

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-84109-2 — The Cambridge Companion to Nineteen Eighty-Four  
Edited by Nathan Waddell  
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THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION  
TO NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) remains a book of the moment. This *Companion* builds on successive waves of generational inheritance and debate in the novel's reception by asking new questions about how and why *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was written, what it means, and why it matters. Chapters on a selection of the novel's interpretative contexts, the literary histories from which it is inseparable, the urgent questions it raises, and the impact it has had on other kinds of media, ranging from radio to video games, open up the conversation in an expansive way. Established concerns (e.g. Orwell's attitude to the working class and his anxieties about the socio-political compartmentalization of the post-war world) are presented alongside newer ones (e.g. his views on evil and the influence of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* on comics). Individual essays help us see in new ways how Orwell's most famous work continues to be a novel for our times.

Nathan Waddell is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Birmingham. He is the author of *Moonlighting: Beethoven and Literary Modernism* (2019), *Modernist Nowheres: Politics and Utopia in Early Modernist Writing, 1900–1920* (2012), and *Modern John Buchan: A Critical Introduction* (2009). He has also co-edited volumes of essays on the work of Wyndham Lewis.

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## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
New Delhi – 110025, India  
79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

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[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108841092](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108841092)  
DOI: 10.1017/9781108887090

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First published 2020

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

ISBN 978-1-108-84109-2 Hardback  
ISBN 978-1-108-84147-3 Paperback

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As many others before me have said, working on George Orwell necessarily means being indebted to the extraordinary scholarship of Peter Davison, whose textual labours have made available in authoritative form the material on which Orwell studies depends. At Cambridge University Press, my thanks to Ray Ryan for believing in this project and for supportively and enthusiastically seeing it through from proposal stage to publication. Thanks, likewise, to Edgar Mendez for his unflagging help and encouragement, and to the anonymous peer reviewers of the proposal for suggesting valuable ways in which to improve the book. All of the students with whom I've discussed *Nineteen Eighty-Four* over the years have shaped my opinions about it. My gratitude to them for the intelligence with which they've responded to my ways of thinking and reading; this edited volume is meant as a tribute to, and a 'thank you' for, their determining influence. I'm hugely grateful to the contributors for writing such brilliant, thought-provoking chapters and for tolerating my interminable queries during the preparation of the typescript. A glass raised not only to them but also to Andrzej Gąsior, Dorian Lynskey, Kara Reilly, David Ryan, Jean Seaton, Lyndsey Stonebridge, D. J. Taylor, Sylvia Topp, Julian Wolfreys, Gobaloussamy Rangaradjou (Senior Copy Editor at Integra), and Jayavel Radhakrishnan (Senior Project Manager at Integra). Daniel Buckingham was good enough not only to compile the 'Chronology' and the 'Further Reading' section but also to proofread the volume in its entirety at the very last minute with typical good humour.

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1903 25 June. Eric Arthur Blair is born in Motihari, Bengal, to Richard and Ida Blair.
- 1932 November. Eric Blair decides to use a pseudonym. ‘George Orwell’ is born.
- 1933 9 January. *Down and Out in Paris and London*.
- 1934 25 October. *Burmese Days*.
- 1935 11 March. *A Clergyman’s Daughter*.
- 1936 20 April. *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*.
- 1937 8 March. *The Road to Wigan Pier*.
- 1938 25 April. *Homage to Catalonia*.
- 1939 12 June. *Coming Up for Air*.
- 1943 28 November. Beginning of the Teheran Conference, later credited by Orwell as the conceptual origin of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.
- 1944 June. Orwell and his wife, Eileen Blair, adopt a son named Richard Horatio Blair.
- 1944 September. Orwell visits, for the first time, the Hebridean island of Jura.
- 1945 29 March. Death of Eileen Blair.
- 1945 25 June. Secker & Warburg acknowledge Orwell’s completion of the first twelve pages of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.
- 1945 17 August. *Animal Farm*.
- 1945 September. Orwell visits Jura again.
- 1946 May–October. Having taken residence at Barnhill, Jura, Orwell works on *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.
- 1946 Mid October. Orwell returns to London.
- 1947 April. Orwell returns to Jura.
- 1947 May. While sending Fred Warburg his school memoir, ‘Such, Such Were the Joys’, Orwell reports that he has completed a third of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

