Chapter 1: Background on George Orwell

1. The Life of George Orwell
   *Contemporary Authors*
   An ardent proponent of human decency, individuality, and social welfare, Orwell was also a foe of such ideological mass movements as fascism and communism. In his masterworks, *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, he warned of the threat to human liberty posed by the growing power of government.

2. Intellectual Censorship Made Publishing *Animal Farm* Difficult
   *George Orwell*
   In this rediscovered preface to *Animal Farm*, Orwell writes of the difficulty of getting the book published due to an unwillingness of British publishers and intellectuals to offend the Soviet Union, which was at that time an ally in World War II. Orwell notes that the principle of freedom of the press is violated by this form of censorship, which has no place in a democracy.

3. Orwell Remains Relevant in the Twenty-First Century
   *John P. Rossi*
   An overriding concern of Orwell’s, best expressed in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Animal Farm*, was the way governments of any type can become totalitarian by a disregard for truth and a corruption of language. These concerns remain relevant in the twenty-first century.
Chapter 2: Politics in *Animal Farm*

1. *Animal Farm*: An Allegory of Revolution  
*Valerie Meyers*
Orwell chose the simple format of an animal fable for *Animal Farm* because he wanted to convey his message about the totalitarian nature of the Soviet government in a way that could be easily understood by all readers.

2. Orwell Distorts Russian History in *Animal Farm*  
*Kingsley Martin*
In *Animal Farm*, Orwell has written a deft and clever satire, which he ruins by overemphasizing the conflict between Soviet leaders Joseph Stalin and Leon Trotsky. The historical truth about communism in the Soviet Union is more complex than the picture Orwell paints.

3. *Animal Farm* Misses the Point About Soviet Communism  
*Northrop Frye*
*Animal Farm* is very well written, but it contains some ridiculous episodes that weaken its satire. The novel fails to probe deeply into the shortcomings of Soviet communism.

4. Orwell’s Views on the Soviet Union Changed While Conceiving *Animal Farm*  
*Alok Rai*
Orwell’s initial intention in writing *Animal Farm* was to create an allegory in which the working class throws off its oppressors; however, while writing the novel, Orwell became disillusioned by events in the Soviet Union. *Animal Farm* ends pessimistically, with the animals in tyranny to new masters—the former revolutionaries.

5. Historical Context Is Vital to Understanding *Animal Farm*  
*John Rodden*
The simple format of *Animal Farm* as a beast fable masks the fact that it is a complex allegory of the history of the Soviet Union and a treatise about the nature of power. Awareness of its historical context is vital to an appreciation of the novel.
6. *Animal Farm* Satirizes All Dictatorships  
   J.R. Hammond  
   *Animal Farm* is an allegory portraying events and characters that represent events and characters in Russian history. The satire in the book, however, is directed not only at the Soviet Union but at all totalitarian governments.

7. *Animal Farm* Satirizes the Failure of Revolutions and Expresses an Ideal of Human Decency  
   Averil Gardner  
   In *Animal Farm*, Orwell satirizes the failings not just of the Russian Revolution but of all tyrannical governments. Orwell’s sympathetic and realistic portrayal of animals powerfully conveys his ideal of human decency and the tragedy of its betrayal.

8. *Animal Farm* Is Artistically Satisfying but Ambiguous  
   Robert Pearce  
   *Animal Farm* is a beautifully written satire on the Russian Revolution, but its meaning is somewhat ambiguous. To many readers, it is not clear whether Orwell is writing only about the Russian Revolution or whether he is saying that all revolutions are doomed to failure.

9. Orwell Preaches Individual Responsibility as a Weapon Against Dictatorship  
   Katharine Byrne  
   *Animal Farm* is not an attack on communism; it is about the tendency of power to corrupt. Orwell’s message is that citizens hold the responsibility for their own liberty.

10. *Animal Farm* Is About a Failure of Communication  
    Robert A. Lee  
    In *Animal Farm*, the other animals surrender to the tyranny of the pigs because they are unable to recognize truth. Orwell’s concern is with the corruption of language and the ability of those who control language to abuse power.
11. Traditional Values Can Win Out over Self-Serving Politics

Richard I. Smyer

Animal Farm offers a dual view of society. Although the ruling classes inevitably lose their ideals and oppress their followers, society is still a place of common values and decency.

Chapter 3: Contemporary Perspectives on Politics

1. Debates on the Size of Government Should Be Conducted Rationally

Cathy Young

Anyone with a sense of Russian history would understand how unfounded and deeply offensive it is to label President Barack Obama as an heir to the policies of Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin. There are rational debates that can and should be made about the size of government without resorting to exaggerated claims.

2. The United States Is Becoming Fascist Rather than Socialist

Jonah Goldberg

Although liberals ridicule conservatives for their concern that the United States is becoming a socialist nation under the Obama administration, the expansion of government that has taken place has made even some liberals talk about a “social democracy.” Reasonable liberals and conservatives agree that extreme positions on either end of the spectrum are untenable; however, they do not agree on where to draw the line. In reality, the collusion of government and corporations smacks of fascism more than socialism.

3. Liberalism, Not Socialism, Is on the Rise

Alan Wolfe

Conservatives are preaching that liberalism and socialism are the same. They are not. Liberals believe that government has a role in securing the common good while extending personal autonomy. Socialists, on the other hand, are willing to sacrifice certain individual liberties to further social equality. The Obama administration is liberal, not socialist.
4. Socialism Is Dying Out in Europe  

Steven Erlanger

At a time when some U.S. conservatives are accusing President Barack Obama of practicing European-style socialism, the left-leaning socialist parties in many European countries have fallen out of favor.

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