

# Example by StudyDriver

Source: <https://studydriver.com/lack-of-privacy-in-1984/>

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## Lack of Privacy in 1984 Example

In George Orwell's novel 1984, there was a device called telescreens watching everything the citizens did. The government of Oceania, or Big Brother, forced the citizens to do what they want or they will be tortured and one day killed. Today, all Americans experience similar privacy invasions. Like The Party surveillance in 1984, the United States government watches and listens to citizens through technology such as Amazon Alexa devices, cell phones, and some computer monitors and cameras.

The American government listens to citizens in their own homes through Amazon Alexa devices or smart microphones, just as the party listened to citizens in 1984. According to Emmanuel Benzaquen, CEO of Checkmarx, having an Alexa is like having an intruder in one's home (Faris par. 16). If an American has an Alexa in their home, the government never stops listening to their conversations. As stated by author Haley Edwards, "...smart microphones... are always on..." (par. 3). These devices are never completely shut down, so they are easily used as an eavesdropping device by the government. The citizens of Oceania had the same problems. In the novel, Winston and Julia discovered a telescreen in their room. Julia stated, "It was behind the picture." Mocking her, the telescreen replied "It was behind the picture" (Orwell 197). Repeating every word, George Orwell

led the readers to believe the telescreen was listening. In 1984, it is inferred that there are also microphones hidden around Oceania. Winston and Julia were in a secret place, they thought when Winston “wonders whether...there was a microphone hidden somewhere near” (Orwell 110). Since it was normal to see microphones around, Winston had a suspicion about there not being one. The American government uses smart microphones to listen to its citizens, just as The Party used telescreens in 1984.

The United States government watches citizens through cellular devices, as the Oceanian government in 1984 watched its citizens on telescreens. In America today, people have their cell phone with them anywhere they go. The government takes advantage of this and uses it to track citizens. If one’s cell phone is powered on, even if they are not using it, it can locate them and will tell anyone where they are (Reilly par. 1). Even when simply sitting around, a person is being monitored. According to Mark Peterson, an investigator at The Rochester Police Department, cell phones are causing a big increase in crimes, such as stalking (Fate par. 2). When people are able to locate someone, stalking is easy. In the novel, telescreens were everywhere. As Julia states after seeing the telescreen, “now they can see us...” (Orwell 197). This is one example of Orwell informing the readers how the telescreen watched citizens as well. Citizens of Oceania are always being monitored, either secretly or publicly. As explained in 1984, “A Party member lives from birth to death under the eye of the Thought Police” (Orwell 187). The citizens have no chance of privacy because from the day they are born the government is observing. The United States government has access to knowing where one is and where they are going, just as the Party did in 1984.

Americans are spied on daily by their government through computer monitors and cameras, in the same way, the Party spies on its members through telescreens. According to Eddie Guy, he purchased a web surf blocking device so people could not track his searches. It detected almost 16,000 efforts of spying in one month (Golbeck par. 2). In only a short period of time so much privacy invasion happened. As this source shows, a large number of people are watching Americans through their web searches. The government is very cautious about things being erased. In the article, Guy tells of a psychiatrist named Andrew Feldmar who was trying to cross the border in 2006. They decided to look for his identity on the internet, and quickly found information stating he was a drug user in 1960

(par. 14). As shown in this source, the government is able to find things which date back many years. Just as The United States government is always watching Americans, in 1984, "Big Brother is Watching You" (Orwell 1). As the propaganda shows, Party members are always surveilled by Big Brother. Even though party members know Big Brother watches them, it could be a secretive act. A member of the Thought Police tells Winston, "For seven years I have watched you" (Orwell 217). Winston thought he was hiding from Big Brother when with Julia, but the Thought Police state otherwise. Governments, past and present observe their citizens privately or publicly through technology such as computers and telescreens.

Governments leave no privacy to their citizens, as shown in 1984 and America today. Whether it is watching or listening, private conversations no longer exist. Americans are monitored through technology such as Amazon Alexa, cell phones, and computer monitors and cameras by their government, just as The Party used telescreens in 1984.