1984

Background info

AUTHOR BIO
Full Name: Eric Arthur Blair
Pen Name: George Orwell
Date of Birth: 1903
Place of Birth: Motihari, India
Date of Death: 1950

Brief Life Story: Eric Blair was born and spent his youth in India. He was educated at Eton in England. From 1922-27 he served in the Indian Imperial Police in Burma. Through his autobiographical work about poverty in London (Down and Out in Paris and London, 1933), his experiences in colonial Burma (Burmese Days, 1934) and in the Spanish Civil War (Homage to Catalonia, 1938), and the plight of unemployed coal miners in England (The Road to Wigan Pier, 1937), Blair (who wrote under the name George Orwell) exposed and critiqued the human tendency to oppress others politically, economically, and physically. He is best known for his satires of totalitarian rule: Animal Farm (1945) and Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949). Both books were widely considered to be indictments of Communism under Joseph Stalin, but Orwell insisted that they were critiques of totalitarian ideas in general, and warned that the nightmarish conditions he depicted could take place anywhere. In 1947 a lung infection contracted in Burma worsened, and in 1950 Orwell succumbed to tuberculosis at the age of 46.

KEY FACTS
Full Title: Nineteen Eighty-Four: A Novel
Genre: Novel / Satire / Parable
Setting: London in the year 1984
Climax: Winston is tortured in Room 101
Antagonist: O’Brien
Point of View: Third-person omniscient

HISTORICAL AND LITERARY CONTEXT
When Written: 1945-49; outline written 1943
Where Written: Jura, Scotland
When Published: June 1949

Related Literary Works: In 1516, Sir Thomas More published a book called Utopia. It’s title meant, in Greek, either “good place” or “no place,” and the book described an ideal society that More used in order to criticize his own society. Utopia was not the first book to imagine a perfect society, Plato’s Republic, for example, does the same thing. But Utopia did give the genre a name, and numerous writers over the years wrote their own Utopian novels. In addition, a number of writers wrote Dystopian novels, in which they imagined the worst possible society, and used it to criticize their current world. Nineteen Eighty-Four is a dystopian novel. The primary literary model for Nineteen Eighty-Four is considered to be H.G. Wells’s anti-Utopian satire When the Sleeper Wakes (1899), but Orwell was also influenced by the writings of the 18th century satirist Jonathan Swift, author of Gulliver’s Travels (1726). Prior to writing Nineteen Eighty-Four Orwell wrote and published essays on Aldous Huxley’s Brave New World (1932), Jack London’s The Iron Heel (1907) and Yevgeny Zamyatin’s We (1924), dystopian novels set in an imaginary future, and James Burnham’s nonfiction political tract The Managerial Revolution (1941).

Related Historical Events: Orwell was a socialist, the direct result of his service as a militiaman on the Republican side against the Fascist general Francisco Franco in the Spanish Civil War. Upon his return to England he joined the British Independent Labour Party and began to write against Stalinism and the Nazi regime. Orwell was also influenced by anarchist critiques of Soviet communism and by the Marxist writings of Leon Trotsky, the exiled communist revolutionary and model for Emmanuel Goldstein in Nineteen Eighty-Four. In 1946 Orwell wrote, “Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism and for democratic socialism, as I understand it.”

EXTRA CREDIT
Outspoken Anti-Communist. Orwell didn’t just write literature that condemned the Communist state of the USSR. He did everything he could, from writing editorials to compiling lists of men he knew were Soviet spies, to combat the willful blindness of many intellectuals in the West to USSR atrocities.

Working Title. Orwell’s working title for the novel was The Last Man in Europe.

PLOT SUMMARY
In the future world of 1984, the world is divided up into three superstates—Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia—that are deadlocked in a permanent war. The superpowers are so evenly matched that a decisive victory is impossible, but the real reason for the war is to keep their economies productive without adding to the wealth of their citizens, who live (with the exception of a privileged few) in a state of fear and poverty. Oceania, made up of the English-speaking nations, is ruled by a group known simply as the Party, a despotic oligarchical collective that is ideologically very similar to the regimes in power in the other two superstates, though each claims that their system is superior to the others. The Inner Party, whose members make up 2% of the population, effectively govern, while the Outer Party, who number about 13% of the population, unquestioningly carry out their orders. The remaining 85% of the population are proles, who are largely ignored because they are judged intellectually incapable of organized revolt. In order to maintain its power, the Party keeps its citizens under constant surveillance, monitoring even their thoughts, and arresting and “vaporizing” individuals if they show signs of discontent or nonconformity. The Party’s figurehead is Big Brother, whose mustachioed face is displayed on posters and coins, and toward whom every citizen is compelled to feel love and allegiance. Organized hate rallies keep patriotism at a fever pitch, and public executions of prisoners of war increase support for the regime and for the war itself.

Winston Smith, a quiet, frail Outer Party member who lives alone in a one-room flat in a squalid apartment complex called Victory Mansions, is disturbed by the Party’s willingness to alter history in order to present its regime as infallible and just. A gifted writer whose job at the Ministry of Truth is to rewrite news articles in order to make them comply with Party ideology, Winston begins keeping a diary, an activity which is not illegal, since there are no laws in Oceania, but which he knows is punishable by death. Since every room is outfitted with a telescreen that can both transmit and receive sounds and images, Winston must be extremely careful to disguise his subversive activities. He imagines he is writing the diary to O’Brien, a charismatic Inner Party bureaucrat whom Winston believes is a member of a fabled underground counterrevolutionary organization known as the Brotherhood. Winston is also writing in order to stay sane, because the Party controls reality to the extent of requiring its subjects to deny the evidence of their own senses, a practice known as doublethink; and Winston knows of no one else who shares his feelings of loathing and outrage.

One day at work, a dark-haired girl whom Winston mistakenly suspects of being a spy for the Thought Police, an organization that hunts out and punishes unorthodox thinking (known as thoughtcrime), slips him a note that says “I love you.” At first, Winston is terrified—in Oceania, individual relationships are prohibited and sexual desire forbidden even to married
and they begin an illicit love affair, meeting first in the countryside, then in the crowded streets, and then regularly in a room without a telescreen above the secondhand store where Winston bought his diary. The proprietor, Mr. Charrington, seems trustworthy, and Winston believes that he, too, is an ally because of his apparent respect for the past—a past that the Party has tried hard to eradicate by altering and destroying historical records in order to make sure that the people of Oceania never realize that they are actually worse off than their ancestors who lived before the Revolution.

Meanwhile, the lovers are being led into a trap. O'Brien, who is actually loyal to the Party, dupes them into believing he is a counterrevolutionary and lends them a book that was supposedly written by the exiled Emmanuel Goldstein, a former Party leader who has been denounced as a traitor, and which O'Brien says will initiate them into the Brotherhood of One. One night, the lovers are arrested in their hiding place with the incriminating book in their possession, and they learn that Mr. Charrington has all along been a member of the Thought Police.

Winston and Julia are tortured and brainwashed by O'Brien in the Ministry of Love. During the torture in the dreaded room 101, Winston and Julia betray one another, and in the process lose their self-respect, individuality and sexual desire. They are then released, separately, to live out their broken lives as loyal Party members. In the closing scene, Winston, whose experiences have turned him into an alcoholic, gazes adoringly at a portrait of Big Brother, whom he has at last learned to love.

**CHARACTERS**

**Winston Smith** – The protagonist of the novel, a 39-year-old Outer Party functionary who privately rebels against the Party’s totalitarian rule. Frail, intellectual, and fatalistic, Winston works in the Records Department of the Ministry of Truth rewriting news articles to conform with the Party’s current version of history. Winston perceives that the Party’s ultimate goal is to gain absolute mastery over the citizens of Oceania by controlling access to the past and—more diabolically—controlling the minds of its subjects. Orwell uses Winston’s habit of introspection and self-analysis to explore the opposition between external and internal reality, and between individualism and collective identity. Convinced that he cannot escape punishment for his disloyalty, Winston nonetheless seeks to understand the motives behind the Party’s oppressive policies, and takes considerable personal risks not only to experience forbidden feelings and relationships but to contact others who share his skepticism and desire to rebel against Ingsoc (English Socialism).

**Julia/The Dark-Haired Girl** – Winston’s dark-haired, sexually rebellious 26-year-old lover, who works in the Fiction Department at the Ministry of Truth. Julia is opportunistical, practical, intellectually primitive, vital, and uninterested in politics. She believes that the Party is unconquerable through organized resistance, and that secret disobedience is the only effective form of revolt. She delights in breaking the rules, and her cunning and courage inspire Winston to take greater and greater risks. Julia disguises her illegal activities beneath an appearance of orthodoxy. For instance, she is an active member of the Junior Anti-Sex League.

