

POLITICAL BOOKS THROUGH THE AGES

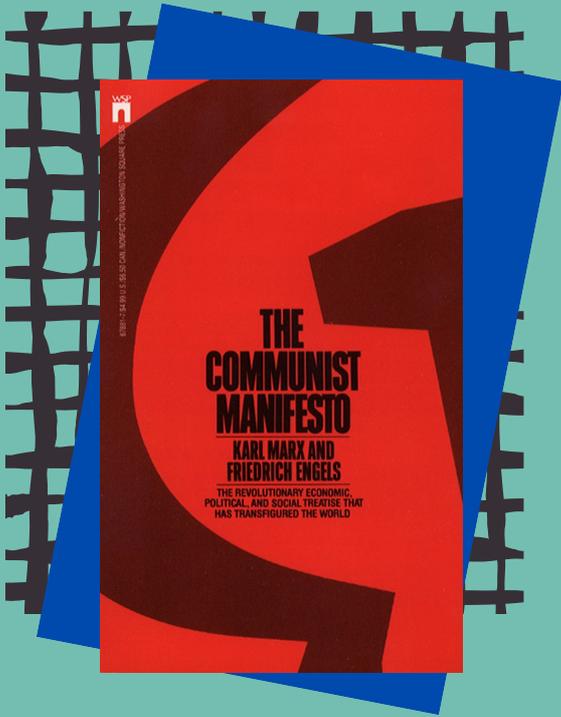


Politics has been a topic of debate through the ages, controversial enough that people often avoid conversing about it with friends, family members, and strangers. Yet despite the unspoken prohibition surrounding its discussion, politics continue to hold importance in our daily lives, our economy, and our way of living. We can read tweets making comments about the president's new projects; sometimes, we see posts on Facebook on their latest accomplishments. We can even see their action and decisions broadcasted live in our phones.

The entirety of politics may appear alike that of a game or a TV drama to many citizens, so divorced from affecting their lives, but most people don't know that politics is also an art and science of governance. In fact, politics itself shape governance when the law becomes too focused and idealistic in binding people.

If you don't understand the inner workings of politics, there's a higher chance for you to get influenced by wrong information, making you susceptible to supporting the tyranny against the minority. It can result in your loss of freedom and rights before you even know it.

Each year, many books about politics find their way into the market, but among all of them, only a few remain to be relevant even to today's society. If you're an aspiring political science student or wish to read about politics for fun, then Plato, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, Tocqueville, are only some of the political philosophers whose works will while your time away. As a treat, here are a few lists of books from our library you can check out to give you a better overview of the topic.



THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

BY KARL MARX

Initially published in 1848, Marx and Engels attempted to explain the goals of Communism and the theory behind its movement through his work, “The Communist Manifesto” (1848). The book has four sections that discuss the Communist’s theory of the history and relationship between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the relationship between Communists and proletarians, and the relationship between Communists and other parties.

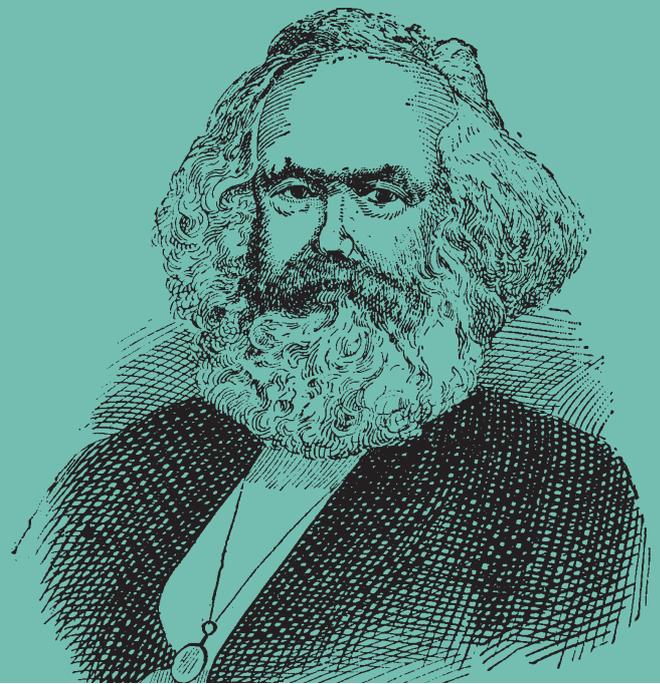
His work further argues the relationship and struggle of each class during the industrial and social change as they exploited one another, which then became the motivating force that drove society’s historical developments.

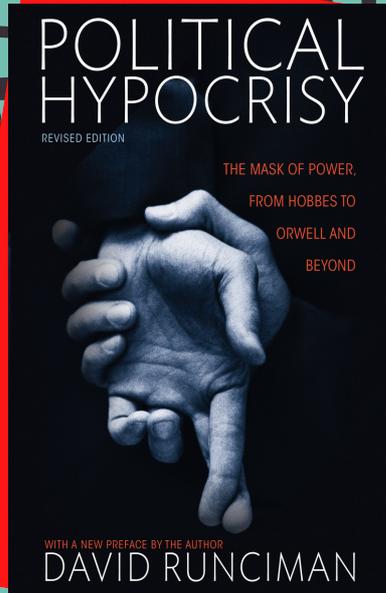
For Marx, modern industrial society is characterized by the class conflict between the bourgeoisie and proletariat. Thus, leading to the proletariat class revolutionizing. His manifesto even argues that capitalism is inherently unstable and that eliminating social classes is not possible through reforms or government changes—instead, a revolution is required.

