

A role of technology in 1984



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In today's society, the evolution of technology has changed society in both positive and negative ways. People all over the world use and benefit from modern technology. Technology has simplified the access to many tools, people need in education, medicine, communication, transportation, etc.

However, it has also caused privacy issues. Technology is becoming more integrated into our work lives. Personal information about us is constantly being gathered. It carries our contacts, calendar, personal message, anything from your Social Security number to your bank account or credit card numbers our information is at risk for strangers, hackers, or identity thieves to gain access to it.

Still, this is far different to 1984 society, where the government was invading the privacy of people and using the media as a way to control them. Along with psychological manipulation, physical control takes place. The Party not only controls what people in Oceania think, but what they do as well.

Technology is another important theme. Without the constant telescreens, microphones, and computers, the Party would be all but powerless of the constant messages and propaganda causes citizens to have no time for an independent thought. Privacy is an important right because it is a necessary condition for other rights such as freedom and personal autonomy. There is a relationship between privacy, freedom and human dignity. Respecting a person's privacy is to acknowledge such a person's right to freedom and to recognize that individual as an autonomous human being.

In the novel " The instrument (the telescreen it was called) could be dimmed but there was no way of shutting it off completely." (Orwell pg. 2). The "

telescreen" is a ubiquitous symbol of the government's omniscient presence in the lives of its citizen. In the novel Julia had given Winston a note, with Winston being eager to read it, he had thought about reading it in the bathroom but later on, realized that the telescreens are everywhere and he could get caught. In today's society, we have had surveillance cameras in public places because they ensure public safety, through surveillance cameras, the police can both prevent crimes from happening and can quickly solve criminal cases with material evidence. In addition, surveillance cameras protect against property theft and vandalism. Installing cameras in bathrooms is an act of privacy violation, that prohibits photographing/filming people without their consent in locations where they might partially or completely disrobe. Bathrooms, bedrooms, changing rooms, locker rooms are all examples of places people are expected to disrobe. It can be prosecuted as voyeurism, illegal spying, illegal recording, invasion of privacy or stalking, all of which carry severe hard prison time and a criminal record.

The government also took over the minds so much that it was almost impossible for people to even think up their own thoughts. " For how could you establish even the most obvious fact when there existed no record outside your own memory? (Orwell pg. 22). The people were completely brainwashed by their government and did not have a clue. Everyone wears the same clothes, eats the same food, and lives the same. Life is uniform and orderly. No one can stand out, and no one can be unique. No matter where the people go, the Party provides a constant barrage of information, mostly untruthful, meant only to occupy their time. The Party also thinks

down upon the family structure. The Party undermines families by letting their children into an organization called the Junior Spies.

The Party then brainwashes and encourages them to spy on their parents. They are told to report any problems and signs of disloyalty. In today's society, people hear about political issues all over the news and form their own opinions on them. Freedom of thought (also called the freedom of conscience or ideas) is the freedom of an individual to hold or consider a fact, viewpoint, or thought independent of others' viewpoints. The right to freedom of speech is recognized as a human right under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and recognized in international human rights law in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The ICCPR recognizes the right to freedom of speech as "the right to hold opinions without interference. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression".

"At the sight of the words I love you the desire to stay alive had welled up in him, and the taking of minor risks suddenly seemed stupid." Orwell 91. This quote shows the overpowering feeling of love in human nature. Even as Winston was ready to give up completely, even though he knows that love for fun is unacceptable and showing emotions for someone else is frowned upon in Oceania. Well, I also thought it may have been more along the lines of connecting emotions with opinions. If you can function enough to think for yourself, then you can get ideas, and the people's ideas can corrupt the government.

Which is why their emotions are constantly being controlled in Oceania. The only two emotions that people are allowed to feel are hatred and fear. Everyone fears everyone else in this book. Someone unable to contain emotions is weak. It's exactly what the government wants and because "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU". McCarthyism is very similar to Oceania. Oceania, where people are controlled and oppressed by the party, led by the big brother, free speech, rebellious and independent thought is forbidden, people who fail to abide by the strict laws are taken away by the thought police and punished severely.

In conclusion, there are certain limits that the government needs to place in order for the economy to not become corrupted, People should not be manipulated and controlled especially not be in constant fear of being watched and not able to speak or act freely. The novel 1984 presents thought's concerning the use of technology and how it could influence the relationship between a country and its government. Although some people may think that his predictions for our future were too exaggerated, yet we still haven't discovered how far technology can go, or how it will affect us as a whole. If a powerful government was able to access devices like presented in 1984, there is a definite possibility that they could control us. It is important that we always consider all the possible outcomes and moral issues when developing new technology.