

1984

Study Guide by Course Hero



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👁 Book Basics

AUTHOR

George Orwell

YEAR PUBLISHED

1949

GENRE

Dystopian

PERSPECTIVE AND NARRATOR

1984 is told in the third-person limited point of view through the perspective of Winston Smith.

TENSE

Orwell's novel 1984 is told primarily in the past tense.

ABOUT THE TITLE

Orwell planned to call his novel *The Last Man in Europe*, but the publisher wanted a title symbolizing the future. Orwell chose *1984*, possibly reversing the last two digits of 1948, the year he wrote the book.

🕒 In Context

Europe and the Soviet Union before 1949

1984 was published in 1949, not long after Joseph Stalin's Great Purge of the 1930s, the Spanish Civil War (1936–39), and World War II (1939–45).

Stalin was the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1929 until his death in 1953. Under Stalin's brand of communism, the state seized all private property and made it communal. However, this seizure didn't give ownership of production to the working class, as Karl Marx's brand of socialism required. Stalin became a dictator, creating a totalitarian government that eliminated all opposition to his rule. He conducted a series of trials throughout the late 1930s, using secret police and torture tactics to get false confessions from his enemies. Similar to the idea of vaporization in Orwell's novel, where people vanished and public records of their existence were destroyed, the Great Purge made millions of people disappear, whether they were sent to prison camps or executed.

Stalin also played a role in the Spanish Civil War, funding the socialist Republican government in its battle against fascist Nationalists, who fought for militaristic, elite rule over the country. However, Stalin's paranoia and need for total power led him to accuse many of his allies on the Republican side of

treason, supporting the Nationalists. The resulting infighting on the Republican side created an even more horrific period of bloodshed and fear of retribution during the war. Orwell, who fought as a socialist in the Spanish Civil War and yet was targeted by Stalin's supporters, had firsthand experience with allies turning into enemies.

World War II was another example of the destructive power of a totalitarian regime. People whom Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party considered undesirables (including millions of Jews, gay people, and Roma) were put in concentration camps and killed. The expansionist Axis powers (primarily Germany, Italy, and Japan) fought against the Allies (primarily England, the United States, and Russia). Although the Allies ultimately won, destruction and suffering in Europe were extensive. History has forgotten the names of many of these victims of the Holocaust. They became and were actually called *nonpersons*. In many cases their histories were erased—a concept that Orwell used almost verbatim in *1984*, calling people vaporized by the Party *unpersons*. The leaders of the Nazi Party, similar to the the Inner Party, used operatives loyal to their cause, similar to members of the Outer Party, to destroy evidence and identities. The erasure of entire groups of people creates a present that is not responsible for the actions of the past. The late 1940s and 1950s saw international attention paid to uncovering facts the Nazis tried to hide, but Orwell's story is a reminder to readers of the dangers of a regime that refuses to take responsibility for its actions.

Orwell as a Supporter of Socialism

Orwell's determination to create better living conditions for the working poor, who are the proles in the novel, led him to support socialism in the 1930s. He was deeply disappointed with the infighting between socialists and Stalin's communist supporters. Stalin used the related political system of communism to impose a totalitarian regime on the people of the Soviet Union, targeting people like Orwell for elimination. Orwell stayed an anti-Stalinist right up to and during the writing of *1984*, and some commentators have said he also continued to believe that a form of socialism called ethical socialism, the moral obligation to provide the benefits of production to all, offered a fairer society than capitalism. Others have said that the novel was written as a dystopian critique of all socialism.

After all, the political system in the novel is named Ingsoc (short for English socialism, in which England's social services, such as health care, are run by the government).

However, Orwell wrote a letter in 1949 stating that the novel was to be read as a warning of what could happen and already had been partially realized under communism and fascism. He explained that he named the political system Ingsoc because he saw England as just as vulnerable to a totalitarian regime as any other country. Hence, he wrote *1984* as an antitotalitarian novel: a cautionary tale but not an antisocialist one. He described himself as a democratic socialist, supporting government-provided social services and benefits under a democracy, until his death of tuberculosis in 1950.

Critical Reception

Seen as a cautionary tale, *1984* made an immediate impression on its early readers. Considered a novel of political prophesy, with the rise of technology and an increasingly divided and partisan media, *1984* is as relevant in the 21st century, albeit in new ways, as it was when it was published. Several words from *1984* have entered common usage throughout the English-speaking world: *Big Brother*, *Newspeak*, *thought police*, and *doublethink* among them. The adjective *Orwellian*, based on the novel, has come to characterize a dystopian, totalitarian future.

Author Biography

Eric Arthur Blair (George Orwell) was born on June 25, 1903, in India, where his father worked for Britain's Civil Service. Within a year his mother returned with the children to England, where they were raised.

Blair started boarding school in 1911. There, as a scholarship student, he first encountered class distinctions. Not popular with the other students, he took refuge in books and won another scholarship—this time to Eton. He couldn't afford to attend university after graduation, so he went to Burma (now Myanmar) to work for the Indian Imperial Police. He returned to England in 1927. He would call on these experiences in the creation of *1984*.

Blair adopted the pseudonym George Orwell when he published a memoir called *Down and Out in Paris and London*

(1933). The living conditions and situations he describes in the book are dismal and were based on his own experiences as a writer struggling to make a living. Orwell did not want anyone to connect those conditions to him or his family by using his real name.

Orwell embraced socialism and decided he would do more than just write about the plight of the working class. He traveled to Spain to join the Workers' Party of Marxist Unification and fought in the Spanish Civil War (1936–39). The war began as a conflict between Nationalist rebels and the socialist Republican government. The Nationalists were backed by the fascists and the Nazis, while the Republican government, for which Orwell fought, was supported by many European countries, the United States, and the Soviet Union. Orwell was wounded by a fascist sniper and decided to leave Spain. This wasn't easy to do, however, because the communist forces in Spain, backed by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, had declared Orwell and his comrades traitors to the antifascist cause. Orwell and his wife had to plot their escape to London in secret. This experience, too, informed the creation of *1984*.

During World War II, Orwell worked for the British Broadcasting Corporation, where he produced propaganda supporting Britain. He didn't like disseminating propaganda, and that may have influenced his depiction of his protagonist's work for the Ministry of Truth in *1984*.

In 1945 Orwell published the allegorical novella *Animal Farm*, in which pigs, representing leaders of the Russian Revolution, fight over philosophical differences. In 1949 critical acclaim of *1984* brought Orwell prosperity for the first time in his life. He died in London seven months later, on January 21, 1950.

Characters

Winston Smith

Winston Smith is a 39-year-old member of the Outer Party who remembers, as a child, living in London in the days before the Revolution. Winston works at the Ministry of Truth, where his job is to rewrite history to align with whatever the totalitarian regime of the Party declares to be truth at the moment. His longing for truth and decency causes him to hate the Party. As

the novel opens, he is secretly rebelling by writing in a diary, an action considered thoughtcrime by the Party. As the novel progresses, Winston actively rebels by engaging in a sexual relationship with Julia, whom he's come to love. There is a Newspeak word for actions like this: ownlife—individualism and eccentricity—and it's heresy to the Party. Eventually Winston takes steps to join the counterrevolutionary movement known as the Brotherhood. Winston believes that eventually his rebellion will be discovered and he will be vaporized. Yet he feels that, no matter how inevitable is his own eventual death, he must stay conscious, free if only in his thoughts, and faithful to the evidence of his eyes, ears, and memories.

Big Brother

As the mustachioed figurehead of the Party and supreme leader, Big Brother rules Oceania. Everyone is expected not just to follow him but to love him. His face is everywhere, including on posters, coins, and the ever-present telescreen. It is possible that Big Brother is only a symbol of totalitarian rule and not an actual person. As such, as long as the Party maintains control, Big Brother will never die.

O'Brien

O'Brien is a prominent member of the Inner Party whom Winston instinctively admires and feels drawn to. Winston is convinced that O'Brien, like him, secretly hates the Party and that he's just better than Winston at concealing his antipathy.

Julia

Julia is first introduced as "the dark-haired girl" who works in the Fiction Department of the Ministry of Truth. Being only 26, Julia has no memories of anything prior to the 1960s. As a young girl she was a member of Spies, the Youth League, and the Junior Anti-Sex League. She still wears the garb of the Anti-Sex League, but it's a ruse. She only makes a pretense of being a good Party member. The real Julia is something quite different. She despises the Party but hides her contempt with the pretense of membership in various pro-Party organizations. Julia's rule-breaking activities are cautious. She enjoys what pleasures she can without being caught, and she feels that staging any overt rebellion would be stupid. She is

opportunistic and proactive, and, having found a meadow away from telescreens and other forms of surveillance, she has enjoyed several sexual partners. She is not interested in politics and is untroubled by the Party's lies. Julia lives in the now and does not worry about the future.

Emmanuel Goldstein

Emmanuel Goldstein was an early leader of Big Brother's Revolution, but he broke off from the Party when he felt that it had betrayed its idealistic goals. It is Goldstein who is said to have written "the book," *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*, the opposition's treatise explaining how the Party maintains control over the People. Called "The Enemy of the People," it is Goldstein's face that the Party uses to convince the citizenry that there is a violent revolutionary group opposing Big Brother. The Party uses his face and supposed activities to build fear and revulsion against an imagined enemy. Because the Party consistently lies to the people, it is even possible that Goldstein doesn't and never did exist.

Mr. Charrington

Mr. Charrington appears to be a frail man of about 60, the owner of an antique shop in the prole (or working class) neighborhood of London. He is friendly, soft-spoken, and unassuming, and Winston seems to like him as soon as they meet. Like Winston he takes an interest in useless items that have a simple beauty about them. He keeps a room above his shop—where he had lived with his wife before she died—as it would have looked before the Revolution. His clothes are simple, his hair is white, and he wears spectacles and speaks in a cockney accent. But he has an air of intellect, as of a better-educated member of the English working class. There is more to Mr. Charrington than Winston notices at first.