Although not every reader agrees with the theory of Communism due to human nature, this book still offers the other perspective on Communism, which continues to explain the modern history, including the situation the world lives in today. It continues to equip his readers with the idea of class consciousness and revolutionaries that are useful even in the 21st-century.

“Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.”

— Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*





POLITICAL HYPOCRISY: THE MASK OF POWER, FROM HOBBS TO ORWELL AND BEYOND BY DAVID RUNCIMAN

"What kind of hypocrite should voters choose as their next leader?" A cynical question from Runciman's "Political Hypocrisy: The Mask of Power from Hobbes to Orwell and Beyond," but according to him, it is much more cynical to pretend that politics can ever be completely sincere. His work further argues that there is no such thing as an ideal authentic politician, which is

why we should instead distinguish between harmless and harmful hypocrisies.

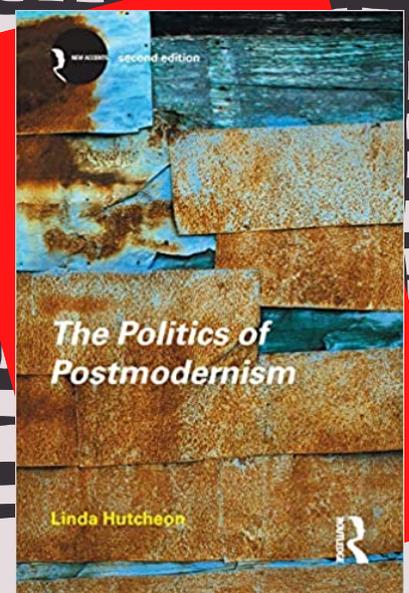
A book about hypocritical politicians at work in contemporary politics; Runciman provides a critical assessment of how past political thinkers tried to rescue politics from the most destructive forms of hypocrisy without making the issue worse by drawing lessons from thinkers like Hobbes, Mandeville, Jefferson, Bentham, Sidgwick, and Orwell. Written in a lively style, this book will change your perspective on political hypocrisy and how to answer some of the basic questions about politics.

"Deception, once it is not bounded by the conventions of the stage, can take many different forms."

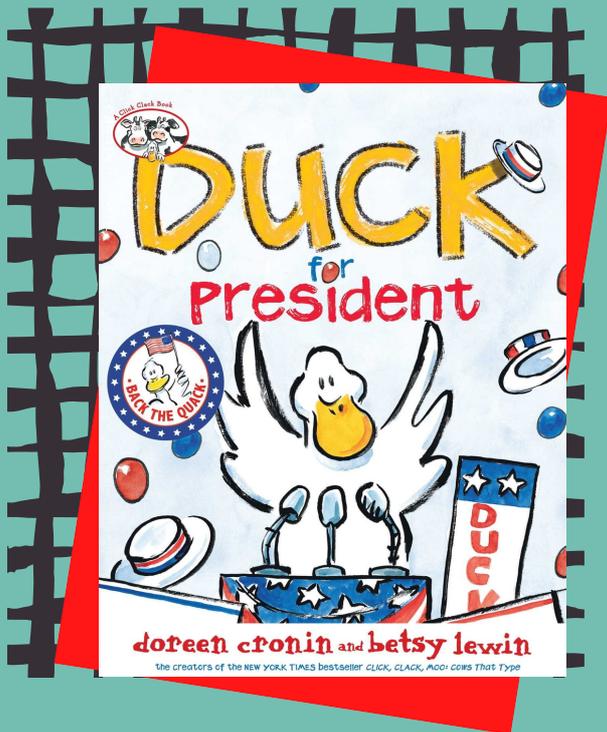
— David Runciman, *Political Hypocrisy*

THE POLITICS OF POSTMODERNISM BY LINDA HUTCHEON

Postmodernism can manifest itself in a vast field of cultural endeavors, from literature, architecture, music, and filmography, to photography. Working through the issue of representation, Linda Hutcheon discusses the political challenges that are dominant to the ideologies of the western world in her work, "The Politics of Postmodernism," which provides a clear and compelling introduction to postmodernism and why it matters.



But of course, we don't want to bore you with all the theories and history of politics, so we will also provide you with a few selected political fiction that may suit your preferences. For kids and young adults who wish to know more about the basic election process, the following light-hearted books will serve as an eye-opener for them.



