

The societal effects of totalitarian control in 1984

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The main goal of Totalitarian government is to limit and regulate every aspect of public and private life. George Orwell's novel, 1984, illustrates a society lacking in freedom and expression. His fictional society in 1984 stands as a metaphor for a Totalitarian society. Communication, personal beliefs, and national loyalty are controlled by the inner party which governs the people of Oceania in order to keep society from rebelling. Oceania, where main character Winston Smith lives, is ruled by the INGSOC. The Inner Party, controlled by Big Brother, dictates several aspects of the people's life.

The Inner Party's aim was to make any other alternative thinking a "thought crime" or "crime think". The Inner Party only allows words that empower or respect the Inner Party and Big Brother. An example of the control the Inner Party has over the people is found in Syme's dialogue on page 46, "It's a beautiful thing, the destruction of words...You haven't a real appreciation for, Winston...Don't you see the whole aim of it is to narrow the range of thought?" As a society, Oceania has been brainwashed to use only words or phrases that empower and respect INGSOC.

Syme, who rewrites the dictionary using and erases old speak, understands the purpose and follows the rules because he has been trained. The overall concept of 1984 is designed to control personal beliefs of the citizens by limiting their form of expression. Controlling the communication fits with the Totalitarian aspects of governing. During the Cold War, communication was stifled between America and the Soviet Union. George Orwell envisioned the lack of communication could possibly result to total dominance and control of the people.

The concept of also controls the personal beliefs of the citizens and promotes Totalitarianism by limiting the form of expression. The citizens of Oceania were forced to work long days which limited self expression because they were too tired to do anything else. For example, the citizens had to wake up and do "physical jerks" and had to work long hours for their government jobs. Through and Thought Police, the Totalitarian system of government in 1984 prevents the people from even thinking against the government and having personal beliefs.

Surveillance is placed on the people and they are forced to comply. Early in the novel we see "it was conceivable that they watched everybody all the time." (6) In chapter two, Winston can hardly remember his childhood because he was been warped and controlled by Big Brother. For example, in 1984 every household is equipped with a giant television that is constantly playing propaganda. The "telescreens" also supervise the behaviors and were there to constantly remind the citizens that "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING". Newspapers and media are censored to keep the government seemingly victorious.

During the Cold War, forms of literature were heavily censored by the Soviet Union and by the United States to prevent military information from falling into the wrong hands. During the Cold War, the German Democratic Republic in East Germany tried to force Communism on as many people as possible by completely enclosing the city of West Berlin for more than a quarter century. The Berlin Wall, constructed in 1961, served as a physical barrier and furthermore hindered European's freedom of self expression because the people did not have the freedom to do what they wanted.

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George Orwell saw this was happening and magnified the possibility of an over controlling government and presented this to the extreme in the novel 1984. The ultimate strength of the Totalitarian society is presented at the end of the novel when Winston Smith submits to Big Brother by means of torture in Room 101. (212) The Inner Party did not care about the well being of Winston. All Big Brother wanted was loyal citizens. If a citizen did not follow accordingly; they would be “ vaporized”. We see a change in Winston as a result from the pressing Totalitarian government. Throughout the novel, Winston was against his government.

For example, he kept a diary, made love to Julia, and conspired against the government with O'brian. However, at the end he has become “ fixed” to support and love his leader through learning, understanding, and accepting. (232) By the end of the novel, Winston does not even feel anything for Julia. He now understands the smile Big Brother always wears. “ He had finally won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother. ” (245) The government of Oceania has gone to great lengths to change Winston, and as always, they got a oppressed loyal follower . Orwell wanted to warn society of the effects of an strict overbearing government.

According to Orwell, the Totalitarian approach of government will not bow down to any one and will eventually dominate who ever gets in its path. America attempted to stop the spread of Communism through agreements and compromises. For example, the National Security Council Report 68 (NSC-68) was a report issued by the United States National Security Council on April 14, 1950. President Truman signed the document to emphasize military over diplomatic action to defend the Western Hemisphere from the <https://assignbuster.com/the-societal-effects-of-totalitarian-control-in-1984/>

Soviets. 1984 was written in 1949 and represented George Orwell's interpretation of a possible society in the near future.

During the 1950's, the Soviets painted a Communist utopian society where everyone was equal, despite financial status or background. For example, Carl Marx wanted to improve the condition of every member of society without distinction of class. However, Orwell wanted us to realize a society under Communist control was far from a perfect utopia; Orwell referred to it as a dystopia. Successfully, 1984 exposed the lifestyle and tradition of a Totalitarian government. Totalitarian politics will dominate communication, personal beliefs, and national loyalty despite the equal utopia appeal created by the Communists.

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