Character Map



- Main Character
- Other Major Character
- Minor Character

Full Character List

Character	Description
Winston Smith	Winston Smith is the protagonist through whose eyes the story is told. Winston belongs to the Outer Party, yet he hates all it stands for and secretly rebels.
Big Brother	Big Brother is the mustachioed embodiment of the Party who rules Oceania and who is likely only a symbol for totalitarian rule rather than a real person.
O'Brien	O'Brien is a member of the Inner Party whom Winston instinctively follows as a man who seems to share his hatred for the Party.
Julia	Julia is a young woman and fellow hater of Big Brother with whom Winston builds a romantic relationship.
Emmanuel Goldstein	Emmanuel Goldstein is a former leader of the Party who now leads the Brotherhood, the counterrevolutionary group against the Party that may or may not actually exist.
Mr. Charrington	Mr. Charrington appears to be a member of the proles (or working class) who owns an antique shop in London and from whom Winston rents a room for secret rendezvous with Julia.
Katharine	Katharine is Winston's wife, though they no longer see each other. She is so repulsed by Winston that they are unable to conceive a child. Since divorce is illegal, Katharine simply leaves Winston.
Thought Police	The Thought Police is a Party branch that uses telescreens and other surveillance to report thoughtcrimes.
Mr. Parsons	Mr. Parsons is the ideal Outer Party member. He is Winston's neighbor at Victory Mansions and a lower-level coworker at the Ministry of Truth.

Mrs. Parsons	Mrs. Parsons is married to Mr. Parsons and is an overworked homemaker. She is raising two children whom she worries are spies likely to turn either parent into the Thought Police.
Syme	Syme is a creative, intelligent, yet orthodox member of the Outer Party. He is a colleague of Winston's at the Ministry of Truth who is helping to write the 11th edition of the Newspeak dictionary.
The Singing Prole Woman	The singing prole woman beneath Winston's rented room symbolizes the freedom of the proles and the only hope for all of society to regain its freedom.

Plot Summary

1984 is set in a possible future in which the world has been ravaged by war and hungry and fearful citizens must pledge allegiance to a paranoid regime that keeps them ignorant through misinformation. Winston Smith, the main character of the novel, lives in London—though England is now called Airstrip One. Airstrip One is part of a large superstate called Oceania, which comprises all of Britain, Iceland, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as the Americas and southern Africa.

Book 1

In Oceania a force called Big Brother watches and spies on people through telescreens, which are like TVs that transmit both ways. It does double duty, spying on citizens and transmitting pro-Party propaganda, instructions, calisthenics, pro-Big Brother music, and more. The city is plastered with Party slogans such as WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, and IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH. This is doublethink, a concept that rules Oceania. Doublethink is the ability to hold two opposing beliefs at the same time and accept both of them. But doublethink concepts cancel each other out and, therefore, make no sense.

The Ministry of Truth, where Winston works, is in charge of rewriting history to align with what the Party decides is truth at the moment. The Ministry of Love is in charge of law, order, and torture; the Ministry of Plenty is in charge of economic

affairs and the perpetuation of artificial scarcity; and the Ministry of Peace is in charge of perpetual war.

Winston writes in his diary about his hatred for the Party. As he writes—itself a crime punishable by death—he remembers two people he noticed that morning at work. The first is a coworker named O'Brien. O'Brien appears to be an orthodox Party member, but Winston decides that he is really a rebel. The other is a young woman known at first only as "a dark-haired girl."

At work one day, Winston discusses editing the Newspeak dictionary with Syme, a coworker. Syme's job is to eliminate words from Oldspeak (Standard English) and come up with a language with very few words. Newspeak deprives people of the ability to express themselves in any nuanced way or have individual ideas.

Winston visits Mr. Charrington, the unassuming cockney owner of an antique shop. Mr. Charrington shows him an upstairs room that appears to be without a telescreen. Winston imagines renting it as a refuge, and, as he leaves the shop, he sees the dark-haired girl again.

Book 2

The dark-haired girl, Julia, surreptitiously drops a note into Winston's hand that says, "I love you." Winston and Julia begin to meet away from telescreens and microphones. They meet often in the midst of loud, angry, crowds thick enough that they can touch hands without being noticed. Once they make love in the belfry of a church. Eventually Winston rents the room above the antique shop, and they meet more frequently.

Winston takes notice of an elderly woman whom he sees often doing laundry and singing. He thinks she is happy and free. Like other proles (or working-class people), she is "off the radar" of the Party. Many proles don't even have telescreens in their houses. Winston realizes that the Party will only be overthrown if the proles come to understand their power and rise up.

One day at work, O'Brien invites Winston to his posh apartment. Julia goes along, and they tell O'Brien they want to join the Brotherhood, the group believed to be fighting the Party. O'Brien asks them a series of grisly questions to determine what they are willing to do for the cause. Julia's only

condition is that she is unwilling to be separated from Winston. O'Brien accepts them and makes plans to get Winston a copy of the manifesto (nicknamed "the book"), or mission statement, of the counterrevolutionary leader Emmanuel Goldstein.

Later Winston reads aloud to Julia from "the book" in the room above the antique shop. When a voice comes from behind a picture on the wall, they realize there is a telescreen in the room and that they have been discovered. Thought Police come into the room along with Mr. Charrington, who is revealed to be an orthodox Party member.

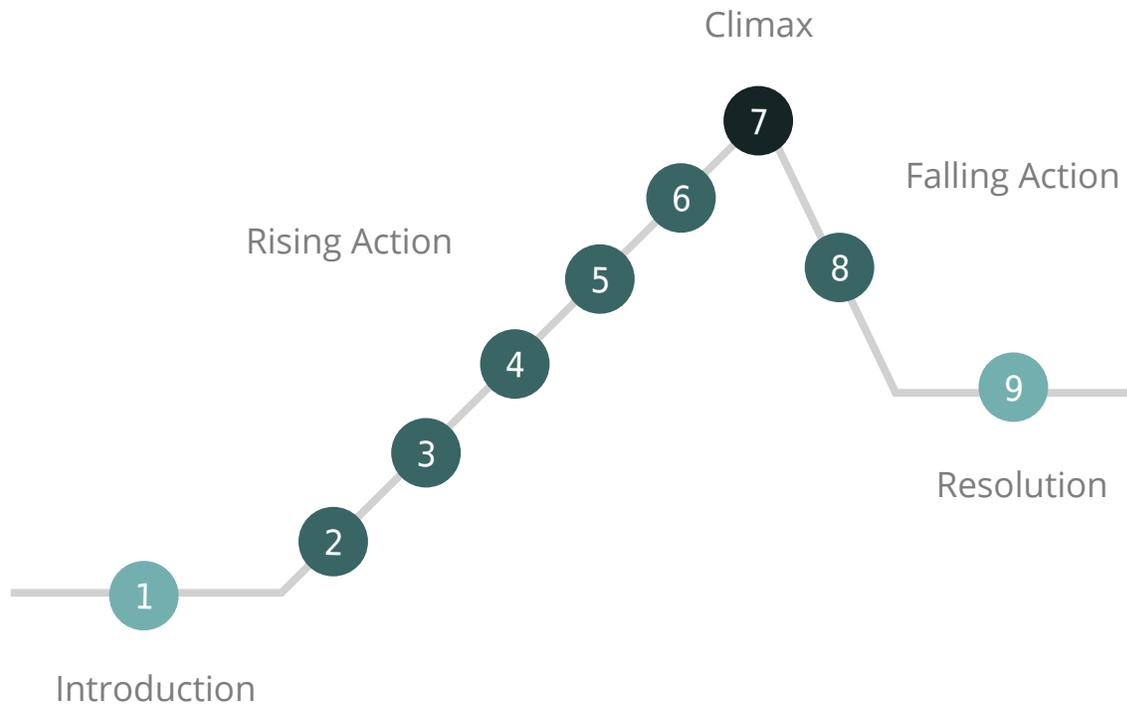
Book 3

Winston and Julia have been separated and presumably taken to different prisons. Winston is being held prisoner with other suspected dissidents. One man piteously begs to be taken anywhere but Room 101. Eventually O'Brien enters and reveals that he is also a true member of the Party. A guard takes Winston to a private cell, where he is tortured and admits to things he's never done. O'Brien alternately dials the pain level up and down, but Winston holds onto what he knows to be true and does not betray Julia. Although he eventually agrees to believe whatever O'Brien says, one night he calls out Julia's name, showing his humanity is still intact.

Winston is eventually taken to Room 101, the place where prisoners are forced to face their worst nightmares. O'Brien shows Winston a cage with rats in it and tells him that the hungry rats will eat his face if they're let free. Winston, who has a phobia of rats so severe that it makes him faint, is defeated and calls out, "Do it to Julia!" before losing consciousness.

Winston is released, and, in the next scene, he is at his favorite café. He has gained weight, has a better job at the Ministry, and has enough money to drink all the gin he wants. In fact, he lives for gin, doesn't care about truth or untruth, and accepts doublethink. He sees Julia on the street one day, and they each admit that they betrayed the other. They talk briefly, but they don't seem to connect. In the dust of the table, Winston draws $2 + 2 = 5$ and then looks at a poster of Big Brother and asks himself why he ever rebelled against that loving face.

Plot Diagram



Introduction

1. Winston lives in a London controlled by Big Brother.

Rising Action

2. Julia tells Winston she loves him. They have sex in a field.
3. They make love often in a room above Mr. Charrington's shop.
4. O'Brien invites Winston to his flat to loan him a book.
5. At O'Brien's flat, Winston and Julia join the Brotherhood.
6. Mr. Charrington arrests Winston and Julia.

Climax

7. O'Brien tortures Winston in the Ministry of Love.

Falling Action

8. Winston and Julia meet in London without feelings.

Resolution

9. Winston doesn't care about truth and loves Big Brother.

Timeline of Events

An hour later

Winston remembers O'Brien, an Inner Party member, and a dark-haired girl he both wants and hates.

A few days later

The dark-haired girl slips him a note at work that says, "I love you"; he decides to meet her.

June 1984

Winston rents the room above Mr. Charrington's shop and meets Julia there several times.

About a week later

The Thought Police arrest Julia and Winston after he reads Emmanuel Goldstein's book.

Weeks later

13:00, April 4, 1984

Winston Smith begins the rebellious act of writing in a diary purchased from an antique shop.

The next evening

In the prole quarter, Winston buys a paperweight from Mr. Charrington at the antique store.

May 2, 1984

The girl and Winston make love in a meadow away from surveillance. He learns her name is Julia.

End of June 1984

Julia and Winston go to O'Brien's luxury flat; they are questioned and both join the Brotherhood.

Several hours later

Winston is imprisoned in the Ministry of Love, beaten for days, and then tortured in Room 101.

Released, Winston meets Julia but doesn't care because his will is gone and he loves Big Brother.

