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GOVERNMENT CONTROL AND INDIVIDUAL  
FREEDOM IN BRAVE NEW WORLD, FAHRENHEIT 451  
AND NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

(DIPLOMSKI RAD)

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Diplomski sveučilišni studij anglistike i filozofije

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## Abstract

*Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are anglophone novels which depict dystopian societies. They are essentially imaginary societies set in the future in which life is either extremely difficult or unfair. The common theme in these novels is government control, which has been taken to the extremes, to the point where it suppresses individuality and freedom of its citizens. This thesis examines the methods which the governments in these three novels use to exert power over their citizens, which ultimately leads to the loss of individuality and freedom. Furthermore, this study explores other issues connected to the government control and individual freedom, such as control of information, censorship, conformity, oppression, importance of knowledge, unsustainability, lack of individuality, critical thinking, and artificial happiness. These novels can serve as a warning to today's society and its future, as they raise important questions about conforming to the government control. The possible consequences of conforming to the government control are further explored.

Keywords: dystopia, government, society, freedom, individuality, control, oppression

## IZJAVA O AUTORSTVU

Ovom izjavom, ja, Lucija Katić, izjavljujem da je diplomski rad pod nazivom “Government control and individual freedom in Brave New World, Fahrenheit 451 and Nineteen Eighty-Four” u potpunosti samostalno napisan i da sam njegov jedini autor. Nijedan dio diplomskog rada nije izravno preuzet iz nenavedene literature, a svi dijelovi rada koji su citirani ili se temelje na drugim izvorima su jasno označeni kao takvi te su adekvatno navedeni u popisu literature.

Lucija Katić

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## INTRODUCTION

Imagine a society which is perfect in all aspects – what would it contain? It could be said that in such a society there is no poverty, no diseases, no hunger, no crime; everyone has a house and a job, enough time for themselves and others. The likely conclusion would be that people in that society are probably happy and free. Now let us imagine a society that is the complete opposite – a society in which people are scared, suffering and in pain, where living conditions are bad, where people are not allowed to enjoy things they want, where their lives are in full control of the government. Both societies have their names, one is called utopia, and the other dystopia. Utopia is considered to be a perfect place that every society should strive to achieve, a place where people enjoy living, where they are free and happy (“Utopia”). The concept of utopia has first been associated with Thomas More, a society which has managed to achieve the ideal way of life (Alberto 7). A dystopian society, on the other hand, is considered to be an imaginary place in which people are unhappy and afraid, a society in which people are usually under complete control of the government and stripped of their freedom and choices (Claeys 4). A dystopian society is also associated with desolation, catastrophes, and hardship. Such societies are depicted in the novels *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

The origin of the word dystopia is derived from two Greek words, *dus* and *topos*, which means a bad, faulty, or unfavourable place (Claeys 4). The word dystopia first appeared in 1747 and was spelt as ‘dustopia’, a year later it was defined as ‘an unhappy country’ (Claeys 273). The word was again used in 1868 in a speech by John Stuart Mill, but it was not until the mid-twentieth century that the term dystopia became commonly used (Claeys 273). Other names included cacotopia or an ‘evil place’, created by Jeremy Bentham (Claeys 4). Ruth Levitas points out that the noun dystopia is often used synonymously with dystopian literature and states: “Dystopias are not necessarily fictional in form; neither predictions of the nuclear winter nor fears of the consequences of the destruction of the rain forests, the holes in the ozone layer, the greenhouse effect and the potential melting of the polar ice caps are primarily the material of fiction.” (Claeys 5). In other words, the adjective dystopian is used to imply fear, chaos, and ruin (Claeys 5). Dystopia is often seen as a ‘failed utopia’, as a place of inequality, control, coercion and slavery (Claeys 5).

It could be said that both utopian and dystopian novels reflect society's progress. These novels try to predict in which way a society could develop based on its industrial and technological progress. Dystopian societies show the possible future if problems are ignored, and action is not taken. Besides just progress, which could turn out to be either positive or negative, dystopian novels reflect the fear and anxiety over the future based on events that happened in real life, including world wars, the Great Depression, various uprisings all over the world, famine, the Cold War, the fear of the next nuclear war and the fear of totalitarian governments (Tablang). Some of the most known dystopian novels were written as a reflection of the state of the world.

