

NOTES FROM: *1984*, by George Orwell

SUMMARY: Goodreads says this is one of the most terrifying books ever written, and I'm inclined to agree. It's set in an oppressive, authoritarian future, and Winston, the protagonist, is in the process of "waking up."

You'll recognize plenty in this book from today's political and social discourse, ideas like "doublespeak", and "groupthink", etc.

In the book, citizens of Orwell's horrifying world are constantly monitored by the State, and their very reality is controlled by what the government wants them to see.

After all, who controls the past controls the future, and who controls the present controls the past.

"Perhaps one did not want to be loved so much as to be understood."

"War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength."

"If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—forever."

"We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness."

"But if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought."

"Doublethink means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them."

"Now I will tell you the answer to my question. It is this. The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power, pure power. What pure power means you will understand presently. We are different from the oligarchies of the past in that we know what we are doing. All the others, even those who resembled ourselves, were cowards and hypocrites. The German Nazis and the Russian Communists came very close to us in their methods, but they never had the courage to recognize their own motives. They pretended, perhaps they even believed, that they had seized power unwillingly and for a limited time, and that just around the corner there lay a paradise where human beings would be free and equal. We are not like that. We know that no one ever seizes power with the intention of relinquishing it. Power is not a means; it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power. Now you begin to understand me."

"Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing."

“Big Brother is Watching You.”

“It's a beautiful thing, the destruction of words.”

“Nothing was your own except the few cubic centimetres inside your skull. ”

“We do not merely destroy our enemies; we change them.”