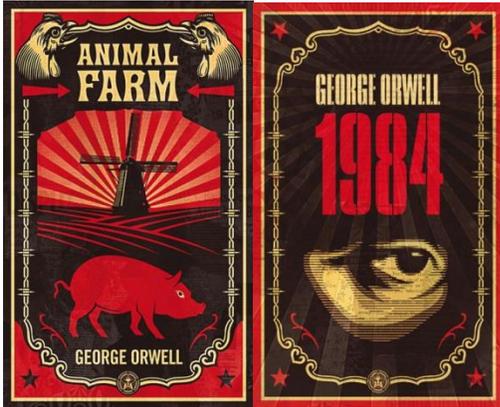


SPOTLIGHT



"Surely you remember THAT, comrades?"

The above quote comes from Squealer of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. He has just recounted an event involving their leader Napoleon and his details run markedly different than the way the other animals on the farm recall.

I found myself thinking about this a lot this weekend as Donald Trump's Press Secretary Sean Spicer tried to convince the masses that there were more people out for Trump's inauguration than any other in history. If memory wasn't enough to prove otherwise, scores of photos certainly did. It's a good thing that Squealer didn't have smartphones back on the farm.

Not that it would have mattered much. On Sunday, Trump advisor Kellyanne Conway doubled down, or should I say, double-thought Spicer's claims, defending his statements as "alternative facts." Doublethink, of course, is an Orwellian term from *1984* referring to the "power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them."

Across the internet people had a field day making fun of "alternative facts." (One of my favourites came from Courtney Love Cobain who tweeted, "I have perfect pitch and the general consensus is that my vocals sound like an opera trained singer Rene Fleming perhaps #alternativefact".)

It would all be hilarious if it wasn't so scary. Less than a month into his presidency and it's like George Orwell's over-the-top satires are coming true.

It would seem that I am not the only one drawing such connections. Just before sitting down to write this, I saw a headline that *1984* has hit bestsellers lists again, 68 years after it was originally published.

Are you trying to stay one step ahead of Trump's game? We have *1984* and *Animal Farm* available at the library and as eBooks through Overdrive.

John Mutford, Library Manager