The governments in *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* aim to gain complete control over their citizens. They use various methods to impose mechanisms of control onto their citizens. The methods they use and the way they affect the citizens will be further examined using content, pattern, and comparative analysis.

## 1. *Fahrenheit 451*

*Fahrenheit 451* is a dystopian novel written by Ray Bradbury. It is considered to be one of the best-known dystopian works which discusses censorship and the role of literature in society. The story focuses on Guy Montag, who is a fireman in an unspecified city in which television has taken over society. Television is the most important thing to people in this society and it serves as a primary means of entertainment. On the other hand, literature is banned, and it is the firemen's duty to find out who is still in possession of books and destroy them. Although firemen's duty has always been to protect and serve society, in this novel the role of firemen is reversed. They are not here to protect from fires but burn instead. Their primary goal is to burn books and houses in which they were found to serve as a warning to those who want to rebel against the system. Nobody knows why books are banned and burned, and they do not question it either. The few people who did question it and who dared to have books hidden in their possession were usually ostracized from society, portrayed as crazy and dangerous. The protagonist of this novel, Guy Montag, was like everybody else; he despised books, he did not understand what was so special about them, and never questioned the authority. After a series of events, Guy Montag began to question his job and the role of firemen in society. It made him question his life choices, happiness, and freedom. His journey from a praised fireman to a wanted fugitive will be examined further, alongside the role and the effects of censorship, and the importance of knowledge that books represent.

### 1.1. The role of censorship

Censorship is one of the major themes in *Fahrenheit 451*. Censorship is defined as the changing, the suppression or prohibition of speech (Anastaplo). The government in this society uses censorship to suppress information from people and push their own information and views. The government is motivated by the desire for power and to maintain it, they use censorship to keep people in control, so they do not ever question the ruling government.

The method that the government uses to control people is to push television into the foreground. In this way, people remain entertained and distracted, the more television they watch, the less time they have for any other endeavours. Since entertainment became the norm,



nobody sees any reason to do anything else, which leaves no room for personal development. This causes the individuals to be in conflict with the majority as the happiness of the majority is put above the happiness of individuals, and to achieve it, freedom must be abolished (Wood 44). Guy Montag was happy like the majority, unsuspecting of his loss of freedom and the government control, until he ran into a young girl Clarisse who motivated him to question his reality.

At the beginning of the novel, Guy Montag obediently followed the rules and seemed to really enjoy his job. When Clarisse asks Guy Montag if he reads any books, he simply says that reading books is against the law. Montag is not aware of the original firemen duties, that firemen used to put out fires and not start them. In this example the first sign of censorship can be seen; firemen, who are considered to be the backbone of this imagined society, do not even know their duties and the history of their job. Firemen, like the rest of society, are unaware of what is happening to them, so it is easy for the government to control them.

Montag, like other people in this novel, is not used to questioning and thinking. Individuals like Clarisse are seen as odd for their views of life. It is clear from the very beginning that those who do not conform to society are seen in a different light. In the eyes of the ruling government, Clarisse is dangerous because the government does not want people to think. If they do think, people might become aware of their reality and overthrow the government. Upon Clarisse's questioning, Montag started to think more. One question was enough to make Guy Montag step out of his routine and think about his life.

