

"1984" free and crude
lives, they do not

Government



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

"1984" is a novel that I had greatly enjoyed to read, mainly due to its genius portrayal of totalitarianism through how it was drafted with its bleak storytelling and use of literary devices to help give people a sense of what totalitarianism is; not based off of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union but in a free country, like England, was under that rule. However, Orwell's portrayal of totalitarianism -not through violence and force, but through manipulation of concepts and language- is what truly makes it grim. What interested me was that while Orwell did not use many metaphors in 1984, the few that he does include are profound. The use of metaphors in 1984 serve to better illustrate what Orwell was conceptualizing. For example, the Proles represent the lowest working classes of society-the proletariat (the proletariat, according to Marx, are the group of workers who don't own the means of production and who would overthrow the czar and come to rule Russia)-and they also serve as a metaphor for ignorance. It's a strange thing to not know that they are oppressed and powerless, but when the masses have been conditioned to such terms, they start to believe that this is normal-that society has always been this way. They have the power to overthrow the government but don't even realize that they're being oppressed; the Proles could have risen up against the Party and restore freedom for all citizens.

However, the history in the year 1984 has been re-written by Emmanuel Goldstein's Party. He claims that the Proles, throughout their history, have rebelled against and renounced the state only to reestablish the same class structures. As such, the Proles in 1984 represent hopelessness and ignorance.

While they live free and crude lives, they do not attempt to try to understand or overcome their oppression. They're just the unwashed masses that have no drive to revolt, giving the reader a sense of powerlessness against the government. Another literary device used by Orwell was foreshadowing. Orwell uses this to hint that something exists so when an action or event occurs, it is anticipated but it builds into the suspense as the reader doesn't know when something is going to happen or if it was really just a red herring. In 1984, Orwell used rats as a form of foreshadowing, specifically for Winston's " death." The rats first appear in the secret room with Winston and Julia. The rats peer through a hole in the wall, causing Winston to be alarmed due to a nightmare he had in the past involving rats. This gets the reader to start speculating on this information that seems out of place and builds the suspense.

Ultimately, this serves to foreshadow his torture in Room 101, which occurs after his arrest by the end of his story. Moreover, Winston also dreams of meeting O'Brien in a room with no darkness, linking both of the dreams in that once he is captured, he meets O'Brien, who threatens to unleash a cage of rats on Winston. " You asked me once," said O'Brien, " what was in Room 101. I told you that you knew the answer already. Everyone knows it. The thing that is in Room 101 is the worst thing in the world" (c5. p4, O'Brien), foretelling the future that Winston's torture would include his deepest, darkest fear: rats. Orwell's use of symbolism in 1984 is also very important.

One such example would be the glass paperweight, which is first seen at the beginning of the story and is used to symbolize hope throughout the novel. It is also used to symbolize the past as it is nearly impossible to craft such an

<https://assignbuster.com/1984-free-and-crude-lives-they-do-not/>

item because the skill required is now unachievable. " What appealed to him about it was not so much its beauty as the air it seemed to possess of belonging to an age quite different from the present one.

The soft, rain watery glass was not like any glass that he had ever seen,"(c1. p10) an object that Winston finds beautiful, something in his society that anything pleasurable is forbidden, shows itself as a rebellion against oppression. It also appears in each place that Winston sees as safe-safe from the thought police. When Winston is arrested, one of the officers symbolically destroys the paperweight, signifying that Winston's hope has been shattered. It could also be related to how Winston, in the end, was "killed." Winston's sense of self was completely destroyed, someone who was opposed to the system, now running with it.

This shows the reader how powerful the government is and just fuels the sense of hopelessness and power that the government has. 1984 is a very well-written book that uses its suspense and constant wariness to give us the feeling that the characters are on constant watch. Orwell's dystopian novel has most likely impacted our views on life in a totalitarian society where it lets the readers scope into what life was like in another part of the world. I would recommend this book to people who liked " Brave New World" by Aldous Huxley.