## Chronology

- 1947 July. Orwell publishes ‘Toward European Unity’, in which he explores the possibility of the division of the world into superstates propped up by isolationism and phoney wars.
- 1947 November. Orwell completes the first draft of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.
- 1947 December. Orwell is admitted to Hairmyres Hospital, East Kilbride, Scotland, and diagnosed with tuberculosis.
- 1948 January–July. Orwell remains at Hairmyres.
- 1948 November. Having returned to Jura, Orwell completes the final version of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in a severely weakened state.
- 1948 4 December. Orwell sends the completed typescript to Warburg.
- 1949 6 January–3 September. Orwell is admitted to Cotswold Sanatorium in Cranham, Gloucestershire, due to worsening tuberculosis.
- 1949 8 June. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is published in the United Kingdom, the first edition comprising 26,575 copies.
- 1949 13 June. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is published in the United States with a print run of 20,000 copies.
- 1949 July. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is selected for the US Book of the Month Club.
- 1949 27 August. The first radio adaptation of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is broadcast, starring David Niven as Winston Smith.
- 1949 3 September. Orwell transfers to University College Hospital on Gower Street in London.
- 1949 13 October. Orwell marries Sonia Brownell.
- 1950 21 January. Orwell, aged 46, dies of pulmonary tuberculosis.

## ABBREVIATIONS

References to Orwell's main works of fiction and non-fiction are taken from *The Complete Works of George Orwell*, edited by Peter Davison, in the following imprints:

ACD	<i>A Clergyman's Daughter</i> (1935; London: Penguin, 1990)
AF	<i>Animal Farm</i> (1945), introd. Malcolm Bradbury (London: Penguin, 1989)
BD	<i>Burmese Days</i> (1934), introd. Emma Larkin (London: Penguin, 2009)
CUFA	<i>Coming Up for Air</i> (1939; London: Penguin, 1990)
DOPL	<i>Down and Out in Paris and London</i> (1933), introd. Dervla Murphy (London: Penguin, 1989)
HC	<i>Homage to Catalonia</i> (1938; London: Penguin, 2003)
KAF	<i>Keep the Aspidochelone Flying</i> (1936; London: Penguin, 1989)
NEF	<i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> (1949), introd. Julian Symons (London: Everyman's Library, 1992)
RWP	<i>The Road to Wigan Pier</i> (1937), introd. Richard Hoggart (London: Penguin, 1989)

References to Orwell's essays, letters, and reviews, and so forth are taken from *The Complete Works of George Orwell*, edited by Peter Davison with the assistance of Ian Angus and Sheila Davison, published in London by Secker & Warburg – as follows:

CW, 10	<i>A Kind of Compulsion, 1903–1936</i> , rev. ed. (2000)
CW, 11	<i>Facing Unpleasant Facts, 1937–1939</i> , rev. ed. (2000)
CW, 12	<i>A Patriot After All, 1940–1941</i> , rev. ed. (2002)
CW, 13	<i>All Propaganda Is Lies, 1941–1942</i> , rev. ed. (2001)
CW, 14	<i>Keeping Our Little Corner Clean, 1942–1943</i> , rev. ed. (2001)
CW, 15	<i>Two Wasted Years, 1943</i> , rev. ed. (2001)

## List of Abbreviations

- CW, 16 *I Have Tried to Tell the Truth, 1943–1944*, rev. ed. (2001)  
 CW, 17 *I Belong to the Left, 1945*, rev. ed. (2001)  
 CW, 18 *Smothered under Journalism, 1946*, rev. ed. (2001)  
 CW, 19 *It Is What I Think, 1947–1948*, rev. ed. (2002)  
 CW, 20 *Our Job Is to Make Life Worth Living, 1949–1950*, rev. ed. (2002)

## Works by others:

- Arendt, OT Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951; London: Penguin, 2017)  
 Atwood, HT Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985; London: Vintage, 1996)  
 Burgess, 1985 Anthony Burgess, 1985 (1978), introd. Andrew Biswell (London: Serpent's Tail, 2013)  
 Derrida, AF Jacques Derrida, 'Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression', trans. Eric Prenowitz, *Diacritics*, 25.2 (Summer 1995), pp. 9–63  
 Doctorow, LB Cory Doctorow, *Little Brother* (London: Harper Voyager, 2008)

All italicized emphases in quotations are as in the original source unless otherwise stated.

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