Another use of technology and control came in the shape of a Mechanical Hound, which is a robotic dog that can sense books and leads firemen to houses that contain them. The Mechanical Hound is described as follows: "The Mechanical Hound slept but did not sleep, lived but did not live in its gently humming, gently vibrating, softly illuminated kennel back in a dark corner of the firehouse." (Bradbury 21-22), "The Hound half rose in its kennel and looked at him with green-blue neon light flickering in its suddenly activated eye bulbs. It growled again, a strange rasping combination of electrical sizzle, a frying sound, a scraping of metal, a turning of cogs that seemed rusty and ancient with suspicion." (Bradbury 23), and "It doesn't like or dislike. It just 'functions', it's like a lesson in ballistics. It has a trajectory we decide on for it. It follows through. It targets itself, homes itself, and cuts off. It's only copper wire, storage batteries, and electricity." (Bradbury 24). The Mechanical Hound has a very strong olfactory system and can sense books from miles away, meaning that nobody in possession of books can hide. The Hound will find them and alert the firemen. People who own books are not safe from

their neighbours either, one anonymous call is enough for firemen to show up at somebody's door. The fire station is seen as an embodiment of the government and its power, while the firemen are considered its soldiers fulfilling their duties (Bloom et al. 29). And Hound is the symbol of the endless pursuit of the government aimed at the opposition (Bloom et al. 55).

Fire is another means of censorship. In the myth of Prometheus, Prometheus stole the fire from the gods and gave it to mankind for survival. But the nature of fire is dual, meaning that it can be used for the good or the bad. In the novel, both fire and technology are used to destroy and are not used to advance mankind. The government uses technology and fire to keep their citizens in control, to spy on them and destroy the ones who oppose the system.

It does not take long for Guy Montag to become aware of the control that the government exerts and revolt against it. He used to despise books and enjoyed burning them, but now he began hiding them. Each time he talks with Clarisse, she helps him broaden his perspective. His character symbolizes that anyone can make a change, even the ones who follow the law obediently. It seems that society is declining, but nobody seems to notice as they are all occupied with television. People start to resemble each other – they all talk the same, think the same or do not talk about anything at all. The society in which they live is not focused on the people, their creativity, hobbies, expression, but rather it is all about work and watching television to the point where people have become numb to each other's feelings and behaviours.

Guy Montag even notices how all the firemen look and act the same; they are all a mirror image of him. Since television became people's main interest, their relationships declined, people do not have enough time for each other anymore and all conversations are superficial. Even Guy and his wife Mildred do not talk too much, let alone about something meaningful. Clarisse touches on the subject of school and children. She does not like school as she believed they are teaching children the wrong things and want to exhaust them so that they have no energy for anything else. Moreover, there seems to be a lot of violence among children as well, as Clarisse mentions that she is scared of children her age because they kill each other: six of her friends were shot in a span of one year, while ten died in car accidents.

Guy's wife Mildred is an example of a perfect obedient citizen who is completely controlled by the government. Mildred does not even try to question anything. All her conversations are meaningless. Her thinking and behaviour are limited, which is exactly what the government wants. She serves as representation of a society that has become mentally numb because of the government control. Since Mildred is unable to process negative emotions, she

is indifferent to a lady who was burned. The old lady's death did not affect her at all, and she showed no compassion whatsoever, representing how the masses feel about the outsiders. Happiness is put above anything else, however, glimpses reveal that Mildred attempted suicide multiple times by swallowing too many pills, indicating that she was not happy after all. This shows that medicine is also used as a means of control, as Mildred was given pills to make her completely forget her attempt, i.e. deaden her senses (Zipes 6).

Mildred is a representation of the masses. She is surrounded by her TV walls, watching somebody's life on screen, but failing to live her own. She has no other interests nor a developed personality, so she identifies with things she owns (Zipes 7). That is the reason why television was pushed into the foreground, as a distraction from living. While the government promotes entertainment and comfort as a means of achieving happiness, it slowly destroys the concept of freedom until it is completely eradicated.

Captain Beatty is one of the characters who try to keep Montag in control. Beatty attempts to give Montag a false explanation of the firemen and the books. He insists that there was no censorship, that the people themselves decided what they liked better and imposed the control onto themselves. But this raises the question: why are books burned? If the majority is not interested in books, why cannot the interested minority read them? The answer would be that books are considered dangerous, as loaded guns, and readers are the one who target people with it, as there will always be someone who might get offended by something written in a book. To ensure that people are protected from being offended and from experiencing negative emotions, their freedom was stripped away for happiness.

