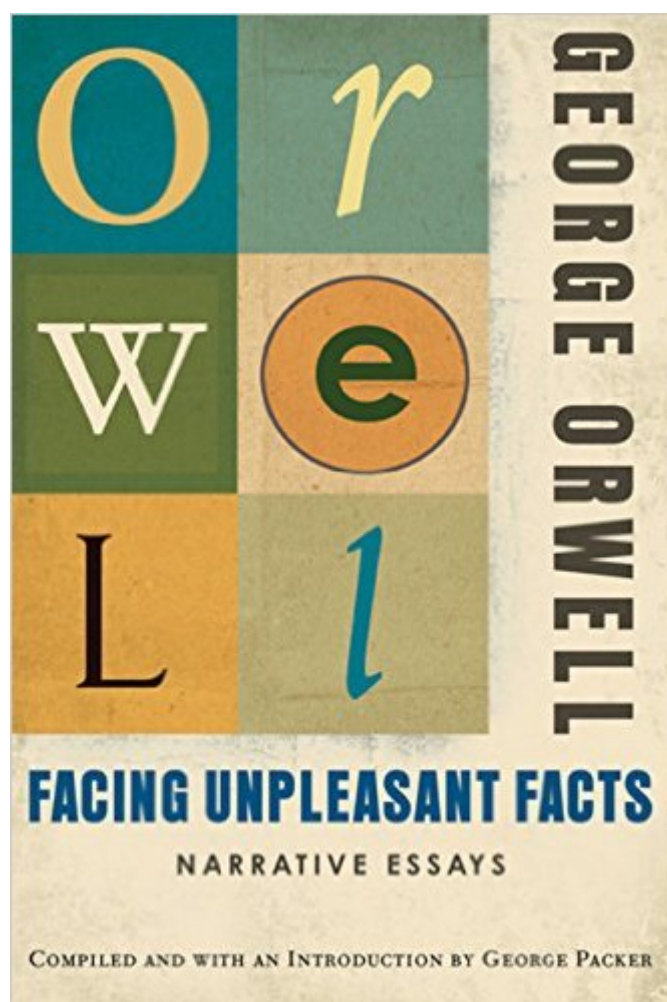


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Facing Unpleasant Facts



Synopsis

George Orwell was first and foremost an essayist, producing throughout his life an extraordinary array of short nonfiction that reflected--and illuminated--the fraught times in which he lived. "As soon as he began to write something," comments George Packer in his foreword, "it was as natural for Orwell to propose, generalize, qualify, argue, judge--in short, to think--as it was for Yeats to versify or Dickens to invent." Facing Unpleasant Facts charts Orwell's development as a master of the narrative-essay form and unites such classics as "Shooting an Elephant" with lesser-known journalism and passages from his wartime diary. Whether detailing the horrors of Orwell's boyhood in an English boarding school or bringing to life the sights, sounds, and smells of the Spanish Civil War, these essays weave together the personal and the political in an unmistakable style that is at once plainspoken and brilliantly complex.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Best known for his late-career classics *Animal Farm* and *1984*, George Orwell—who used his given name, Eric Blair, in the earliest pieces of this collection aimed at the aficionado as well as the general reader—was above all a polemicist of the first rank. Organized chronologically, from 1931 through the late 1940s, these in-your-face writings showcase the power of this literary form. The range of subjects is considerable, from *Shooting an Elephant* to remembrances of working in a bookshop (The combines can never squeeze the small independent bookseller out of existence...); from recollections of fighting in the Spanish Civil War to culinary oddities such as *A Defence of English Cooking* and *A Nice Cup of Tea*; to the broad-stroke

masterwork of boarding-school irony, *Such, Such Were the Joys*. New Yorker contributor Packer (The Assassins' Gate) keenly assembles and introduces this selection, bringing into high relief Orwell's range of experience and committed humanism, showing how, as Orwell put it, to make political writing into an art. (Oct. 13) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

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