

1984

BY GEORGE ORWELL

A New Adaptation Created by Robert Icke & Duncan Macmillan
Presented in association with Headlong, Almeida Theatre, & Nottingham Playhouse

**A.R.T. PRODUCTION
EDUCATIONAL TOOLKIT**

EXPERIENCE
THE
a.r.t.
2015/16 Season



Welcome!

It's back to the future at the A.R.T.

George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* depicts a future in which citizens' every move is monitored and manipulated by "Big Brother," an ominous personification of the State. Written during World War II, when public information (and history itself) was a powerful means of control, the themes of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* have taken on renewed relevance in the twenty-first century. Only recently, the revelation of the NSA's PRISM program—and its widespread clandestine surveillance of U.S. citizens—has brought issues of privacy, identity and free speech into stark relief.

This Educational Toolkit is designed to complement the A.R.T. production of **1984**, Headlong's startling adaptation of Orwell's dystopian novel. The Toolkit includes behind-the-scenes features on the creative team; provocative scholarship on the novel, the stage adaptation, and even the role of language in today's society; suggested lesson plans for pre- and post-show engagement with the play; and much more.

Please reach out to the A.R.T. Education and Community Programs Department to talk further about ways to connect this production to your classroom or afterschool curriculum. We hope to see you at the theater!

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CONTENT WARNING

This intense dystopian drama contains graphic depictions of torture violence, loud noises and flashing lights, and is not recommended for students under age 16. In-class preparation and/or consultation with the A.R.T. Education Department is strongly encouraged prior to attendance. Thank you!



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1984 EDUCATIONAL TOOLKIT

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Thank you for participating in the A.R.T. Education Experience!

If you have questions about using this Toolkit in your class, or to schedule an A.R.T. teaching artist to visit your classroom, contact the A.R.T. Education and Community Programs department at:

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EXPERIENCE

ADAPTING BIG BROTHER

The works of George Orwell are frequently adapted, but that doesn't mean they're played out. Stage and screen adaptations of his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* come in many shapes and sizes, but adapters must always consider the challenges of unpacking its dense layers of history: the fictional 1984 of the novel, 1940's England (where and when Orwell wrote the novel), and the contemporary time in which the adaptation is created and performed.

Orwell himself affixed an additional framing device to the novel, his often-neglected appendix to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, titled "The Principles of Newspeak" (excerpted on pages 9-10). The author of this fictional essay is an unnamed scholar looking back and analyzing the rise of Newspeak as a historical event. By describing the society of the novel in the past tense, Orwell provides a clear impression that Newspeak and, by extension, the English Socialist state that destroys protagonist Winston Smith, have not survived. Duncan Macmillan and Robert Icke of U.K. theater company Headlong are among the first to tackle the complex historical framing of the appendix in their stage adaptation. Headlong's *1984* raises complicated questions about the connections between the fears, paranoia, and realities of the past and present. Moreover, it interrogates the act of writing history, or "historiography," cautioning the viewers to always question the source—and thus the credibility—of what we're told.

The **EXPERIENCE** section of this Toolkit (pages 5-13) introduces Orwell's thoughts on writing *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Headlong's approach to adapting it for the stage, seventy years after the novel's publication.

WHAT IS HEADLONG?

Headlong, a U.K.-based touring theater company, is known for re-imagining literary classics such as the works of Shakespeare and Classical Greek drama as well as developing new pieces about contemporary issues. Created in 1974 as The Oxford Stage Company, the company became Headlong in 2005. The current name reflects the Headlong's tendency to experiment, diving head first into theatrical exploration. Former artistic director Rupert Goold, told [The Guardian](#), "If you don't programme every show believing that it could change the face of theatre - if you go, 'Oh they'll need a comedy or something' - it fails."

Headlong also focuses on technological innovation on stage, in order to establish itself as "a company for the digital age." In an interview with critic Dominic Cavendish, co-creator of *1984* Robert Icke said, "there's a real desire ... to want to be able to say to particularly young people who come that we can deliver them a live experience that's as fizzy and exciting and immediate as they might find their *Grand Theft Auto 5* session."

Headlong's production of *1984* debuted in 2014 at the Nottingham Playhouse and was nominated for an Olivier Award for Best Play (the British equivalent of the Tony Award). Since then, this production has toured all over the U.K., Australia, and just recently started its North American tour.

Beginning at the End

How paying close attention to the appendix in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* led co-creators Duncan Macmillan and Robert Icke to rip up the theatrical rule book.

by Dominic Cavendish

It's not enough that Winston Smith knows in his heart of hearts that the world he's living in is monstrous – and that he hates it. He needs to write those thoughts down, give vent to his thought-crimes. But who is he writing for? Almost from the moment he puts forbidden pen to precious paper, he senses that his gesture of individualistic defiance, his lonely groping after some kind of sanity, is futile:

“In front of him there lay not death but annihilation. The diary would be reduced to ashes and himself to vapour. Only the Thought Police would read what he had written, before they wiped it out of existence and out of memory. How could you make appeal to the future when not a trace of you, not even an anonymous word scribbled on a piece of paper, could physically survive?”

He doesn't know it but his words do survive, after a fashion. Orwell is explicit that they do. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* doesn't simply run in the “real-time” of Winston's experience – the birth of his rebellion culminating in his inevitable destruction – it's also a remembered time. As Duncan Macmillan and Robert Icke astutely observe, as soon as you grasp the importance of the appendix, you have to regard the novel in a different light. It's not some disposable organ, it's integral.



Robert Icke and Duncan Macmillan in rehearsal for *1984*

Photo: Manuel Harlan

Though “The Principles of Newspeak” only runs to some 4,000 words, and has the sheen of something academic, arid and extraneous, it crucially reframes the action. In a sense it at once cancels out and future-proofs the “prophetic” aspect of the story by thrusting it into the past, making it a historical document.

Winston's vantage-point is 1984, or thereabouts, whereas the anonymous author of the post-script could be writing at any point up to or beyond 2050, the moment Oldspeak was to have been superseded by Newspeak. The appendix yields fascinations about a totalitarian state's control of language – and by extension thought. It also affords final flourishes of grim humour (“Ultimately it was hoped to make articulate speech issue from the larynx without involving the higher brain centres at all. The aim was frankly admitted in the Newspeak word DUCKSPEAK, meaning “to quack like a duck”). Above all, though, its primary achievement is to reduce the reader's ability to be certain about the narrative.

Recalling his initial approach to the Orwell estate for the stage rights, Icke explains: “I remember saying quite forcefully at the start, ‘I think the appendix is the most important bit. I think it's structurally the thing that defines the whole... I don't know how you can adapt this novel if you don't touch the appendix. I don't know what it means.’”

Beginning at the End (cont'd)

He continues: "It's a book that's about unreliability... and Orwell puts something at the end that a lot of people hilariously and ironically haven't bothered to finish. One of the things the novel really thinks about is the status of the text, and what text means - and whether text can have any authority when it has been messed with. How can you trust words to deliver any information?"

Who is giving us Winston's story, and why? As the director further elaborates: "From the moment you read, "It was a bright cold day in April," you're reading the book with somebody else, because that person has footnoted it and written you an appendix, so there's another reader in your experience of the novel at all times."

Does this sound like an over-complication? Worrying where the book stands in relation to the appendix actually consolidates our appreciation of its sophistication. Icke and Macmillan's approach - which brings the act of reading centre-stage, so that the story is being pored over, anticipated, responded to and enacted - pulls off a theatrical correlative to double-think, a state of contrary interpretation. We are rendered as disorientated as the protagonist by the dream-like stage action. As Icke suggests: "This could be the future that

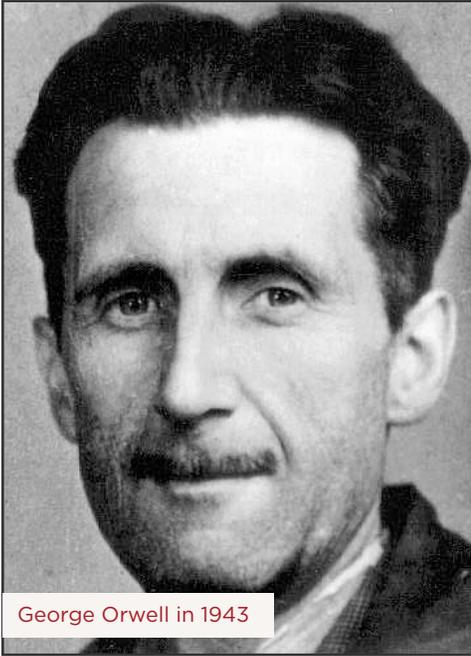
Winston imagines when he starts to write the diary. It could be us thinking about Orwell. Or it could be the people who write the appendix... looking back at the primary text of Orwell's novel or Winston's diary."