**O’Brien** – The antagonist of the novel—a corrupt bureaucrat, member of the Inner Party, and symbol of dehumanizing and dehumanized despotism. O’Brien’s charismatic appearance and manners fool Winston into believing that he too is working against the Party, leading Winston to incriminate himself. Even after O’Brien reveals himself to be the Party’s instrument of terror, Winston continues to admire his intelligence, and under torture comes paradoxically to worship him as his savior.

**Mr. Charrington** – The elderly owner of the junk shop where Winston buys the diary, then the paperweight, and eventually rents a private bedroom for his trysts with Julia. Charrington induces Winston to trust him with his apparent reverence for the past, discreet behavior, and mild-mannered exterior. Actually a member of the Thought Police, Charrington ensures that the lovers are arrested.

**Big Brother** – An invention of the Party whose face appears on coins and posters throughout Oceania. Ostensibly a Party leader, he is a figurehead devised to focus the loyalty of Party members, whose feelings of love are more easily directed toward an individual than an organization.

**Emmanuel Goldstein** – An exiled former Party leader, who is vilified by the party as the Enemy of the People. He is the subject of the broadcast viewed at the Two Minutes Hate, author of *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*, and the supposed leader of the Brotherhood.

**Syme** – A politically orthodox linguist and colleague of Winston’s whose job is to edit the Eleventh Edition of the Newspeak dictionary. Syme’s intelligence leads to his arrest and vaporization, as Winston suspects it will. O’Brien’s mention of Syme after his disappearance encourages Winston to believe O’Brien is a secret ally.

**Parsons** – Winston’s neighbor at Victory Mansions, a sweaty, pudgy, orthodox man who inadvertently criticizes the Party in his sleep and is reported to the Police by his vigilant daughter, a member of the Spies. Winston despises him for his unquestioning acceptance of Party doctrine.

**Mrs. Parsons** – Parsons’ wife, who asks Winston to repair her sink and nearly discovers the diary.

**Tillotson** – A secretive and apparently hostile colleague of Winston’s in the Records department who is employed on what Winston suspects are exactly the same tasks as himself.

**Ampleforth** – A colleague of Winston’s whose job is to edit poems into compliance with Party ideology. He is eventually arrested for retaining the word “God” in a poem because he can think of no other rhyme.

**The Woman With Sandy Hair** – A colleague of Winston’s whose job it is to delete the names of persons who are vaporized.

**The Man With The Quacking Voice** – A bureaucrat who converses with Julia in duckspeak in the canteen at the Ministry of Truth.

**Katharine** – Winston’s wife. Orthodox and unimaginative, she considers it their duty to the Party to bear children, and leaves him when their efforts to conceive end in failure. Winston once considered murdering Katharine during their duty to the Party to bear children, and leaves him when their efforts to conceive end in failure. Winston once considered murdering Katharine during a nature walk, but decides not to act on the opportunity.

**Martin** – O’Brien’s servant. Vaguely Oriental in appearance, Martin is privy to the incriminating conversation between O’Brien, Winston, and Julia.

**Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford** – Formerly prominent Party leaders accused of traitorous activities. Winston observes them when they are released after torture and are drinking gin at the Chestnut Tree Café. He also briefly possesses photographic evidence of their innocence.

**The Skull-Faced Man** – A starving prisoner at the Ministry of Love who falsely incriminates others in order to avoid being taken to the dreaded Room 101.

**Bumstead** – A fat, chintish man who offers a crust of bread to the starving skull-faced man and is beaten by guards.

**The Old Prole Man** – An incoherent, drunken old man whom Winston questions about the quality of life before the Revolution.

**Winston’s Mother** – A saint-like woman who became depressed after her husband’s disappearance. Left to care for her two children alone in extreme poverty, she nonetheless was generous with her affection. Winston feels guilty about the selfish way he treated her.

**Comrade Withers** – A disgraced Party member who is vaporized and becomes an unperson. Winston is assigned the task of deleting references to him in a news article.

**Comrade Ogilvy** – The fictional hero Winston invents to replace Comrade Withers.

**THEMES**

**TOTALITARIANISM AND COMMUNISM**

Orwell published *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in 1949, not as a prediction of actual future events, but to warn the world against what he feared would be the fate of humanity if totalitarian regimes were allowed to seize power as they had done recently in Germany under Hitler and in the Soviet Union under Stalin. In the aftermath of World War II, Anglo-American intellectuals were reluctant to criticize the Soviet regime, despite evidence of Stalin’s despotism, because Russia had been an ally against Germany and Japan. Orwell, who witnessed firsthand the Soviet-backed Communists’ brutal suppression of rival political
groups during the Spanish Civil War, returned from the war an outspoken critic of Stalinism. For the rest of his life he worked tirelessly to expose the evils of totalitarianism and to promote what he called “democratic socialism.” To reviewers who wished to see his book as a critique of Soviet Communism, Orwell maintained that he had set the book in Britain in order to show that totalitarianism could succeed anywhere if it were not fought against. In the novel, INGSOC represents the worst features of both the Nazi and Communist regimes. The Party’s ultimate ambition is to control the minds as well as the bodies of its citizenry, and thus control reality itself. Totalitarianism was an outgrowth of Socialism, which arose as a response to industrialization, and sought to create more equitable societies by centralizing production and abolishing private property in favor of collective ownership. Emmanuel Goldstein’s book, parts of which Winston reads in Book II, outlines the methods by which a totalitarian regime consolidates and extends its power.

THE INDIVIDUAL VS. COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

One way a totalitarian regime seeks to stay in power is by denying human beings their individuality, eradicating independent thought through the use of propaganda and terror. Throughout Nineteen Eighty-Four, Winston tries to assert his individual nature against the collective identity the Party wishes him to adopt. He keeps a private diary, engages in a forbidden sexual relationship, and insists that his version of reality is the truth, as opposed to what the Party says it is. Instead of going to the Community Center or participating in social groups, he wanders the prole neighborhoods alone and seeks solitude in his apartment, engaging in behavior the Party calls ownlife and considers dangerous. After Winston is caught, the seven years of torture to which O’Brien subjects him are designed to destroy Winston’s ability to think unorthodox thoughts. Before he enters Room 101, Winston is able to see that to die hating the Party is freedom, but by the end of the novel he is no longer capable of this. In order to save himself from O’Brien’s rats, Winston does the one thing he can never forgive himself for—he betrays Julia and in doing so relinquishes his own morality and self-respect.

REALITY CONTROL

The Party controls the citizens of Oceania through a combination of surveillance, terror, and propaganda. Although there are no laws to punish crime, the party can indiscriminately use torture, imprisonment, or vaporization on anyone whose thoughts or actions indicate that they may commit a crime in the future. The presence of telescreens in every room reminds citizens that they are constantly being observed, and all live in fear that their neighbors, coworkers, or even family members will report them to the Thought Police. Another way the Party controls the minds of the people is by destroying historical evidence that contradicts what the Party wishes the people to believe: for instance, when the Party reduces the chocolate ration, it also eliminates any information that would make it possible for anyone to verify that the chocolate ration had once been larger. Winston and his fellow employees in the Records Department are given the task of rewriting news articles and other literature in order to bring the written record into compliance with the version of history supported by the Party, a never ending job, since the Party constantly changes facts in order to support its policies. Books that describe the past in a way that does not conform with Party ideology are destroyed or translated into Newspeak, a form of English designed by the Party to lack words that are considered unnecessary or dangerous, and which thereby prevents revolutionary thoughts.

SEX, LOVE, AND LOYALTY

As Julia observes, the Party polices sexual relationships because it realizes that the hysteria caused by sexual frustration can be harnessed into war fever and leader-worship. Because of this, when Winston and Julia make love they think of it as a political act, “a blow struck against the Party.” The sadistic fantasies Winston has about Julia before they begin their affair indicate the strong link between sexual repression and violence. The red sash Julia wears and her voluptuous appearance arouses feelings of hatred and resentment that only dissipate when he learns that he can possess her physically. Another reason that the Party restricts sexual behavior is that sexual desire competes with loyalty to the State: after Winston makes love with Julia, he realizes that it is “the force that would tear the Party to pieces.” In place of heterosexual love, the Party substitutes leader-worship and patriotic feeling; thus, when Winston betrays Julia under torture, he learns to revere O’Brien and worship Big Brother.

CLASS STRUGGLE

In Nineteen Eighty-Four, society is made up of three distinct social classes: the elite Inner Party, the industrious Outer Party, and vast numbers of uneducated proles. When Winston reads Goldstein’s book, he learns that the history of humankind has been a cyclical struggle between competing social groups: the High, the Middle, and the Low. This theory was originated by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the 19th century and became known as Marxism. Marxists believe that the aim of the Middle group is to change places with the High, which they do by enlisting the support of the Low group. After the Middle group seizes power in a revolution, they become the High and thrust the Low back into servitude. Eventually a new Middle group splits off and the cycle begins again. At various points in the narrative, Winston entertains the hope that the proles will become conscious of their oppressed state and initiate a revolution. At other times, he despairs that since the proles cannot rebel until they become conscious, and cannot become conscious until only after they have rebelled, such a development is extremely unlikely.