In Beatty's mind, freedom is actually happiness, and if books threaten happiness, then freedom must be restricted (Filler 530). This novel touches on the concept of utilitarianism, as the happiness of the majority leads to the oppression of the minority. The pursuit of happiness, i.e. freedom becomes a means to oppress the freedom of other people (Filler 531). And in that pursuit of happiness, censorship of books is used as a means of control as it imposes restrictions on the mind (Buck 169). The freedom of people relates to the freedom of books as the government cannot control people who are informed (Buck 169-171).

Throughout the novel, Montag's character growth is evident, while others remain passive to change. Despite the censorship, Montag's character seems to grow the more he thinks. For the first time ever, Montag ponders on his job, his choice of being a fireman, and the fact that he is responsible for burning numerous books. The books in which somebody put

a lot of time and energy to write them, and now they perished in seconds: “It took some man a lifetime maybe to put some of his thoughts down, looking around at the world and life and then I come along in two minutes and boom! It’s all over.” (Bradbury 49). Montag starts despising not only his job, but himself as well. He did not want to be a fireman anymore.

This has put him in the category of those who question the authority. People who oppose the system usually end up miserable or dead. Clarisse McClellan was an example of a person who questions, who wanted to know why, and in Beatty’s eyes she is better off dead, implying that people should not even try to question the government as they will end up alone and miserable. She is one of the reasons why kindergarten age is lowered every year, so that the state can raise children and not the parents. People like her are considered dangerous to the state rule and the number of such people should be minimized as “the home environment can undo a lot you try to do at school.” (Bradbury 57).

When it comes to the school system, Captain Beatty describes why it is important for the state to raise the children: children are taught numerous facts, and they feel ‘brilliant’ knowing all the information, but in reality, it is all useless data which they do not need, because too much thinking causes misery and melancholy. Those children will be happy because those facts do not change, they will feel like moving while always remaining in one place. Since memorizing all the meaningless information exhausts the children, they are frustrated which makes their fun activities outside the school turn to violence (Zipes 7). Activities that express creativity, such as writing, painting, music, pottery, and drawing, can help children ease their aggressive tendencies, but they are forbidden, so it is no surprise that children are aggressive and violent (Arnold 53).

Moreover, parents do not seem to be interested in taking care of their children either. As previously mentioned, violence is constantly on the rise. One of Mildred’s friends proudly says that she sends her children to school nine days out of ten because it is easier, and when they come home, which is three days a month, she makes them watch television: “You heave them into the ‘parlor’ and turn the switch. It’s like washing clothes; stuff laundry in and slam the lid.” (Bradbury 93). Although this is just one example of how children are raised, it could be a representation for many, as adults spend too much time entertained by shows and children spend most of their time in school.

Schools and kindergartens are not the only places under the control of the government. The architecture has also been changed in subtle ways; there are no front porches and gardens

because people would sit and talk, which could lead to thinking, and the government does not want people to have a social life. Because of that, they created TV-walls, big television screens so that people can enjoy watching various movies and dramas, which are also simplified so that they would not think about them either.

Censorship has also affected Faber, an old retired English professor who lost his job forty years ago due to the lack of students and who lives in constant fear. He was afraid of Montag at first because he was still a fireman. In this novel, several types of people can be recognized: the ones who set the rules, the ones who blindly follow them, the ones who follow them out of fear and the ones who are against the rules. The government is the one who sets the rules, people like Mildred, her friends and the firemen follow them, Faber follows out of fear and Montag and Clarisse are the ones against the rules.

In the last two chapters of the novel, Montag finds out just how much things have been censored. Faber informs him that there used to be tons of books in the world, but he said nothing when the law was passed to ban them. Books were banned because they showed the reality of life, the good and the bad. As Captain Beatty mentions, ethnic and minority groups were offended by their portrayal in the mass media. To ensure comfort and happiness, technology, mass media and censorship were used to eliminate differences and originality. A well-read individual with a developed sense of thinking could offend others by eliminating books, people cannot read anymore and cannot develop the capacity to understand, therefore cannot offend anyone anymore. Individuality and freedom were the cost of comfort. All books had to be banned, and people were prevented from reflection and personal development (Zipes 11).