Chapter Summaries

Book 1, Chapter 1

Summary

The story begins in London in 1984. Posters of an imposing male face with a mustache, captioned with the phrase "Big Brother Is Watching You," are everywhere. England is now called Airstrip One and is part of the wider community of nations called Oceania.

The Ministry of Truth, where main character Winston Smith works, is in charge of "news, entertainment, education, and the fine arts." The Ministry's true function is revealed in subsequent chapters. The author hints at it with Party slogans displayed on the side of the building: WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, and IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH. The other three divisions of government are the Ministry of Peace, in charge of war; the Ministry of Love, in charge of law and order; and the Ministry of Plenty, in charge of the economy.

On his lunch break, Winston returns to his meager flat, in an apartment building where the electricity is often cut, the elevator doesn't work, and everything smells of cabbage. The building is named Victory Mansions. The main feature of Winston's flat is a telescreen—a device like a TV, except it can be dimmed but not turned off and it transmits both ways. As long as he is within its field of vision, every sound is heard, every movement seen; everything he says and does can be scrutinized. Winston moves to an alcove out of range of the telescreen and writes: April 4th, 1984. A monologue that has been running through his head pours onto the page.

That morning at work, Winston had noticed two people during a daily ritual called Two Minutes Hate. One was a dark-haired woman whom Winston instinctively disliked. The other was O'Brien, an important member of the Inner Party. Each day the focus of Hate varies. That morning it had been Emmanuel Goldstein, an early betrayer of the Party, referred to as the "Enemy of the People." Goldstein was shown on-screen abusing Big Brother, shouting that the Party's original goals had been betrayed, and advocating freedom of speech, the press, assembly, and thought. The crowd became increasingly

fearful and vindictive as the program went on. When the program ended, Winston caught O'Brien's eye and sensed that O'Brien concurred with his contempt for the Party. Winston reflects on that momentary glance exchanged with O'Brien and writes, "DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER." It is thoughtcrime. He will be vaporized. As he puts down his pen, someone knocks at the door.

Analysis

The novel opens with descriptions of Winston Smith's home and workplace that reveal the kind of society London has become in 1984. The people are under the control of the Party, with absolutely no privacy or room for individuality. Winston's decision to write in a diary is, on its own, a dangerous act, revealed by the fact that he has to do it out of sight of the telescreen. The words that he writes are even more dangerous, and his diary entries show the reader where he stands regarding the Party right away: Winston is a rebel.

The descriptions of the Ministries, the Party slogans, and Winston's workplace introduce the idea that in this society people are expected to be able to swallow the lies the Party feeds them. They are also encouraged to fear enemies, real or imagined, because fear generates hatred and hatred keeps people under the Party's control. By linking the Two Minutes Hate with fear, Orwell is cautioning the reader about the effect of generating fear. Whatever the original focus of the fear—real, such as the threat of an attack, or false, such as fear of a religion or race—once it manifests, fear becomes a permanent state and leads to hatred.

Book 1, Chapter 2

Summary

It is Mrs. Parsons at the door, not the ever-vigilant Thought Police. The building is dingy and falling apart; she asks Winston to fix her plumbing. As Winston works the Parsons children menace Winston, shouting that he is a traitor and brandishing a toy gun.

Winston reflects that children are horrible. Many denounce their own parents to the Thought Police. He remembers a dream he had years ago in which O'Brien said, "We shall meet

in the place where there is no darkness," and the memory causes him to feel a connection—good or bad, he doesn't know.

A newsflash announces a success against the Eurasian army and, as the patriotic song "Oceania, 'Tis for Thee" resounds from the telescreen, bombs explode in the distance. As Winston listens a flapping poster in the street causes the word *Ingsoc* (English socialism) to alternately appear and vanish. Returning to his diary, Winston wonders for whom he is writing, the past or future. He knows he will die for his rebellion (writing *is* rebellion), so to stay alive as long as he can, he washes the ink off his hands.

Analysis

While Winston remembers a time when London was a very different place, the Parsons children have no memory of a time when originality of thought or the questioning of authority was tolerated. Orwell seems to be saying that, whenever control instead of creativity is encouraged, blind obedience follows.

When Winston writes, "Thoughtcrime does not entail death: thoughtcrime IS death," he knows he'll be vaporized. Winston realizes that the Party controls reality. He seeks to control his own reality by recording his thoughts.

Book 1, Chapter 3

Summary

As Chapter 3 begins, Winston is dreaming of his mother, who disappeared with his younger sister in the 1950s during an early purge. He feels that his mother and sister were sacrificed so he could live. They lived in a time when one had privacy and could feel love. Now one can only feel fear, hatred, and pain. In his dream he has visions of pastures, swaying trees, and clear fish-filled pools.

Winston feels guilty when he recalls his mother. He regrets that he did not treat her well and that she disappeared before he could make amends. The responsibility and his nostalgia for that relationship are examples of *Oldthink*, or illegal memories of a time prior to the Revolution.

Suddenly the telescreen calls him to calisthenics, and as Winston exercises he cannot remember for sure a time when Oceania had not been at war. He vaguely remembers the surprise of the first atomic bomb and the scurrying of citizens into the subway stations. Although Winston remembers that Oceania had once been allied with Eurasia, the party line is that Oceania had always been at war with them. Winston reflects that, if you tell a lie often enough, it becomes accepted as truth. Reality control. Newspeak. Doublethink.

A voice from the telescreen screams that Winston is not exercising vigorously enough. Winston hides his emotions so as not to give away his disdain for the Party.

Analysis

In reflecting on the disappearance of his mother and sister, Winston recalls enough of the past to call a lie a lie; the implication is that *most* people do *not* remember the past the way it was. Orwell is likely foreshadowing, or hinting at, a time when Winston himself won't be able to remember the past as it was. The Party rewrites history because, as a totalitarian regime, it cannot accept shades of grey. An evil enemy must be represented as "absolute evil." If a current enemy was an ally in the past, it must have some good qualities. If that's true then its evil can't be absolute. Yet Winston finds it "terrifying" that something historical can be said to have never happened. This creates inner conflict in Winston, because it is his job to rewrite history.

An often-quoted line from *1984* is "Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past." Capitalism (the political and economic system Big Brother replaced) had its excesses, but it wasn't nearly as bad as the Party makes it seem. By describing capitalism the way it does, the Party convinces a docile citizenry that, while things aren't great under totalitarianism, they are better than they were under capitalism.

Book 1, Chapter 4

Summary

Chapter 4 begins with a description of Winston's work at the Ministry of Truth. His job is to change what was written in

previous editions of periodicals, films, and photographs. If, for example, Big Brother predicted an attack in one corner of the world and it occurs in another place, Winston "corrects" the newspaper article that reported the prediction so that whatever Big Brother predicted matches what eventually happened. Any reference to people killed by the Party has to be removed because vaporized people are now "unpersons." The original publication is sent down the "memory hole," a chute that leads to an incinerator, to be burned, and it is replaced by the revised edition as if the revision is the original.

The ministry employs "swarms of workers" to delete unpersons from texts, rewrite poems that have become "ideologically offensive," recall and burn books, and fake photographs. Sometimes facts, statistics, or a person have to be created to fill a hole in a story. Winston likes this work because it allows for some creativity.

The Ministry of Truth also creates entertainment for the proles, "almost nothing except sport, crime ... films oozing with sex." The proles are not a threat to the Party, but there are many of them, so they are distracted with entertainment such as alcohol, pornography, and gambling.

Analysis

In the Ministry of Truth, workers are actually changing the truth. This is part of Orwell's warning about totalitarian regimes and about society's vulnerability to them: people should always question what they read, because it may be slanted to portray a particular truth that isn't altogether true. Even a subtle difference in word choice can change the perception of truth. In *1984* a word that portrays people as happily working rather than being enslaved is an example of how word choice can change the perception of truth. In truth, the people who work for the Party don't have a choice in what they're doing. They're enslaved to the truth of the Party, and they are forced to destroy any evidence that contradicts that party line.

Orwell also uses the term *unpersons* to symbolize the power the Party holds, not just over the lives of human beings but over the fact of their existence. A person can be born, live, and then be completely erased by the Party, as if they never even existed. This erasure goes beyond changing the words in a news story. In the real world, if a person dies or disappears, even in a totalitarian regime, family members or the community still remembers that person and may still talk privately about

them. In the world of *1984*, the Party has the right to take away the fact that a person lived at all, and anyone connected with that person just has to accept that sudden hole in their reality. The Party has the power to totally control everyone's reality, and the consequences for remembering the past as it really was are dire. When people hand over all of their power to the state, according to Orwell, they lose the ability to live their own lives, quite literally.

Book 1, Chapter 5

Summary

Winston is in the canteen (lunchroom) at work when his coworker Syme joins him. Syme is working on the 11th edition of the Newspeak dictionary. The purpose of this dictionary is to eliminate words from the language, thereby reducing the range of possible thoughts and thus limiting people's consciousness. Syme says that reading classic literature will be impossible one day. Even having a conversation like Syme and Winston are having will be impossible. Party slogans will have to change. Syme explains by saying, "How could you have a slogan like 'freedom is slavery' when the concept of freedom has been abolished?"

They overhear a conversation at another table. The man isn't expressing a single original thought; he's parroting what he's been spoon-fed. "Duckspeak," Syme calls it, and he notes that it has two contradictory meanings: it can be an insult or praise. Winston thinks Syme is too intelligent to survive. He reads too much, thinks too deeply, and says things he shouldn't. One day, Winston is sure, he'll be vaporized.

Mr. Parsons, who also works at the Ministry of Truth, approaches the two bragging about how his daughter turned a man over to the Thought Police. Just then an announcement from the Ministry of Plenty touts production increases in everything from food to helicopters, and the reader considers that the Ministry's name is another example of doublethink. Winston knows the reality: scarcity of just about everything and general bleakness in daily life. But he also knows that memories have been toyed with. Why should anyone feel that life is "intolerable" if they can't remember that anything had once been different?

As everyone listens to the announcement, the dark-haired girl is looking at Winston, hoping her glances will not be noticed. But Winston does notice and is filled with fear. He worries his facial expression, or "facecrime," might give him away. As the chapter ends, a piercing whistle signals time to return to work.

Analysis

The characters in this chapter all have some reason to be worried about survival. Syme, who is very good at his job and is even enthusiastic about removing subtlety from communication, still has a trait that may do him in after all. He's intelligent, and intelligent people can't be controlled as easily as the Party would like them to be. Is Winston's certainty that Syme will eventually be vaporized warranted? Judging from the reasons that people have been vaporized before, Winston is likely correct.