THE GLASS PAPERWEIGHT

The old glass paperweight sold to Winston by Mr. Charrington represents the past. The level of craftsmanship required to make it is no longer achievable, since production standards have dropped and the Party has abolished beauty for its own sake. The tiny fragment of coral embedded in the paperweight represents the fragility of human relationships, particularly the bond between Julia and Winston, which is destroyed by O’Brien as easily and remorselessly as the paperweight is smashed by the Thought Police. The paperweight also symbolizes the room in Mr. Charrington’s house that becomes a private sanctuary for the lovers, imagined by Winston as a separate world, frozen in time.

THE RED-ARMED PROLE WOMAN

The prole woman symbolizes fertility and reproductive capacity, and represents the strong and vital lower classes. She is compared to an animal (a mare), a fruit (a rose-hip), and an overripe turnip. Winston feels a “mystical reverence” toward her. Just before the lovers are arrested, the sight of her hanging laundry in the courtyard convinces Winston that the proles are “immortal” and will someday awaken and rebel against and overthrow the Party.
The inexhaustibly interesting thing was not the fragment of coral but the interior of the glass itself—that was the ultimate subtlety: consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed. Even to understand the word “doublethink” involved the use of doublethink.

The process of continuous alteration was applied not only to newspapers, but to books, periodicals, pamphlets, posters, leaflets, films, sound tracks, cartoons, photographs—to every kind of literature or documentation which might conceivably hold any political or ideological significance. Day by day and almost minute by minute the past was brought up to date. In this way every predication made by the Party could be shown by documentary evidence to have been correct; nor was any item of news, or any expression of opinion, which conflicted with the needs of the moment, ever allowed to remain on record. All history was a palimpsest, scraped clean and reinscribed exactly as often as was necessary. In no case would it have been possible, once the deed was done, to prove that any falsification had taken place.

BOOK TWO QUOTES

In the old days, he thought, a man looked at a girl’s body and saw that it was desirable, and that was the end of the story. But you could not have pure love or pure lust nowadays. No emotion was pure, because everything was mixed up with fear and hatred. Their embrace had been a battle, the climax a victory. It was a blow struck against the Party. It was a political act.

There was a direct, intimate connection between chastity and political orthodoxy. For how could the fear, the hatred, and the lunatic credulity which the Party needed in its members be kept at the right pitch, except by bottling down some powerful instinct and using it as a driving force? The sex impulse was dangerous to the Party, and the Party had turned it to account.

He turned over towards the light and lay gazing into the glass paperweight. The inexhaustibly interesting thing was not the fragment of coral but the interior of the glass itself. There was such a depth of it, and yet it was almost as transparent as air. It was as though the surface of the glass had been the arch of the sky, enclosing a tiny world with its atmosphere complete. He had the feeling that he could get inside it, and that in fact he was inside it, along with the mahogany bed and the gateleg table and the clock and the steel engraving and the paperweight itself. The paperweight was the room he was in, and the coral was Julia’s life and his own, fixed in a sort of eternity at the heart of the crystal.

The terrible thing that the Party had done was to persuade you that mere impulses, mere feelings, were of no account, while at the same time robbing you of all power over the material world. When once you were in the grip of the Party, what you felt or did not feel, what you did or refrained from doing, made literally no difference. Whatever happened you vanished, and neither you nor your actions were ever heard of again.

The primary aim of modern warfare (in accordance with the principles of doublethink, this aim is simultaneously recognized and not recognized by the directing brains of the Inner Party) is to use up the products of the machine without raising the general standard of living.

The two aims of the Party are to conquer the whole surface of the earth and to extinguish once and for all the possibility of independent thought. There are therefore two great problems which the Party is concerned to solve. One is how to discover, against his will, what another human being is thinking, and the other is how to kill several hundred million people in a few seconds without giving warning beforehand.

The heirs of the French, English, and American revolutions had partly believed in their own phrases about the rights of man, freedom of speech, equality before the law, and the like, and have even allowed their conduct to be influenced by them to some extent. But by the fourth decade of the twentieth century all the main currents of political thought were authoritarian. The earthly paradise had been discredited at exactly the moment when it became realizable. Every new political theory, by whatever name it called itself, led back to hierarchy and regimentation. And in the general hardening of outlook that set in round about 1930, practices which had been long abandoned, in some cases for hundreds of years—imprisonment without trial, the use of war prisoners as slaves, public executions, torture to extract confessions, the use of hostages, and the deportation of whole populations—not only became common again, but were tolerated and even defended by people who considered themselves enlightened and progressive.

Crimestop means the faculty of stopping short, as though by instinct, at the threshold of any dangerous thought. It includes the power of not grasping analogies, of failing to perceive logical errors, of misunderstanding the simplest arguments if they are inimical to Ingsoc, and of being bored or repelled by any train of thought which is capable of leading in a heretical direction. Crimestop, in short, means protective stupidity.

The Ministry of Peace concerns itself with war, the Ministry of Truth with lies, the Ministry of Love with torture and the Ministry of Plenty with starvation. These contradictions are not accidental, nor do they result from ordinary hypocrisy; they are deliberate exercises in doublethink. For it is only by reconciling contradictions that power can be retained indefinitely. In no other way could the ancient cycle be broken. If human equality is to be for ever averted—if the High, as we have called them, are to keep their places permanently—then the prevailing mental condition must be controlled insanity.
BOOK THREE QUOTES

“...The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness: only power, pure power. What pure power means you will understand presently. We are different from all the oligarchies of the past, in that we know what we are doing. All the others, even those who resembled ourselves, were cowards and hypocrites. The German Nazis and the Russian Communists came very close to us in their methods, but they never had the courage to recognize their own motives. They pretended, perhaps they even believed, that they had seized power unwillingly and for a limited time, and that just round the corner there lay a paradise where human beings would be free and equal. We are not like that. We know that no one ever seizes power with the intention of relinquishing it. Power is not a means; it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power.”

To die hating them, that was freedom.

“Sometimes,” she said, “they threaten you with something—something you can’t stand up to, can’t even think about. And then you say, ‘Don’t do it to me, do it to somebody else, do it to so-and-so.’ And perhaps you might pretend, afterwards, that it was only a trick and that you just said it to make them stop and didn’t really mean it. But that isn’t true. At the time when it happens you do mean it. You think there’s no other way of saving yourself, and you’re quite ready to save yourself that way. You want it to happen to the other person. You don’t give a damn what they suffer. All you care about is yourself.”

“All you care about is yourself,” he echoed.

“And after that, you don’t feel the same towards the other person any longer.” — “No,” he said, “you don’t feel the same.”

He gazed up at the enormous face. Forty years it had taken him to learn what kind of smile was hidden beneath the dark mustache. O cruel, needless misunderstanding! O stubborn, self-willed exile from the loving breast! Two gin-scented tears trickled down the sides of his nose. But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother.

APPENDIX QUOTES

The purpose of Newspeak was not only to provide a medium of expression for the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc, but to make all other modes of thought impossible. It was intended that when Newspeak had been adopted once and for all and Oldspeak forgotten, a heretical thought—that is, a thought diverging from the principles of Ingsoc—should be literally unthinkable, at least so far as thought is dependent on words.

SUMMARY & ANALYSIS

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 1

As the clocks strike thirteen on a day in April, Winston Smith, a low-ranking member of the Outer Party, climbs the stairs to his flat in Victory Mansions. He has left his work at the Records Department early in order to write in a diary he has bought in a junk shop in a proletarian slum in London, the capital of Airstrip One in the superstate of Oceania.

Because the electricity that powers the elevator has been turned off in preparation for Hate Week, Winston, who is 39 years old, frail, fair-haired and wearing a blue Party uniform, slowly climbs seven dingy flights of stairs to his flat. He limps because of a varicose ulcer on his right ankle. On each landing of the stairs hangs a poster depicting the enormous face of a man with a black mustache, with a caption that reads, BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU.

The opening paragraphs, which set the scene in a fictional future world, present numerous details about life under Party rule that will be more fully explained later. Ominously, the clocks strike thirteen, a traditionally unlucky number.

Orwell uses the word “Party” to suggest that the fictional regime in 1984 is based on the actual Communist regime then in place in the Soviet Union under the dictatorship of Joseph Stalin. The details emphasize the grayness and scarcity characteristic of life under totalitarian rule.