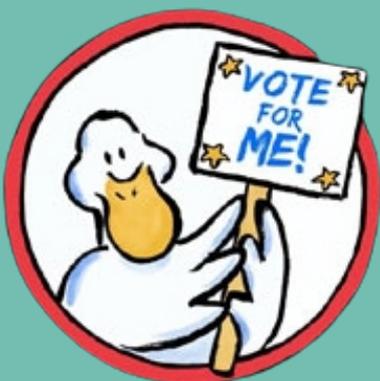
DUCK FOR PRESIDENT BY DOREEN CRONIN

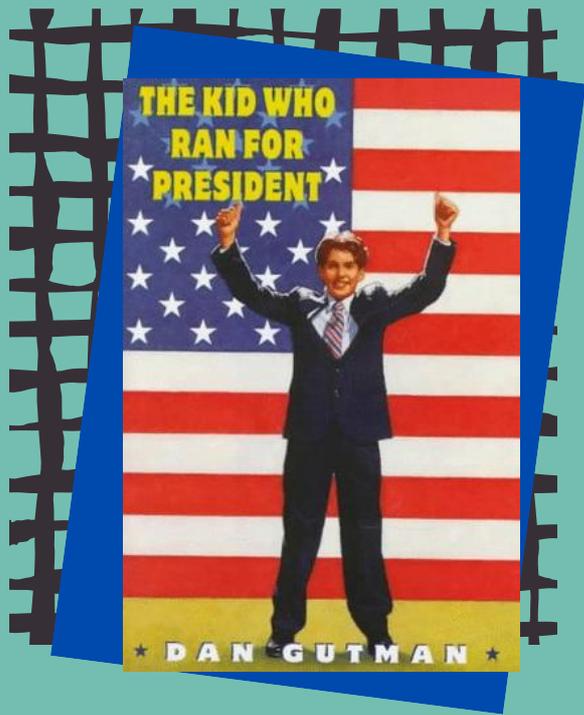
“Running a farm is very hard work.” At the end of each day, Duck gets covered by tiny bits of grass and espresso beans. Which made our web-footed wonder decide to seek greener pastures—hence, running and winning a seat in politics. However, our ambitious hero is not content with only becoming the governor. Now, he wants to become the president of the country!

“If he walks like a duck and talks like a duck, he will be the next president of the United States of America.”

A fun story about an ambitious duck who wants more than being just an ordinary farm animal that takes out the trash mows the lawn, and grinds coffee beans for his farmer, “Duck for President” by Cronin Doreen introduces the basic mechanics of the election process with her usual dash of humor and daftly sweetness.

“Running a country is no fun at all!”
—Doreen Cronin, *Duck for President*





THE KID WHO RAN FOR PRESIDENT

BY DAN GUTMAN

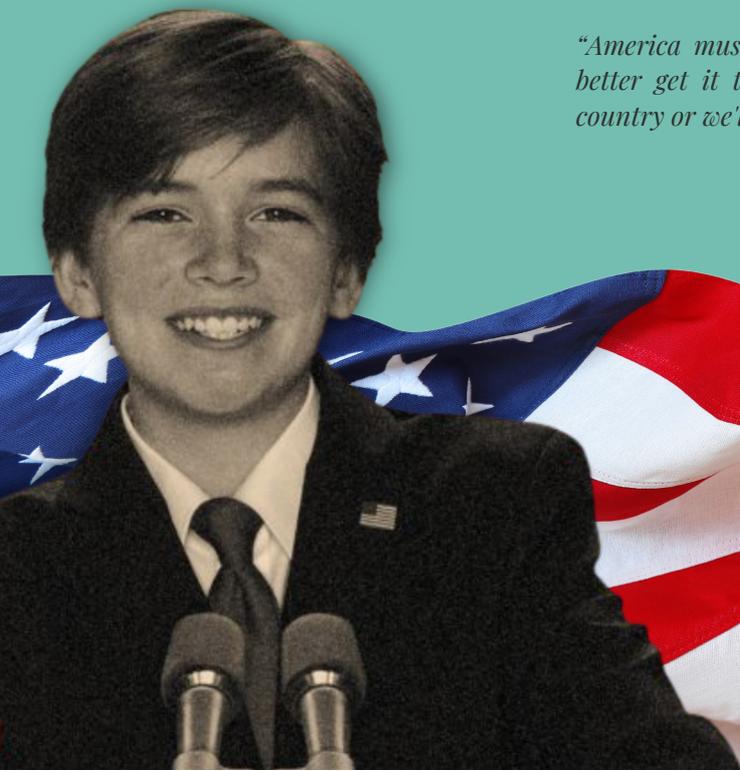
Judson Moon was just your average 12-year-old boy who charmed his way into campaigning as the next president of the “YOU-nited States.” With the urging of his best friend, Lane, what started as a joke to Judson became something more serious and real as he changed his image to be more palatable to the American public. He even promised to abolish homework, convinced the prettiest girl in school to become his first lady, and established the “Lemonade Party.”

It didn't take much for Judson to convince the entire population of America to let a kid run the country rather than a grown-up, even though the constitution states that a presidential candidate must be at least 35 years old. And so begin Judson's face-paced, funny, and surprising political adventure as a kid who ran for president.

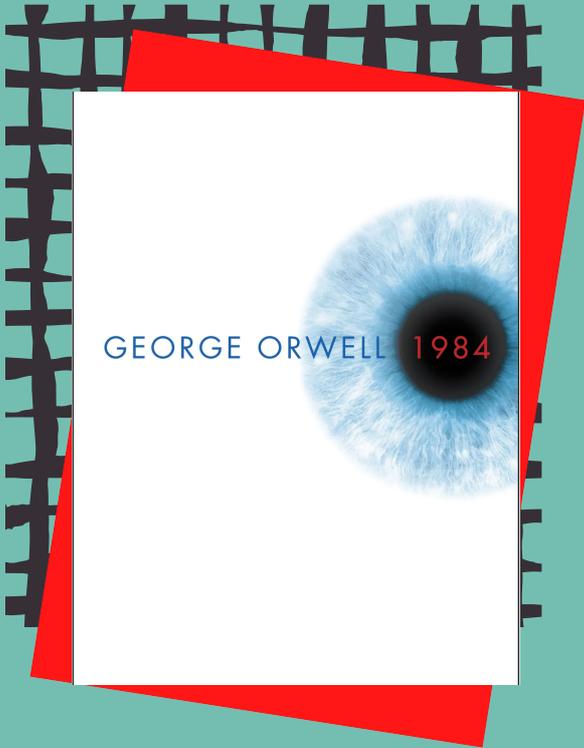
A satirical story written by Dan Gutman in 1996, which was compared to the 2016 US election as presented in a segment on Last Week Tonight by John Oliver, the book received positive reviews from the readers. It had a lot of interesting points that engage students in the US Presidential election process, filled with thoughtful conversation about friendship, honesty, and integrity. Overall, “The Kid Who Ran for President” is a must-read for every student and young adult reader.

