

## ENGLISH: LIST 1

**In 1984, the Party is brutally effective in controlling the people.**

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The ruthless totalitarian government ruling Oceania is extremely successful at subordinating the masses and reducing them to unquestioning, mindless drones. The Party and its omnipotent leader Big Brother maintain absolute power over its citizens by instilling fear into the very consciousness of the people and abolishing quintessential traits that define their humanity. The two courageous characters Winston and Julia are distinguishable by their defiance of the Party, manifest through the dangerous liaison they pursue and the numerous prohibited activities they partake in. In addition to this, the Party effectively manipulates information & methods of communication to make dissidence almost impossible. However, the protagonist Winston Smith's intellectual nature enables him to see past the Party's insurmountable power to the manipulative mechanisms by which it operates. It is this ability that renders him vulnerable to the Party's merciless regime. Through Winston's demise, the party reveals the unscrupulous yet effective methods by which it has deemed itself "the undisputed master of the entire world."

The oppressed citizens of Oceania exist in a constant, unrelenting state of fear, rendering them vulnerable to their manipulative government. Fear is instilled in the restrained citizens by means of sophisticated technology that allows the Party to constantly watch citizens for any sign of rebellion, hence controlling their behaviour and their private lives. "There was no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment." "A flicker of the eyes could give you away." However, the protagonist Winston perceives that thoughtcrime, supposedly the easiest to conceal, "doesn't entail death, (but) IS death." By frightening citizens into believing that their "every move" is watched, the Party has effectively achieved complete control. However, Winston loathes the presence of the telescreens, and goes to efforts to avoid their "gaze". This behaviour is atypical in Oceania, and reveals the beginning of Winston's fateful quest to witness the downfall of Big Brother. Furthermore, the Party has successfully abolished the traditional family, turning children against their parents by indoctrination, gradually turning them into "ungovernable little savages." Parsons, Winston's mindless, subservient neighbour, has his fate sealed when his daughter "denounced (him) to the thought police." Citizens are hence constantly watched not only by the Party but by those that knew them "intimately." "The traditional family has, in effect, become an extension of the Thought Police." Through such merciless and manipulative measures, the Party successfully exerts its reign over Oceania's citizens by frightening them into a dutiful and submissive state.

By the "destruction" of traditional communication and the implementation of its own methods, the Party reduces the likelihood of opposition, this further strengthening its command over Oceania. The gradual eradication of traditional English, or "oldspeak" and its replacement with a shortened, less expressive version named "Newspeak" is intended to not only limit the means by which one can express disapproval of the Party, but to make the very concept of opposition obsolete. In the appendix, Winston comments that the entire Declaration of Independence, which embodies truth and justice, would be reduced to "just one word-thoughtcrime." This further underscores the Party's determination to "change" its enemies and to affirm itself as "the undisputed master of the entire world." The link between the usage of Newspeak and the notion of doublethink is the crux of Ingsoc. The very core of Ingsoc is dependent upon this irrational concept.

The party claims to "possess absolute truth" by imposing a certain view upon its manipulable masses, and assuming that they will employ the use of doublethink to forget any memory that conflicts with what they've been told and then to "forget the erasure." Winston's rationality disallowing him from successfully using doublethink compounded with his other behaviour inconsistent with the Party's demands, renders him a direct threat to the existence of the Party. He claims that "if it is granted that  $2+2=4$ , then all else follows." The manipulation of the English language coupled with a restrictive vocabulary, hand the Party an undue amount of power, thus allowing them to impose their subjective version of "truth" upon its yielding citizens.

The “mutability of the past” is another tool that allows the Party to further distort reality, hence giving them the authority to determine what is true. The Ministry of Truth, where Winston is employed, is involved in the “falsification” of news, literature, books and movies. The objective is to ensure that “at all times, the Party is in possession of absolute truth.” Any evidence that contradicts the word of Big Brother is non-existent, however Winston has the fortune or misfortune, of encountering a photograph and article of the three shamed revolutionaries Aaronson, Rutherford and Jones, that proved that they once existed, disproving the claim that they are “unpersons.” However, he recognises the danger of being caught with such evidence, and “promptly” disposed of it. The inherent sense of peril present in all citizens is most evident by this incident, and it also reveals the extent to which the Party’s control has pervaded the very minds of the conformable citizens of Oceania. The re-writing of history is most effective if all Party members have short memories. Most citizens successfully “forget” anything that counters the word of Big Brother “to stay alive,” but Winston is distinguishable by his unwillingness, or inability to forget events of the past. This inability contributes to the Party’s perception of him as “a stain” on the flawless slate that is Oceania. The constant changing of allies and enemies doesn’t perturb the masses; they accept the shifts and forget that they knew any different. However, during Hate Week Winston is astonished when a ferocious orator is handed a note during his speech and he, “in mid-sentence” changes the name of the enemy and a “wave of understanding” ripples through the crowd. The listeners are thrown into frenzy, tearing down posters of the enemy covering the streets. “The agents of (Emmanuel) Goldstein were at work!” Through the violation of history, the Party is in the position to impose its own version of the truth, thus allowing them to control reality and hence further subordinate the people.

The abolishment of quintessential human traits is crucial to the Party’s vision of establishing an army of unquestioning “devoted drudges.” All emotions are to be channelled towards the party. “There will be no loyalty, except loyalty towards the party. There will be no love, except the love of Big Brother. There will be no laughter, except the laugh of triumph over a defeated enemy.” Julia also observes that Hate Week, a week of frenzied, mass emotion is “simply sex gone sour.” The Party’s objective of “changing” its enemies materialises when Julia and Winston are captured and sent to “the place where there is no darkness”; the Ministry of Love. The incredible power of the Party is most apparent by the intelligence about the pair that the Inner Party has accumulated. By focussing on their human traits, perceived by the reader as their strengths, yet perceived by the Party as weaknesses, the Party slowly “tears their minds apart” by means of lengthy interrogation, ridicule and torture. Ultimately, they are defeated when they are faced with their worst fear, when Winston breaks his promise to Julia to not betray her. Although Julia and Winston’s demise is tragic, it confirms to the reader the absolute power that Big Brother holds. Their determination to “stay human” is crushed in an instant, and Winston discovers that the power of the party dwarfs even his most paranoid conception.

The Party maintains “absolute power” over the conformable masses of Oceania by pervading their consciousness and changing their perception of quintessential human qualities such as the ability to communicate, to recall memories and to love another human being. The merciless nature of the Party’s methods becomes most apparent when they “get inside” Winston and Julia. Their defeat provides enhanced meaning to the Party’s conviction that “we do not merely destroy our enemies, we change them.” This “changing” of enemies is consistently successful, and continually strengthens the Party’s dominion over the unquestioning people of Oceania.