The monotonousness of the broadcast on the telescreen emphasizes its irritating and oppressive presence. The details that follow continue the theme of surveillance, which Winston is particularly conscious of because he is about to engage in an act of thoughtcrime. The posters of Big Brother symbolize the constant vigilance of the State over its subjects. “INGSOC” stands for English Socialism.
Gazing through his window at the rows of rotting and bombed-out buildings, Winston can’t remember whether London has always looked this way. He is distracted by the sight of four gigantic glittering white pyramids: his workplace, the Ministry of Truth (in Newspeak, Mintruth), which controls the media and education; the Ministry of Peace (Minipax), which conducts war; the terrifying Ministry of Love (Miniluv), which maintains law and order; and the Ministry of Plenty (Minisplenty) which manages economic affairs.

Controlling his facial expression, Winston faces the telescreen. By leaving work early he has missed his opportunity to eat in the canteen, and though he is hungry he must save the only food in the house, a piece of dark-colored bread, for breakfast the next day. He drinks a teacup of oily-smelling Victory Gin and takes out a Victory cigarette.

Sitting in an alcove out of sight of the telescreen, Winston takes out a penholder and nib, a bottle of ink, and a blank book. Since there are no laws in Oceania, it’s not illegal to keep a diary, but Winston knows that if he’s in Oceania, it’s not illegal to keep a diary. As the run-on quality of Winston’s description of this propagandistic film conveys both his fear of discovery and also his primitive early understanding of the Party’s motives—at this point in the novel, his revulsion is emotional, not intellectual. The objections of the prole woman are a sign that any hope of a revolution lies with the proletarians.

The diary fascinates Winston because it is an artifact from the past, an obsolete and forbidden object. The solitude that Winston seeks is regarded as subversive by the Party, which refers to it as ownlife. Winston’s inability to pinpoint the date suggests the degree of control the Party exerts over reality and the historical record.

Winston’s instincts are notoriously unreliable: he is strangely drawn to O’Brien, who becomes his tormentor and enemy, and initially suspicious of Julia, who becomes his ally.

Winston’s flashback illustrates his confused emotional state and the contagious nature of propaganda-fueled hatred. Winston needs to write in the diary in order to sort out his feelings, and he imagines he is addressing his thoughts to O’Brien, an authority figure whom he believes will rescue him from the isolation of his subversive thoughts. During the Two Minutes Hate, the telescreen broadcasted a story about Emmanuel Goldstein, a former Party leader and now its scapegoat. Winston experienced conflicting feelings of hate toward Goldstein on one hand and the Party on the other. He also felt hatred toward the dark-haired girl, and imagined beating, raping, and slitting her throat. He realized that he hated her because she was young and desirable, and was wearing a scarlet sash that identified her as a member of the Junior Anti-Sex League, an organization that promotes chastity.

As the crowd reached a frenzied hatred of Goldstein, Big Brother appeared on the telescreen along with the Party slogans: WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH. Winston’s eyes met O’Brien’s, and it seemed to Winston that O’Brien was sending him a silent message of understanding. Wondering if O’Brien was a member of the fabled Brotherhood, a counterrevolutionary group, Winston decided to go home to write in his diary.

In the apartment, Winston finds he has been writing “DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER” repeatedly in the diary. He realizes that whether he writes them down or not, his disloyal thoughts constitute thoughtcrime, and that he will eventually be discovered, arrested by the Thought Police, and vaporized. Just then, he hears a knock on the door.
Winston wonders why he’s keeping the diary, since it’s doubtful that it will survive him when, inevitably, he is vaporized. He decides that he’s keeping it in order to stay sane, not to communicate with the future. Realizing that he’s a dead man, but determined to stay alive as long as possible, he puts the diary away and returns to work.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 3

Winston wakes from a dream of his mother, who was vaporized when he was a boy, not long after his father disappeared. He sees his mother, holding his baby sister in her arms, on a sinking ship, looking up at him through the water. He knows that his mother sacrificed her life for him and he regrets that there is no longer any privacy, love, friendship, or complex emotions—only fear, hatred, and pain.

Still dreaming, he finds himself in a pasture in the countryside that he thinks of as the ‘Golden Country.’ The girl with dark hair comes toward him, taking off her clothes with a careless gesture that Winston admires. He awakens with the word “Shakespeare” on his lips to an ear-splitting whistle from the telescreen, the daily wake-up call for office workers. Struggling through compulsory morning exercises, Winston tries to remember a time when Oceania hasn’t been at war, and fails. Instead, he remembers sheltering as a child with his family in a Tube station during an air raid with a drunken old man who kept repeating that they “didn’t ought to ‘ave trusted the buggers.” Because the written record is perpetually changing, and people are not allowed to speak of any version of events other than the official one, it is impossible to keep track, but Winston seems to remember that though the country has always been at war, the enemy has changed. According to the Party, however, Oceania has always been at war with Eurasia and allied with Eastasia. Winston knows that to remember differently constitutes thoughtcrime.

Winston understands that in order to combat the reality control practiced by the State, he must record his private thoughts, even if he cannot share them with another person. Winston’s struggle to hold onto his beliefs is the ultimate subject of the novel.

Winston experiences considerable guilt over his treatment of his mother prior to her disappearance. His mother represents the old world; when emotional ties, particularly between family members, were valued and respected.

The ease with which Julia defies the Party’s rules impresses Winston, who finds it harder to repudiate them because he must do so on an intellectual level.

The Party controls the citizens of Oceania by altering the historical record so that it reflects whatever views the Party finds it in its interest to promote. Winston constantly struggles to negotiate the discrepancy between the evidence of his senses and what the Party wishes him to believe. The old man represents the people who initially supported the Revolution and who were later betrayed by Party leaders whose desire for power led them to abandon their political ideals.

Winston decides that the Party’s ability to change the past by controlling not only the media, but also the minds of citizens, is its most frightening power. He focuses on the concept of doublethink, a Newspeak word meaning “reality control,” the ability to believe simultaneously in contradictory opinions when it’s ideologically convenient. Winston tries to remember the year he first heard of Big Brother and realizes that the past has been destroyed, not merely altered. He does not even remember when he first heard the word INGSOC—NewSpeak for the movement formerly known as English Socialism.

At that moment the telescreen screams at him to pay attention, and Winston realizes that his facial expressions are betraying his loathing of the Party.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 4

At work, Winston rewrites news articles so that they reflect the Party’s current version of history, a task known as “rectifying.” His instructions arrive on rolls of paper through pneumatic tubes, and are disposed of in “memory holes,” slits in the walls leading to an incinerator. All media—books, films, photographs, and newspapers—are “rectified” to ensure that the Party looks as if it is always correct.

Winston considers his colleagues, a secretive man named Tillotson, a woman with sandy hair whose job is delete the names of people who have been vaporized, and a poet named Ampleforth who alters poems to make them comply with Party ideology. The Ministry of Truth is a huge organization, swarming with workers whose task it is to produce propaganda, including sensational novels and pornography for the lower classes or proles, in order to distract them from realizing that they are victims of oppression.

Winston sets to work rewriting an article about an Inner Party member who has been vaporized, a Comrade Withers. To replace Withers, Winston invents a Comrade Ogilvy—an exemplary Party member who devotes his life to hunting down thought-criminals—dictating his revisions into a speakwrite. He becomes convinced that Tillotson is working on the same article, but that his own version will be the one that is recorded.

Reality control was an important feature of 20th century totalitarian regimes such as Nazism and Stalinism. Propaganda was a powerful tool, as was surveillance, and when individuals appeared resistant to ideology they were often ‘persuaded’ through torture. Winston’s dreams, memories, and diary entries all challenge the view of history the Party wishes to promote.

Winston is shocked into the realization that he is under constant surveillance, and is therefore in great danger.

Another example of how the Party practices reality control, eradicating independent thought by rewriting history to suit its purposes. Euphemistic terms like “rectifying” were used by actual totalitarian regimes to disguise barbaric practices. Orwell felt that the deterioration of language was connected to the decay of moral values.

Although the proles are not really considered a threat, the Party takes precautions to ensure that they never become conscious of their poverty and powerlessness. According to Marxist historians, the lower classes have traditionally been manipulated through the encouragement of behaviors such as gambling, drinking, and fornication.

In this passage Winston demonstrates his skill at producing a version of history that will be acceptable to the Party, guided by his knowledge of the principles of INGSOC and what he imagines the Party wishes him to say. The fact that others are employed on the same task indicates that the Party takes it very seriously.
BOOK 1, CHAPTER 5

In the canteen at lunch, Winston talks with Syme, a linguist who is working on the Eleventh Edition of the Newspeak dictionary. Winston suspects that Syme, despite his political orthodoxy, will one day be arrested by the Thought Police because he's simply too intelligent. Drinking Victory Gin, they talk about the Eleventh Edition, which will be definitive, and much shorter than previous dictionaries. Syme believes the "destruction of words" is a beautiful thing; saying enthusiastically that thoughtcrime will eventually be impossible because there will be no words with which to express disloyal thoughts. The Revolution, he says, will then be complete.