“America must be in really bad shape if you elected me president. You better get it together and find some other qualified people to run this country or we'll all be in big trouble.”

— Dan Gutman, *The Kid Who Ran for President*



For adult readers who are fond of reading action-packed stories and psychological thrillers with a dash of politics and dystopia, here are a few foreign titles you might want to read during your free time.



1984 BY GEORGE ORWELL

Winston Smith has grown sick and frustrated by the oppression and rigid control of the Party. The constant monitoring, the disinformation, and the brainwashing activities the government does to the citizen—who in their right mind would believe “2+2=5”? But if the state says so, then it is, for there is no real truth in the world where Winston lives. The “truth” is what the state says, which is why Winston wants to rebel.

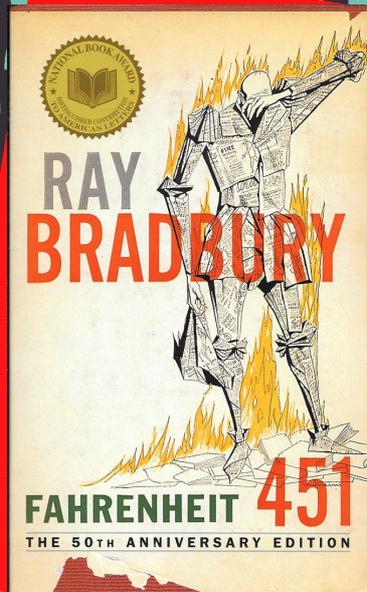
He wants to overthrow the Party and the omniscient leader known as “Big Brother.” But how will he do it if even thinking of rebellious thoughts is illegal? In fact, the worst of all crimes to be committed in 1984 London.

Orwell's “1984” follows a three-part linear narrative about Winston’s experience of dehumanization, love, and betrayal. Although the book was published in 1949, “1984” is one of the rare works that grows more haunting as its futuristic imagery of a dystopian world becomes more real to its readers. The story even explored the themes of mass media control, government surveillance, totalitarianism, and the manipulation and control of history, thoughts, and lives that no one can escape from. Hence, ranking as one of the most terrifying novels ever written.

“Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.”

— George Orwell, 1984





FAHRENHEIT 451 BY RAY BRADBURY

"If knowledge were burnt, then the people would be left in a complete state of utter innocent ignorance. There would be no room for free thought. That way, they could be told anything about history and themselves. If all books were burnt, they are just sheep to be led into a future dictated by the government. To make it worse, the men who do it enjoy it."

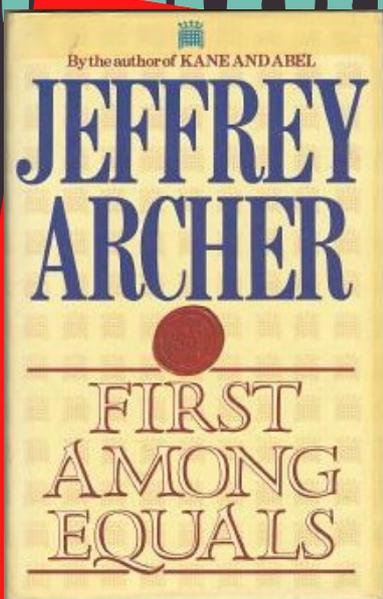
Guy Montag is a fireman, but his job is not to put out a fire. Instead, he fires and hunts readers mercilessly, burning and destroying books and the houses where they are hidden. He never questioned his actions, he never questioned the procedure, and he never questioned why books have become illegal. He simply does what every fireman does—burn books—until one day, he meets a young girl named Clarisse, who introduces him to a past where people didn't live in fear and a world filled with ideas from books. Since then, Montag grew conscious of his society's problems and began questioning everything he had known and believed in.



A story that highlights censorship, book banning, and ignorance, with a hint of a bleak and dystopian future, the message of Bradbury's "Fahrenheit 451" continues to be relevant to our lives in our modern world as technology and social media conquer our lives. Its stance against censorship and its defense of literature, free speech, and individualism is essential for humanity and society.

"There must be something in books, things we can't imagine, to make a woman stay in a burning house; there must be something there. You don't stay for nothing."

— Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451*



FIRST AMONG EQUALS BY JEFFREY ARCHER

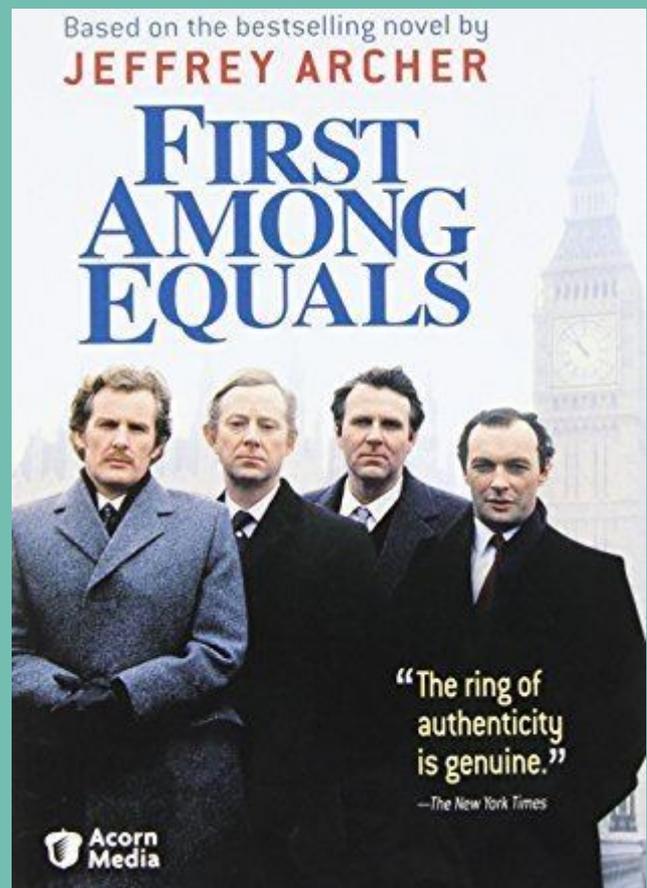
Charles Seymour will never be an earl like his father but will soon realize his destiny; Simon Kerslake's father sacrificed everything to fulfill his son's dreams; Ray Gould, who was born on the back streets, has the intellect and desire to achieve the impossible; while Andrew Fraser has the chance to do heroic deeds. Charles, Simon, Ray, and Andrew; these four men had one ambition—and this was to become the Prime Minister of Britain.

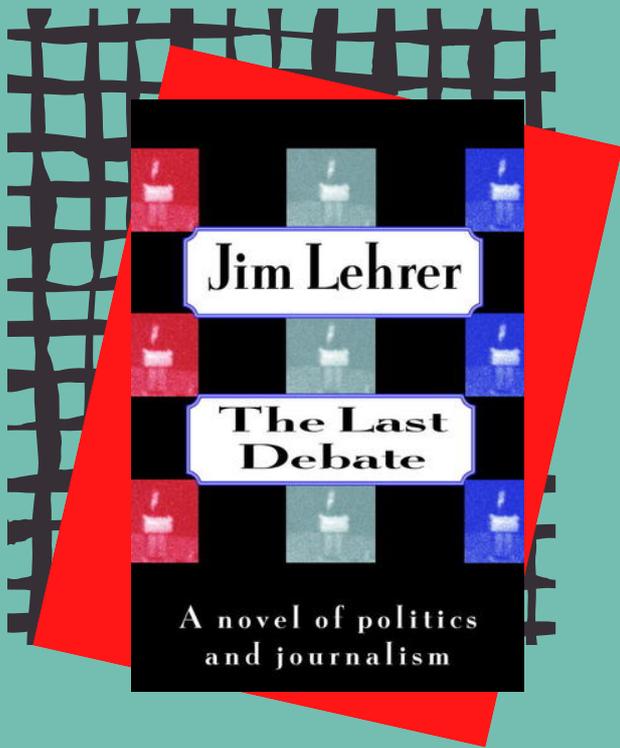
In the race to lead the country, these strangers will embark on a high-stake journey to acquire the keys to No. 10 Downing Street, testing their honor, loyalty, and love for their family and the country. However, only one can triumph in a game where there is a first among equals.

A story about four characters competing in British politics from 1964 to 1991, Jeffrey Archer's "First Among Equals" weaves the personal stories of each candidate as they struggle with the political challenges faced between them and their ultimate goal.

"This engrossing, well-spun tale of ambition and will-to-power is a pick-hit in the summer sweepstakes. Archer received his usual high marks for readability and gives his novel a pleasing sense of substance."

—Publishers Weekly





THE LAST DEBATE

BY JIM LEHRER

It is the night of the presidential debate, and Tom Chapman, a writer from the *New American Tatler*, will be covering the presidential campaign between James Merideth, a Republican candidate, and his opponent, a lackluster Democrat. Meredith was not only handsome but was also indeed a charismatic figure who left audiences spellbound by his speeches. But, he was also racist, nationalist, and a fundamentalist