With no capacity to think, people are influenced by television to act a certain way. Television creates the truth it wants and that is the danger of it. Programs program people the way the government wants them, they tell the lie which people believe, and if people do not watch TV, they will think and act differently and the facade will soon be dropped. The people of this society live in a state of fake bliss, unsuspecting of the danger that is coming at them. The war is approaching, but they do not notice it because they are indulged in the entertainment. The citizens are not aware of the oncoming war as the government never warned them. Its duty was never to protect citizens but to make them obedient. Therefore, Montag's escape from the authorities is also seen as an escape to freedom (Bloom et al. 42).

These are the reasons why censorship is dangerous; people are being fed lies about their entire existence and the world. While it may seem that these people are happy, that is just a facade, the exterior. Everyone is the same, acts the same, even looks the same. It is not clear how much this affected freedom and individuality as only glimpses can be seen. But it seems that most people are not affected much because they do not even realize it, only the ones who realize it know the extent of it. People are free, but not actually free, they can be whoever they want, they can act any way they want, but only within the boundaries of the government. These people believe they are free, but their freedom is limited and made out to be limitless. This can be seen throughout all three novels.

## 1.2. The importance of knowledge for individual freedom

Knowledge is another major theme present in *Fahrenheit 451* and through each character, it will be examined how knowledge was affected by censorship and the role it plays for individual freedom. Knowledge is connected to freedom as it is seen as a means through which an individual can reach their freedom (Filler 528). As mentioned in the previous chapter, books are banned, they have not been a source of knowledge for decades in this society. Children do not read books anymore, they are filled with various unnecessary data, meaning that they know a lot of information, but in reality, they do not know much. Be it an adult or a child, without knowledge, one is not free.

They do not know how to question what they know or even discern between various pieces of information given to them. Since they are taught this way from a really early age and they do not know anything else besides that, these children probably think that this is all that exists. They cannot name any major writer or a book, and the information presented to them is so simple that it is not clear how that affects their brains – whether they are developed enough. And when these children reach adulthood, school and all the information is replaced with TV programs, which are also simplified. As Captain Beatty said, people are only presented with facts that are absolute and have no reason for questioning. Questioning is not even an option in this society, so it cannot be stated clearly that these people actually have knowledge. They only have knowledge which is presented to them, which is only a small, simplified portion. It can be said that society is experiencing intellectual stagnation (Sisario 202).

The first character who shows Montag the importance of knowledge is Clarisse. Her name means light, illumination, and clarity, which signifies the first awakening of Montag's consciousness (Zipes 6). Clarisse raises Montag's consciousness which makes him see above the illusions of the government (Zipes 6). She is his first teacher. Each of the people that Montag meets is a character who makes him closer to truth and freedom, a new lesson in his quest for freedom (Zipes 7).

Another character in this novel which shows the importance of knowledge is Mildred, an obedient follower of rules. She is in no way whatsoever interested in books or breaking the rules. It can even be stated that she is obsessed with watching television, as that is how she is described in the novel; always watching and always listening to something. When Montag presents her with the books he has hidden and begs her to at least try to see what is in the books, Mildred refuses. Mildred simply does not believe there is any good reason to read and is not open to it at all. She was given a choice to discover a piece of knowledge, but refused, indicating that even when people are presented with knowledge, they resist acquiring it as they are not used to it and are brainwashed into despising it. Mildred teaches Montag how important it is to not become ignorant and be open to learning.