Winston becomes aware of a man speaking to a girl at a table to his left in a quacking voice. Syme tells him that there is a word in Newspeak, duckspeech, that refers to propagandistic speech uttered almost unconsciously. "Orthodoxy is unconsciousness," Winston thinks.

Parsons, Winston's pudgy, sweaty neighbor, sits down at their table. Syme studies a column of words on a scrap of paper while Parsons demands a donation for Hate Week from a girl at a table to his left. Parsons proudly relates that his daughter followed and then reported a suspicious man to the Thought Police. Parsons' stupidity does not save him.

The telescreen announces that the standard of living in Oceania has gone up by 20 percent, and reports that people are demonstrating in the streets in gratitude to Big Brother for having raised the chocolate ration. Winston is appalled that doublethink has made it possible for people to swallow obvious lies: No one has enough to eat, there are shortages of clothing and cigarettes, the buildings are all dilapidated and underheated, and the Party actually reduced the chocolate ration just the day before.

Syme is an example of an ideologically orthodox individual who is nonetheless considered a threat to the totalitarian regime because his intelligence suggests that he may possibly become dangerous. Orwell viewed the impoverishment of vocabulary as a primary tool of totalitarian regimes. Syme's delight in the "destruction of words" is intended to be appalling.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 6

Winston writes in his diary about an encounter he had with an aging prole prostitute in a basement kitchen, a minor crime. Disgusted, he considers the Party's attitude towards sex, which is that it should only occur between married people for the purpose of procreation, and should not be pleasurable. He remembers his politically orthodox wife, Katharine, who forced him to have sex with her once a week because it was their "duty to the Party," and then left him when they failed to produce a child.

Because Party members are not allowed to feel or express desire for each other, encounters with prostitutes are Winston's only sexual outlet. Desire, too, is thoughtcrime. Winston confesses in the diary that the prostitute had been old and unattractive. Disgusted, he considers prostituting himself and even Parsons, himself and even O'Brien will be vaporized, but not Parsons, the quacking man or the dark-haired girl from the Fiction Department. He realizes that it is she who is sitting across from the quacking man and that she is staring at him. Winston is terrified and worries that he has committed facecrime, the wearing of an expression that betrays feelings disloyal to the Party. A whistle blows and all return to work.

It is not until Winston gets to know Julia that he learns how the Party has manipulated sexual instincts to serve its political purposes. Winston's own sexual fantasies are overwhelmingly sadistic, showing how repressed sexuality can take the form of violent wishes and taboo behaviors.

Tolerated in Oceania, sex with prostitutes encourages men to despise themselves for being unable to ignore their sexual needs, and to think of the sex act itself as unclean and even immoral.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 7

Still writing in his diary, Winston records his belief that the Party will be overthrown by the proles, who make up 85 percent of the population of Oceania. The Party makes no attempt to indoctrinate them, and promiscuity among them goes unpunished, because the Party considers them to be too stupid to be dangerous.

From a children's textbook, Winston copies out a passage describing capitalism. He can't tell how much of the passage is lies, but he suspects that life in Oceania may have been better before the Revolution overthrew the capitalist system, though the Party claims that the standard of living is higher and that people are happier and live longer.

Winston's first statement of belief in the possibility of revolution by the proles. He notes the paradox that the proles cannot rebel until they become conscious, and they cannot become conscious until after they have rebelled.

Suspicious of the Party's claim that life under INGSOC is better than before, Winston makes further efforts to learn the truth about the past. The children's book is another example of propaganda.
Winston recalls finding a photograph eleven years earlier of three men—Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford—former leaders of the Revolution who had been exposed as traitors, imprisoned, tortured, released, and eventually rearrested and vaporized. Winston remembers seeing the three at a bar, the Chestnut Tree Café, weeping sentimentally into their gin. The photograph Winston found proved their innocence, and showed that their confessions had in fact been extorted. Winston regrets having destroyed the photograph out of fear.

Winston is mystified by the Party's reasons for continuously falsifying the past, and horrified that what Party ideology amounts to is an outright denial of external reality. To the Party, he realizes, common sense is the ultimate heresy.

Winston becomes aware that he is writing the diary to O'Brien. Though conscious of his own intellectual limitations, he still believes that he is right and that the Party is wrong. The freedom from which all other freedoms follow, he decides, is the freedom to see reality for what it is, to say that two plus two make four.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 8

Instead of going to the Community Center, Winston wanders through prole neighborhoods. He is fearful because he knows the Party disapproves of owlnife, the desire for solitude. Preoccupied with the fact that he may be stopped by a patrol, he is nearly struck by a rocket bomb. Getting to his feet, he sees a severed hand on the pavement and kicks it into the gutter.

Winston passes by a group of proles who are standing outside a pub and arguing about the Lottery. Winston knows that the prizes are largely imaginary and wonders how the proles can be taken in, but still believes that hope lies in the possibility that they will someday rebel against the Party.

Winston follows an old man into another pub, intending to ask him about life before the Revolution. He buys the man beer and asks him about the past, but the old man is incoherent. Winston realizes that there is no one alive who can tell him whether life was better or worse in the past—that history has been obliterated.

This memory prefigures the final chapter of the novel in which Winston, broken in torture by O'Brien, weeps sentimentally over his love for Big Brother while drinking gin at the Chestnut Tree Café. At this point neither Winston nor the reader knows why the men are weeping, but the reason will become clear by the end of the novel.

Winston realizes that the Party's goal is absolute control over reality, which it can achieve by controlling the minds of the people through terrorism and propaganda.

Although he believes that the Party is evil, Winston desires confirmation of this from O'Brien, whom he views as his intellectual superior. Ironically, it is O'Brien who forces him to see that 2+2=5.

Kicking the hand into the gutter shows how Winston's empathy for other people has atrophied because of the Party's policy of discouraging emotional bonds between individuals.

The lower classes, or proles, are easily distracted from recognizing that they are poor and disenfranchised by activities such as gambling.

The inability of the old prole to satisfy Winston's curiosity about the past is an indicator that the Party has succeeded in its program of mind control. Winston's hope that the proles will rebel seems increasingly futile.

Because he suspects that life has grown worse under Party rule, Winston is fascinated by Mr. Charrington and his possessions from the past. The paperweight, a beautiful relic from a more civilized age, symbolizes the fragility of memory. The paperweight is eventually destroyed by the Thought Police.

The nursery rhyme is another scrap of the past that Winston seizes upon. The print of the church, St. Clement's Dane, is likewise a relic, since the Party has outlawed religion—a possible threat to its power.

Winston's violent thoughts toward Julia may be connected to his frustrated sexual desire. The scene in which Winston gazes at the image of Big Brother on the coin parallels the final scene, in which he gazes at the same image on a poster, but with very different thoughts and feelings.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 1

Four days later, at work, as Winston is walking past the dark-haired girl, she suddenly falls. As he is helping her up she slips a note into his hand. Afraid to read it immediately, Winston wonders whether she is a member of the Brotherhood. Back at his cubicle, he reads the note. It says: “I love you.”

Later, Winston sees the girl in the lunchroom but can't bring himself to speak to her. Finally, after a week of failure, he manages to sit alone with her for a few minutes during lunch. Speaking quickly and looking down to hide their conversation, they agree to meet at Victory Square after work, where they believe they will be safe because of the crowds.

At the time of their meeting, Victory Square is filled with people pushing and running to see a convoy of Eurasian prisoners. As they stand together watching the event, the girl whispers to Winston directions to a location in the countryside outside of London, near a dead tree. As the last truck in the convoy passes, the girl squeezes Winston's hand. He dares not look at her, but stares ahead into the eyes of a prisoner.
BOOK 2, CHAPTER 2

Winston meets the girl at the agreed-upon place, then follows her to a deserted clearing. They kiss and she tells him her name is Julia. He tells her that before he read her note he had wanted to rape and murder her, because he thought she was a spy for the Thought Police. She laughs and says he is in love with her, and she is not afraid of the Party. They walk into the open and Winston recognizes the pasture that he has dreamed of—the Golden Country. A thrush sings in a nearby tree as they kiss passionately. Julia removes her clothing and tells him she has slept with dozens of Party members. Winston tells her that the more men she has had sex with, the more he loves her, because then more people are breaking the laws of the Party. They have sex and fall asleep.

Half an hour later Winston wakes and lies looking at Julia's naked body. He considers the sex they have had to be a conscious political act, a blow struck against the Party.

Winston's violent fantasies indicate how sexual repression leads to violent desires, and suggests how the Party therefore purposely interferes with the private sexual lives of its citizens through constant surveillance in order to more easily be able to whip them into war fever. From the first moment of their relationship, Winston and Julia see their relationship as a political act against the Party. Even the food they share is illegal.