The final word goes to Duncan Macmillan: "I think the over-riding thing was: how do we find a theatrical form for the prose form of what Orwell is doing?... How do we achieve double-think, how do we deliver the intellectual argument, and also can we take along a 15-year-old who has never read the book while satisfying the scholar who has read this book 100 times? And once you've seen it and go back to the book, is it all still there...?" He asserts with calm confidence: "I think we've ended up being incredibly faithful to the book." Having seen their remarkable, risk-taking, mind-expanding version when it premiered in Nottingham last year, I'd double-vouch for that.

Dominic Cavendish is deputy theatre critic for the Daily Telegraph and founding editor of theatrevoice.com. In 2009, to mark the 60th anniversary of Nineteen Eighty-Four's publication, he created "Orwell: A Celebration" at Trafalgar Studios.

DISCUSSION

- By what criteria would you evaluate an adaptation of your favorite novel, video game, and/or comic book (is it faithfulness, creativity, modernization, "fan service," etc.)? Is the original always "better?"
- What are some of the essential differences between the medium of literature and the medium of theater? Why do you think Icke and Macmillan's version, which "brings the act of reading centre-stage," has taken the form of a play, instead of a film, television series, etc.?
- What are the essential elements of Nineteen Eighty-Four that a stage adaptation should capture?



George Orwell in 1943

In His Own Words

George Orwell's Letter on Why He Wrote *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

*In 1944, three years before writing and five years before publishing *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, George Orwell penned a letter detailing the thesis of his great novel. The letter, warning of the rise of totalitarian police states that will "say that two and two are five," is reprinted from *George Orwell: A Life in Letters*, edited by Peter Davison and published today by Liveright. [Click here](#) for a digital, interactive version of this letter.**

To Noel Willmetts
18 May 1944
10a Mortimer Crescent NW 6

Dear Mr Willmetts,

Many thanks for your letter. You ask whether totalitarianism, leader-worship etc. are really on the up-grade and instance the fact that they are not apparently growing in this country [Britain] and the USA.

I must say I believe, or fear, that taking the world as a whole these things are on the increase. Hitler, no doubt, will soon disappear, but only at the expense of strengthening (a) Stalin, (b) the Anglo-American millionaires and (c) all sorts of petty fuhrers of the type of de Gaulle. All the national movements everywhere, even those that originate in resistance to German domination, seem to take non-democratic forms, to group themselves round some superhuman fuhrer (Hitler, Stalin, Salazar, Franco, Gandhi, De Valera are all varying examples) and to adopt the theory that the end justifies the means. Everywhere the world movement seems to be in the direction of centralised economies which can be made to 'work' in an economic sense but which are not democratically organised and which tend to establish a caste system. With this go the horrors of emotional nationalism and a tendency to disbelieve in the existence of objective truth because all the facts have to fit in with the words and prophecies of some infallible fuhrer. Already history has in a sense ceased to exist, ie. there is no such thing as a history of our own times which could be universally accepted, and the exact sciences are endangered as soon as military necessity ceases to keep people up to the mark. Hitler can say that the Jews started the war, and if he survives that will become official history. He can't say that two and two are five, because for the purposes of, say, ballistics they have to make four. But if the sort of world that I am afraid of arrives, a world of two or three great superstates which are unable to conquer one another, two and two could become five if the fuhrer wished it. That, so far as I can see, is the direction in which we are actually moving, though, of course, the process is reversible.

As to the comparative immunity of Britain and the USA. Whatever the

[*genius.com/2094593](http://genius.com/2094593)

In His Own Words (cont'd)

pacifists etc. may say, we have *not* gone totalitarian yet and this is a very hopeful symptom. I believe very deeply, as I explained in my book *The Lion and the Unicorn*, in the English people and in their capacity to centralise their economy without destroying freedom in doing so. But one must remember that Britain and the USA haven't been really tried, they haven't known defeat or severe suffering, and there are some bad symptoms to balance the good ones. To begin with there is the general indifference to the decay of democracy. Do you realise, for instance, that no one in England under 26 now has a vote and that so far as one can see the great mass of people of that age don't give a damn for this? Secondly there is the fact that the intellectuals are more totalitarian in outlook than the common people. On the whole the English intelligentsia have opposed Hitler, but only at the price of accepting Stalin. Most of them are perfectly ready for dictatorial methods, secret police, systematic falsification of history etc. so long as they feel that it is on 'our' side. Indeed the statement that we haven't a Fascist movement in England largely means that the young, at this moment, look for their fuhrer elsewhere. One can't be sure that that won't change, nor can one be sure that the common people won't think ten years hence as the intellectuals do now. I *hope* they won't, I even trust they won't, but if so it will be at the cost of a struggle. If one simply proclaims that all is for the best and doesn't point to the sinister symptoms, one is merely helping to bring totalitarianism nearer.

You also ask, if I think the world tendency is towards Fascism, why do I support the war. It is a choice of evils – I fancy nearly every war is that. I know enough of British imperialism not to like it, but I would support it against Nazism or Japanese imperialism, as the lesser evil. Similarly I would support the USSR against Germany because I think the USSR cannot altogether escape its past and retains enough of the original ideas of the Revolution to make it a more hopeful phenomenon than Nazi Germany. I think, and have thought ever since the war began, in 1936 or thereabouts, that our cause is the better, but we have to keep on making it the better, which involves constant criticism.

Yours sincerely,
Geo. Orwell
[XVI, 2471, pp. 190–2; typewritten]

DISCUSSION

- Where and when in history do you perceive personal freedoms to be most limited? Have we taken steps forward or steps backward since those times?
- Can you identify a moment in your life when you had to identify “the lesser of two evils,” and choose between them? How did you evaluate which option was “less evil” than the other? How did the experience make you feel?
- Orwell writes: “Hitler can say that the Jews started [World War II], and if he survives that will become official history.” What does he mean? Is history always written by the victor?
- In the second paragraph, Orwell labels several world leaders of his time as “superhuman fuhrers.” What is the connotation of this phrase? What is Orwell getting at?
- Orwell wrote this letter two years before writing *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Which concrete ideas from this letter do you see incorporated into the novel?

The Principles of Newspeak: The Appendix of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

*The following excerpts are taken from George Orwell's fictional essay "The Principles of Newspeak," which he added as an appendix to Nineteen Eighty-Four. The essay is written by a fictional scholar looking back on the development of Newspeak as a historical event from an undetermined point in the future – possibly even later than the year 2050. Read these excerpts or read the appendix in full [here](#).**

On the Purpose of Newspeak:

"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. Its vocabulary was so constructed as to give exact and often very subtle expression to every meaning that a Party member could properly wish to express, while excluding all other meanings and also the possibility of arriving at them by indirect methods. This was done partly by the invention of new words, but chiefly by eliminating undesirable words and by stripping such words as remained of unorthodox meanings, and so far as possible of all secondary meanings whatever."

