

## **FEAR AND CONTROL IN GEORGE ORWELL'S ANIMAL FARM**

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the relationship between fear and control in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. The novel begins with the animals' hope for freedom, equality and a better life after the rebellion against Mr. Jones. However, their new life gradually becomes controlled by fear, threat and physical force. The study focuses on how fear changes the behavior of ordinary animals and makes them silent, obedient and unable to resist. The article uses qualitative literary analysis based on close reading of selected episodes from the novel. Special attention is given to the fear of Mr. Jones's return, the role of the dogs, public punishment, and the silence of ordinary animals. The study shows that fear in *Animal Farm* is not only a feeling, but also a method of control. Orwell presents fear as a force that weakens freedom, destroys resistance and helps corrupted power remain strong.

**Keywords:** George Orwell, *Animal Farm*, fear, control, power, obedience, domination, silence.

### **1 Introduction**

George Orwell's *Animal Farm* is one of the most famous literary works about power, rebellion and political betrayal. The novel tells the story of animals who rebel against Mr. Jones because they are tired of hunger, hard work and cruelty. At the beginning, the rebellion seems to promise a new and fair life. The animals believe that they will no longer be used by humans and that the farm will become a place of equality and freedom.

The first dream of the animals is simple. They want enough food, rest, respect and a life without humiliation. Their rebellion is not shown only as a political event. It is also connected with an emotional wish for safety and dignity. This makes the later changes on the farm more painful. The animals remove the old master, but they do not receive the real freedom they expected.

After the rebellion, the farm slowly becomes a place where fear controls daily life. The animals are often reminded of the possible return of Mr. Jones. The dogs become a visible sign of danger and punishment. Public confessions and punishments frighten the whole farm. Ordinary animals begin to speak less and obey more. In this way, Orwell shows that control does not always work through open chains. It can also work through fear, memory, threat and silence.

Fear is important in the novel because it changes the animals from hopeful rebels into obedient workers. Many animals feel that something is wrong, but they cannot express their doubt openly. Some are afraid of punishment. Some are afraid of being called traitors. Some are too confused to understand what is happening. Their silence becomes one of the strongest signs of control in the novel.

Previous studies have examined different forms of domination in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. For example, Khafaga et al. (2025) analyze violence, gestures, dogs' growls and sheep's bleating as nonverbal tools of domination. Seguedeme, Dikpo and Abodohou (2022) study the abuse of power in the novel. Mustafa and Najmalddin (2019) discuss the nature of revolution and the failure of revolutionary dreams in *Animal Farm*. These studies show that Orwell's novel has

often been analyzed through power, domination, manipulation and revolution. This article focuses more directly on the relationship between fear and control.

The aim of this article is to analyze how fear is used as a tool of control in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. The study tries to show that fear does not appear in only one form. It works through the memory of past suffering, physical threat, public punishment and inner silence. The main research question of the article is: How does George Orwell represent fear as a tool of control in *Animal Farm*?

## 2 Method

This article uses qualitative literary analysis. The main material of the study is George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. The analysis is based on close reading of selected episodes where fear influences the behavior of ordinary animals. The study does not use statistical data, questionnaires or experiments, because the object of analysis is a literary text.

The selected episodes are connected with four main aspects of fear in the novel. The first aspect is the animals' fear of Mr. Jones's return. This fear is important because it is based on their memory of old suffering. The second aspect is the role of the dogs, which represent physical threat and violence. The third aspect is public punishment, where fear becomes a warning for all animals. The fourth aspect is the silence of ordinary animals, especially the behavior of Boxer, Clover and Benjamin.

The method of analysis follows a simple interpretive approach. First, the relevant episodes from the novel are selected. Then, these episodes are examined according to their connection with fear and control. The analysis pays attention to characters' actions, repeated situations, emotional reactions and the general atmosphere of the farm. Short extracts from the novel are used in the Results section to support the interpretation.

Secondary sources are also used to support the analysis. Previous studies on domination, abuse of power and revolution in *Animal Farm* help to place this article in a broader academic context. However, the main focus remains on the text of the novel itself. The article does not try to cover every political meaning of *Animal Farm*. It focuses on one specific problem: how fear makes control stronger and resistance weaker on the farm.

## 3 Results

The analysis of *Animal Farm* shows that fear is not used in one simple way. It appears in different situations and changes the behavior of the animals step by step. At first, fear is connected with the memory of Mr. Jones. Later, it becomes stronger through the dogs, public punishment and the silence of ordinary animals. These forms of fear help the new power keep control over the farm.

Table 1. Main forms of fear and control in *Animal Farm*

Type of fear	Textual example	Controlling effect
Fear of Jones	"You do not want Jones back?"	stops criticism
Dogs	Napoleon's dogs attack opponents	creates physical threat
Public punishment	animals confess and are punished	spreads collective fear
Traitor accusation	doubters are linked with enemies	weakens independent thought
Silence	Boxer, Clover and Benjamin do not resist	shows inner control

Table 1 shows that fear in *Animal Farm* works in several connected forms. The animals are controlled not only by direct orders, but also by memory, physical threat, public punishment and

silence. The fear of Jones reminds them of the old suffering. The dogs make power visible and dangerous. Public punishment teaches the whole farm that resistance is unsafe. The silence of Boxer, Clover and Benjamin shows that fear has already entered the inner life of ordinary animals.