Winston feels he is in a golden country as he experiences a moment of true private love, on the one hand, and is completely violating the rules and laws of the Party on the other. Even his normal feelings of human jealousy are overwhelmed by his desire to experience sex that is as anti-Party as possible.

The Party has such control over everything, that Winston can think of nothing, even sex, except as it supports or harms the Party.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 3

Julia and Winston travel back to London separately, by different routes. But before they leave they arrange to meet at a crowded market four days later.

For several weeks Julia and Winston meet at irregular times in the streets of London, but do not return to the clearing. As Winston works 60 hours a week and Julia is busy with the Junior Anti-Sex League, they find it difficult to meet.

Private life in any location where the Party can watch them is impossible.

Now a couple, Winston and Julia can already feel how the Party represses sexuality: through the sheer volume of work and constant surveillance.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 4

After a month, Winston decides to rent the room above Mr. Charrington's junk shop as a place in which to secretly meet Julia. Mr. Charrington discreetly reassures Winston that he will not betray their secret to the Police. As he impatiently waits for Julia to arrive the first time, Winston watches a red-armed prole woman singing and hanging laundry in the courtyard below. Winston knows they are taking a terrible risk, and he involuntarily thinks of the torture rooms at the Ministry of Love.

Winston sees his relationship as deeply political. Julia doesn't. Her dislike of reading indicates that, unlike Winston, she's no intellectual. Her dislike of the party is still intense, but not as deep as Winston's. She does not think of overthrowing the party, as Winston does. She just enjoys beating it in the limited way that she can. While the Party keeps its members sexually repressed, it keeps the Proles quiet by actually publishing pornography for them.

Though not as educated as Winston, Julia has a much better understanding of the Party's manipulation of sex.

Winston understands that the Party will see their actions as a revolt, and that the Party sees everything. Julia, who is not interested in overthrowing the Party, doesn't understand this. She thinks her rebellion is private and small. But to the Party, any rebellion is a threat, because it could incite others to follow.

Winston realizes that in renting the room he is taking a definitive step. He is making his relationship with Julia "official," a thing that occurs in a real space. He knows such an action is something the Party will torture them for should it find out, but for love is willing to do it anyway. The prole woman is here connected to this human–animal–need for love and sex.
BOOK 2, CHAPTER 5

**Syme** is vaporized and becomes an unperson. As a heat wave grips the city, the city is consumed by preparations for Hate Week. Winston embalishes articles that are to be quoted in speeches while Julia produces atrocity pamphlets. As Parson and his children hang streamers all over Victory Mansions, they endlessly sing the new Hate Song written for Hate Week. A poster that shows a monstrous Eurasian soldier holding a machine gun is displayed all over the city, outnumbering even the monstrous Eurasian soldier holding a machine gun is displayed all over the city, outnumbering even the monstrous Eurasian soldier holding a machine gun.

Winston and Julia continue to meet in the room above Mr. Charrington’s shop. Winston stops drinking gin and grows healthier. Mr. Charrington shows Winston other treasures from the past, and teaches him more nursery rhymes. Winston thinks of Charrington as an “extinct animal.”

Julia and Winston are building a domestic world, and yet the prostitute perfume signals that all is not right here. The prostitute’s singing symbolizes the freedom and vitality of the proles to Winston, something that he believes could, if harnessed, lead them to revolt.

The rat further indicates that there new “home” is not secure.

In their private space, Winston and Julia begin to reveal their secrets, their past, to each other. This is the stuff relationships are built on, but something they would never feel free to share if they felt they were being watched by the Party. Winston’s wish that this moment could continue forever indicates his understanding that it cannot.

While in the previous chapter Winston and Julia build their own private world, their own private reality, the beginning of this chapter reaffirms the Party’s power to shape reality; making Syme disappear not just from the face of the Earth but from history as well. And it forces Winston and Julia to help it as it manipulates the emotions of its citizens.

Meanwhile, though, Winston and Julia do continue building their private world, and it gives them something to live for. Charrington’s nursery rhymes show that he has a memory of both history and innocence.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 6

One day, O’Brien stops Winston in the hallway at work and makes a reference to the vanished Syme. Because referring to an unperson constitutes thoughtcrime, Winston realizes that O’Brien is risking his own safety in order to gain Winston’s trust. O’Brien then invites Winston to visit him at his home, saying that he will loan him an advance copy of the Tenth Edition of the Newspeak dictionary.

Winston feels that he is on a path that started on the day he had his first rebellious thought against the Party. He assumes that the path will lead him to torture and death at the Ministry of Love, but is nonetheless excited to be going to O’Brien’s house.

Winston is terrified of rats, but as they are about to leave the room, Winston gazes into the glass room they are in, and that the coral inside is his life and Julia’s, fixed in eternity.

Winston and Julia rebel against the Party in different ways. Julia merely wants to resist, to do small things that allow her to have a private life and identity. Winston wants to overthrow the party, to have a revolution. Winston’s insult that Julia is only a rebel from the waist down denies Julia’s intelligence while emphasizing her sexuality. In doing so, he links her to the proles, who he sees as vital but mindless. Which is not to say that Winston is correct to insult Julia in this way.

Suddenly Winston finds himself closer to making contact with a real rebellion than he had ever dreamed.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 7

One morning a while later, Winston wakes up in tears. He is in the room above Mr. Charrington’s shop with Julia, who asks him what’s wrong. He responds that he had a dream of his mother, and that the dream made him realize that for his entire adult life he has subconsciously believed that he murdered her. In the dream, Winston saw the room where he, his mother, and his younger sister lived after his father disappeared. They were poor and nearly starving. One day, when a chocolate ration was issued, he demanded the whole piece and his mother gave him most of it, and the rest to his sister. He snatched the chocolate out of his crying sister’s hand and ran off to eat it. When he returned to the room his mother and sister were gone. He never saw them again.

In the safety of the room above Mr. Charrington’s shop, in the private reality that Winston and Julia have built for themselves beyond the Party’s surveillance, they begin to move fully regain their identities as individuals by reclaiming their own history and memory. And by sharing his history with Julia, Winston deepens his connection with her. It is only by having privacy that a person can then choose to share details of his or her life with another. The Party, with its surveillance, destroys that ability to share, and therefore destroys people’s sense of their own past.
Winston says he hates the Party because it has persuaded people that their feelings and impulses are unimportant. He believes that the proles alone have stayed human, by holding on to primitive emotions that Winston has only recently re-learned. He remembers with shame how he kicked the severed hand into the gutter.

Winston warns Julia that if she continues to see him she will die. He tells her that at the end they must not betray each other, though whether they do or not will not make any difference in what happens to them. They know they should leave the room and never come back, but can't bring themselves to do it. They agree that they will never stop loving each other, and are comforted by the thought that though the Party can torture or even kill them, it can't get inside their heads and alter their feelings.

**BOOK 2, CHAPTER 8**

Winston and Julia go to O'Brien's luxurious apartment, where O'Brien's servant, Martin, admits them into a room where O'Brien is dictating a message in Newspeak. At Winston's amazement, O'Brien turns off the telescreen, a privilege allowed to Inner Party members.

Winston confesses that he and Julia are enemies of the Party and adulterers. O'Brien serves Julia and Winston wine, which neither of them have ever tasted. Winston proposes a toast to the past.

O'Brien tells Winston that the Brotherhood is real and that Emmanuel Goldstein is alive. He then asks Winston a series of questions in order to test his commitment to working against the Party. Winston answers yes to all of them except the last—he is prepared to do anything but separate from Julia.

O'Brien promises to send Winston a book that teaches the true nature of their society and how it can be destroyed. After reading it, O'Brien promises Winston and Julia will be full members of the Brotherhood. He explains that members of the Brotherhood work alone, for safety reasons, but their orders will come from him. They drink to the past, and Julia leaves.

Winston both looks down upon and admires the proles. He sees their emotions as primitive, as lacking any sophistication or self-knowledge, and yet he recognizes that these emotions give them a sense of self that the Party members lack.

Winston and Julia believe that while the Party can disappear people and change public history by doctoring articles and photographs, that it can't interfere with the realities of their own heads. They are willing to face pain and death for their love, and can't give up the individuality that love gives to them.

As he is leaving, Winston asks O'Brien if they will meet again. "In the place where there is no darkness," O'Brien nods without surprise. Winston then asks O'Brien if he knows the ending of the rhyme about the London churches. O'Brien completes the rhyme. As he departs, Winston realizes that O'Brien, too, leads a double life, working for the Party's interests even as he seeks to undermine them.

O'Brien's knowledge of the old nursery rhyme further indicates to Winston that O'Brien stands against the Party. How could he possibly know enough about history and truly belong to the Party? The "place where there is no darkness" could be a positive or negative: on the one hand, darkness is usually associated with evil or terror or other bad things. On the other hand, darkness provides privacy, and a place with no darkness is similar, then, to a place under constant surveillance.