On the Meaning of Newspeak words:

"[W]ords had highly subtilized meanings, barely intelligible to anyone who had not mastered the language as a whole. Consider, for example, such a typical sentence from a 'Times' leading article as OLDTHINKERS UNBELLYFEEL INGSOC. The shortest rendering that one could make of this in Oldspeak would be: 'Those whose ideas were formed before the Revolution cannot have a full emotional understanding of the principles of English Socialism.' But this is not an adequate translation. To begin with, in order to grasp the full meaning of the Newspeak sentence quoted above, one

would have to have a clear idea of what is meant by INGSOC. And in addition, only a person thoroughly grounded in Ingsoc could appreciate the full force of the word BELLYFEEL, which implied a blind, enthusiastic acceptance difficult to imagine today; or of the word OLDTHINK, which was inextricably mixed up with the idea of wickedness and decadence. But the special function of certain Newspeak words, of which OLDTHINK was one, was not so much to express meanings as to destroy them. ...

"Countless other words such as HONOUR, JUSTICE, MORALITY, INTERNATIONALISM, DEMOCRACY, SCIENCE, and RELIGION had simply ceased to exist. A few blanket words covered them, and, in covering them, abolished them. All words grouping themselves round the concepts of liberty and equality, for instance, were contained in the single word CRIMETHINK, while all words grouping themselves round the concepts of objectivity and rationalism were contained in the single word OLDTHINK."

On the Ideology of Newspeak:

"No word ... was ideologically neutral. A great many were euphemisms. Such words, for instance, as JOYCAMP (forced-labour camp) or MINIPAX (Ministry of Peace, i.e. Ministry of War) meant almost the exact opposite of what they appeared to mean. ...

"Even in the early decades of the twentieth century, telescoped words and phrases had been one of the characteristic features of political language; and it had been noticed that the tendency to use abbreviations of this kind was most marked in totalitarian countries and totalitarian

*orwell.ru/library/novels/1984/english/en_app

The Principles of Newspeak (cont'd)

organizations. Examples were such words as NAZI, GESTAPO, COMINTERN, INPRECORR, AGITPROP. In the beginning the practice had been adopted as it were instinctively, but in Newspeak it was used with a conscious purpose. It was perceived that in thus abbreviating a name one narrowed and subtly altered its meaning, by cutting out most of the associations that would otherwise cling to it. ...

“The intention was to make speech, and especially speech on any subject not ideologically neutral, as nearly as possible independent of consciousness. For the purposes of everyday life it was no doubt necessary, or sometimes necessary, to reflect before speaking, but a Party member called upon to make a political or ethical judgement should be able to spray forth the correct opinions as automatically as a machine gun spraying forth bullets.”

On the Effect of Newspeak:

“From the foregoing account it will be seen that in Newspeak the expression of unorthodox opinions, above a very low level, was well-nigh impossible. It was of course possible to utter heresies of a very crude kind, a species of blasphemy. It would have been possible, for example, to say BIG BROTHER IS UNGOOD. But this statement, which to an orthodox ear merely conveyed a self-evident absurdity, could not have been sustained by reasoned argument, because the necessary words were not available.”

DISCUSSION

- Do you agree with the “Party” that one cannot think negative thoughts without the vocabulary to express them? Have you ever felt or thought something that you could not put into words?
- Think of some real-life examples of euphemisms, or what Orwell calls “ideologically neutral” words/phrases (“correctional facility” for prison, etc.). Why invent substitute words for harsh or unpleasant concepts, and in what context would you use them?
- The appendix states that “words had highly subtilized meanings, barely intelligible to anyone who had not mastered the language as a whole.” What does Orwell mean by this? Can you think of any words or ideas in your native language that this statement applies to?

FURTHER READING

- For examples of Newspeak vocabulary, see the glossary on pages 24-25 of this Toolkit.
- To continue a discussion on how language can influence thought, see Susan Begley’s article on pages 26-27 of this Toolkit.
- To continue a discussion on the power of words and the development political correctness in recent years, see Walter Goodman’s article on pages 21-22 of this Toolkit.

Language Lessons

Padraig Reidy on the historical context of *Nineteen Eighty-Four**

Nineteen Eighty-Four (not 1984) has become the one-stop reference for anyone wishing to make a point. CCTV? Orwellian. Smoking ban? Big Brother-style laws. At the height of the British Labour Party's perceived authoritarianism while in government, web libertarians squealed that "*Nineteen Eighty-Four* was a warning, not a manual".

It was neither. It's a combination of two things: a satire on Stalinism, and an expression of Orwell's feeling that world war was now set to be the normal state of affairs forever more.

A brief plot summary, just in case you haven't taken the *WSJ*'s advice on this summer's hot read: *Nineteen Eighty-Four* tells the story of an England ruled by the Party, which professes to follow Ingsoc (English Socialism). Winston Smith, a minor party member, thinks he can question the totalitarian party. He can't, and is destroyed.

While Orwell was certainly not a pacifist, descriptions of the crushing terror of war, and the fear of war, run through much of his work. In 1944, writing about German V2 rockets in the *Tribune*, he notes: '[W]hat depresses me about these things is the way they set people off talking about the next war ... But if you ask who will be fighting whom when this universally expected war breaks out, you get no clear answer. It is just war in the abstract.'

It's hard for us to imagine now, but Orwell was writing in a world in which the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was not yet formulated, and where the Soviet

Union seemed unstoppable. Orwell had long been sceptical of Soviet socialism, and for his publisher Frederick Warburg *Nineteen Eighty-Four* represented "a final breach between Orwell and Socialism, not the socialism of equality and human brotherhood which clearly Orwell no longer expects from socialist parties, but the socialism of Marxism and the managerial revolution". Warburg speculated that the book would be worth "a cool million votes to the Conservative party".

This is the context in which *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was written, and the context that should be remembered by anyone who reads it.

But too often it is imagined there is a "lesson" in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as, drearily, it seems there must be a lesson in all books. There is not. The brutality of Stalinism was hardly a surprise to anyone by 1949. The surveillance, the spying, the censorship and manipulation of history were nothing new. Orwell was not so much warning that these things could happen as convinced that they would happen more. He offers no way out, no redemption for his characters. ... As it is, we get an appendix on the development of "Newspeak", the Party's successful project to destroy language and, by extension, thought. This addition is designed only to assure us that the Ingsoc system still thrives long after Winston has knocked back his last joyless Victory gin.

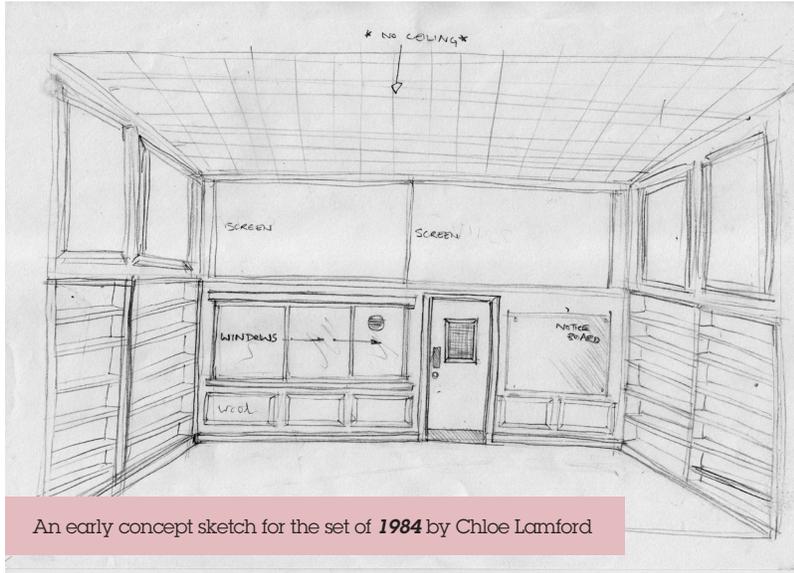
DISCUSSION

- Compare Riley's reading of Orwell's appendix to Icke and Macmillan's (as described by Cavendish on pages 5-6) and Orwell's own reasons for writing the novel (pages 7-8).
- What does Orwell mean by "war in the abstract" in the fourth paragraph? In your opinion, has war become more or less "abstract" since World War II, when Orwell wrote *Nineteen Eighty-Four*?

*Full Article: ioc.sagepub.com/content/42/3/145.full

Designing a Dystopia

1984 Set and Costume Designer Chloe Lamford talks about bringing the world of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to three-dimensional life on stage.



