an iron curtain even before WWII. The Communist government raved about its achievements and its advanced technology, but it never allowed experts or scientists from outside the country to check on its validity. Orwell mentions the fact that the other farmers became suspicious and worried when their animals began to sing Beasts of England. Many Western governments have gone through a similar problem with their people in this century. There was a huge "Red Scare" in the United States in the 20's. In the 1950's in the United States, Joseph McCarthy was a legislative member of the government from Wisconsin. He accused hundreds of people of supporting the Communist regime, from famous actors in Hollywood to middle-class common people. The fear of communism became a phobia in America and anyone speaking out against the government was a suspect.

<http://www.netcharles.com/orwell/books/animalfarm.htm>