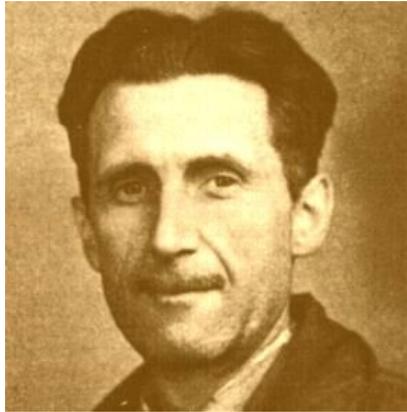


NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

by George Orwell



THE AUTHOR

George Orwell was the pen name of Eric Blair (1903-1950), who was born in India, where his father was part of the British civil service. He was educated in private schools in England, but hated the repressive atmosphere there and never went to university. He worked for five years as a policeman in Burma, but found the British colonial government no less repressive than the schools he so detested. Returning home because of poor health, he spent time in the slums of London and Paris and in the coal mines of northern England, later writing about his experiences in *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1934). His experiences among the poor turned him toward socialism, though he often criticized English socialists as being unrealistic dilettantes. He hated totalitarian government of any kind, and in 1936 went to Spain to fight on the Loyalist side in the Spanish Civil War. He was at first thrilled, but later disillusioned, by the progress of socialism in Spain. After leaving Spain, he contracted tuberculosis, from which he would continue to suffer for the remainder of his days.

When World War II began, he wanted to enlist in the army, but was determined to be medically unfit, though he did serve in the Home Guard. The growing awareness of the atrocities perpetrated by the communists in the Soviet Union and the fascists in Germany led Orwell to write his greatest works, the political satires for which he is chiefly remembered. *Animal Farm* (1945) is really an allegory of Russian communism, with different animals clearly intended to represent historical figures like Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin. A more highly-developed critique of totalitarianism is found in the dystopian fantasy *1984* (1949), a cautionary tale of the dangers of totalitarianism in the West. In his last and greatest book, Orwell emphasized the roles played by language, history, and the media (especially the new medium of television) in supporting totalitarian oppression, and spoke cynically of the uses of war for domestic political purposes. Orwell never sought adequate treatment for his tuberculosis, and died on the island of Jura off the coast of Scotland in January, 1950.

PLOT SUMMARY

The story takes place in the year 1984 in London, a city in Airstrip One, a province of Oceania, one of the three great world powers (the others are Eurasia and Eastasia). We are

introduced to the protagonist, Winston Smith, a member of the Outer Party, and a bureaucrat who works in the Ministry of Truth changing historical records to match current Party dogma. Winston has begun to question the Party, and takes the daring step of purchasing a diary in which to record his thoughts. In order to do so, he must sit in a nook in his bedroom, the only place he knows where he can be free from the observation of the two-way telescreen. While writing, Winston recalls the day's Two-Minute Hate; during this exercise in Party fanaticism, Winston had observed two people in particular - one was an Inner Party member named O'Brien, whom Winston was convinced was "someone he could talk to"; the other was a dark-haired young girl, an apparent Party enthusiast whom Winston hated instinctively. While writing in his diary, and while exercising in front of the telescreen the following morning, Winston thinks of his early life - of his mother and sister, who had starved to death, partly because of his own greed - and wonders whether life had been better before the Revolution. As a worker in the Ministry of Truth, he is perfectly well aware that the Party routinely lies about past and present events, and asks himself whether the past can ever be truly known. That day at lunch, Winston speaks with Syme, an expert who is working on the Eleventh Edition of the Newspeak Dictionary; while they are eating, Syme explains the principles of Newspeak, which focus on the reduction of language for the purpose of controlling thought and making thoughtcrime impossible. At home, Winston again writes in his diary and remembers his wife, a mindless fool who was completely in thrall to the Party and believed that sex was only appropriate in order to produce new Party members - she called it "our duty to the Party"; she had left him years before, and he didn't miss her. He speculates that the only hope for society lies with the proles, who have not been corrupted by the brainwashing of the Party. Finally, he concludes that the Party's real goal is to control all of reality by insisting that reality exists only in the mind; he asserts that the right to believe that two and two make four is fundamental to all human freedom.