An early concept sketch for the set of **1984** by Chloe Lamford

“The novel has a very particular aesthetic and atmosphere. Finding a way to create Winston’s world, which has such a lot of detail in it, felt like a real challenge. I wanted to create a blandness and a timelessness, as well as acknowledging the fact that the action might be entirely, or in part, subjective: happening inside Winston’s head. Both the space and the costumes are made to feel generic – somewhere in the 20th century and referencing various periods from the moment of the novel’s composition onward, allowing us to see a future that is somehow drab, retro, futuristic and weirdly characterful.”

- Chloe Lamford, **1984** Set and Costume Designer



SYME

“A real mix of vintage styles, he feels somewhere between the '60s and the '80s. The more austere polo neck and slightly uncomfortable colour palette felt right for this character.”



JULIA

“We wanted Julia to feel slightly intimidating – harsh and unfeminine yet very simple. She wears a red belt to reference the sash her character wears in the novel.”

Early costume images for **1984**

Designing a Dystopia (cont'd)



MRS PARSONS

“She’s almost a generic 20th century mother – her look has warmth and knitted textures.”



O'BRIEN

“We looked to historical figures, primarily the German communist politician Erich Honnecker: his striking spectacles and neat suit were a real key towards finding the character. The suit, with its double-breasted cut, is vintage.”



CHARRINGTON

“The quintessential idea of an archaic feeling, he also has little details like spectacles, fingerless gloves, and a watch chain, and is very textured in terms of different wools and layers.”

DISCUSSION

- How does your vision of Winston’s world compare to Lamford’s designs?
- What feelings or comparisons do Lamford’s designs evoke about each character? What type of person do you think they are based on how they are presented and dressed? How does this compare to how the characters act in the novel?
- Why do you think Lamford would choose to feature costumes from different decades? Does this choice illuminate anything about Orwell’s story?

ENRICH

UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES



Does privacy matter?

What is the line between free speech and hate speech?

Does language affect the way we think?

The **ENRICH** section of this Toolkit (pages 15-27) is designed to tackle these larger questions by introducing three major themes pertinent to **1984**: **Surveillance** (pages 15-19), **Censorship** (pages 21-22), and **Propaganda** (pages 23-27). The materials in this section are designed to spur conversation, help draw broad connections between the novel, the play, and our contemporary lives, and deepen the impact of the lessons outlined in the **ENGAGE** section of the Toolkit (pages 28-32).



TOPIC: SURVEILLANCE

Does privacy matter? As the digital universe expands as rapidly as the physical universe, we struggle to find the appropriate ways to manage and sustain its expansion. We are afforded greater freedom to surf the web and engage with each other digitally, but our online behavior also generates a vast amount of data that corporations, advertising agencies, internet search engines, and state security agencies gather and use for their own ends.

This section dives deeper into the topic of **Surveillance**, drawing from and extrapolating beyond the world of Orwell's socialist state.

In his article "The Consent of the Surveilled" (pages 16-17), Dr. Paolo Gerbaudo sheds light on the contradictions of "freely" surfing the web. When are we subject to surveillance, and how are marketing companies and state security agencies using the information they gather about our behavior?

In his article "Tracking" (pages 18-19), from the A.R.T. season *Guide*, playwright James Graham follows Americans' right to privacy through Cambridge and beyond, begging the question: have you ever given away your privacy in exchange for something you really want?

Dive deeper into the topic of **Surveillance** with the lesson plan on page 29.

The Consent of the Surveilled

by Dr. Paolo Gerbaudo

After the revelations made by the American information analyst Edward Snowden about the operations of the American National Security Agency (NSA), and of its UK equivalent Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ), many have claimed that we live in a present that closely resembles the nightmare scenario of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Indeed the details about the Prism programme of collecting, storing and analysing information about millions of Internet users in their daily interactions with social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and even online video games such as Angry Birds, casts an alarming picture of the degree of intrusion by state security agencies in our digital lives.

Never has it been so clear that the extent to which those very digital services and tools we associate with our personal freedom and sociability are also a means through which our actions can be monitored, our behaviour scrutinised and sanctioned – the intensity and systematic character of which has no historical precedent.

In the world of neoliberal capitalism, and a society dominated by gigantic corporations rather than by totalitarian governments, surveillance is not an operation forced upon us by a police state. Rather it is an activity, the success of which entails some degree of reluctant and unconscious cooperation on our part, a sort of half-hearted consent and indifference from those who are subject to surveillance.

Naturally, none of us would wilfully accept having our personal details controlled by state authorities. But we frequently accept online consent forms that allow companies like Facebook and Google to store enormous amounts of information about our everyday interactions, allowing them to use the data to conduct sophisticated market research and wage-targeted advertising campaigns that aim at micro-niches of consumers.

This is the ‘pact with the devil’ that we have struck with digital corporations. We have accepted the practice of giving

away our personal data in exchange for free services, fully knowing (unless we were completely naïve) that these services would use our data to make money. What we did not realise was that this arrangement with corporations would also be one with the state security agencies, which want to use our data for very different reasons.

In the past, surveillance agencies would have autonomously collected information about their suspects. Now, agencies such as the NSA and the GCHQ act as parasites on the information economy, capturing data collected by commercial enterprises for their own marketing purposes, and turning it into a means of surveillance.

We are exposed to surveillance precisely by virtue of our choices – or better by virtue of our illusory choices, such as the acceptance that we expressed when we press the “yes” button to accept a digital service’s terms and conditions.

We have become the consenting surveilled, people who by accepting the



A modern surveillance camera outside Orwell's home in London

The Consent of the Surveilled (cont'd)

system of Internet communication and its “free” economy, have ended up unwittingly accepting the surveillance of state security agencies.

We are entangled in part because we desire to be exposed, because we want to share our lives with distant others, expressing our everyday activities, our successes and our disgraces, our happy moments and our sad times. When we post on Facebook, when we Tweet, when we comment on a YouTube video, we should never forget something that was very clear to Winston in front of his telescreen: the machine does not only transmit; it also *receives*.

Or – to adapt this proposition to the case of social media – whatever we write, whatever we do, will not be seen just by its intended receivers, but also by other parasitical receivers, who want to know about what we do. If we are lucky, this is to sell us products and services; if we are unlucky, it could be to lock us in jail.

Dr Paolo Gerbaudo is a lecturer in Digital Culture and Society at King's College London.

DISCUSSION

- Are you one of the “consenting surveilled?”
- What do you think Dr. Gerbaudo means when he writes, “We are entangled in part because we desire to be exposed, because we want to share our lives with distant others, expressing our everyday activities, our successes and our disgraces, our happy moments and our sad times”? Do you agree with this statement?
- Look up the projects TOR (torproject.org) and DuckDuckGo (duckduckgo.com). How do these projects react to the world Gerbaudo describes, and why?
- Look up the social theory of the “Panopticon.” Does not knowing if and when you’re being watched affect your daily behavior? For example, would you stop your vehicle at a red light if no one were around to enforce the traffic laws? Why?

FURTHER VIEWING

- Check out Glenn Greenwald’s engaging TED talk, “Why privacy matters”: [ted.com/talks/glenn_greenwald_why_privacy_matters#t-572219](https://www.ted.com/talks/glenn_greenwald_why_privacy_matters#t-572219)

Tracking

by James Graham

*“We know where you are. We know where you’ve been.
We can more or less know what you’re thinking about”
- Eric Schmidt, Executive Chairman of Google*

There is something immensely satisfying about a production that dramatizes the erosion of civil liberties being performed at A.R.T., given that—arguably—it was in Cambridge where privacy first found its way into American law and then, 200 years later, began its demise as an accepted part of American cultural life.

Too “Orwellian” a view? Possibly. But when Louis Brandeis, the Supreme Court Justice and Harvard graduate, wrote his revolutionary paper for the Harvard Law Review in 1890, he argued in “A Right to Privacy” that legal recognition of a person’s secrets was now paramount given the “mental pain and distress” such an invasion can cause. No doubt Winston Smith, the protagonist of *1984*, would readily agree.