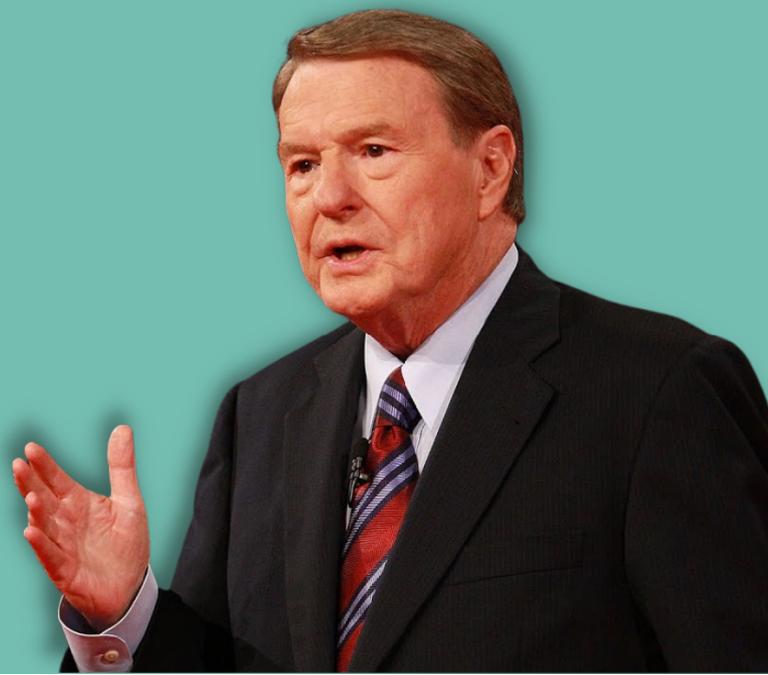
Christian demagogue whose ambitions border on white supremacy—sounds familiar?

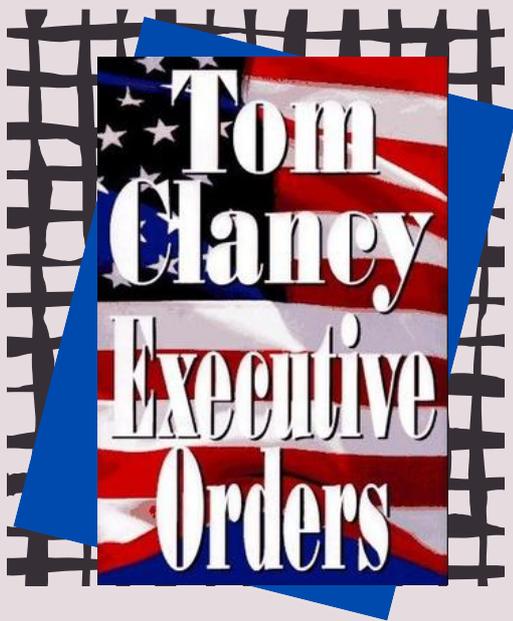
The election was eight days away, and four reporters who will panel the debate believed that Merideth would be a disaster for the country. As the Republican nominee pulled ahead in the polls, the reporters and the debate moderator conspired to ruin him by dispensing the debate with damning, unpublished information that would destroy the career of Merideth. The tale was told by the magazine reporter Thomas Chapman. But what unfolds during “The Last Debate” will change the course of electoral politics and the news business forever.

A sharp and absorbing satirical piece about presidential debates, Jim Lehrer, who has been a moderator of past American presidential debates, targets religious fundamentalists, political handlers, self-important journalists, and feral network programming heads with his work “The Last Debate,” exposing the duplicitous posing and posturing of made for TV political events.

“When it comes to writing political thrillers, Jim Lehrer may be the ultimate insider- outsider.”

— *The Washington Post*





EXECUTIVE ORDERS BY TOM CLANCY

The President is dead, a joint session of Congress destroyed, most of the Cabinet, Congress Supreme Court, and the Joint Chiefs are dead—what would Jack Ryan do now that the world has fallen on his shoulder? Dazed and confused, Jack, who only accepted the position of vice president for a year as a caretaker, had to become the president. How can he run a government with a government? Where would he even begin?

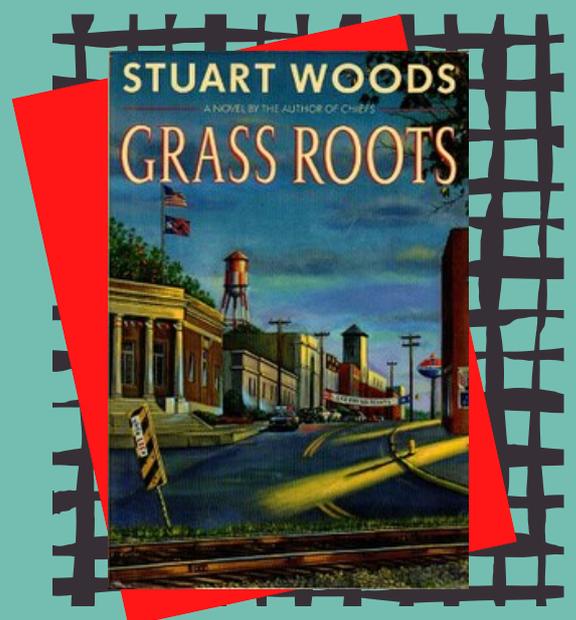
Not to mention, many eyes are now on him, mostly with an unfriendly approach. And with many countries taking advantage of his situation—some of whom bear a deep animosity towards the United States and the new president himself, will Jack Ryan be able to reconstitute his Cabinet and Congress at full speed and run the country successfully? Or will he fall victim to the hands of his perpetrator?

Filled with exceptional realism and intricate plotting and a blockbuster story written by the world's leading thriller writer, "Executive Orders" by Tom Clancy continue Jack Ryan's adventures from his spectacularly successful no. 1 bestseller "Debt of Honor."