But what about Parsons? Parsons is proud of his kids for reporting people, but pride doesn't make him safe. If family members are encouraged to report each other, it's only a matter of time before Parsons loses his place in this highly stressful world.

Winston, of course, being a rebel, is worried all of the time that he's going to get caught, so his survival is at stake. The girl, if caught noticing Winston in a way that is anything but unemotional or hateful, could also get into trouble with the Party. The fact that Winston has to control his facial expressions around the girl foreshadows a more intense emotional connection with her than he's currently having.

Book 1, Chapter 6

Summary

Winston is writing in his journal about a time when he had hired a prostitute. The practice is forbidden, but even if Winston had been caught, the sentence would have been light: maybe only five years in a forced-labor camp. The Party says sexual urges occasionally need to be indulged, as long as the sex is joyless. Sex is discouraged except to produce children; couples have to get Party approval to marry, and those who seem attracted to each other are always denied. The Party is trying to kill human instincts, and, if the sexual instinct can't be killed, at

least the act should be considered dirty and unpleasant. Winston recalls that the prostitute was old and toothless and that the experience had been dreadful. He hopes that, in writing it down, he will be purged of it, but it doesn't work.

Winston is, in fact, married to a woman named Katharine. His estranged wife is a Party hack incapable of an original thought, but divorce is unlawful and separation discouraged. However, after 15 months the marriage became intolerable, so they were allowed to separate. It has been almost 11 years since Winston has seen Katharine. Winston might have stuck with her except that sexual intercourse with her was "like embracing a jointed wooden image." Winston compares her to a vulgar, old prostitute. Katharine had insisted on intercourse once a week, because she viewed it as their duty to the Party, but Winston couldn't stand that idea. The narrator says that organizations like the Junior Anti-Sex League, of which the dark-haired girl (Julia) is a member, are so successful in convincing Party women that sex is ugly that they believe it. Yet Winston wants to feel love and to destroy the "wall of virtue" that controls sex and other connections between human beings.

Analysis

Another side of Winston comes clear in this chapter. He seems to know that sex could be something more than intolerable. It becomes clear through Winston's diary entry and memories of the lack of love that he actually yearns for love or, at the very least, an intimate connection with a partner who desires him.

Using the description of the awful encounter with the prostitute and the passionless marriage with Katharine, Orwell shows how thoroughly the Party has taken all joy out of life. It has turned one of humankind's best gifts into something loveless and repellent. The narrator tells readers that the "sexual act, successfully performed, was rebellion." Winston has already been described as a rebel. What is Orwell foreshadowing?

Book 1, Chapter 7

Summary

"If there is hope," Winston writes, "it lies in the proles." Winston is reflecting on the proletariat, or working class, which makes up 85 percent of Oceania's population. He believes that only a rising up of the wretched, disregarded majority can overthrow the Party. In his alcove he takes out a children's history book loaned to him by Mrs. Parsons. He copies a passage that describes the horrors of capitalism. He wonders how much of what he is copying is true.

Winston thinks back to the one time he held in his hand proof that the Party history is not true. Back in the 1960s, many original leaders of the Revolution were declared traitors. Many others were killed. A few went into hiding, including Goldstein. Three men who survived were Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford. The three "confessed" and were temporarily paroled. Winston had seen them once at the Chestnut Tree Café. Five years later a photograph came across Winston's desk rolled inside another piece of paper; he shouldn't have seen it. It showed the three at a Party function in New York on the date on which the three had confessed to having been on enemy soil. Here was something he could hold onto—proof positive that the Party did lie about history. He did not, of course, hold onto it, but he also never forgot it.

Winston begins questioning his sanity. Even though his job entails "revising" documents, something tells him that history should *not* be alterable. The Party believes it is. If he is right, Winston wonders, and the Party is wrong, does that make him crazy?

Orwell also poses this for readers to consider: If a person is the only one to believe something, does that make that person a lunatic? Or does it simply make that person a minority of one? There was a time, Winston reflects, when one person (Copernicus) declared that the earth goes around the sun rather than the sun going around the earth. He was proved right and therefore wasn't crazy. The chapter ends with Winston writing "Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four."

Analysis

In this chapter Winston admits to himself that, if the photo of Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford had come across his desk now, he'd probably have kept it as evidence of Party deceit. As

he considers how his actions would be different now, it becomes obvious to the reader that his desire for an engaged rebellion is growing.

This chapter also presents the party line that before the Revolution London was "not the beautiful city" that the Party declares it to be today. If people hear a lie long enough, and there are no dissenting voices, they begin to believe the lie. This is another of Orwell's themes: Be vigilant. Remember the past. Recognize lies. Winston is trying to do all of that, but he was so young when the Party took over that all he has are a few vague memories and an instinct that things should be better.

Book 1, Chapter 8

Summary

Winston wanders into the slums of London. After narrowly escaping a rocket bomb, he sees a severed hand on the street and kicks it to the gutter. As he strolls past a pub, he sees a very old man. Winston decides he might remember life before the Revolution, so he follows the man into the pub, buys him a beer, and asks him to compare his life as a boy with now. The man is eager to talk but can't stay on track.

Winston leaves the pub and finds himself at the junk shop where he'd purchased his diary. It seems spooky. Oddly, late as it is, the shop is still open, so he goes in. The proprietor lets him look around, and Winston buys a glass paperweight with coral inside it. The proprietor, Mr. Charrington, invites Winston to see more antiques in an upstairs room. They climb the stairs, and the room conjures vague memories. On the wall is a picture of an old church (St. Clement's), and Mr. Charrington recites part of a children's rhyme that includes its name. Near the end is the ominous line, "Here comes a chopper to chop off your head." There is no telescreen in this room, and Winston believes he could be alone and secure here. He considers risking renting it for a few dollars a month. As he leaves the shop, he sees the dark-haired girl from the Ministry of Truth and wonders if she is spying on him. While walking home Winston considers the fact that they always come for you at night. As the chapter ends, he recalls O'Brien's words, "We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness."

Analysis

In this chapter it becomes clear to the reader that Winston is torn between the man the Party wants him to be and the man he is allowing himself to become. When he kicks the severed hand, his lack of empathy is in line with Party policies that discourage relationships between people. Winston is not yet as human as he aspires to be.

When the old man is unable to stay on track, Winston despairs. Yet, when he thinks about what O'Brien tells him about the place where there is no darkness, he insists on seeing it as a sign of hope. Something is propelling Winston forward: Maybe it's his inability to fit in or to accept the prevailing society. Maybe it's his improbable wish to change it, which some in the novel would call a character flaw. It may lead to Winston's demise.

Here, the narrator introduces the word *ownlife*, another no-no. Individualism and eccentricity are dangerous for a Party member. And Winston *is* a Party member, albeit one in the Outer Party. The proles may be destitute, but at least they're free from constant surveillance. Winston's feet mysteriously bring him back to the same shop where he bought his diary. He buys the paperweight, which is beautiful and useless, two characteristics that make it dangerous, and now he's considering renting the upstairs room.

Orwell takes time to describe Mr. Charrington, the owner of the junk shop, yet he doesn't give readers the name of the old man in the pub. There's something different about this man: He's not the usual prole. The narrator describes him as having "a vague air of intellectuality" with an "accent less debased than that of the majority of proles." These "differences" suggest to Winston that perhaps Mr. Charrington's memories of the past have not yet been weakened to the extent of most proles and that he might find an ally in Mr. Charrington.

Book 2, Chapter 1

Summary

Four days after Winston's visit to the junk shop, the dark-haired girl passes him in the hall at work and slips a piece of paper into his hand. Back at his desk, Winston places it among other

papers so he can read it without detection. Worrying that it's from the Thought Police, but hoping it might be from the rebel group the Brotherhood, he reads it. It is handwritten and reads, "I love you." Home in bed, Winston considers the note, and because of how agitated the girl was when she handed it to him, he's sure she means it.

The two eventually meet in the canteen and fix a meeting place and time without looking at each other—Victory Square at 19 hours. When she arrives a passing convoy of Eurasian prisoners draws a mass of people to the square. Forcing themselves into the crowd, they're at last shoulder to shoulder. She asks him to take Sunday afternoon off, and he agrees. She outlines a complicated route for him to follow and says to meet at 15 hours. She gives his hand a quick squeeze. He studies every detail of her hand. Needing to remain undetected, neither looks at the other as they part.

Analysis

The world Orwell has created is believable. So, if the reader takes a critical look at the way the relationship between Winston and Julia begins, it is logical to question whether Julia truly loves Winston or if she is planning to entrap him.

Readers already know that the Parsons children are spies who say Winston should be vaporized. In this chapter Winston and the girl get to meet and even grasp each other's hands because of a crowd drawn to the square to gawk at a passing convoy of prisoners. Other scenes in the novel show people taking pleasure in the looming torture of fellow humans. Winston doesn't participate in the gawking at unfortunate souls like these, but most Party members and proles do. Winston is very different from the rest of his society.

Book 2, Chapter 2

Summary

Winston and Julia meet in the shade of bushes, away from telescreens and hidden microphones. Winston steps into "pools of gold," walks across ground that is "misty with bluebells," and listens to a bird with a speckled breast singing. Despite the privacy of their surroundings, they keep their voices low. Julia (whose name readers finally learn) is 15 years

younger than Winston but is attracted to him because she's detected that he also hates the Party. The Party wants sexual relations to be free of desire, so the couple's sexual attraction becomes political, and their climax is a victory.

Analysis

Orwell creates a very different scene for Winston and Julia's rendezvous. The description of the place they meet—"pools of gold," "misty with bluebells"—is the only vision of beauty so far in the novel.

It's also in this chapter where Winston realizes that he and Julia have committed a crime against the Party. He is pessimistic about their future now and says, "We are the dead."

A thrush alights on a nearby branch, sings, and then takes flight. The bird is a symbol of the freedom Winston and Julia are playing at but have not achieved. Winston is just like the bird that can't stop singing, except he can't fly away.

Book 2, Chapter 3

Summary

"Never go home the same way as you went out," Julia says as they part. The next time they make love, it is in the belfry of a ruined church. Usually, however, they only get to talk in what they call "installments." If, as they talk, the Thought Police draw near, Winston and Julia separate and pick up with the same sentence the next day.

Being only 26 Julia has no memories of anything prior to the 1960s. As a young girl she'd been a member of Spies, the Youth League, and the Junior Anti-Sex League. She still wears the garb of the Anti-Sex League, but now it's a ruse.