As Brandeis saw it: “Instantaneous photographs and newspaper enterprise have invaded the sacred precincts of private and domestic life; and numerous mechanical devices threaten to make good the prediction that ‘what is whispered in the closet shall be proclaimed from the house-tops.’”

When Mark Zuckerberg arrived in Brandeis’s footsteps at Harvard two centuries later, he tapped into the modern desire to connect, to broadcast, and to share our most intimate thoughts while simultaneously performing private surveillance on our friends and colleagues (tell me you’ve never done it). Facebook was born, and culturally accepted boundaries about what we share and to whom began to change forever.

I should declare an interest—given that no one has any secrets any more. I wrote my own play entitled *Privacy* for the Donmar Warehouse in London, 2014, and I am currently adapting *1984* as a feature film next year. To me, the changing nature

of surveillance is the seminal issue of our generation, and—whatever side of the debate you fall down on—there is no denying the prescience and increasing relevance of Orwell’s novel, as witnessed in this truly remarkable theatrical adaptation.

Don’t get me wrong—I think sharing is a good thing. And that’s why I love theatre. So much of our entertainment and culture has become “private” and atomized now, where even movies are viewed on cellphones or iPads, alone in our rooms rather than together in the multiplex (after, of course, an algorithm has carefully recommended to you your choice based on detailed analysis of your personality and past behavior). So the public forum that is theatre, where a community must physically come together in a space and debate the issues of the day, has become more and more essential. Having worked at A.R.T last summer with the great Diane Paulus on our musical *Finding Neverland* (for which I wrote the book), I can’t wait for the rawness and power of Duncan Macmillan’s uncompromising adaptation to echo around that chamber. Above the politics and the ideas, you’re in for a theatrical feast.

It was Tim Berners-Lee—now also a Massachusetts resident—who invented and then donated the World Wide Web to all humankind (or, as he live tweeted from London’s 2012 Olympic opening ceremony, “This is for everyone”). And there is arguing what a force for good the connecting of the planet and the global sharing of ideas has become. But there will always be compromises that come with such advances. Regardless of the different views on the ethics of his actions, the Edward Snowden revelations about the expanding reach of government surveillance gave nations across

Tracking (cont'd)

the whole world a long pause for thought.

Of course, unlike in Orwell's imagined dystopia, where the surveillance is undertaken by a fascist government regime, today we freely hand over data about ourselves by the tonne, to social media sites, web browsers, shopping websites, fitness apps, you name it, in order to receive goods and services in return. Where complacency led Orwell's Party to power, our own sheer compliance is what's done privacy in for us.

That is because, in the main, we think it a fair and worthwhile transaction. We give away a bit of our privacy in return for something we *actually want*, geared uniquely to our own personal preferences. And at labs nearby at M.I.T and Harvard, students are working on the technology of tomorrow

we can't even begin to imagine yet, to assist us in our modern lives, and make us happy. All I would say is—heed Orwell's warnings about the fragile nature of our freedom, as brought magically to life by some of theatre's most exciting talent in this exhilarating new show: "The choice for mankind lies between freedom and happiness and for the great bulk of mankind, happiness is better..."

*James Graham is a British playwright and screenwriter. His plays include **Finding Neverland** (A.R.T. and Broadway); **Privacy** (Donmar Warehouse); **This House** (National Theatre). His film and TV work includes X+Y, Prisoners' Wives, Caught in a Trap, and a forthcoming feature film adaptation of 1984.*

DISCUSSION

- Graham states that we exchange privacy for something we "actually want." Do you agree with him? Which services do you willingly give your information to online to get something that you want?
- How important is privacy to you? What degree of privacy?
- Do you spend more of your time watching movies alone on your own devices, or going out in public to movies or the theater? Do you agree with Graham about the benefits of spending time out in a public space such as going to the theater?

POST PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION SERIES

The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation is collaborating with the American Repertory Theater on several post performance discussions for their upcoming presentation of **1984**. The discussions will examine totalitarianism and state surveillance in the modern day. Discussions will be led by Harvard University faculty doing research on surveillance, totalitarianism, and the role of technology in popular uprisings. Discussions will follow the evening performances on February 23-24 and March 1-2. For more information, click [here](#).

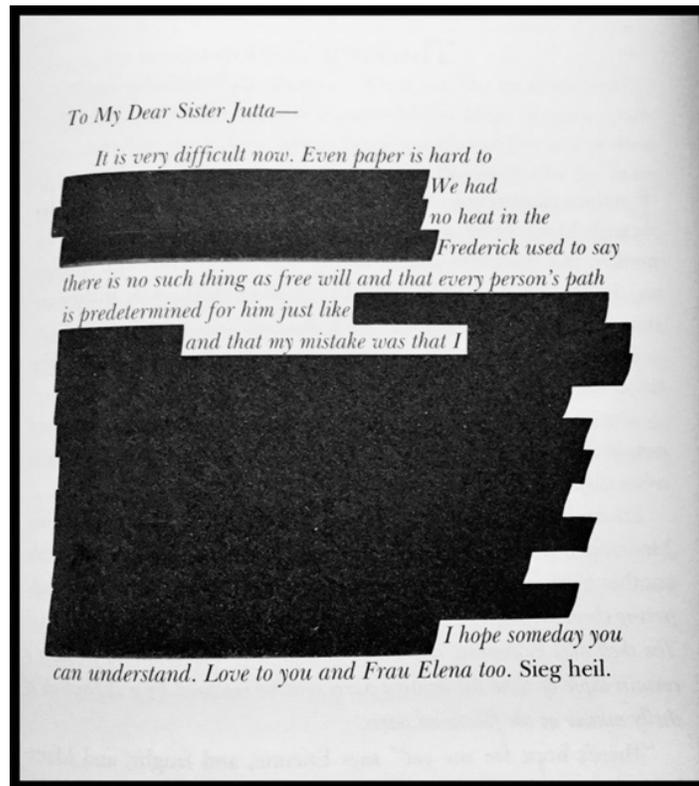


HARVARD Kennedy School

ASH CENTER

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and Innovation

ENRICH



TOPIC: CENSORSHIP

1984 depicts a society under the thumb of an oppressive government. Citizens are not allowed to speak, write, or often even contemplate “thoughtcrimes” – a sneaky umbrella term referring to any ideas that could endanger the establishment or lead to rebellion.

You’ve just read about **Surveillance**, one of the tactics implemented by the Party in order to enforce its rule over the people, and the contemporary connection to data tracking and internet privacy today. This section explores the issue of **Censorship**, another tool of control implemented by Ingsoc leaders. While we are not living under the same authoritarian control shown in **1984**, there is a lively contemporary debate over political correctness: what is the boundary between free speech and hate speech?

Taking a look at how this debate has developed, former *New York Times* television critic Walter Goodman reacts to the 1989 “Dictionary of Cautionary Words and Phrases” and the ever-evolving landscape of political correctness. Consider your own position on political correctness by analyzing and evaluating Goodman’s editorial article “Decreasing Our Word Power” (pages 21-22), first published fifteen years ago.

The topic of **Censorship** is also fully integrated into the hands-on lesson plan on page 30.

Decreasing Our Word Power: The New Newspeak

by **Walter Goodman**

A former New York Times television critic reflects on political correctness and the limit between free speech and hate speech. Is political correctness an infringement on freedom of speech? Look closely at Goodman's choice of words and tone. What is he arguing or analyzing? Do you agree with the way Goodman presents this topic?

The ailment of hypersensitivity, a symptom of the disease of political correctness, is breaking out in journalism. Fresh evidence comes from the University of Missouri School of Journalism in the form of the "Dictionary of Cautionary Words and Phrases: An Excerpt From the Newspaper Content Analysis Compiled by 1989 Multicultural Management Program Fellows."

This work, actually a glossary, consists of 18 photocopied pages stapled together; you can get one by mailing \$10 to the Multicultural Management Program, Box 838, Columbia, Mo. 65205.

