

# Example by StudyDriver

Source: <https://studydriver.com/is-1984-relevant-today/>

---

## Is 1984 Relevant Today Example

Books are often a way of communication from author to reader. The dystopian society portrayed in 1984 by George Orwell is one of the multifarious settings in many fictional and historical fictional pieces of literature. This genre uses a form of social order propagandized as utopian despite the extreme flaws beneath the surface of the attempts to make the perfect society. Although these plots are fabricated through the author's imagination, they are often based off of historical events, composed of current realities in our modern government policies and social systems and laced with messages that the author wants to convey; creating what seems like a possible, real-life scenario. The path that the plot takes often ends up sending a foreshadowing message of the author's worldview. In the book 1984, author, George Orwell creates a plot based off of historical events and constructed with the patterns of society to communicate his ideas of the future for the world we live in.

Orwell's 1984 was written in 1948. By switching the last two digits of the date, the book takes place in what was, at the time, Orwell's imagination of a future world. At the time that Orwell wrote the book 1984, the rise of fascist leaders such as Adolf Hitler and Josef Stalin fueled Orwell's increasing hatred of totalitarianism and political authority. Based on the situation at the time the book was being written, Orwell pictured that less than 40 years

later, following the end of World War II, the world would go through a revolution ending in the rise of the English Socialist Party (Ingsoc). Orwell imagined that with enough avaricious thirst for power, these societies that once strived for equality and perfection would become ruined, transforming into an oligarchical, dystopian society.

Through this hypothetical, futuristic universe, Orwell tries to warn readers of the dangers of letting technology and bureaucratic control advance out of hand. He illustrates the narrow path he sees the world heading down if we let government powers take control: a labyrinthine society maintained through dehumanization, annihilation of emotions, and the stripping of independence, identity, self image, and any personal thoughts at all. With the ever advancing and improving technology, Orwell exhibits the extreme consequences of how technology in the wrong hands can be manipulated to strip the world of all privacy or thought. In the book, telescreens constantly monitor and ensure the loyalty of everyone to the commands of the omnipotent totalitarian figurehead, Big Brother. Thought Police are in charge of making sure that anyone with even a single thought against the Party or Big Brother are arrested. Orwell mentions at the beginning of the book that "There was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any moment" (Orwell 3). Through the eyes of the protagonist Winston Smith, Orwell gives readers a better glimpse of what a world without privacy or thought in which "Big Brother is watching you" (Orwell 2).

Regardless of the extents taken to establish order and control within these worst-case-scenario societies, Orwell admits that eventually, these systems are faced with threats challenging authority. The protagonist, Winston Smith is a member of the Party but realizes how it restricts his personal independence, sparking in him sedition and hatred towards Big Brother. Although Winston is drawn to believe that the innermost thoughts and values of the human mind are impregnable, Orwell goes to demonstrate to readers that with enough torture and threatening, humans are easily malleable to the mold of a higher authority. This depicts the possible future of the world if fascist leaders or totalitarian government were allowed to develop in our world. In 1984, Winston is forced in to penitence, capitulating to the orthodoxy of the Party when the object of his greatest fear --rats-- was threatening him. This goes to show superfluous extents that this society went to to make sure it had full allegiance of every person.

The setting, plot, and ending of the book is a representation of the author's thoughts of what situations might come upon the world and the path down which he foresees humanity and society heading. Unlike other books with endings rendering hope such as *Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry or *Anthem* by Ayn Rand, the book *1984* ends in tragic abject loss and despair. By the end of the novel, Winston Smith fully succumbs to the Party, the last line of the book reading "He loved Big Brother" (Orwell 298). In spite of the "unhappy" ending, Orwell produces a thought provoking scenario. If Orwell had chosen to end his book with the classic trace of hope still hanging in the air, it could not fully express his cautioning message. This bleak ending goes to show that in such societies, despite the indefatigable efforts of a valiant hero like Winston, a single person succeeding to overthrow authorities is idealistic and unrealistic. Orwell shows that in reality, if we let a society like the one in *1984* come about, there will be nothing anyone can do about it no matter the remonstrances taken. Having already seen *1984* come and go, we know that Big Brother did not take control but we also can realize that we live in a world of wildly shifting and unstable systems and Orwell's ideas and fears aren't far off. Although Orwell did not believe *1984* would truly happen, this premonitory novel's purpose is to didactically illustrate, in the form of a tragic story, what could theoretically happen if too much power over technology flowed into the wrong hands, compelling us readers to become more aware of the risks to our world we are taking by advancing technology.