The next day, Winston walks in the prole section of town and tries to strike up a conversation with an old man who clearly had lived before the Revolution. He can remember nothing of value, however. Winston then wanders around and finds himself at an old pawnshop where he had purchased the diary. While there, he buys an antique paperweight with a piece of coral embedded in the glass, and notices that the pawnshop owner, Mr. Carrington, has a small bedroom upstairs that he is not using. Outside the shop, he meets the dark-haired girl, whom he is now convinced is a spy for the Thought Police.

The next day, he again sees the dark-haired girl, who falls as she passes him in the corridor. As he bends to help her up, she passes him a piece of paper on which is written the phrase, "I love you." He then looks for an opportunity to speak with her surreptitiously, and succeeds in sitting with her one day in the cafeteria. She gives him instructions to a safe meeting place out in the country. When they meet, he learns that her name is Julia, and that she perceived in him something that told her that he, too, was against the Party. While Winston's opposition to the Party is largely intellectual, Julia opposes the Party because it won't let her do what she wants; she is essentially a rebel in the cause of hedonism. They have sex, and arrange another meeting. They continue to meet sporadically in different places until Winston rents out the room over the pawnshop, which then becomes their personal hideaway.

Later, O'Brien seeks out Winston in the Ministry of Truth, compliments him on his work, and invites him to his home to view a copy of the most recent edition of the Newspeak Dictionary. Somehow Winston knows that the invitation is a cover for something more significant, and hopes against hope that O'Brien, too, is a rebel against the Party, perhaps even a member of the secret Brotherhood of Emmanuel Goldstein, the scapegoat for all of the Party's hatred. When Winston goes to O'Brien's home, he takes Julia with him. They are ushered in, O'Brien turns off his

telescreen (apparently Inner Party members enjoy this privilege), and speaks to Winston and Julia of the Brotherhood and the war against Big Brother and the Party. He tells Winston that the Brotherhood never protects their members, and that they can hope to see no real change in their lifetimes, but that they must do whatever they can to work against the tyranny of Big Brother. He also promises to get Winston a copy of Goldstein's book, and says that, if they meet again, it will be "in the place where there is no darkness." Winston and Julia now realize that their actions will ultimately lead them to torture and death in the cells of the Ministry of Love, but commit themselves to perform whatever atrocities are required in order to confound the Party. They leave separately, not knowing what will come next.

At the beginning of Hate Week, the telescreen announces that Oceania is now at war with Eastasia (previously, they had been at war with Eurasia, and Eastasia had been their ally); Winston and his co-workers at the Ministry of Truth now must change every documentary reference so that it appears that Oceania has always been at war with Eastasia, and that Eurasia has always been an ally. It requires, he realizes, a huge exercise in doublethink to believe that the past is subject to change, and yet that the past has never been changed. Nonetheless, he does his job, which in his heart he really enjoys, at least as an exercise in technical skill.

At the end of Hate Week, Winston receives Goldstein's book through an exchange of briefcases in the street. The book, entitled *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*, contains three main sections based on the three chief slogans of the Party - War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, and Ignorance is Strength. As Winston reads these chapters, he comes to understand the use of war in the modern world as a technique for using up the products of industry while keeping the population poor, dependent, and desperate, and the control of the past in order to manipulate the thoughts of people and maintain the power of the Party. By the time he is done reading, Winston thinks that he understands *how* the Party does what it does, but still does not understand *why*. Julia, who has little interest in such intellectual matters, falls asleep while he reads. When she awakens, he speaks to her of the hopelessness of their position, and tells her that "We are the dead." Suddenly a voice behind them repeats his words, and he realizes that the room above the pawnshop contains a telescreen hidden behind a picture. Soon, the police arrive to arrest them, and he realizes that Carrington is a member of the dreaded Thought Police.

Winston is taken to a cell in the Ministry of Love, where he experiences various physical tortures. In the process, he confesses anything they want him to confess and betrays anyone they want him to betray. He is then confronted by O'Brien, who tries to cleanse him of his insane thoughts. O'Brien leads him, by torture, through the stages of learning, understanding, and acceptance. He gets Winston to admit that two plus two could be three or five if the Party said so, that he had never really seen the evidence of Party deceit that had passed over his desk in the Ministry of Truth, and convinces Winston that the Party's sole goal is power for the sake of power. Even after months of torture, however, Winston still believes in his heart that he is right and the Party is wrong, and he insists that he has not betrayed Julia because he has never stopped loving her. O'Brien then takes him to Room 101, where each prisoner is confronted with what he fears most. For Winston, it is rats, and when O'Brien fastens a cage to his face containing rats and prepares to let them loose to attack him, Winston cries out that he should do it to Julia instead; he performs the ultimate act of betrayal. Winston is then released and given a decent-paying, no-work job in his old office. When he meets Julia, the two can barely speak to each other, knowing that they betrayed one another in the cells of the Ministry of Love. Winston now spends most of his time playing chess with himself and drinking Victory Gin in the Chestnut Tree Café and listening to the telescreen. Oceania is at war with Eurasia again (and, of course, had *always* been at war with Eurasia), and when

the telescreen announces a great victory over the Eurasian menace in Africa, Winston weeps with joy. He has reached the level of acceptance - he loves Big Brother.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

- Winston Smith - The protagonist of the novel, Winston is a minor bureaucrat in the Ministry of Truth, where he has the job of changing past documents to reflect party policy. He rebels against the Party in his mind, beginning with purchasing and writing in a diary. He later begins an affair with a young hedonist named Julia and seeks membership in the Brotherhood, the rebels against the rule of the Party. He is arrested by the Thought Police, brainwashed and broken by torture in the Ministry of Love, and becomes a mindless adherent of the Party.
- Julia - A young girl who works in the Fiction Department of the Ministry of Truth, she falls in love with Winston because she detects rebellion in his eyes. She initiates a love affair, and is with Winston when they are arrested. They betray one another under torture, and when they meet after their release, they feel nothing for one another.
- O'Brien - A member of the Inner Party, he invites Winston and Julia to his apartment to initiate them into the Brotherhood, but in reality he is drawing them deeper into thoughtcrime. He claims to have been the principal author of Goldstein's book, and personally supervises the torture of Winston in the Ministry of Love, convincing him that two and two make five and inducing him, by the threat of letting rats tear his face apart, to betray Julia.
- Parsons - A weak-minded Party flack, he is turned in for thoughtcrime by his daughter, a member of the Spies, who hears him denouncing Big Brother in his sleep.
- Syme - A philologist and expert in Newspeak, Syme is arrested and liquidated simply because he is too intelligent and self-aware.
- Mr. Charrington - An old man who runs a pawnshop, he rents a room above the shop to Winston as a trysting place where he can meet Julia. When they are arrested, Winston realizes that Charrington is a member of the Thought Police.
- Big Brother - The titular head of the Party, Big Brother never appears except in ubiquitous pictures, where his eyes follow the observer wherever he goes; he probably doesn't even exist as more than a symbol.
- Emmanuel Goldstein - The reputed head of the rebels against the Party, he may not exist either except as a convenient scapegoat.

NOTABLE QUOTATIONS

“WAR IS PEACE. FREEDOM IS SLAVERY. IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH.” (p.7)

“How could you communicate with the future? It was of its nature impossible. Either the future would resemble the present in which case it would not listen to him, or it would be different from it, and his predicament would be meaningless.” (p.10)

“Nearly all children nowadays were horrible. What was worst of all is that by means of such organizations as the Spies they were systematically turned into ungovernable little savages, and yet this produced in them no tendency whatever to rebel against the discipline of the Party.” (Winston, p.24)

“We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness.” (O’Brien, p.24)

“Always the eyes watching you and the voice enveloping you. Asleep or awake, working or eating, indoors or out of doors, in the bath or in bed - no escape. Nothing was your own except the few cubic centimeters inside your skull.” (Winston, p.26)

“Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.” (p.32)

“All history was a palimpsest, scraped clean and reinscribed exactly as often as was necessary.” (p.36)

“Comrade Ogilvy, who had never existed in the present, now existed in the past, and when once the act of forgery was forgotten, he would exist just as authentically, and upon the same evidence, as Charlemagne or Julius Caesar.” (Winston, p.43)

“You think, I dare say, that our chief job is inventing new words. But not a bit of it! We’re destroying words - scores of them, hundreds of them, every day.” (Syme, p.45)

“Don’t you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it.” (Syme, p.46)

“Orthodoxy means not thinking - not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness.” (Syme, p.47)

“Your worst enemy, he reflected, was your own nervous system. At any moment the tension inside you was liable to translate itself into some visible symptom.” (p.56)

“If there is hope it lies in the proles.” (Winston, p.60)

“In the end the Party would announce that two and two made five, and you would have to believe it. It was inevitable that they should make that claim sooner or later: the logic of their position demanded it. Not merely the validity of experience, but the very existence of external reality was tacitly denied by their philosophy. The heresy of heresies was common sense.” (Winston, p.69)

“Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four. If that is granted, all else follows.” (Winston, p.69)

“Their embrace had been a battle, the climax a victory. It was a blow struck against the Party. It was a political act.” (p.105)

“That was very true, he thought. 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.” (p.111)

“The room was a world, a pocket of the past where extinct animals could walk.” (p.124)

“Talking to her, he realized how easy it was to present an appearance of orthodoxy while having no grasp whatever of what orthodoxy meant. In a way, the world-view of the Party imposed itself most successfully on people incapable of understanding it. They could be made to accept the most flagrant violations of reality, because they never fully grasped the enormity of what was demanded of them, and were not sufficiently interested in public events to notice what was happening.” (p.129)

“I don’t mean confessing. Confession is not betrayal. What you say or do doesn’t matter; only feelings matter. If they could make me stop loving you - that would be the real betrayal.” (Winston, p.137)

“War is a way of shattering to pieces, or pouring in to the stratosphere, or sinking in the depths of the sea, materials which might otherwise be used to make the masses too comfortable, and hence, in the long run, too intelligent.” (Goldstein, p.157)

“With the development of television, and the technical advance which made it possible to receive and transmit simultaneously on the same instrument, private life came to an end. Every citizen, or at least every citizen important enough to be worth watching, could be kept for twenty-four hours a day under the eyes of the police and in the sound of official propaganda, with all other channels of communication closed. The possibility of enforcing not only complete obedience to the will of the State, but complete uniformity of opinion on all subjects, now existed for the first time.” (Goldstein, p.169)

“*Doublethink* means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one’s mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them.” (Goldstein, p.176)

“Reality exists in the human mind, and nowhere else. Not in the individual mind, which can make mistakes, and in any case soon perishes; only in the mind of the Party, which is collective and immortal. Whatever the Party holds to be truth is truth. It is impossible to see reality except by looking through the eyes of the Party.” (O’Brien, p.205)

“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.” (O’Brien, p.217)

“Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing.” (O’Brien, p.220)

“If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face - forever.” (O’Brien, p.220)

“What knowledge have we of anything, save through our own minds? All happenings are in the mind. Whatever happens in all minds, truly happens.” (Winston, p.229)

“To die hating them , that was freedom.” (Winston, p.231)

“He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother.” (p.245)

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Discuss the following in a five-paragraph essay:

1. One of the ideas argued in George Orwell’s *1984* is that privacy and liberty are closely related. The telescreens, because they deprived people of privacy, also deprived them of liberty. In our own day, we see the principle of privacy being used, not only to prevent government interference with individual liberties, but also to excuse blatant forms of immorality. To what extent is privacy an inalienable right? Is privacy always good? Formulate your answer using both quotations and incidents from the novel and the teachings of Scripture.
2. In George Orwell’s *1984*, one of the Party slogans was, “Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.” Today, postmodern interpreters of history unapologetically argue that history should be used as propaganda - that history may be altered in order to satisfy a particular political or social agenda. Why is this dangerous? What difference does it make whether or not we know history, and whether we know it rightly? Use Scripture and details from the novel in answering the question.
3. When Winston and Julia first visit O’Brien’s apartment in George Orwell’s *1984*, they discuss what they would be willing to do to help the Brotherhood. What does this conversation indicate about their values? Are they any more moral than the Party they oppose? Why or why not? How are their values similar, and how are they different, from those of the totalitarian system they seek to overthrow?

4. In a conversation with Winston Smith in George Orwell's *1984*, Syme says, "Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it." Is it true that thoughts can be controlled by changing the meanings of words or eliminating them altogether? To what extent is the modern tendency toward political correctness an exercise in Newspeak? Discuss the political use of language by citing examples, both from the novel and from contemporary society.
5. In George Orwell's *1984*, Winston Smith says, "In the end the Party would announce that two and two made five, and you would have to believe it. It was inevitable that they should make that claim sooner or later: the logic of their position demanded it. Not merely the validity of experience, but the very existence of external reality was tacitly denied by their philosophy. The heresy of heresies was common sense." Why is it true that totalitarianism depends on the belief that reality exists only in the mind? How does this relate to the modern assertion that truth is "what is true for you"? Discuss, using examples from the novel, the idea that radical subjectivism tends to lead to totalitarianism.
6. In George Orwell's *1984*, why did the Party oppose sex, or at least pleasurable sex, but not oppose marriage? To what extent did they succeed in separating sex from morality? Does our society do the same thing in a different way? What is the danger of such a separation? Support your answer from the novel and from Scripture.
7. In George Orwell's *1984*, Winston, appalled at Julia's lack of concern for truth, concludes that, "In a way, the world-view of the Party imposed itself most successfully on people incapable of understanding it." In our society, many people hold their worldviews with no consciousness of what they are. Why is this dangerous? Why is it important for people to be aware of the framework through which they interpret the world around them? Support your answer from the novel and from Scripture.
8. If you were a Christian living in the world of George Orwell's *1984*, how would you respond to the repression of the Party? Use details from the novel to describe your actions and their likely consequences, and justify from Scripture the path you would follow.
9. From your knowledge of Russian history, compare the description of the Brotherhood given by O'Brien in George Orwell's *1984* to the secret societies that flourished in Russia in the last half-century before the Bolshevik Revolution. Based on this comparison, discuss the extent to which a revolution tends to become like the system it overthrows rather than maintaining the principles by which it rose to power. Support your answer from the novel and from your knowledge of history.
10. In George Orwell's *1984*, to what extent is O'Brien a father figure for Winston? In what ways is he like a father, and in what ways is he the antithesis of a father? Compare and contrast the ways in which the two men view their relationship.

11. In George Orwell's *1984*, the book supposedly written by Emmanuel Goldstein was titled *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*. Is this an appropriate description of the form of government that ruled Oceania? Of the Russian Communism against which Orwell was warning the world? Why or why not? Support your arguments from the novel and from your knowledge of history.
12. In George Orwell's *1984*, to what extent do the excerpts from Emmanuel Goldstein's book convey Orwell's own beliefs? Is Goldstein the mouthpiece of the author of the novel? Why or why not? What does this tell you about Orwell's political views? Support your conclusion with details from the novel and from Goldstein's book.
13. In George Orwell's *1984*, the technological key to the domination of the Party is the development of the telescreen. Today, computers attached twenty-four hours a day to the Internet, where open communication in both directions with an unlimited number of other computers can theoretically occur, and the development of webcams have made something very like the telescreen plausible rather than being relegated to the realm of science fiction. Do you consider the Internet a potential threat to human freedom? Why or why not? Use information from Orwell's novel to support your arguments.
14. According to the language of Newspeak formulated in George Orwell's *1984*, "*Doublethink* means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them." In our postmodern world, such a practice does not seem all that unusual; we are often told that all beliefs must be accepted as equally true even if they contradict one another. What are the causes of *doublethink* in contemporary society? What are the dangers of this kind of thinking? Support your arguments with specifics from the novel.
15. In George Orwell's *1984*, O'Brien, while brainwashing Winston, argues that "It is impossible to see reality except by looking through the eyes of the Party." Interestingly enough, Christians make a similar claim when they say that it is impossible to see reality except by looking through the lens of God's revelation in the Bible. Compare and contrast these two ideas. Why is one horrible deception and the other foundational truth? Use both Scripture and Orwell's novel to answer the question.
16. Discuss the extent to which George Orwell's *1984* is a Nietzschean nightmare. If the Will to Power becomes dominant, will it produce a Superman like Napoleon or a monster like Big Brother? Describe the straight line running from Darwin to Nietzsche to Hitler to Big Brother. Is such a path inevitable if Nietzsche is right? Why or why not?
17. Compare and contrast the totalitarian states pictured in C.S. Lewis' *That Hideous Strength* and George Orwell's *1984*, which were written only a few years apart. Address specifically what the two authors considered to be the major threats to Western civilization.

18. George Orwell's *1984* describes the dehumanizing character of a totalitarian bureaucratic state. If such a state ultimately deprives people of their humanity, discuss what the author views as the essence of human nature. Is he right? Why or why not? Evaluate the view of human nature found in the novel on the basis of Scripture, being sure to cite specific details in the process.
19. In George Orwell's *1984*, the author portrayed a social and political system that had the capacity to destroy the humanity of man, reducing him to little more than an automaton. In our own day, similar cautionary tales are told in connection with such practices as cloning. Is it possible to destroy human nature - to dehumanize man to the extent that he may no longer be considered man? Why or why not? Support your arguments from the novel and from the Bible.
20. In George Orwell's *1984*, a brainwashed Winston Smith asserts that "Whatever happens in all minds, truly happens." What influences in society today try to convince us that truth depends on the majority - that whatever most people think must by definition be true? A Christian would clearly reject this kind of reasoning, but faces temptations every day, particularly in the area of changing standards of morality, to accept what he is told are the views of the majority. Use specifics from Orwell's novel to explain the dangers of succumbing to such social pressures.
21. In George Orwell's *1984*, do you think that Bog Brother and Emmanuel Goldstein really exist, or are they mere symbols, one for the omnipotence and omniscience of the Party and the other as a scapegoat for all who oppose it? Why do you think so? Does it make any difference to the story whether they exist or not? Support your conclusions with specifics from the novel.
22. It has often been said that "he who does not understand history is doomed to repeat it," but the greatest dystopian novel of the twentieth century has something far more serious in mind. Discuss the concept of the value of history as it appears in George Orwell's *1984*. Why did Orwell see true knowledge of the past as so important? Support your arguments with details from the book.
23. In your opinion, are the two lovers in George Orwell's *1984*, Winston and Julia, well-suited to one another? Do they have anything in common other than their dislike of the Party? If you were asked to give them marriage counseling, would you advise them to marry or break up? Support your advice with specifics from the novel.
24. If successful propaganda involves controlling access to information, discuss the effectiveness of Big Brother's propaganda machine in George Orwell's *1984*. To what extent have such techniques been implemented in totalitarian states since the writing of the novel? How successful have they been? Why did such efforts ultimately fail?

25. When George Orwell's *1984* was written in 1949, the Cold War had not yet begun (later that year, the Soviet Union set off its first atomic bomb) and many Americans viewed Russian communism as a noble political and economic experiment. Orwell was thus warning the West about what could become a reality in the Free World within a single generation if totalitarianism were not halted. To what extent was Orwell's work prophetic? Use your knowledge of history in the generation between the end of World War II and Orwell's ominous date to assess the accuracy of his warning.
26. In George Orwell's *1984*, after experiencing torture at the hands of O'Brien, Winston Smith comes to the conclusion that nothing is more powerful than physical pain as a tool to reeducate and reshape a person. Is he right? Is there anything that can enable a person to resist the effects of torture and maintain his sanity? Why do you think so? Cite examples to support your conclusion.
27. European nations that colonized parts of Asia and Africa often imposed their own languages as the media for law and commerce. Since that time, such practices have often been condemned as "cultural imperialism" because the reduction of the languages of the people also tended to condemn their cultures and ways of life to extinction. Compare this common colonial practice with the principles of Newspeak in George Orwell's *1984*. What similarities and differences do you see between the practice of European colonial powers and the attempted thought control of Big Brother? Be sure to address issues related to goals, practices, and results when comparing the two.
28. In George Orwell's *1984*, London is to a large extent a run-down slum. The Party, while expert at propaganda and torture, does a poor job of taking care of the population of Oceania. According to Goldstein's analysis, this is deliberate. Parallels with the economic situation in the countries of the Soviet Bloc during the Cold War are obvious. In fact, it was the economic failure of the Soviet system that finally brought it crashing to the ground. Does Orwell see such an economic revolt as a possibility, or does he fail to take account of the power of the purse in the life of a nation? Support your arguments with specifics from the book.
29. Compare the Spies, the children's organization in George Orwell's *1984*, to the Hitler Youth movement. Was the German organization a model for Orwell's monstrosity? What could a government hope to gain by turning children against their parents? How could such a horrible procedure actually work?
30. One of the components of the Party's control of society in George Orwell's *1984* is enforced isolation of the people from those of other nations and cultures. The only citizens of Eurasia or Eastasia who are ever seen in London are prisoners of war. Why is eliminating contact with foreigners so important to the Party? Compare their goals and tactics to those of the Soviet Union in the Cold War era.

31. Discuss the effectiveness with which Winston Smith evaluates the people around him in George Orwell's *1984*. While he clearly misreads Julia and O'Brien in his initial impressions of them, he forms opinions about other characters as well. In which cases is he right and in which cases is he wrong? What do these assessments of others tell us about Winston himself? How do they contribute to the themes of the novel?
32. Compare and contrast the political and class structure of Oceania in George Orwell's *1984* to that of the Soviet Union in the days of Stalin. Be sure to cite specific similarities and differences in the two systems.
33. Compare and contrast the economic systems of Oceania in George Orwell's *1984* to that of the Soviet Union in the days of Stalin. Pay particular attention to the treatment of the proletariat in the so-called socialist states and worker's paradises. Be sure to cite specific similarities and differences in the two systems.
34. In assessing the prophetic value of George Orwell's *1984*, address the issue of the causes of the fall of the Soviet Union. Was the destruction of the Party largely the result of an uprising of the proles, the rebellion of the members of the Outer Party, or internal weakness within the Inner Party itself? Support your arguments with specifics from your knowledge of history.
35. Robert Vaughan Young, a member of the cult of Scientology for twenty-two years, argues that the mind-control practices of the cult are in many ways similar to those pictured in George Orwell's *1984*. From your knowledge of various cult groups, compare the practices of mind-controlling cults to those pictured in Orwell's famous dystopian novel. Be sure to cite specifics, both from the novel and from the history and practices of the cult groups to which you refer.
36. When George Orwell wrote a review of C.S. Lewis' *That Hideous Strength*, he argued that the supernatural element destroyed the suspense of what is otherwise a good story. He said, "When one is told that God and the Devil are in conflict one always knows which side is going to win. The whole drama of the struggle against evil lies in the fact that one does not have supernatural aid." How does Orwell's *1984* illustrate the author's view of the proper way to present the conflict of good and evil? Compare his perspective on that battle with the one presented by Lewis.
37. Four years before the publication of *1984*, George Orwell wrote a review of C.S. Lewis' *That Hideous Strength*. In it he briefly described the machinations of the N.I.C.E. and concluded that "there is nothing outrageously improbable in such a conspiracy." How does Orwell's famous dystopian fantasy show that he took seriously the threats to human society posed by some of the thinkers of his day? Does he see the same threats that Lewis does? Why or why not?

38. To what extent may George Orwell's dystopian fantasy *1984* be seen as an exposition of Lecture III in C.S. Lewis' *The Abolition of Man*? How does the novel illustrate the basic ideas of Lewis' lecture? Be sure to consider ideas such as manipulation of people by those in power, the nature of education, and the destruction of humanity.
39. Discuss the development of George Orwell's thought between the publication of *Animal Farm* in 1945 and his masterpiece *1984* in 1949. In what ways do the two novels address similar themes? In what ways does the later work expand upon the themes of the earlier one? Be specific, using examples from both works in your answer.
40. Discuss George Orwell's assessments of the use and abuse of language in *Animal Farm* and *1984*. Include in your discussion the issue of limiting language to limit debate ("four legs good, two legs bad" and Newspeak), twisting language to manipulate others, and using false statistics in order to maintain power. Be sure to use examples from both novels in your discussion.
41. Discuss the concept of the rewriting of history as it is utilized in George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *1984*. Why are the actions of Squealer and the Ministry of Truth in altering the past central to the ability of the ruling clique to maintain their control over the common people? What does this tell us about the importance of knowing history?
42. To what extent is George Orwell's *1984* a sequel to *Animal Farm*? Trace the ways in which the practices that develop in the fable are deeply entrenched in the dystopian fantasy. Why were Orwell's fears for the direction of Western society greater in 1949 than they had been in 1945?
43. George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *1984* are both extremely pessimistic accounts of human society. Based on these narratives, would you conclude that Orwell had no hope for the future of man? Can you find anything in these novels that would provide a basis for hope for mankind? If so, what evidence can you cite? If not, on what basis does Orwell draw his despairing conclusion?
44. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, George Orwell's *1984*, and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* all contain characters who, though part of the power structure of their oppressive societies, fully understand what those societies have rejected. All three characters are used for expository purposes, but also serve as antagonists to the central figures in the stories. Compare and contrast the characters of Mustapha Mond, O'Brien, and Captain Beatty, both in terms of their roles in the plots of the novels and the ways in which they contribute to the reader's understanding of the societies of which they are a part.