### 3.1 Fear of Mr. Jones's return

One of the first forms of control is the fear of Mr. Jones's return. The animals remember their difficult life before the rebellion. They were hungry, tired and dependent on human rule. This memory later becomes a useful tool for the new leaders. When the animals begin to doubt the situation on the farm, they are reminded of the old master.

#### Extract (1)

“Surely, comrades, you do not want Jones back?” (Orwell, 2008, ch. 3)

This short question has strong controlling power. The animals are not asked to discuss their present life freely. They are pushed to remember the old danger. The fear of Jones makes them afraid of questioning the new rulers. In this way, the past becomes a tool of control. Orwell shows that fear can work even without direct violence. The animals obey because they think disobedience may bring back a worse life.

### 3.2 Dogs as instruments of fear

The dogs are one of the clearest signs of physical control on the farm. They do not need to explain anything to the animals. Their presence itself creates fear. The ordinary animals understand that disagreement may bring punishment. The dogs make power visible and dangerous.

#### Extract( 2)

“Napoleon ... uttered a high-pitched whimper.” (Orwell, 2008, ch. 5)

After this signal, the dogs immediately move against Napoleon's opponents. This scene shows that Napoleon's authority is supported by force. The animals do not obey because they fully agree with him. They obey because they are afraid. Through the dogs, Orwell shows how fear can stop resistance before it begins. The animals may have doubts, but the possibility of violence keeps them silent.

### 3.3 Public punishment and collective fear

Public punishment is another important form of control in the novel. It is not used only to punish separate animals. It is shown to the whole farm as a warning. The purpose is to frighten all animals and teach them that resistance is dangerous.

After such scenes, the animals begin to control themselves. They avoid questions and accept official explanations. Truth becomes less important than safety. Orwell shows that public punishment changes the atmosphere of the farm. The animals no longer feel that they live in a free community. They live in a place where every word can become dangerous.

This form of fear is collective. Each animal understands that it can also become a victim. The result is silence and obedience. The farm becomes controlled not only by leaders, but also by the fear that lives inside the animals.

### 3.4 Fear and the silence of ordinary animals

The strongest result of fear is silence. The ordinary animals often feel that life after the rebellion is not what they expected. They notice tiredness, hunger and inequality. Some animals remember that the first dream was different. Still, they do not openly protest.

Boxer shows one form of this silence. He believes that harder work can solve problems. His famous phrase, “I will work harder,” shows his loyalty and simple faith (Orwell, 2008, ch. 3).

Boxer is not selfish. He wants the farm to succeed. His obedience is painful because it is based on trust, not on personal benefit.

Clover shows another form of silence. She often feels that something is wrong, but she cannot clearly explain it. Her sadness shows the emotional side of fear. Benjamin understands more than many animals, but he usually remains passive. These characters show that silence does not always mean agreement. Sometimes silence means fear, confusion and loss of courage.

#### **4 Discussion**

The results show that fear in Animal Farm is not only an emotion. It becomes a system of control. The animals are controlled through the memory of Mr. Jones, the threat of dogs, public punishment and the fear of speaking openly. These forms of fear work together and make obedience seem safer than resistance.

The fear of Mr. Jones's return is important because it connects control with the past. The animals really suffered under human rule. This suffering is later used against them. They are made to believe that criticism may bring back the old master. As a result, they accept new injustice because they are afraid of old injustice. Orwell shows that power can use memory as a weapon.

The dogs show the physical side of control. Their role proves that power in the novel is not kept only through speeches and slogans. It is also kept through force. The animals see the dogs and understand the danger without long explanation. This makes control stronger because fear works before open resistance appears.

Public punishment makes fear stronger because it turns violence into a lesson for everyone. When punishment is shown publicly, all animals learn what may happen to them. This destroys courage. The animals begin to censor themselves. They do not need to be watched all the time, because fear already lives inside them.

The silence of ordinary animals is one of the most painful results of fear. Boxer's obedience, Clover's sadness and Benjamin's passivity show different reactions to control. Boxer tries to work harder. Clover feels pain but cannot express it clearly. Benjamin understands the situation but does not act. Orwell uses these characters to show that fear can make even honest and intelligent beings powerless.

Fear also changes the meaning of freedom in the novel. At the beginning, the animals think freedom means life without human cruelty. Later, they live without Mr. Jones, but they cannot speak freely or question decisions. Their freedom becomes only a name. Real freedom disappears because fear controls their behavior.

The relationship between fear and control also explains why the rebellion fails. The animals remove one ruler, but they cannot protect themselves from another form of domination. The name of the farm changes, the language of power changes, but fear remains. Orwell shows that a society cannot become truly free if fear becomes the main method of government.

#### **5 Conclusion**

This article analyzed fear as a tool of control in George Orwell's Animal Farm. The study showed that fear appears in several forms: fear of Mr. Jones's return, fear of the dogs, fear of public punishment and fear of speaking openly. These forms make ordinary animals silent, obedient and unable to resist.

The analysis also showed that fear works both outside and inside the animals. Outside, it appears as force, threat and punishment. Inside, it appears as silence, confusion and loss of courage. Orwell presents fear as one of the main reasons why the dream of freedom fails.

The main conclusion is that control in Animal Farm does not depend only on leaders or propaganda. It also depends on fear. When fear becomes part of everyday life, truth becomes

weak and resistance becomes difficult. Orwell's novel remains important because it shows how power can destroy freedom while still speaking in the name of freedom.

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