

1984 ap essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

1976. The conflict created when the will of an individual opposes the will of the majority is the recurring theme of many novels, plays, and essays. Select the work of an essayist who is in opposition to his or her society; or from a work of recognized literary merit, select a fictional character who is in opposition to his or her society. In a critical essay, analyze the conflict and discuss the moral and ethical implications for both the individual and the society. Do not summarize the plot or action of the work you choose.

War is peace, Freedom is slavery, Ignorance is strength. These three phrases may contradict everything that you know and have been taught, but in the “negative utopia” of George Orwell’s novel 1984 these are the slogans of the Party and of Big Brother which governs Oceania (modern day England). This society suppresses all free thinking, free enterprise, and all other freedoms. George Orwell predicts that the world will come to this if someone does not stand up to the dominant society.

This someone is Winston Smith, the thoughts and actions of Winston in 1984 place him against the Party, their views, and Big Brother. The Party which is the chief government rule of Oceania has strict rules limiting the person to think the way the Party thinks. The Ministry of Truth where Winston is employed does the job of destroying anything from the past that contradicts any rule of the Party or of anything Big Brother says. “Who controls the past,” ran the Party slogan, “controls the future: who controls the present controls the past,” (34).

They create their own past to set up the future, if something changes now that was previously recorded, it was changed as to not harm the integrity of

the Party. The ethical implications of the society are to control people and to do everything in their power to maintain sovereignty. It is the will of the Party to put fear into the minds of every citizen and alter their own free will to make them love Big Brother. Winston Smith, a middle-aged man began defying the law when he sat in hiding from his telescreen and wrote in ink in a diary.

His will is to uncover the secrets of the party, and of the world outside Oceania. He wants to think for himself and does not want to do the work of the Party. “ Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four. If that is granted, all else follows,” (81). That quote was an entry in Winston’s secret journal, implying that people should be able to think for themselves and not think what the Party makes you think. Winston’s moral implications are to set himself and others free from the malevolent rule of the Party and Big Brother.

There is a problem with Winston’s frame of mind in the eyes of the Party, and Julia who is Winston’s girlfriend turns him into the Thought Police. A man named O’Brien who works with Winston is secretly the leader of the Thought Police. Winston is tortured and beaten, but not killed, the Party wants him to change and conform to their policies. “ When you finally surrender to us, it must be of your own free will. We do not destroy the heretic because he resists us; so long as he resists us we never destroy him. We convert him, we capture his inner mind, we reshape him.

We burn all evil and illusion out of him; we bring him over to our side, not in appearance, but genuinely, heart and soul,” (255). The Party tortures and

tortures until you admit defeat and the Party has won again. O'Brien explains that everything about Goldstein and the Brotherhood was made by the Party to strike fear into the people to make them love the party for what they do. " But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother," (298).

This quote ties in the beginning of the novel when Winston is searching for himself. He admits defeat considering all that he had been through and conforms to just living the way that Big Brother want him to. This conflict reminds me of the Inquisitions, in which the Catholic Church converted or killed anyone who spoke against their rule. The Church also imposed their own ideas about the past and made them conform to the ideas of the Church. 1984, a year that has come and passed, but George Orwell's vision of what the world is becoming is very relevant today.

We are living while others are in control, and while this country may be free there has been proof of this " negative utopia" in the world. For example, the Nazi rule, the Soviet Communist rule and the Catholic control of all of Europe before the enlightenment era. There is living proof in Libya today where Qadaffi wants to suppress all who oppose him and crush those who stand in his way. Paranoia in the United States has risen due to the wiretap ideas, and if they really happen or not. Always remember BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU.