



1984 (Signet Classics)

By George Orwell

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Written in 1948, 1984 was George Orwell's chilling prophecy about the future. And while 1984 has come and gone, his dystopian vision of a government that will do anything to control the narrative is timelier than ever...

“The Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was their final, most essential command.”

Winston Smith toes the Party line, rewriting history to satisfy the demands of the Ministry of Truth. With each lie he writes, Winston grows to hate the Party that seeks power for its own sake and persecutes those who dare to commit thoughtcrimes. But as he starts to think for himself, Winston can't escape the fact that Big Brother is always watching...

A startling and haunting vision of the world, *1984* is so powerful that it is completely convincing from start to finish. No one can deny the influence of this novel, its hold on the imaginations of multiple generations of readers, or the resiliency of its admonitions—a legacy that seems only to grow with the passage of time.

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1984 (Signet Classics) By George Orwell Bibliography

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Editorial Review

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"Outside, even through the shut window pane, the world looked cold. Down in the street little eddies of wind were whirling dust and torn paper into spirals, and though the sun was shining and the sky a harsh blue, there seemed to be no color in anything except the posters that were plastered everywhere."

The year is 1984; the scene is London, largest population center of Airstrip One.

Airstrip One is part of the vast political entity Oceania, which is eternally at war with one of two other vast entities, Eurasia and Eastasia. At any moment, depending upon current alignments, all existing records show either that Oceania has always been at war with Eurasia and allied with Eastasia, or that it has always been at war with Eastasia and allied with Eurasia. Winston Smith knows this, because his work at the Ministry of Truth involves the constant "correction" of such records. "Who controls the past,' ran the Party slogan, 'controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.'"

In a grim city and a terrifying country, where Big Brother is always Watching You and the Thought Police can practically read your mind, Winston is a man in grave danger for the simple reason that his memory still functions. He knows the Party's official image of the world is a fluid fiction. He knows the Party controls the people by feeding them lies and narrowing their imaginations through a process of bewilderment and brutalization that alienates each individual from his fellows and deprives him of every liberating human pursuit from reasoned inquiry to sexual passion. Drawn into a forbidden love affair, Winston finds the courage to join a secret revolutionary organization called The Brotherhood, dedicated to the destruction of the Party. Together with his beloved Julia, he hazards his life in a deadly match against the powers that be.

Newspeak, doublethink, thoughtcrime--in 1984, George Orwell created a whole vocabulary of words concerning totalitarian control that have since passed into our common vocabulary. More importantly, he has portrayed a chillingly credible dystopia. In our deeply anxious world, the seeds of unthinking conformity are everywhere in evidence; and Big Brother is always looking for his chance. --*Daniel Hintzsche*

Review

Novel by George Orwell, published in 1949 as a warning about the menaces of totalitarianism. The novel is set in an imaginary future world that is dominated by three perpetually warring totalitarian police states. The book's hero, Winston Smith, is a minor party functionary in one of these states. His longing for truth and decency leads him to secretly rebel against the government. Smith has a love affair with a like-minded woman, but they are both arrested by the Thought Police. The ensuing imprisonment, torture, and reeducation of Smith are intended not merely to break him physically or make him submit but to root out his independent mental existence and his spiritual dignity. Orwell's warning of the dangers of totalitarianism made a deep impression on his contemporaries and upon subsequent readers, and the book's title and many of its coinages, such as NEWSPEAK, became bywords for modern political abuses. --The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature

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Joe Hessler:

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Piedad Trainor:

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