**BOOK 2, CHAPTER 9**

On the sixth day of Hate Week it is announced that Oceania is, and has always been, at war with Eastasia, and that Eurasia is an ally. Winston has to work long hours to rectify all of the now obsolete references to Oceania's war with Eurasia. At one rally, the orator actually had to change his speech in the middle, shifting from a diatribe against Eurasia to one against Eastasia. The people in the crowd blamed their anti-Eurasia signs on sabotage by Emmanuel Goldstein's agents. For five days Winston works around the clock.

At last the workers are given a day off. Winston goes to the room above Mr. Charrington's shop and begins reading the book while he waits for Julia to arrive. Written by Emmanuel Goldstein and titled The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism, the book claims that all societies are divided into High (Inner Party), Middle (Outer Party), and Low classes (proles), whose aims are irreconcilable.

The Party once again demonstrates its power over reality, completely flipping, in a single day, a single instant, its enemy and ally. Yet while such power to manipulate history gives the party power, it also serves as a contrast to the private reality of love that Winston and Julia have created and which they believe the Party can't interfere with.

The private room becomes not just a place for Winston to build a private relationship with Julia, but also a place for Winston to fully, without fear, explore ways to try to overthrow the Party. The book begins by describing class struggle (in much the same terms that Marxism does).
The book outlines that all of the totalitarian control, surveillance, and reality control are efforts by the high class to maintain its grip on power. Constant war provides the government in power with a reason to need to maintain power—the government can justify its grip on power as the sole means by which it can protect its citizens. But, in fact, it perpetuates the war without ever trying to win it. In other words, the government doesn't maintain power in order to protect its citizens from enemies. Rather, the government maintains enemies in order to justify holding onto power and repressing its citizens. And it does everything in its power to make sure that the citizens have no means of understanding what it is doing to them.

When the Party seized power in Oceania, the new High group, or Inner Party, realized that to keep a new Middle group from splitting off and rebelling, it needed to use mind control. They invented a figurehead named Big Brother to serve as a focus for feelings of love, fear, and reverence. The Thought Police were appointed to keep a constant watch over Party members for signs of unorthodox opinions and instincts. Laws to punish crime were eliminated, but anyone deemed a danger to the Party could be tortured or vaporized at the Party's whim. Elaborate mental training for children was developed that teaches them to avoid unorthodox, and therefore dangerous, thoughts (this is called crimestop). To further ensure compliance, the Party controls access to the past in order to keep citizens from realizing that they are not better off than previous generations, and also to prove that the Party's predictions are infallible. Finally, all Party members are trained in doublethink—to simultaneously remember and forget when convenient, and to tell deliberate lies while genuinely believing in them—for "it is only by reconciling contradictions that power can be retained indefinitely." Unlike Party members, the proles were granted intellectual liberty because they were considered too stupid to rebel.

This section of the book details how the Party stops the cycle of revolutions between middle and high classes, and therefore keeps itself in power, through reality control. The Party doesn't just exert power over its citizens, it makes it so that the citizens are unable to think for themselves or recognize that the government is not helping them live better lives. The Party does everything it can to eliminate any reference point against which citizens can measure the quality of their lives, and, further, trains its citizens so that they are bad at recognizing any reference points that do get through the Party's control. The proles, the low class, are ignored because they are not considered to be intelligent enough to recognize their strength or the way that they are being used.

When Winston turns to Chapter 3, "War Is Peace," he is not insane for hating the Party. Although he still has not learned the ultimate secret—he understands how the Party has seized power, but not why—he falls asleep reassured that the book contains the truth and that he is not insane for hating the Party anymore. The book continues to explain how class struggle leads to intermittent revolution, and how the high and middle classes switch position by using and abusing the low class. Once again, this description of history is reminiscent to that described in Marxism.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 10

Winston wakes to the singing of the prole woman in the courtyard. He and Julia watch her and Winston is fascinated by her vitality and fertility, and agree that, though they themselves are doomed, if there is any hope for society, it lies in the proles. Winston and Julia together say, "We are the dead."

Winston and Julia continue to see the proles as the only true hope for revolution. They also continue to see themselves as doomed, and almost seem proud of being willing to sacrifice themselves for their ideals.
Suddenly an ironic voice speaks to them from behind the picture saying “You are the dead!” It orders them not to move, and speaks the last two lines of the nursery rhyme about St. Clements church: “Here comes a candle to light you to bed / Here comes a chopper to chop off your head!” Winston realizes that the picture of the church hides a telescreen. Black-uniformed Thought Police rush into the room. They smash the glass paperweight and Julia is beaten and carried away.

Although the clock reads nine, Winston suspects that he and Julia have slept through the night. Mr. Charrington enters the room, and orders the troopers to clean up the shattered paperweight. Winston realizes that the iron voice belonged to him and that he is a member of the Thought Police.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 1

Winston is first taken to a holding pen occupied by common criminals as well as political prisoners. He notices that the common criminals fight back while the Party prisoners are silent and terrified. An enormous, drunken prole woman is carried in and thrown onto Winston’s lap. Her name, too, is Smith. She wonders if she could be Winston’s mother.

Next Winston is taken to a cell in the Ministry of Love. It is the place where there is no darkness, since the lights are never turned out, and there are no windows. Ravenous with hunger, he wonders if he will see O’Brien, and hopes O’Brien will send him a razor blade.

Ampleforth the poet arrives, imprisoned because he has retained the word “God” in a poem by Kipling. Shortly afterward he is led off, terrified, to Room 101.

Next Parsons is delivered to the cell, guilty of thoughtcrime committed in his sleep and reported to the police by his daughter. He uses the lavatory pan, then is taken away.

Winston and Julia’s illusion of having created a private reality of their own is shattered—they have been under surveillance the entire time. All of their intimate secrets are now known, and the Party mocks them with the bits of historical trivia they have gathered, while also shattering the symbol that indicated the permanence of their love.

The Party is everywhere, even hiding among the proles. The reality Winston thought he knew is not a true reality. Now he can’t even tell what time of day it really is.

The prole criminals retain their individuality and courage even in prison. The Party members, raised to be fearful and obedient and to understand the true power of the Party, are, in contrast, terrified.

101 is often used to mark introductory lessons—what things will be “taught” in that room?

Parson’s crimes were unconscious! And he was turned in by his daughter! The horror of the Party is driven home.

A man with a skull-like face, whom Winston realizes is dying of starvation, is brought in. A fat, chinless prisoner named Bumstead offers the emaciated man a piece of bread, which the man fearfully refuses. A guard enters and strikes Bumstead. An officer orders the skull-faced man to go to Room 101. The skull-faced man begs the officer to kill his family or to just kill him rather than send him to Room 101. He struggles and is taken away with a broken hand.

Alone in the cell and delirious with thirst and hunger, Winston thinks of Julia and wonders if she is suffering. O’Brien enters and Winston naively exclaims, “They’ve got you too!” O’Brien tells Winston not to deceive himself, he has always known that O’Brien is on the side of the Party. A guard strikes Winston on the elbow with a truncheon, blinding him with pain. Winston realizes that no one can be a hero when faced with torture because the pain is too much to endure.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 2

Winston awakes, immobilized and lying on his back, with O’Brien peering down at him. He has no idea how much time has passed, but he remembers being repeatedly beaten and interrogated. Humiliated and terrified, he remembers confessing to crimes he has not committed. Winston senses that O’Brien is directing the beatings, and though he can’t be certain, that he has been imprisoned for seven years.

O’Brien turns a dial and Winston receives a painful electric shock. The needle is at 40. O’Brien tells him he will increase the amount of electricity if Winston lies to him. O’Brien asks Winston if the past exists. Winston replies that it does. O’Brien responds that the past exists in the mind of the Party only. To become sane, Winston must see through the eyes of the Party.

O’Brien holds up four fingers and asks Winston how many he sees. Four, says Winston. If the Party says there are five, says O’Brien, how many are there? Winston says there are four. O’Brien shocks Winston, again and again, then provides drugs that ease the pain. Winston comes to love and depend on O’Brien, because O’Brien alone can ease the pain. O’Brien informs Winston that his goal is not to extract a confession or punish him, but to cure him—to convert his thinking to that of the Party.

Even basic kindness, such as sharing a piece of bread, is not allowed in the Ministry of Love. Room 101 is further established as something that inspires terror, though we don’t yet know why. The skull-faced man is willing to betray everything important to him, to give up his life and his love, to avoid learning what is taught in Room 101.

Winston’s dreams of being a part of the Brotherhood are shattered. He was being tricked all along. O’Brien further implies that Winston always knew he was being tricked, that Winston always knew he was headed to this prison, which is true. Winston also realizes that torture is not something you can heroically resist...that you will always succumb to it.

Earlier in the novel Winston imagined himself dying in defiance of the Party. But now he is kept alive, tortured constantly, until he will admit to doing things he did not do, to things that are not real, just to make the pain go away.