Analysis

In this chapter the reader learns how Winston and Julia are different. Julia is willing to break rules and enjoy what pleasures she can but feels that staging any kind of overt rebellion is stupid. She sees her relationship with the Party in simplistic terms. She wants to do things the Party doesn't want

her to do. While readers can imagine Winston rebelling outwardly, it doesn't seem likely that Julia will. Winston is a pessimist, believing everyone is already "dead," but Julia won't have any of it. In comparison with him, she is an optimist and something of a hedonist. She wants to enjoy being alive.

The reader also learns more about the literature created by the Party. While some workers in the Ministry's Fiction Department at least revise what is spun out of the kaleidoscopes, Julia describes herself as "not clever" and simply runs and services the machines. Orwell (an avid reader and a lifelong writer of fiction) may have felt that the novel-writing business was in danger of becoming like a machine.

Halfway through the chapter, the reader learns that Julia believes that the Party's purpose for undermining the sexual instinct is to induce "hysteria." Hysteria was a real diagnosis in the late 1800s, and it had a real treatment involving massage. In Julia's mind, by encouraging sexual privation, the Party hopes to induce hysteria and, instead of curing it, transform it into war fever. Julia's sexual freedom is a political act.

Book 2, Chapter 4

Summary

Winston is back in the room above Mr. Charrington's shop. He's rented it long term. At the front of the hearth are an oil stove, a saucepan, and two cups. In the weeks they've been together, Winston's physical desire for Julia has turned into a deeper affection, and he's doing his best to make the shabby little room a romantic getaway.

Julia arrives with real coffee, real sugar, and other treats. She wears makeup and perfume so she'll feel like a woman in this room. They make love and fall asleep. Julia sees a rat when she wakes up. Unfazed, she tosses a shoe at it and starts to describe what rats do to their babies. But Winston is in a panic. It reminds him of a dream of something too dreadful for him to face. Julia asks about the paperweight and the picture of St. Clement's church on the wall. Winston recites a verse from the rhyme about it, and to his astonishment, she finishes the rhyme. As the evening ends, Winston contemplates the paperweight.

Analysis

The rhyme about St. Clement's and the paperweight are mentioned again. Julia remembers a bit more of the rhyme than Mr. Charrington did, but the same ominous ending is there: "Here comes a chopper to chop off your head!" The rhyme is part of an old children's game in which a child is caught between arms of the others during the last lines, as if his or her head is being chopped off.

Metaphorically, Winston sees the paperweight as their room. Inside it is the coral, symbolizing both his life and Julia's. It may therefore symbolize a secret place where Winston and Julia are sealed off from Big Brother. He also describes it as a useless object and a chunk of history. Perhaps Orwell is hinting that remembering history is useless under the Party, but what tidbits he can remember are beautiful.

Book 2, Chapter 5

Summary

Winston figured that Syme would disappear one day, and he has. His name has been removed from lists, and he has therefore become an unperson. People work overtime in preparation for Hate Week and are drawn into a patriotic frenzy. Rocket bombs kill hundreds, leading to demonstrations against Goldstein. Julia wonders if it's the Party dropping the bombs just to keep the people frightened.

Winston and Julia meet several times in June in their room. Sometimes Winston believes the Brotherhood exists and considers active rebellion. Julia, however, finds the idea absurd. She agrees that O'Brien may be with the Brotherhood, but to her the only sensible thing to do is engage in secret disobedience, as they are in the room.

Analysis

Winston's anxiety about the revision of history increases, even though it's his job. Julia doesn't care, because in her mind, it's all lies anyway, one bloody war after another. But Winston is frustrated that he can't prove history is being rewritten. To be unable to trust one's own memories would cause insanity, and

it's hard to imagine how anyone in Big Brother's world would stay sane. Even Winston's sanity seems at stake.

Julia becomes a metaphor for those in any society who don't understand the ramifications of being "asleep." It's so much easier for Big Brother to take over and maintain control if people step aside from the political process, just give in, and accept oppression by ceasing to care. Orwell's novel is a cautionary tale, telling readers to stay alert, ask questions, think critically, and sort out objective facts for themselves.

Book 2, Chapter 6

Summary

As Winston walks along a corridor at the Ministry, O'Brien lays a friendly hand on his arm. He'd been reading one of Winston's articles and looking for a chance to talk. He praises the article but points out that Winston used two obsolete words and refers him to the 10th edition of the Newspeak dictionary. The 10th edition hasn't been published yet, but O'Brien says he has one and Winston may borrow it. He gives Winston his address on a slip of paper and suggests that Winston come by. Borrowing this book wouldn't be considered illegal activity.

Analysis

O'Brien makes an apparent reference to Syme, but Syme is an unperson. Winston believes that this is a signal representing a crack in the Party's reality. This reinforces Winston's belief that O'Brien, an Inner Party member, is actually a dissenter. What Winston does not consider is that O'Brien might be trying to entrap him into committing thoughtcrime by leading him to think about the unperson.

Winston's evolution has become clear, and it is progressing rapidly now. He's moved from a vague dissatisfaction to the blatant expression of his thoughts in his diary. Now he is on the cusp of action, and the narrator says, "The end was contained in the beginning." The message is what Winston has long believed: that he is on the way to his grave. A literary tragedy is when a character's flaw leads him to an end that was inevitable from the beginning *because* of that flaw. A tragic flaw is a defect that brings about a character's downfall. Although Winston is not the typical tragic hero, he knows the actions

he's taking are likely to lead to his demise.

Book 2, Chapter 7

Summary

Winston awakens from a dream that took place inside the paperweight. The dream was of the early days of the Revolution when his family lived in a small room. His father had disappeared some time before, and the child Winston greedily took all of the chocolate his family—now just his small sister and mother—had been rationed. He ran away from them, and when he returned his family was gone. He tells Julia he had always thought that he murdered his mother.

Julia comes fully awake when Winston says aloud, "The proles are human beings. *We* are not human." He believes that emotions make people human, and, because Party members are without emotions, they are already dead. He decides they should part: if she stays clear of him, she can survive. She decides to do whatever he does even if that means rebellion. They decide that, if the Party makes them confess, their feelings will not change. The real betrayal, Winston says, would be to make them stop loving each other. He thinks the Party can't do that.

Analysis

Winston's realization of what the Party has done is becoming clearer. He realizes that, in the midst of futilely trying to take care of her kids, his mother exhibited a kind of nobility and had feelings. The Party has robbed the people of feelings and natural impulses. But the proles have retained their natural sympathies. Winston's memory of the time he coldly kicked a severed hand into the street drives home his belief that the proles are the only ones with any feelings.

Winston believes that the Party will find and kill him. But he knows that, as long as he can hold onto his feelings, they cannot kill his spirit. Winston's sexual relationship with Julia and the practice of writing in his diary—both illegal acts—are what allow him to finally wake up to his internal feelings. He and Julia begin to believe there is a difference between their private space and the public space of the Party and make a promise to continue their love for one another, even if (when)

the Party captures them. This is what makes Winston a rebel—his faith in the value of human emotion.

Book 2, Chapter 8

Summary

Having come by different routes, Winston and Julia arrive at O'Brien's apartment in a part of town where the wealthy Inner Party members live. Everything is clean, plush, and spacious, and Inner Party members can turn off the telescreens for up to half an hour at a time. O'Brien seems irritable, and Winston wonders if he misunderstood the invitation. He doubts for a moment that O'Brien is with the resistance.

O'Brien turns off the telescreen, smiles, and offers an invitation for Winston to speak. Winston says that he and Julia want to join the resistance. O'Brien explains that his valet, Martin, is "one of us" and has the man bring them wine. O'Brien has them raise a glass, and they toast Emmanuel Goldstein.

Testing their resolve to overthrow the Party, O'Brien asks a series of grisly questions, including if they're prepared to throw sulfuric acid in a child's face. Winston and Julia answer "yes" to each question until O'Brien asks if they're prepared to never see each other again. To this Julia answers "no." O'Brien explains other rules of the Brotherhood, and Julia leaves. He asks Winston if they have a hiding place, so Winston tells him of the room over Mr. Charrington's shop. O'Brien says he will get a copy of Goldstein's book soon, and Winston leaves.

Analysis

Winston and Julia have shown a new activism by coming to O'Brien's home, and they agree that, in joining the Brotherhood, they are willing, if asked, to do terrible things. But much more is revealed about their personalities by the Q-and-A session, which shows to what violent lengths they are willing to go for the cause.

The mood of a work of literature is its general atmosphere, and it is influenced by how the writer describes characters and scenes, the words and phrases used to describe actions, the dialogue, and other story elements. The prevailing moods of Chapter 8 of Book 2 are suspicion and optimism.

At the end of the chapter, Winston understands that O'Brien is duplicitous; he believes that O'Brien's "true self" supports Goldstein.

Book 2, Chapter 9

Summary

Winston is now in possession of "the book," Goldstein's manifesto. But outside, banners, speeches, parades, and displays of weapons have worked citizens into a frenzy against the enemy despite being unaware that the enemy has changed within minutes. Oceania had been at war with Eurasia, but now it's Eastasia, and, according to the Party, it has *always* been Eastasia.

The revamping of history means overtime work at the Ministry of Truth. Even though Winston knows that everything he creates is false, he tackles it with imagination and enthusiasm. At the end of six days, it's impossible for anyone to prove that the war with Eurasia ever happened, and the workers at the Ministry of Truth get an afternoon off. Winston takes this chance to go to the room above the shop, where he finally has a chance to read "the book."

The rest of the chapter consists, with the exception of a few references to Julia, of the contents of Goldstein's manifesto. The manifesto explains how the Party is structured and why it operates as it does. "The book" ends with the unfinished sentence, "This *motive* really consists ..." Because the sentence about motive is unfinished, Winston feels he knows the Party's "how" but not its "why."

Analysis

As the primary statement of the opposition, "the book" is an odd piece of writing because it doesn't present any hope for a way out or any method for overthrowing the Party's regime. If anything, it makes the novel even more dystopian. Besides not offering hope, it states that the division of the population into the Low, Middle, and High classes has been that way throughout history and won't ever change. Even if the top 2 percent are overthrown, those who become the new leaders will instigate injustice and division under a different name. The book closely echoes Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, in

which he defines class in terms of ownership of property and argues class struggles and conflict are inevitable.