Several of the 18 compilers are employed by some of the nation's largest newspapers, including The Daily News, Newsday, The Chicago Tribune, The Miami Herald and The Atlanta Journal and Constitution.

What the misused "cautionary" indicates is that unlike standard dictionaries, which are meant to help people use words, this one warns against using them. It is a prophylactic guide to writing, its avowed purpose to sensitize reporters and editors to usages that members of minority groups may find offensive. Copies will presumably be distributed to the young along with other condoms. Readers are promised that this is only a starting point. Revisions are reportedly in the works, and more words and phrases will assuredly find their way onto the prohibited list as sensitivities expand.

Most of the words here - "nigger," "chink," "fairy" - are unredeemable insults that have long been banned from above-ground newspapers, except in quotations, as with Jesse Jackson's use of the relatively mild "Hymie." They do not require a new

dictionary of no-nos. What gives this work its special character is its concern not with intended insults but with perceived slights. The criterion is the sensibility of the beholder, particularly if he or she belongs to a minority.

The young journalist will learn here that given a choice, two or more words are less offensive than a single word. "Asian-American" is preferred over "Oriental." "Jewish person" is all right, but "Jew," even as a noun, is suspect. "African-American" seems to be less offensive than "black," but some persons of color, the lexicographers suggest, may find it more offensive. Will separate editions of newspapers be required for total inoffensiveness?

Nobody may live in a "project" anymore; one now resides in "subsidized housing" or in a "public housing development," three words being less offensive even than two. "Senior citizen," of course, is superior to "elderly," which carries the stigma of ageism, and "hearing impaired" is better than "deaf." No one will mind getting rid of "dumb" to go with deaf; still, "speech impaired" makes quite a mouthful.

A single word may win out over two words if it can't be spelled: "prosthesis" is preferable to "peg leg" but "artificial limb" will serve. Reporters are advised to shun "invalids" for "people with disabilities." Journalists who take all this to heart may find themselves disabled, not to say "handicapped," a word that should not be said and may not be printed.

Whenever the opportunity presents itself, the newspaper person in quest of inoffensiveness will choose the fancier phrase: "undocumented resident" is better than "illegal alien." The up-to-the-minute lexicon

The New Newspeak (cont'd)

also rules that instead of “black community,” a reporter should write “black residents in a northside neighborhood.” (Probably, if they live on the south side, “black residents in a southside neighborhood” is acceptable, but don’t count on it.)

Women are a big category, and many words applied to them in the days before multicultural management are outlawed. (Since about half of the lexicographers are women, one wonders how their title, “Fellows,” slipped through.) For “housewife,” please use “homemaker,” lest any reader conclude that the woman in question is married and keeps house. “Buxom” and “matronly,” which themselves are often euphemisms for fat, must give way to even more neutral terms. “Full-figured,” which seems to have been invented by makers of bras to flatter a certain, uh, fodge clientele, is also out, and good riddance.

The dictionary advises, under the category “Beauty,” that newspaper writers “avoid descriptive terms of beauty when not absolutely necessary.” It adds helpfully: “For instance, do not use ‘blonde and blue-eyed’ unless you would also use ‘brown-haired and brown-eyed’ as a natural measure of attractiveness.” A sworn affidavit may be

required.

The point is that drawing attention to a woman’s physical attributes or want of them reduces her to a sex object. (Let’s hear it for a dictionary that would put phrases like “sex object” on its hit list.) “Cheesecake,” that swell word for what appears on barbershop calendars, is objectionable. And goodbye, “pert”; so long, “statuesque.” Extrapolations suggest themselves. The reporter trying to slip a little color into his or her copy may get away with describing someone as having a long nose -- but not if that someone is a Jewish person.

In a gesture at equal treatment for men, “hunk” and “beefcake” are prohibited. “Womanizer” is out, too, but it is still all right to use “johns” for persons of the male sex who frequent prostitutes. (Have these fellows no sensitivity or just no lobby?) Instead of using “man” to cover both men and women, the dictionary suggests “a person” or “an individual” or “humanity,” though the last choice must be suspect. If one may offer an example: It defies a person’s faith in humanity that such a work could have been put together by individuals. This is the committee mind in action, and boy, does it show. (Sorry, “boy” is dangerous.)

DISCUSSION

- What is Goodman’s tone in this article? Does he agree with the “Dictionary of Cautionary Word and Phrases” or is he critical? What is he analyzing or arguing? Do you agree with him?
- Do you find any of the terms Goodman mentions offensive? Do you think other people would find them offensive? Why or why not?
- This article was written fifteen years ago. What is different today from the landscape Goodman describes? Is this still a valid topic?
- Are there words that, in your opinion, cannot or should not be spoken in public today? Who decides what language is taboo, or universally inappropriate? Why?

THE 1984 LOBBY EXPERIENCE

We use our public spaces at the A.R.T. to provide multiple ways to engage with the work on stage in creative, challenging, and fun ways.

The **1984** Lobby Experience will spur conversations on the themes brought up by the play. Through interactive and provocative exhibits on censorship, propaganda and surveillance, audiences will be immersed in the world of **1984**. You may even get the chance to inform on a friend or family member you suspect of thoughtcrime (let us remind you that it’s your CIVIC DUTY).

Explore the A.R.T.’s public spaces and post your photos or thoughts to:

@americanrep #1984onStage

ENRICH



Photo: Manuel Harlan

TOPIC: PROPAGANDA

In this section, you will analyze how the language of **propaganda** can be used as a manipulative tool used to control unconscious citizens. In the appendix of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell mentions how a native speaker of Newspeak would have been unable to imagine the meaning of words like “free” and “bad.” How far off is Orwell’s claim from reality? Does our vocabulary limit or shape the way we think?

Research has pointed out that we acquire “certain habits of thought that shape our experience in significant and often surprising ways.” Currently, there is no evidence to show that language makes certain thoughts impossible. If a language has no word for “tomorrow,” its native speakers would still be able to understand the concept of the future. However, there is proof that languages influence our minds “not because of what our language allows us to think but rather because of what it habitually obliges us to think about.”*

The “Glossary of Newspeak” (pages 24-25) provides words and definitions from *Nineteen Eighty-Four* that will help you enter the world of the play.

Sharon Begley, in her article “Why Language May Shape Our Thoughts” (pages 26-27), analyzes cases when language has an effect on thought. For example, certain languages force speakers to think about gender when describing inanimate objects.

Explore the topic of **Propaganda** even further with the lesson plan on page 31.

*“Does Your Language Shape How You Think” by [Guy Deutscher in the NYT Magazine:](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/29/magazine/29language-t.html)
[nytimes.com/2010/08/29/magazine/29language-t.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/29/magazine/29language-t.html)

A Glossary of Newspeak

ANTI-SEX LEAGUE

Organisation advocating celibacy among Party members and the eradication of the orgasm. In Airstrip One, love and loyalty should exist only toward Big Brother and the Party.

AIRSTRIP ONE

A province of Oceania, known at one time as “England” or “Britain.”

BIG BROTHER

The dictatorial leader of the Party, and its cofounder along with Goldstein (see Goldstein, Emmanuel). Life in Oceania is characterised by perpetual surveillance and constant reminders that “Big Brother is watching you.”

THE BROTHERHOOD

An underground network founded by Emmanuel Goldstein, an original member of the Inner Party. Goldstein turned on Big Brother and was one of the few to escape during the revolution (see also Resistance, Emmanuel Goldstein.)

BLACKWHITE

The ability not only to believe that black is white, but to know that black is white and forget that one has ever believed the contrary.

DOUBLEPLUS

An example of how comparative and superlative meanings are communicated in Newspeak. “Plus” acts as an intensifier, and “double” even more so. In Newspeak, “better” becomes “plusgood” and even better is “doubleplusgood.”

DOUBLETHINK

The ability to hold two contradictory beliefs in one’s mind simultaneously and accept both of them.

FACECRIME

Any improper expression that carries the suggestion of abnormality or of something hidden. A nervous tic or unconscious look of anxiety could be a punishable offence.