Winston and Julia had thought that the Party could trick people about history, but could not actually invade or change people's thoughts. O’Brien is saying that changing people's thoughts, that making them see as the Party wants them too, is precisely the Party’s goal.
Finally, after more torture, Winston gives O'Brien the answers he wants: that Oceania has always been at war with Eastasia, that he invented the photograph of the three traitors, and that he sees five fingers instead of four. Winston begins to understand and practice doublethink, to refuse to believe what he knows is true, and to truly believe what he knows is not.

O'Brien gives Winston permission to ask him some questions. Winston asks what has happened to Julia. O'Brien says she betrayed Winston and was quickly converted through torture. Next Winston asks if Big Brother exists in the same way that he, Winston, does. O'Brien responds that Winston does not exist. Winston asks if the Brotherhood exists and O'Brien answers that he will never learn the answer to that question. Finally, Winston asks what is in Room 101. O'Brien says that everyone knows what is in Room 101.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 3

After weeks of further torture, O'Brien tells Winston that there are three stages—learning, understanding, and acceptance—and that he is about to enter upon the second stage. He tells Winston that he, O'Brien, is one of several authors of the book he told Winston was written by Emmanuel Goldstein. He says that the Party can never be overthrown and that the idea of a proletarian rebellion is nonsense. He asks Winston if he knows why the Party wants power.

Trying to say what he thinks O'Brien wants to hear, Winston replies that the Party seeks power for the good of the majority. O'Brien shocks him for this answer, and tells him that the Party seeks power for power's sake—absolute power over all individuals, so that they are nothing unless they merge themselves with the Party. Winston responds that the Party can't control physics, such as the movement of the stars. O'Brien retorts that because the Party controls the mind, it controls all reality. "If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—forever."

O'Brien's torture-driven training begins to take hold over Winston. Winston is not pretending that he sees the five fingers. He has been so brutally tortured that is in fact what he sees. The Party is controlling his reality.

Winston insists that the spirit of Man will defeat the Party. O'Brien tells Winston that he is the last man and orders him to remove his clothes and look in the mirror. Winston does, and is horrified at his changed appearance—he is emaciated, bald, gray with dirt, scarred, and has lost nearly all of his teeth. O'Brien mocks him. Winston begins to weep.

O'Brien says that Winston does not exist because he is "training" Winston to see and think as the Party wants him too, to basically, merge with the Party and lose his individual identity to that collective identity. Room 101 continues to be established as something to be feared.

O'Brien says that Winston has been completely beaten, broken, degraded. Winston protests that there is one degradation he has not suffered: he has not betrayed Julia. O'Brien agrees and Winston experiences a feeling of reverence toward O'Brien for admitting this fact. He asks O'Brien when they will shoot him. O'Brien answers that it may be a long time, because he is a difficult case, but not to give up hope—in the end he will be shot.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 4

Weeks or months pass. Winston is tortured less often and moved to a more comfortable room. He puts on weight and gains strength because he is now given three meals a day. He is allowed to wash, his rotting teeth are replaced with dentures, and he is given clean clothing. He dreams often of Julia, his mother, and the Golden Country. He has been given a slate and pencil and over and over writes the slogans on a slate he has been given. He also writes "two and two make five." He accepts that the laws of nature are nonsense and that reality exists only in the mind, and longs for the day when he will be shot.

One night, Winston dreams of the Golden Country and wakes up crying out for Julia, loving her more than ever. He realizes then that his inner heart has not been converted, though his mind has surrendered. Inside, he still hates the Party, and he believes he will have his revenge when he dies, still hating it.

O'Brien walks into the cell and says Winston has made intellectual but not emotional progress. He asks Winston what his true feelings are toward Big Brother. Winston answers that he hates him. O'Brien says Winston must love Big Brother, and orders that Winston be taken to Room 101.

Winston realizes that his heart, his spirit, has not given in. He knows there's no hope of freedom, for him or anyone, but now has embraced Julia's goal of winning a private victory over the Party.

O'Brien also realizes Winston's continuing resistance. Winston, meanwhile, is feeling powerful in his defiance. And it is at this moment of small triumph that Winston will be brought to room 101.
BOOK 3, CHAPTER 5

Room 101 is deep underground. Once inside, Winston is immobilized and strapped to a chair. O’Brien tells him that Room 101 contains “the worst thing in the world,” and that this thing varies from person to person. O’Brien lifts up a cage containing two huge, starving rats and a kind of door that can be fitted right up against Winston’s face. O’Brien brings the cage nearer and tells Winston that when he puts the cage in place and opens the door, the rats will devour his face. As the cage and rats come closer and closer, Winston is overwhelmed by a black panic. He knows that the to save himself he must place a body between himself and the rats—and that that body must be Julia’s. He shouts frantically, “Do it to Julia! Not me!” O’Brien, pleased, removes the cage.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 6

Winston, now released from prison, has become an alcoholic. He has been given a job editing the Eleventh Edition of the Newspeak dictionary, haggling over details with other bureaucrats. The rest of the time he spends drinking gin at the Chestnut Tree Café, worrying about the progress of the war, watching the telescreen, and playing chess alone. On the dusty table, he traces “2 + 2 = 5.” He recently ran into Julia, on a cold winter day in the Park. Her body had thickened and stiffened, and the thought of having sex with her filled him with horror. She admitted that she betrayed him under torture, and he admitted that he betrayed her as well. They parted, agreeing to meet again but with no intent to actually do so. Winston, deeply ashamed, returned to the café to drink.

Winston hears a melody and the lyrics “Under the spreading chestnut tree / I sold you and you sold me,” which he remembers hearing when he saw Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford sitting in the same café so many years earlier. He begins to cry, and remembers a happy time when he played Snakes and Ladders with his mother. He quickly dismisses this as a false memory that never happened, and returns his attention to the telescreen, which is announcing a great military victory in Africa. Winston is overjoyed at the Party’s triumph. He imagines himself back in the Ministry of Love, the hoped-for bullet entering his brain as he walks down a corridor. He looks up at the portrait of Big Brother on the wall, which fills him with a sense of happiness and safety. He knows that the struggle is over: at last, he loves Big Brother.

APPENDIX

The Appendix describes Newspeak in more detail than was possible in the narrative parts of 1984. Newspeak, the official language of Ingsoc and Oceania, was not commonly spoken or written, except in newspaper articles. It was expected to replace Oldspack, or Standard English, by 2050, in the perfected version embodied by the Eleventh Edition of the Newspeak dictionary. The purpose of Newspeak was to make heretical thought impossible by eliminating undesirable words, and stripping existing words of unorthodox and secondary meanings. Even negative terms such as “bad” have been eliminated, replaced by words like “ungood.”

In Newspeak, all parts of speech are interchangeable. A single word can be used as verb, noun, adjective, or adverb. Adjectives and adverbs were formed by adding the suffixes –ful and –wise, and prefixes such as un-, plus-, ante-, up-, down-. The prefix doubleplus- could be used to further modify or intensify a word.

Newspeak is part of the Party’s efforts at reality control. The idea is that language provides the means by which people think, and therefore if the Party can remove from the language all the means by which people can think rebellious or even original thoughts, then it in fact removes people’s ability to think those thoughts.

Any uniqueness or individuality in the language is removed. Just as no people in the Party have unique roles, now words have unique roles. Everything is interchangeable.
There are three distinct classes of Newspeak words: the A, B, and C vocabularies. The A vocabulary consisted of simple words intended to express concrete objects or physical actions such as eating, drinking, and working. All secondary meanings from these words are stripped away, so that they mean only exactly what they are meant to mean. The B vocabulary consists of compound words used for political purposes, such as “goodthink,” and are designed to create ideological conformity among all Party members. Many B vocabulary names were commonly abbreviated, and a gabbling style of pronunciation called duckspeak encouraged, with the intention of making speech nearly independent of thought. The C vocabulary consisted of scientific and technical terms, and was seldom used in everyday speech.

The vocabulary of Newspeak contains no words that refer to abstract or complicated thoughts or concepts. There is no “honor,” “courage,” “shame,” “dignity,” “freedom.” There are no words that people can use to think about their feelings. Without those words, the people literally can’t think complicated thoughts. They can only think about objects or technical terms. By limiting language, Newspeak limits thought.

The restricted vocabulary of Newspeak made it impossible to express unorthodox opinions or think heretical thoughts. Certain crimes could no longer be committed because they were nameless and therefore unimaginable. For instance, the Declaration of Independence could only be translated using the single word “crimethink.” The decision to postpone the full adoption of the language until 2050 was based on the need to first translate a great number of technical volumes into Newspeak. By limiting thought, Newspeak eliminates the possibility for people to think unique thoughts, to be unique, to express themselves in any way that might allow themselves to see themselves as individuals.