45. Scientists have long argued about the relative importance of heredity and environment in shaping human life. Those who favor one or the other as the key to human behavior will often seek to manipulate the one on which they focus for the common good. Some critics have noted that two great dystopian fantasies, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984*, portray societies in which genetic engineering and behavioral conditioning, respectively, have run amok. Is this an accurate assessment of the two novels, or is the central difference between the two more complex? Support your conclusion with specifics from both stories.
46. Compare and contrast the ways in which the totalitarian societies of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984* retain control of their respective peoples. What do the differences in their tactics say about the messages and themes of the two books? Be specific.
47. The greatest dystopian fantasies are often prophetic, speaking of future societies whose characteristics appear in the world in the years that follow the publications of the novels. Alternatively, they may be cautionary, warning of what might happen should things continue as they appear to be going. Three of the greatest dystopian fantasies of the twentieth century are Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, George Orwell's *1984*, and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*. Discuss whether these novels should be viewed primarily as prophetic or cautionary, supporting your conclusions with details from the stories.
48. Discuss the relationships between the major dystopian fantasies of the twentieth century - George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* - and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*. To which of the other famous novels is Bradbury's work most similar? Why do you think so? Be specific in the similarities you cite, using both incidents and quotations from the works involved.
49. Compare and contrast William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and George Orwell's *1984* as cautionary tales about the dangers of totalitarianism. How is the society of Jack's hunters like that of Big Brother, and in what important ways are the two different? Which novel gives more hope for the future of mankind? Why do you think so?
50. Compare and contrast Wart's visit to the ant colony in T.H. White's *The Once and Future King* with the society portrayed by George Orwell in *1984*. What are the chief similarities between the two societies? Were both authors satirizing the same thing? Why do you think so?
51. Compare and contrast the views of history found in B.F. Skinner's *Walden Two* and George Orwell's *1984*. Why does one society consider history unimportant while the other sees it as an essential means of societal control? Critique both views of history on the basis of Scripture.

52. B.F. Skinner's *Walden Two* and George Orwell's *1984* were both published in 1948. Both novels picture societies shaped by total control of the environment in which people live, but one is utopian in nature while the other portrays a horrifying dystopia. Contrasts between the two societies are obvious, but do you see any significant similarities between them? What is the significance of these similarities? Why does one author see them as wonderful while the other pictures them as horrible?
53. Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* ends with the vision of the Professor, who believes that the strong should annihilate the weak, leaving only himself, if he is strong enough. Compare this vision with that pictured by George Orwell in *1984*, where O'Brien characterizes the future as "a boot stamping on a human face - forever." The two novels were critiquing different political realities, but what ideas do they share? Are they equally hopeless in their assessment of the future of humanity?
54. Compare and contrast the portrayals of the corrupting nature of power in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Consider both the nature of the power that is in view and the effects of that power on the ones who possess it. Which tale most effectively illustrates the inevitably evil nature of unfettered power? Support your conclusion with specifics from both works, and be sure to consider the fact that the evil power fails in one case and succeeds in the other.
55. Compare and contrast the repressive environments portrayed in Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and George Orwell's *1984*, both of which are descriptions of the same repressive society. What difference does it make that one author is critiquing the system from the inside while the other is looking in from outside and expanding the portrayal to a worldwide dystopia?
56. Both Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and George Orwell's *1984* are critiques of repressive Communist societies. Compare and contrast the two protagonists in their responses to the societies in which they live. Be sure to address the characters of their rebellions as well as their consequences.
57. One characteristic that repressive societies have in common is the lack of personal privacy. Both Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and George Orwell's *1984* portray extreme environments where privacy is nonexistent. What consequences does such an environment have on those subjected to it? How are the effects of constant observation by the authorities manifested in the lives of the two protagonists? Which deals with the intrusiveness of the authorities more effectively? Why do you think so? Be sure to include evidence from both novels in your discussion.