Even though Winston doesn't understand the "why" of Big Brother, "the book" explains why the Party does some things. The lives of the Low must be crushed by drudgery so they can't be conscious of anything outside their dreary daily lives. War must be continuous because warfare uses up resources that otherwise would be available to enrich the lives of the people. Using up resources is key to the Party's success because, if everyone had enough, there wouldn't a division between the classes. Then there would be no need for a hierarchy, and the elite who want power would lose it. Warfare is also desirable because it raises the public's hatred and fear to a fever pitch. If the people live in a constant state of fear, they feel the need to trust their leaders to take care of them. They don't question authority, thus keeping the High class in power. "History" has to be constantly revised because the Party must be seen as omnipotent; because it can't be, "facts" about the past have to keep changing.

The narrator gives a slightly better explanation of doublethink in this chapter by saying, "Doublethink means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously." People do this all the time as they evaluate two opposing viewpoints. But what's different in doublethink is that a person has to accept both ideas. The narrator says that in Oceania people have to rearrange their memories *and* simultaneously forget they have done so.

At the end of the chapter, Winston repeats an idea mentioned earlier in the novel. Even if a person is the only one in the world who knows the truth, he or she is not mad. "Sanity," he decides, "is not statistical."

Book 2, Chapter 10

Summary

When Julia awakens she wonders why the stove's gone out because she'd made sure the oil had been full before going to sleep. It has gotten cold, and she can't make coffee. Winston goes to the window and listens to the woman singing in the yard. While he thinks of her as fat and ugly, it also strikes him that she is beautiful.

Winston realizes that people all over the world are the same. While they've been separated by hatred and lies, a race of conscious beings is sure to arise. "We are the dead," he says aloud. Julia repeats his words, and then, from behind them, they hear the words again, this time by the Thought Police. They are caught. The woman in the yard stops singing, and there is the sound of the washtub being thrown across the yard, along with a yell of pain. Men in black uniforms stampede into the room. As ordered, Winston and Julia turn back to back and hear trampling. The paperweight is smashed to pieces, and Julia is punched in the chest. She lands on the floor, struggling for breath before being brutally carried out of the room.

Just as Winston wonders if they caught Mr. Charrington as well, he walks into the room, much changed. He's a member of the Thought Police and has trapped Winston and Julia with the illusion of privacy in the room.

Analysis

Orwell foreshadows Winston and Julia's arrest when there's no oil in the stove although Julia had made sure it was full; was someone else in the room? When the Thought Police arrive, they repeat everything Winston says. Winston's private space has been exposed as a Party space. The extent of Winston's thoughtcrime is known to the Party.

In the first half of the chapter, the earlier pessimism turns into a type of optimism. Despite the fact that "the book" says inequality will always exist, Winston is hopeful. He reflects on the bird singing in Chapter 2 of Book 2 and the woman singing outside the window—symbols of freedom and beauty. While they sing the Party does not. So Winston is convinced that the proles will rebel if enough stay conscious and believe that $2 + 2 = 4$.

Although Mr. Charrington has seemed like an innocent prole up to this point, when he enters the room, all he has to do is speak and the uniformed men are quieted. He is no longer wearing his spectacles, has lost his cockney accent, and looks completely different. Mr. Charrington has deceived Winston from the start, again driving home the point that in *1984* no one can be trusted and nothing is as it seems.

Book 3, Chapter 1

Summary

Chapter 1 of Book 3 begins with Winston in a cell. He believes he's in the Ministry of Love. A hungry ache in his belly never goes away. He imagines what will happen to him—the smash of truncheons (clubs) on his body, begging for mercy from the floor. Sometimes he thinks of Julia and for a time believes he'd double his pain if it would take some from her. He doesn't know where she is.

Winston's one hope is that O'Brien will save him or that the Brotherhood will get a razor blade to him. Others arrive: Ampleforth, Winston's coworker and a poet; his neighbor, Parsons; a mean-looking man with a face as thin as a skull. When the starving skull-faced man is told to go to Room 101, he begs for anything but that.

Eventually the door opens. It is O'Brien. "They've got you too!" Winston cries, only to find out that O'Brien is with Big Brother. "They got me a long time ago," O'Brien says. O'Brien comes in with a guard who now slams a truncheon into Winston's elbow, and everything explodes in pain.

Analysis

At the end of Book 1, because the Thought Police always come for people at night, Winston hoped to find "the place where there is no darkness." He thought he would be safe there. As it turns out, he is there now, but it's a cell where the lights are always on. Orwell was foreshadowing this cell with that image rather than giving readers a sign of hope for Winston's future.

After O'Brien reveals that he has been a faithful Party member for a long time, the narrator tells readers that Winston had always known it. Nothing Winston has been said to have thought has prepared the reader for this. Perhaps the reader doubted O'Brien, but nothing indicated that *Winston* had doubted him. If Winston *had* known, then readers begin to wonder if Winston is an unreliable narrator—one who doesn't fully understand a situation or who draws incorrect conclusions. Readers are reminded that they trusted Winston when he believed Julia loved him because of how she appeared when she handed him the note. But readers are also

reminded that, while they may have trusted Winston's original instinct about O'Brien, he was wrong on that count. The story is told only through Winston's eyes, so if the reader believes the world of Big Brother is as oppressive as he says it is, readers *have to trust* that he is a reliable narrator. Here, the novel makes the reader doubt his or her own assumptions, just as Winston has to do.

There are two possible answers. One is that Winston was hiding the knowledge about O'Brien from himself. Psychologists call this self-deception. Perhaps in a world of doublethink, it should come as no surprise that Winston, a rewriter of history, should be fooled by self-deception. Or maybe O'Brien is playing with Winston's mind—revising history even in this statement, convincing Winston that he has always known what he says he knows now.

Book 3, Chapter 2

Summary

Winston is in a cell, drifting in and out of consciousness because of endless interrogations and beatings. He confesses to all kinds of things he's never done. Hallucinations begin, and he imagines O'Brien there.

Eventually O'Brien really *is* there. He hooks Winston to a machine, which can inflict pain on a scale from 0 to 100. The pain can be increased or decreased depending on Winston's answers. O'Brien is reprogramming Winston's mind so that he believes the Party's truth of the moment, that history's never been revised, and that, when he holds up four fingers, he's holding up five.

O'Brien explains that it is not the Party's goal to destroy heretics but to convert them because it is intolerable to the Party to allow individual thought to exist. Thus, they must torture and interrogate a person until everything is dead inside and the person is free of emotions.

Analysis

Readers are now seeing O'Brien for who he is. Like Winston, he takes truth and untruth seriously. The only problem is the two men have diametrically opposed opinions about what is

true. Maybe it was O'Brien's commitment to truth (as he saw it) that first drew Winston to him and to conjecture, "Perhaps one did not want to be loved so much as to be understood."

Throughout the novel Winston and Julia have asserted that their private thoughts and memories are their own and are true records of the past. In this chapter O'Brien destroys that certainty by tearing down what Winston remembers to be true. O'Brien tries to get Winston to believe that being in a minority of one makes you crazy because there is no truth but the truth the Party tells you. Because Winston believes something different, it only follows that he must be insane.

Book 3, Chapter 3

Summary

O'Brien tells Winston that he collaborated in writing "the book" and goes on to give Winston the answer to the question of "why." Winston says what he thinks O'Brien wants to hear: that the Party is ruling the people for their own good. O'Brien dials up the pain threshold. Wrong. O'Brien goes on to explain, "We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power." The Party slogan "Freedom is Slavery" is also reversible: "Slavery is Freedom."

O'Brien continues to explain Party doctrine, alternately dialing up and dialing down the level of pain according to how well Winston's answers agree or disagree not with what Winston believes but with the Party tenets. O'Brien wants to make Winston a parrot of the Party. Nonetheless, Winston continues to hold tight to ideas he knows to be true: gravity exists, the earth has existed for millions of years, the stars are millions of light-years away, and the Party will one day fail.

When Winston sees himself in a mirror, he is frightened by the emaciation of his body. The one thing that sustains him is that in his heart he has not betrayed Julia. He has not stopped loving her, and O'Brien knows it.

Analysis

When O'Brien says that he collaborated in writing "the book," it is likely that he says this to weaken Winston's faith in the existence of the Brotherhood. After all, he follows it up by

telling Winston that it's nonsense to believe the Party can ever be overthrown.

The reverence Winston felt for O'Brien in Chapter 2 of Book 1 is still evident even after O'Brien explains that the Party doesn't care about the people's happiness. When Winston believed O'Brien was a kindred spirit, he felt connected to him. Letting go of that connection further isolates Winston. It may, in fact, seem more appealing to Winston to change his view and agree with O'Brien than to be cast out into total isolation.

O'Brien tells Winston that "power is not a means; it is an end." But he goes on to say that this power cannot be experienced if one is alone. It has to be collective, and that's why the Party slogan can be reversed to say "Slavery is freedom." A person must merge into the mind of the Party. He seems to be saying that, when you are alone, you can be defeated, but, if you are free of "aloneness" (when you are enslaved to the Party), you are free not to be defeated.

Book 3, Chapter 4

Summary

Winston has been made more comfortable in his cell. He can eat and bathe, and the painful varicose ulcer he's had since Book 1 has been dressed. He's trying to reeducate himself. After reading Goldstein's manifesto, he had decided that sanity was not statistical. Now he agrees that it is and that it's just a question of accepting the Party's "truth"—until it changes, of course. "The past was alterable"; however, it has never been altered. Doublethink.

Even so, occasionally some thought comes into his head that needs to be pushed away. "Crimestop" is the Newspeak term. But something bursts through, and Winston finds himself calling aloud for Julia. O'Brien comes into his cell and tells him that intellectually he's "cured" but emotionally he isn't. Always able to detect a lie, he asks Winston what his true feelings are toward Big Brother. Winston tells him, "I hate him." At that, O'Brien tells the guards to take him to Room 101.

Analysis

Winston has changed. He's capitulated. He's started to believe the Party's truth. Before being arrested it was enough to *pretend* to go along with the Party. Now he has surrendered his mind to it. Winston will now believe what he is told to believe, and this is the ultimate character transformation. This change should be enough to make the Party happy, but, when he calls out for Julia, he shows that he's keeping his heart unspoiled, independent. He knows that he'll be punished but prefers to be in the wrong. "To die hating them" is the freedom Winston now seeks. But this is before he's taken to Room 101.