GOLDSTEIN’S BOOK

Referred to simply as “The Book,” Emmanuel Goldstein’s record is a compendium of all the heresies, of which Goldstein was the author and which circulated clandestinely here and there. *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*

GOODTHINKER

A person who adheres to the principles of Newspeak.

INNER PARTY

Oceania’s political class, who enjoy a higher quality of life than general Party members. They are dedicated entirely to Big Brother and the principles of Party rule.

MINISTRY OF LOVE (ALSO MINILUV)

Oceania’s interior ministry, enforcing loyalty and love of Big Brother through fear, oppression and thought modification. As its building has no windows, the interior lights are never turned off.

MINISTRY OF PEACE (ALSO MINIPAX)

The defence arm of Oceania’s government, in charge of its military.

MINISTRY OF PLENTY (ALSO MINIPLENTY)

The management of Oceania’s economy lies with this arm of government, which oversees rationing and maintains a state of poverty, scarcity, and financial shortage while convincing the population that they are living in perpetual prosperity.

Julia

The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism

A Glossary of Newspeak (cont'd)

MINISTRY OF TRUTH

(ALSO MINITRUE) *Winston Smith employed here*
The Party's communication apparatus, by which historical records are amended in keeping with its approved version of events.

NEWSPEAK

The official language of Oceania. Designed to make thoughtcrime impossible, its vocabulary gets smaller every year, asserting that thoughtcrime—and therefore any crime—cannot be committed if the words to express it do not exist. Implementation of Newspeak is referred to as “The Project.”

OCEANIA

One of three superstates, over which Big Brother exercises totalitarian rule. Its neighbouring territories are Eurasia and Eastasia.

OLDSPEAK

The version of English preceding Newspeak. In Newspeak, words that represent politically incorrect ideas are eliminated.

OLDTHINK

Ideas and patterns of thought that are inconsistent with the Party's principles.

THE PARTY

The general population of Oceania, comprising middle class bureaucrats and other government employees, comprising approximately 13% of population. There is a huge gap between the standard of living of Inner and Outer Party members. Outer Party members have very little possessions, and almost no access to basic consumer goods. All Outer Party members have a telescreen in every room of their apartment.

RESISTANCE

The revolutionary group said to have been led by Emmanuel Goldstein in an uprising against the Party. Every ill of society is blamed on this group, which may or may not exist.

ROOM 101

A room in the Ministry of Love where thought criminals are taken.

SEXCRIME

Having sex for enjoyment. In Oceania, the only approved purpose of sex is procreation for the Party.

TELESCREEN

Two-way screens installed in the homes of all Party members to broadcast information and ensure constant surveillance. There is no way to control what is broadcast, only its volumes, and the screen cannot be turned off.

THOUGHTCRIME

All crime begins as a thought, therefore all crime is thoughtcrime. A person who has committed thoughtcrime is a thought criminal, even before committing the act itself. Thoughtcrime is “the essential crime that contains all others in itself.” *example of doublethink*

THOUGHT POLICE

Law enforcement department designed to detect mental political transgressions.

TWO MINUTES' HATE

A daily broadcast showing instances of thoughtcrime.

UNGOOD

The opposite of good. *bad*

UNPERSON (ALSO UNWRITE)

The process of altering and erasing records in order to eradicate someone from cultural memory. Once unpersoned, an individual's previous existence can be denied.

YOUTH LEAGUE

Group for children in which membership is mandatory. Members' primary task is to monitor the activities of their parents.

Why Language May Shape Our Thoughts

by Sharon Begley

When the *Viaduct de Millau* opened in the south of France in 2004, this tallest bridge in the world won worldwide accolades. German newspapers described how it “floated above the clouds” with “elegance and lightness” and “breathtaking” beauty. In France, papers praised the “immense” “concrete giant.” Was it mere coincidence that the Germans saw beauty where the French saw heft and power? Lera Boroditsky thinks not.

A psychologist at Stanford University, she has long been intrigued by an age-old question whose modern form dates to 1956, when linguist Benjamin Lee Whorf asked whether the language we speak shapes the way we think and see the world. If so, then language is not merely a means of expressing thought, but a constraint on it, too. Although philosophers, anthropologists, and others have weighed in, with most concluding that language does not shape thought in any significant way, the field has been notable for a distressing lack of empiricism—as in testable hypotheses and actual data.

That’s where Boroditsky comes in. In a series of clever experiments guided by pointed questions, she is amassing evidence that, yes, language shapes thought. The effect is powerful enough, she says, that “the private mental lives of speakers of different languages may differ dramatically,” not only when they are thinking in order to speak, “but in all manner of cognitive tasks,” including basic sensory perception. “Even a small fluke of grammar”—the gender of nouns—“can have an effect on how people think about things in the world,” she says.

As in that bridge. In German, the noun for bridge, *Brücke*, is feminine. In French, *pont* is masculine. German speakers saw prototypically female features; French speakers, masculine ones. Similarly, Germans describe keys (*Schlüssel*) with words such as hard, heavy, jagged, and metal, while to Spaniards keys (*llaves*) are golden, intricate,

little, and lovely. Guess which language construes key as masculine and which as feminine? Grammatical gender also shapes how we construe abstractions. In 85 percent of artistic depictions of death and victory, for instance, the idea is represented by a man if the noun is masculine and a woman if it is feminine, says Boroditsky. Germans tend to paint death as male, and Russians tend to paint it as female.

Language even shapes what we see. People have a better memory for colors if different shades have distinct names—not English’s light blue and dark blue, for instance, but Russian’s *goluboy* and *sinly*. Skeptics of the language-shapes-thought claim have argued that that’s a trivial finding, showing only that people remember what they saw in both a visual form and a verbal one, but not proving that they actually see the hues differently. In an ingenious experiment, however, Boroditsky and colleagues showed volunteers three color swatches and asked them which of the bottom two was the same as the top one. Native Russian speakers were faster than English speakers when the colors had distinct names, suggesting that having a name for something allows you to perceive it more sharply. Similarly, Korean uses one word for “in” when one object is in another snugly (a letter in an envelope), and a different one when an object is in something loosely (an apple in a bowl). Sure enough, Korean adults are better than English speakers at distinguishing tight fit from loose fit.

In Australia, the Aboriginal Kuuk Thaayorre use compass directions for every spatial cue rather than right or left, leading to locutions such as “there is an ant on your southeast leg.” The Kuuk Thaayorre are also much more skillful than English speakers at dead reckoning, even in unfamiliar surroundings or strange buildings. Their language “equips them to perform

Why Language May Shape Our Thoughts (cont'd)

navigational feats once thought beyond human capabilities,” Boroditsky wrote on Edge.org.

Science has only scratched the surface of how language affects thought. In Russian, verb forms indicate whether the action was completed or not—as in “she ate [and finished] the pizza.” In Turkish, verbs indicate whether the action was observed or merely rumored. Boroditsky would love to run an experiment testing whether native Russian speakers are better than others at noticing if an action is completed, and if Turks have a heightened sensitivity to fact versus hearsay.

Similarly, while English says “she broke the bowl” even if it smashed accidentally (she dropped something on it, say), Spanish and Japanese describe the same event more like “the bowl broke itself.” “When we show people video of the same event,” says Boroditsky, “English speakers remember who was to blame even in an accident, but Spanish and Japanese speakers remember it less well than they do intentional actions. It raises questions about whether language affects even something as basic as how we construct our ideas of causality.”

DISCUSSION

- How does Begley’s ideas connect to the highly engineered vocabulary in *Nineteen Eighty-Four’s* Newspeak?
- Do you think the Party’s strategy to limit language would have been effective?
- Are there words in your native language that remind you of Newspeak?
- Do further research on the connection between language and cognition (some links to get you started are provided below); what is your stance on Lera Boroditsky’s hypothesis that “language shapes thought?”