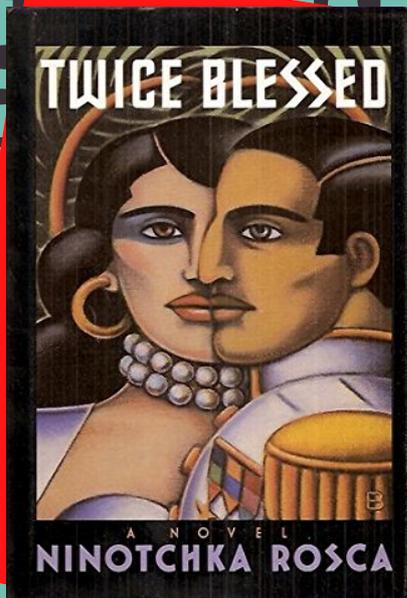
GRASS ROOTS: A NOVEL BY WOODS, STUART

After years of being the chief of staff for a respected senator in Georgia, Will Lee, a prominent lawyer, decided to run for the seat when a stroke crippled his mentor. But it won't be an easy path for Will. There will be ambitious democratic governors and far-right fundamentalists who will stand in his way during the general elections. To top it up, his senatorial campaign will be interrupted by a controversial race-murder trial, where he has to defend as a lawyer, while elsewhere, a dedicated ex-cop carries out gangland-style killings. Will Lee ever bring his political ambitions to reality?

A three compelling plotlines woven into a tautly drawn suspense political novel by Stuart Woods, "Grass Roots" continues the story of Will Lee and his family after the events of "Deep Lie" in Delano, Georgia.



And, of course, we're not ending our journey without tapping into our very own local stories. Below are a few Filipino-written political fictions and literature that comment on and criticize our political events, systems, and theories even way back in the Spanish Colonialism to the Martial Law Era.



TWICE BLESSED: A NOVEL BY NINOTCHKA ROSCA

Hector and Katerina, the Basabas Twins, were born to an impoverished branch of a warlord clan. To gain dominance and power over the aristocracy that despises them, they traded what they valued the most—their selves and each other, piece by piece—not knowing that the process was slowly transforming them into the same people they despised.

By the time Hector had become a presidential candidate, the twins had become the aristocracy: shrewd, ruthless, corrupt, and insane.

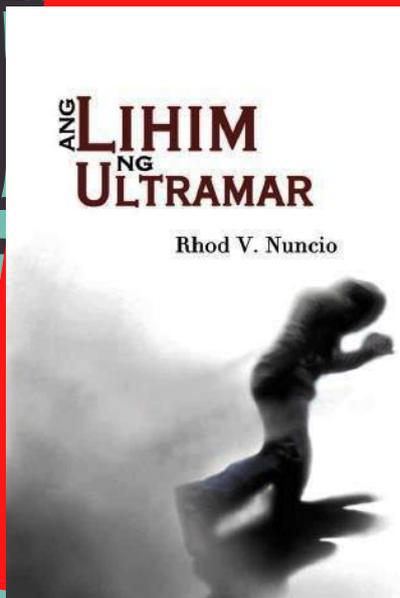
When the incumbent President refuses to accept Hector's election victory, the country falls into a political crisis as each warlord clan clashes with one another. Guns, Goons, and Gold—the triple currency of Philippine politics and the Sisyphean dance—that's all it takes to ensure victory over their enemy. But will the Twins win this battle? Or will they succumb to their downfall?

A devastating political satire by Ninotchka Rosca, "Twice Blessed: A Novel," portrays the story of the Basabas Twins as they maneuver through a labyrinthine of political intrigue and momentary alliances to gain dominance and power over the aristocracy. Entwined with the intimate story of Katerina's lost love.

"Kafkaesque brilliance, an intensity that makes this first novel a powerful piece of literature."

— Publishers Weekly





ANG LIHIM NG ULTRAMAR

BY RHOD NUNCIO

Who would have thought that a single letter would turn the life of an ordinary professor working at the de la Salle University to 180-degrees? No one was supposed to know about the mysterious death of a religious Brother, but Dr. Arvin Villa did. Now, he has become the late brother's successor after receiving the task from the previous Chancellor himself.

His task was simple—access the current President's masterlist and check whether or not he is to be assassinated. With the current President being accused and villainized of corruption, scandal, and immorality, including the assassination of his political rival during the Presidential election, he was forced to fire his Cabinet secretaries, slammed the entire AFP, and PNP, and shut down a TV station critical to his administration. Now, he's facing a great danger of a coup d'état—or worse, death.

Luckily, the former President signed a classified Presidential Decree under the National Security Act to form a covert security group to protect the current President and pursue those who attempted to assassinate him. Now, it is up to Dr. Arvin Villa, the PSG Chief, the former President, and a genius General, to investigate the military and civilian conspiracy to save the President from an impending coup and assassination. But how will they fulfill their mission if, one by one, they're killed; masked in the form of an accident?

Mixed with action, mystery, and a dash of romance, “Ang Lihim ng Ultramar” by Rhod Nuncio is a story worthy of the audience's praise.





ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FILIPINO SONOVABITCH: A POLITICAL NOVEL BY ROBERTO REYES

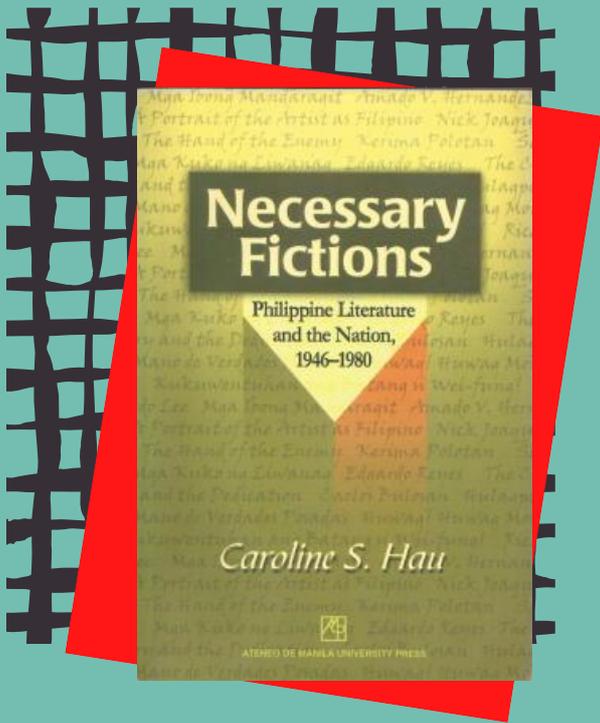
A transportation magnate in the Philippines, John Samora started his business with nothing but a brief friendship with Congressman Marcos. When Marcos was elected president, John Samora became one of the most fortunate people in the country. Not only did he become a golfing crony of the President, but he was also part of the “crony capitalism.” In less than a decade, Samora built a corporate conglomerate in the country.

A fictional story about a typical businessman who started with good intentions, Roberto Reyes’ “One Day in the Life of a Filipino Sonovabitch” carries numerous bitter jokes about the martial law period in the Philippines during the reign of the late President Ferdinand Marcos. Read through his work and experience the private life of John Samora as he becomes drunk with the power and money he obtains from being one of the cronies of the president.

What better way was there to do this than to “borrow” one of the great writer’s titles, create a pun out of it and use the pun as the title of my first novel?

— Roberto Reyes, One Day in the Life of a Filipino Sonovabitch





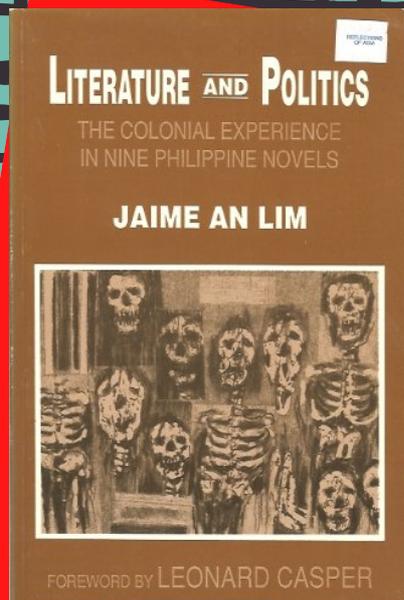
NECESSARY FICTIONS: PHILIPPINE LITERATURE AND THE NATION, 1946-1980 BY CAROLINE HAU

“Necessary Fictions” by Caroline Hau examines the connection between Philippine literature and nationalist discourse during the postwar period of the country through close readings made by some of the most well-known Filipino writers and national artists from Dr. Jose Rizal, Amado Hernandez, Nick Joaquin, Edgardo Reyes, Ricardo Lee, and Kerima Polotan, Carlos Bulosan, to Mano de Verdades Posadas.

The book tackles the possibility and the necessity of social changes, answering the relationship between one’s knowledge and action, including one’s personal and political views. The book also provides a brief overview and comparison of the country’s culture and history, culture and politics, and culture and economics, increasing the citizen’s understanding of the fundamental assumptions of nationalist discourse and practice.

In addition, Caroline's work registers the contradiction that exceeds nationalist attempts to intervene in the complex realities of the Philippine society, whether it may be intellectually or politically.





LITERATURE AND POLITICS: THE COLONIAL EXPERIENCE IN NINE PHILIPPINE NOVELS BY JAIME AN LIM

Literature and politics are nothing new in the Philippines. In fact, many literary works showcase the culture, history, and politics of the Filipino society since the Spanish period with Dr. Jose Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere" (1887), Linda Ty-Casper's "The Three-Cornered Sun" (1979), and F. Sionil Jose's "Po-on" (1984). All were written in the late 19th century to expose the social cancer afflicting the nation.

The book also discusses the interracial encounters and relationships portrayed by the colonizer and the colonized in the American Period and its political generalizations, which affects the rhetorical effectiveness and artistic integrity of the country's literature through Maximo Kalaw's "The Filipino Rebel" (1930), Juan C. Laya's "His Native Soil" (1941), and Bienvenido Santos's "The Man Who (Thought He) Looked Like Robert Taylor" (1983). Literary works made by Stevan Javellana's "Without Seeing the Dawn" (1947), Ediberto K. Tiempo's "More than Conquerors" (1964), and Wilfrido Nolledo's "But for the Lovers" (1970) were also examined to reflect on the literature made during the Japanese Occupation in the Philippines.

Jaime An Lim's work isolates the overwhelming socio-political condition that characterized Philippine society and history during its last 400 years of colonialism. Therefore, examining the experiences perceived, interpreted, and developed by the nine selected Filipino novelists and their work. A comprehensive review and evaluation of their political agendas, literary strategies, and achievements.