O'Brien tells him it's not enough to capitulate in his mind. He has to capitulate in his heart. He has to love Big Brother. Readers start to believe that, whatever will happen in Room 101, it will be enough to cement the transformation of Winston from rebel to Party loyalist.

Book 3, Chapter 5

Summary

Winston is taken to Room 101 many meters underground. He's strapped to a chair so tightly that he can't move his head. O'Brien tells him that Room 101 is different for each person. What happens there is the worst thing that the person can imagine, and for Winston that means rats. O'Brien shows Winston a mask that looks like the kind a fencer wears, with a fine mesh covering for the face. This mask, however, has two compartments. Winston's face fits in one compartment, and there are two hungry sewer rats in the other. There is a door at the front that O'Brien can open. The mask is coming closer to Winston. Terrified, he calls out, "Do it to Julia! ... Not me! Julia!" Winston loses consciousness and hears a sound in the darkness. It is the cage door clicking shut, not open.

Analysis

To die with hatred in his heart meant freedom to Winston; it meant holding onto his humanity and his love for Julia. At the end of Book 3, Chapter 3, Winston was happy that, at least in his heart, he had not betrayed Julia. O'Brien *had* agreed, or so it appeared. But now readers know that O'Brien must fully

destroy any shred of humanity left in Winston and that the only way to do this is to cause him to betray Julia. O'Brien, of course, knew this to be their weakness from the meeting in his apartment. Once it's complete and Winston betrays his lover, it no longer matters if he lives or dies. The Party has triumphed.

There are two echoes of things that have already happened. O'Brien's choice of rats for Winston's torture reveals again that the Party invaded Winston and Julia's "private" space, where Winston told Julia he was afraid of rats. Second, when Winston betrays Julia, this echoes the experience of the "skeleton man" who joined Winston in his first cell. The man offered to see his own young child killed rather than go to Room 101. Winston has become the skeleton man, literally and figuratively reduced to bare bones.

Book 3, Chapter 6

Summary

As the final chapter of the novel opens, Winston sits in his usual corner of the Chestnut Tree Café. Gin is his life now, his death and resurrection. He's listening to the telescreen, awaiting a bulletin about a battle between Oceania and Eurasia. Winston is worried because he thinks the news will be bad. As he plays chess, he traces the equation $2 + 2 = 5$ in the dust.

Winston knows now that the Party can get inside people after all. In a flashback the narrator reveals that Winston and Julia had run into each other once after being released. The Thought Police didn't care about them now, so the two could have talked, even made love. But both were so completely changed that they didn't care about each other. Before they parted they admitted that they had betrayed each other. They pretended they would meet again, but neither actually cared enough to do so.

Winston has been promoted to a new job at the Ministry of Truth, working on the newest edition of the Newspeak dictionary. He still has memories of an earlier time, even of his childhood, but he pushes them out of his mind. After all, he knows now that they're false. On the telescreen the announcer says that Oceania won the battle. There is cheering in the street, and Winston is relieved. He has a waking dream in which he's back in the Ministry of Love and has been forgiven.

As Winston walks down the hall, the narrator explains that finally "the long-hoped-for bullet was entering his [Winston's] brain." He looks up at the face of Big Brother and wonders why he had ever rebelled against that loving face.

Analysis

The change in Winston is gradually revealed to readers in the last chapter of the book. One of the clues the narrator gives is about Winston's belief in what the telescreen tells him. Another is that he no longer cares whether he sees Julia again. By the time the narrator tells readers that he sees a memory of his childhood as false, it's clear that he has lost his ability to think for himself—even to the point of believing that $2 + 2 = 5$ and that Oceania has always been at war with Eurasia.

There is controversy among readers of the novel about how to interpret the end of the novel—literally or metaphorically. The narrator tells readers that a bullet is entering Winston's brain. Is this a real bullet, or is the narrator speaking metaphorically? The last paragraph of the novel says, "The struggle was finished. ... He loved Big Brother." Therefore, the best interpretation is to understand the bullet as a metaphor. Winston's goal up until he was tortured in Room 101 was for the Party not to get inside of him, to continue to believe that $2 + 2 = 4$ no matter what the Party said. But Winston lost that battle.

Death was never Winston's concern; he always believed he would be vaporized. Because death was inevitable, it would not be a tragedy. What he has lost—the metaphorical bullet in his brain—is his humanity, his independence, and his knowledge of what is real. Now Winston is one of the people who is "already dead" but just doesn't know it. This is the tragedy. And with this the novel ends.

“” Quotes

"It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen."

— Narrator, Book 1, Chapter 1

Orwell begins his novel with a clear declaration that the world has changed. The story appears to take place in the readers' world—it is the familiar month of April—but clocks don't ever strike 13 times. Readers can assume that this world uses some version of military time and that it is likely 1:00 p.m.

"Big Brother Is Watching You."

— Narrator, Book 1, Chapter 1

This is the most-often-quoted phrase from *1984*, and it is a motif that runs through the entire novel. These words appear on posters all over Oceania, and they mean that government surveillance is everywhere. This phrase has become commonplace in the English-speaking world. People use it to mean that their government has become overly intrusive (e.g., when the National Security Agency collects data by tracking private emails, texts, and phone calls).

"War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength."

— Narrator, Book 1, Chapter 1

These statements are slogans of Ingsoc, which is the name of the Party's political ideology, and they adorn buildings throughout London. Everything in this world is paradoxical, and the citizens of Oceania must hold two contradictory ideas in mind simultaneously. The process is called doublethink. For example, the phrase *preemptive war* is an example of doublethink, because starting a war cannot prevent war.

"We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness."

— O'Brien, Book 1, Chapter 2

This statement is one that Winston hears O'Brien say in a dream. Because he already imagines O'Brien as an ally, hearing him say it seems like a sign: together they and the Brotherhood

will usher in an era of light, not dark. When O'Brien actually says it in Book 3, it refers to Room 101, a room flooded with constant, glaring lights, where dissidents are tortured.

"Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past."

— Winston Smith, Book 1, Chapter 3

This is a Party slogan that Winston considers in Book 1 and later says to O'Brien in Book 3. He means that governments with authority to control the media can tell the people anything they want about the past; in doing so, they position themselves and their ideas as the only solution to all problems in the past. And because the Party is in complete control of the present, it can rewrite the past any way it wants. Both sides of the equation feed each other, and in this way the Party keeps the allegiance of the people. Orwell is cautioning readers to delve into the stories told by their own media and ask, "Is this really the way things happened?"

"Until after they have rebelled they cannot become conscious."

— Winston Smith, Book 1, Chapter 7

The first part of Winston's thought ("Until they become conscious they will never rebel") is quoted more often than this part. However, this sentiment is more important. Consciousness is the goal, not a mindless rebellion. Winston is right that, before a revolution can happen, the people have to understand they are in the majority and can overcome the minority. But to do this they must become conscious of their power. Winston is pointing to a catch-22, meaning that each condition is dependent on the other, so the people are stuck with this dilemma.

"Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four."

— Winston Smith, Book 1, Chapter 7

This is a frequently quoted statement from the novel. It represents Winston's resolve to believe what his senses, wisdom, memory, and intelligence tell him rather than to go along with the ever-changing "truth" fed to the people by the Party. His point is that people are only free if they have the freedom to acknowledge the real truth.

"Doublethink means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs ... and accepting both of them."

— Emmanuel Goldstein, Book 2, Chapter 9

Several words and phrases from *1984* have come into common usage, and doublethink is one of them. This statement is Emmanuel Goldstein's definition of doublethink in "the book." When people evaluate two opposing viewpoints, they have to hold both ideas in their mind, but in doublethink they have to accept both ideas as true. For example, Goldstein explains that an Inner Party member may receive the information that a war is not actually happening. But by using doublethink the Inner Party member fully believes that the war is, in fact, happening. This keeps the Inner Party member in a constant state of fear and hysteria that is necessary to maintain power.

"Sanity is not statistical."

— Winston Smith, Book 2, Chapter 9

This statement is the last thought that Winston has after he finishes reading Goldstein's book and before he falls asleep. All of the people in Winston's life, except Julia, accept the lies that the Party tells, so Winston has no one to confirm that he's not crazy for rejecting these lies. But Goldstein's book confirms his belief that the Party changes facts to suit its needs. Winston realizes that, even if he is alone in believing the real truth, he's not insane for doing so.

"Where there is equality there can be sanity."

— Winston Smith, Book 2, Chapter 10

This statement reveals the truth about the Party's motives, which Winston understands after reading Goldstein's book. He now knows that the Party creates inequality through such things as artificial scarcity and information control. It is an insane world. The way to turn around the insanity would be, he believes, a revolution against the Party, led by the proles. If everyone were equal, life would be sane.

"The birds sang, the proles sang, the Party did not sing."

— Winston Smith, Book 2, Chapter 10

Winston is remembering the thrush that sang to him and Julia in the meadow while he listens to the prole woman singing in the yard below. He realizes there is life in both the bird and the woman, because they continue to sing no matter what. Singing is a sign of vitality and joy. The Party is spiritually dead, having crushed the human spirit in everyone it controls, so the Party can't sing.

"Perhaps one did not want to be loved so much as to be understood."

— Winston Smith, Book 3, Chapter 2

Winston loves Julia, but she doesn't understand why it's so important to him to hold onto truth. This lack of understanding makes Winston uncomfortable with Julia. Winston realizes that the most important part of a relationship, for him, is to be understood by the other person. O'Brien seems to understand Winston's grip on truth. Winston loves O'Brien because he feels understood by him and therefore connected in a way that he is not with Julia.

*"Reality exists in the human mind,
and nowhere else."*

— O'Brien, Book 3, Chapter 2

This statement expresses O'Brien's insistence that Winston accept the false reality imposed by the Party. People process in their minds what they experience through their senses, so in one way reality does only exist in the mind. However, O'Brien's goal is to retrain Winston's mind to accept whatever the Party tells him as reality, no matter what his senses tell him. In that way the reality of the Party is insulated from the reality Winston sees in front of him.

*"The choice ... lay between
freedom and happiness, and that,
for the great bulk of mankind,
happiness was better."*

— Winston Smith, Book 3, Chapter 3

This statement is Winston's response to O'Brien regarding why he thinks the Party clings to power. Winston feels it's for the good of the majority—that, left to themselves, the people wouldn't be able to take care of one another because they are frail and cowardly and can't face the truth. Winston thinks this is why people let those stronger than them rule. He's later shocked to hear O'Brien say the Party seeks power entirely for the sake of having power.

