

# The New Criterion

## Letters

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### Revisiting "Catalonia" again

by [Keith Windschuttle](#)

A letter from Keith Windschuttle.

To the Editors:

George Orwell was a great writer and a good man but he was not perfect. Anthony Daniels's re-reading of *Homage to Catalonia* [*The New Criterion*, February 2007] performs a public service by showing that, although he was one of the first English socialists to denounce the tyranny of the Soviet Union, Orwell's romanticism about the Spanish working class nonetheless harbored a reverence for totalitarianism of its own. There are other aspects of Orwell's political writings that also deserve to be better known.

When I taught journalism in the late 1970s, I used to cite *Down and Out in Paris and London* and *The Road to Wigan Pier* as classic examples of the participant-observer genre. I thought they were strictly autobiographical accounts of events Orwell had witnessed and experiences he had lived through. I also thought that, being authored by Orwell, their facts would be scrupulous. ...

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