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- “How Language Seems to Shape One’s View of the World” by Alan Yu, npr.org:
npr.org/sections/health-shots/2013/12/30/258376009/how-language-seems-to-shape-ones-view-of-the-world
- “Does Language Shape How You Think?” by Guy Deutscher, *NYT Magazine*:
nytimes.com/2010/08/29/magazine/29language-t.html
- Lera Boroditsky’s UCSD landing page:
lera.ucsd.edu/index.html

ENRICH

LESSON PLANS



The **EXPERIENCE** and ENRICH sections of this Toolkit have introduced you to the creative team, major themes, Headlong's adaptation of **1984** at A.R.T.

The **ENGAGE** section will help you prepare for the production through lessons designed to prepare students for active engagement with **1984**. These lessons expand on the major themes introduced in the ENRICH section: the function of **surveillance**, **ensorship**, and **propaganda** in today's society.

LESSON PLAN: Undercover (page 29)

Students observe how surveillance alters behavior in this hands-on assignment.

LESSON PLAN: Censors Say What? (page 30)

Students experience the effects of the censorship process on a piece of their own work in this partner writing activity.

LESSON PLAN: Propawhat? (page 31)

Students analyze the presence of manipulative language and imagery in the world around them in this flash lesson.

Surveillance Lesson Plan: Undercover

OBJECTIVES

In this take-home activity, students will observe another person and analyse how observation alters human behaviors. This activity promotes individual reflection and group discussion to build the following skills: critical thinking, disciplined observation, and attention to detail.

MATERIALS

Notebook

Writing implements

[Edward Snowden Interview](#) (optional):

theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/09/nsa-whistleblower-edward-snowden-why

[Lewis Beale opinion article](#) (optional): cnn.com/2013/08/03/opinion/beale-1984-now/

[Glenn Greenwald's TED talk](#) (optional):

ted.com/talks/glenn_greenwald_why_privacy_matters#t-572219

PROCEDURE

Process

- At home, students observe a family member or friend from afar for 10 minutes and record details of their behavior.
- Students then tell the person they are observing them that they are being watched. Students continue observing and recording for another 10 minutes, noting changes in their behavior.

Extension options:

For a full week, have students record all instances when they think they are being recorded or monitored.

For a full day, students write down all of the advertisements they see while surfing online.

BEFORE the activity, read or watch the [Edward Snowden Interview](#) and discuss as a class.

AFTER the activity, read the [Lewis Beale opinion article](#) or [Glenn Greenwald's TED talk](#) and discuss as a class.

Starting Points for Reflection

- What was it like to be an observer?
- How does human behavior change when we know we are being watched?
- Do you think you are being “watched,” and how does that make you feel?
- What is the role of surveillance in our world today?
- What are the limits to privacy today?
- Which of your personal freedoms would you give up to feel more safe?
- How are the characters in **1984** being watched? Do they know they are being watched? Does this effect their behavior?

Censorship Lesson Plan: Censors Say What?

OBJECTIVES

In this activity, students will actively censor and re-write a peer's writing through the lens of "thought crimes" in the novel Nineteen Eighty-Four to consider the impact censorship has on the meaning of a text and its author's intent. This activity promotes partner work and group discussion to build the following skills: critical thinking, self-expression, and metaphorical thinking.

MATERIALS

Paper

Writing implements for writing and censoring

Whiteboard or chalkboard

Bells (optional)

[Campus Censorship Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3vgGqIzGGE) (optional): [youtube.com/watch?v=Z3vgGqIzGGE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3vgGqIzGGE)

PROCEDURE

Process

- Students write a stream-of-consciousness piece on the topic of "my greatest dream" for 5-10 minutes.
- Brainstorm and write down a list of "thought crimes" such as: love or lust, asserting individuality, negativity, rebellion
- Students are paired up and decides who will share their writing first.
- The **author** reads their writing sample aloud to their partner, the **censor**.
- Censors either ring a bell or say "No!" any time they think the writing shows evidence of a thought crime from the list. **Students should aim to be strict and discerning as censors!**
- Students trade roles and repeat the previous two steps.
- Students rewrite their partner's writing sample, eliminating all evidence of thought crimes.

Extension Options

- Students rehearse and read both their original and their censored writing samples out loud in front of the class.
- BEFORE the activity, watch the [Campus Censorship Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3vgGqIzGGE) and discuss as a class.

Starting Points for Reflection

- Was it difficult to censor or write the revisions?
- How does censorship alter the meaning of a text?
- What was lost or altered about your writing after it was censored?
- Does censorship violate the First Amendment, which protects freedom of speech?
- Can censorship be useful?
- What do you consider the line between opinion and hate speech?
- How does this process relate to Winston's job and the concept of "crimestop" in the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*?

Propaganda Lesson Plan: Propawhat?

OBJECTIVES

In this activity, students will define and analyze the definition of “propaganda” in order to define and analyze the influential role that imagery and language plays in their lives and society. This activity promotes individual research and group discussion to build the following skills: critical thinking, close reading, and precise use of language.

MATERIALS

File folders

[Douglas Kellner article](#) (optional):

pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/papers/mediapropaganda.htm

PROCEDURE

Setup

Label two file folders: one labeled “Propaganda” and one labeled “not Propaganda.” Display these folders prominently in your classroom.

Process

- The class writes a definition of propaganda. **The definition must be accepted by the entire class**, similar to a jury’s decision in a court case.
- On a regular basis, students find and bring in examples of ads, social media posts, etc.
- In pairs or as a whole class, students discuss which ideas and/or products each artifact is trying to “sell” and whether or not they could be considered propaganda, based on the definition created by the class.
- Place all
- The class discusses and revises their definition of propaganda when necessary, again only adopting changes by a 100% consensus vote.

Extension Options

- Periodically revisit materials placed in both folders and re-evaluate whether they still belong where they are placed.
- BEFORE the activity, watch the [Douglas Kellner article](#) and discuss as a class.

Starting Points for Reflection

- What is propaganda? Is it ever useful? Is it ever wrong?
- Which tactics are used by advertisers and individuals to “sell” their products, ideas, and/or beliefs?
- What is the role of language in imagery in our society?

RESOURCES

Articles Reproduced in this Toolkit:

- “Language Lessons” by Pádraig Reidy: ioc.sagepub.com/content/42/3/145.full
- “The Principles of Newspeak,” appendix to *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell: orwell.ru/library/novels/1984/english/en_app
- Orwell’s letter explaining why he wrote *Nineteen Eighty-Four* : genius.com/2094593
- “Language Lessons” by Pádraig Reidy: indexoncensorship.org/2014/01/problem-orwellian/
- “Decreasing Our Word Power: The New Newspeak” by Walter Goodman: nytimes.com/1991/01/27/books/decreasing-our-word-power-the-new-newspeak.html
- “Why Language May Shape Your Thoughts” by Sharon Begley: newsweek.com/why-language-may-shape-our-thoughts-81725

Lesson Plan Resources:

- “We’re living ‘1984’ today” by Lewis Beale, CNN Opinion: cnn.com/2013/08/03/opinion/beale-1984-now/
- “Edward Snowden, NSA files source, interview with Ewen MacAskill, *The Guardian*: theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/09/nsa-whistleblower-edward-snowden-why
- “Campus Censorship and the End of American Debate” by Encounter Books, *YouTube*: theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/09/nsa-whistleblower-edward-snowden-why
- “Spectacle and Media Propaganda in the War on Iraq: A Critique of U.S. Broadcasting Networks” by Douglas Kellner, UCLA: pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/papers/mediapropaganda.htm
- “Why Privacy Matters” TED Talk by Glenn Greenwald: ted.com/talks/glenn_greenwald_why_privacy_matters#t-572219

Additional Resources:

- “Does Language Shape How You Think?” by Guy Deutscher, *NYT Magazine*: nytimes.com/2010/08/29/magazine/29language-t.html
- “How Language Seems to Shape One’s View of the World” by Alan Yu, npr.org: npr.org/sections/health-shots/2013/12/30/258376009/how-language-seems-to-shape-ones-view-of-the-world

About Headlong:

- Headlong website: headlong.co.uk/about/
- “Rupert Goold: ‘Every show should aim to change theatre’” by Matt Trueman, *The Guardian*: theguardian.com/stage/2014/feb/12/rupert-goold-almeida-headlong-theatre-chimerica-american-psycho