*"Power is not a means; it is an
end."*

— O'Brien, Book 3, Chapter 3

This statement sums up the main reason the Party wants power. While torturing Winston O'Brien offers all the reasons that people think leaders want power—for wealth, material goods, long life, happiness, or the benefit of others. O'Brien

says none of these are the reasons—that leaders like Big Brother only want power and that they arrange things as best they can to maintain power forever. By placing this statement at the end of the book, Orwell reiterates the reason he wrote the novel: to warn people around the world to stay awake and beware of megalomaniacal leaders who are seeking power for power's sake.

Symbols

Emmanuel Goldstein

It's likely Emmanuel Goldstein doesn't exist, but he symbolizes the power of groupthink. The Party needs to compare itself to something/someone in order to maintain its superiority. Goldstein symbolizes all that is *not* the Party, which to some makes him an object of hatred and to others makes him an object of hope.

The Telescreen

The telescreen is a symbol of the continual surveillance of the people by the Party. It represents the total power of a regime over its people, right down to their private lives inside their homes.

The telescreen is introduced in Chapter 1 of Book 1. It transmits both ways, presenting propaganda that supports the Party's ever-changing truth and, at the same time, placing people under constant surveillance. Telescreens are everywhere, so they can even detect thoughtcrime by recording the expression on a person's face.

Newspeak and the Memory

Hole

Newspeak, the continual revision in word meaning and reduction of the number of words in English, symbolizes the total thought control by the Party. The memory hole, which is where all previously true documents and photographs get tossed, also symbolizes this thought control and the restructuring of what is true.

In Chapter 5 of Book 1, Syme brags to Winston that he is working on the 11th edition of the Newspeak dictionary. Being an orthodox Outer Party member, he takes pleasure in knowing that he is helping the Party achieve its goal of controlling consciousness by limiting the people's means of expression. If people don't have words to express themselves, they can't say what they actually think. If all written materials reach the people in a language that the Party controls, then their knowledge and thoughts are also increasingly controlled by the Party. The memory hole serves the same purpose by eliminating all evidence of what people knew to be true. The Party can then insist on its own version of truth as the only real one.

Newspeak limits thought by destroying words and thereby nuance. Eventually, says Syme, all real knowledge of Oldspeak (or Standard English) will be gone so that the literature and wisdom of the past by such writers as William Shakespeare, Geoffrey Chaucer, John Milton, and Lord Byron will be inaccessible. People won't know the words, so they won't be able to read anything but "literature" written in Newspeak. If people don't have anything to prove that the wisdom of the past existed, how can they learn from it? Newspeak keeps the people ignorant of the past and therefore unable to really learn anything. The memory hole also keeps people ignorant of what really happened in the past by burning it up, making it disappear. Anyone who insists on the truth of past events is told that they are wrong. The proof of the past has been rewritten, and the previous evidence of truth has been destroyed. So Newspeak and the memory hole are symbols not only of thought control but also of total ignorance and lack of real history or knowledge. Nothing is real to the people unless the Party says it is.

Big Brother

Big Brother first appears in Chapter 1 of Book 1. His enormous face is on the telescreen and is plastered everywhere on posters, not only outside but inside Winston's apartment building as well. Big Brother is a direct and literal symbol of the Party, serving as a constant reminder that the people are under surveillance. They are told that Big Brother is watching them, which is supposed to feel comforting, but it evokes terror instead. The name *Big Brother* connotes family and caring, but the truth is the exact opposite. In fact, Big Brother is a perfect example of doublethink, two concepts that are in opposition to each other but that are believed at the same time.

$2 + 2 = 5$

$2 + 2 = 5$ is a symbol of the lies that the Party presents as truth and the people accept as such. The equation is obviously false, but the people call it true because the Party says it is. To do otherwise is to be subject to torture and death.

In Chapter 10 of Book 2, Winston decides that the regime of Big Brother will fall if enough people stay conscious and believe that $2 + 2 = 4$.

In Chapter 2 of Book 3, O'Brien holds up four fingers and tries to get Winston to say that he's holding up five. Winston sees four and refuses to lie about what he sees. "Reality," he says, "is not external. Reality exists in the human mind, and nowhere else."

The false equation also serves as a symbol of Winston's defeat at the end of the book. After he is released from Room 101 in the final chapter, Winston plays chess and traces $2 + 2 = 5$ in the dust of his table. He has lost his humanity and now accepts lies as truth.

The Glass Paperweight

The glass paperweight with the coral embedded in it first appears in Chapter 8 of Book 1, when Winston sees it at Mr. Charrington's antique shop and buys it. The paperweight is a symbol of beauty for beauty's sake. It is also a symbol of Winston's past, a childhood he barely remembers, and a time when people expressed their individuality in the decor of their homes. The paperweight represents not only history but also creativity, art, and love of beautiful things, all obliterated by the Party.

The coral inside the paperweight symbolizes love that Winston shares with Julia, a secret love hidden away from the rest of the world. It is "fixed in a sort of eternity at the heart of the crystal." The paperweight therefore also symbolizes a secret and safe place to be a human being who experiences love on his or her own terms, an act forbidden by the Party.

When the paperweight is shattered by the Thought Police at the end of Book 2, Winston's attempts to be safe and secure in private, as well as his desire to connect with his memories of the past and think independently, are shattered too.

The Rented Room and the Singing Prole Woman

Both the rented room above the antique shop and the prole woman who sings beneath its window are symbols that reflect the temporary sense of security and vain hope for a free world, as well as the freedom to love without interference or control by the Party.

Winston first hears a woman singing outside the window of his rented room. The sound of her voice causes him to think that, while the proles are very poor, they have relative freedom. As she sings he catches a glimpse of what kind of life people might have had before the Revolution. No one is stopping her from singing exactly what she wants to sing.

When Winston hears the woman singing again, in Chapter 10 of Book 2, he observes her. In spite of her age, roughness, and size, he sees her as beautiful. She has spent her life having and loving a family, without interference by the Party. That freedom and ability to love makes her beautiful in a way that Winston never sees outside of the prole quarter.

A Boot Stamping on a Human Face

In Book 2, Chapter 3, O'Brien has been explaining to Winston that the purpose of the Party is to maintain power for its own sake, not to make life better for others. He explains that, as time goes on, the Party's power will grow even greater and oppression will increase. To illustrate his point, O'Brien tells Winston that the future looks like "a boot stamping on a human face—forever."

This boot symbolizes a government in complete control of its people. The power of the Party is complete: O'Brien says to Winston, "The espionage, the betrayals, the arrests, the tortures, the executions, the disappearances will never cease." The boot represents these things crushing human emotion and freedom forever.

Themes

Class Struggle

The novel explores the theme of class struggle. Orwell supported democratic socialism as a way to fight against oppression of the working class. He saw totalitarianism as a huge danger in countries where socialism was the party line, but the reality was much harsher. Winston speaks often of the need to mobilize the proles, the working class in the novel, against the Party. The Party controls the middle class and has them convinced that the proles are at the same level as animals. This keeps the middle class and the proles from joining forces. Winston belongs to the middle class, which has no control or power over anything in their lives, and he knows the higher class enjoys privileges he can't have. At some level Winston believes that the proles enjoy freedom because they are ignored by the Party.

Freedom versus Oppression

Orwell wrote *1984* in reaction to the rise of totalitarian governments such as Joseph Stalin's rule over the Soviet Union. Under Stalin, anyone perceived as an enemy of the government was executed or condemned to forced labor.

In fictionalizing what can happen under a regime that monopolizes all power, Orwell includes techniques he saw in totalitarian regimes usurping power in Europe. Limiting the press was necessary so that the only "truth" one heard was propaganda spread by the state. Poverty was widespread, and scarcity was imposed. As Emmanuel Goldstein explains in "the book," even when there is no scarcity of material goods, artificial scarcity must be created because an underfed, poor, weak population is easier to rule over than one that lives with all they need.

Orwell's intent in this cautionary tale is twofold: to disparage totalitarian regimes such as that of Stalin and Hitler and to warn future readers about the possibility of takeover by intolerant, antidemocratic regimes that constrain individual freedoms and thought. Orwell seems to be saying, "Be vigilant. Hold onto what you know to be true. Remember the past. Recognize the lies."

Fear and Hate as Means of Control

In *1984* Orwell examines the sneaky ways governments create fear and hate among their people. Orwell shows how fear and hate, which are natural emotions everyone experiences, are ramped up by politicians, subgroups, and governments in order to gain or hold onto power. Propaganda is used to convince people that they need to be afraid and that hatred is the correct response to alleviate that fear. With enough media exposure, the people can be convinced of anything. The telescreens in Orwell's novel subject the people to nearly constant exposure to verbal propaganda.

One way in which the Party incites fear and hatred is with the ritual of Two Minutes Hate, which the narrator describes as "an

act of self-hypnosis, a deliberate drowning of consciousness by means of rhythmic noise." The effect of the ritual, and the obvious intent of the Party, is to work the populace into a mad frenzy—to blame their troubles on a distant enemy, to build solidarity in the face of a bleak world where things keep turning darker, to tell themselves that someone else is to blame, and to believe that their own culture is the only positive society in the world.

Individual Thought versus Mind Control

Individual thought requires freedom of expression, and the richer the language, the more choices a person has to express nuance and specificity. Winston's colleague Syme, an orthodox member of the Outer Party, is helping to create the 11th edition of the Newspeak dictionary. The purpose is to eliminate words from the language, thereby reducing the range of consciousness, limiting original thinking, and controlling both the thoughts and the behavior of its speakers. With each edition more words are dropped from the dictionary. Syme looks forward to a time when there will be no thought because there will be no words to express them. "Orthodoxy," he says, "means not thinking—not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness." This is the ultimate form of mind control.

One day, Syme explains, reading classic literature will be impossible. No one will understand the words because they won't exist. Even having a conversation like the one he and Winston are having will be impossible, and Party slogans will need to change. "How," he asks, can you "have a slogan like 'freedom is slavery' when the concept of freedom has been abolished?"

Not only is speaking out against the government repressed and overt rebellion punished, but people are not even allowed to think anti-Party thoughts. Thoughtcrime can be detected by a lukewarm expression during calisthenics (facecrime) or a less-than-enthusiastic expression of hatred when a convoy of prisoners passes by. The only allowable thoughts are the ones that the Party instills, and most of those thoughts are lies. But if someone in power tells a lie often enough, and no dissenting voices come forward, people begin to believe the lie.

Suggested Reading

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