When Montag decides to read a poem to Mildred and her two friends, Mrs. Phelps and Mrs. Bowles, by the end of the poem Mrs. Phelps starts crying and cannot express how she feels. In this one small moment, a glimpse of reality reached Mrs. Phelps. This moment proves that some people can see through the illusions, but they need somebody to help them with it. On the other hand, Mrs. Bowles is just like Mildred and says that she knew something like this would happen, supporting Beatty's claim that books and thinking make people unhappy. Mrs. Bowles supports that claim by saying that poetry is connected to tears, suicide and crying. She even goes on to say that these are all silly words which only end up hurting people and she does not understand why somebody would want to hurt others. She sees Montag as a horrible person who only wants to hurt other people. From this situation, it can be deduced that people refuse knowledge and equate it with negativity. It also shows that people do not even know themselves, let alone the world around them.

Montag decides to completely shatter the illusion in which Mrs. Phelps was living by saying that she should think about her divorce, her husband dying, her children who hate her, and herself. Mrs. Phelps and Mildred are two characters who represent people who are not aware of their lives and their decisions. And it is not clear whether these women are not aware of their lives, or they just do not want to be and instead pretend they are fine and numb their

pain by experiencing reality in TV shows. Montag's words "go home, go home and think" (Bradbury 98) could be directed at everyone, not just Mrs. Phelps. It seems that people do not even know how to think anymore and are afraid of what may come with all that thinking since they are not used to it.

In the novel, an old lady sets herself and her books on fire when she gets caught by the firemen and the Hound. This event deeply affects Montag as he always used to think that they "weren't hurting anyone, you were hurting only things" (Bradbury 34), but it additionally motivates him in his pursuit of knowledge and defiance against the government. Her burning signifies the importance of knowledge for an individual and their freedom. The old lady refused to submit to the government and its power to decide over her life; by setting herself on fire, in her final moments she took that power away from the government (Bloom et al. 23). She chose to die for her freedom, as death seemed better than to remain living under control. To individuals like this old lady, control was like imprisonment, but without the walls and bars. The lady's last words were Master Ridley, a bishop who was burned for heresy (Bloom et al. 51). The words "We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust I shall never be put out." were said to Master Ridley by a man named Latimer, which serves as a symbol of resistance (Bradbury 37). The government can kill, imprison, and control the rebels, but it cannot stop them as there will always be someone willing to stand up to them.

Another character which serves to emphasize the importance of knowledge is Faber, whose name means 'builder' (Zipes 6). He is one of the characters who help Montag expand his knowledge and see beyond the illusions that the government places upon them. Faber is an old English professor who used to teach at a university. By his position, it can be assumed that Faber has a lot of knowledge, but he is keeping it from others out of fear. To Faber, knowledge is in the words, in old motion pictures, old friends, nature, ourselves, not only books. Faber expresses how knowledge can be found everywhere, even in 'parlor families' or television shows. But most of these things have been banned; books cannot be owned and read, old motion pictures are non-existent, people are not that close to each other anymore and mostly have meaningless conversations, and television shows are simplified and do not provide people with knowledge about the world.

This presupposes the question: can people truly be free and happy if knowledge is kept from them? While analysing this novel, it gave me the impression that people are not completely aware of the world around them, and if some are aware of it to an extent, they willingly choose to ignore it. Therefore, happiness and freedom exist for people as long as they



are in this bubble. Captain Beatty, on the other hand, seems to know a lot, but refuses to share that knowledge with anyone. He slowly starts confessing the truth to Montag— that the firemen are the enemy of truth and freedom. They are the ones supporting the system. People are constantly being fed lies, and they hardly have any factual knowledge, if any. And what happens to a society built on lies?

Sometimes one person is enough to crush the illusion or burst the bubble of a perfect life. In *Fahrenheit 451*, that one person is Montag, who went from a proud fireman to a fugitive in a very short span, he went from not knowing anything to slowly broadening his mind and expanding his knowledge. And soon, he finds out that he is not alone in this, he finds that there are many people in the world who preserve knowledge. While it may not be much, each individual plays a vital role, each individual holds a part of knowledge on something, and together they make a whole. Little by little those people add to that knowledge. And they wait until it is safe to bring it to the surface again. Montag's journey is a journey towards intellectual freedom (Moore 403). It also appears that the progress of humankind is in the books, while people like Montag serve as a means of keeping the books alive (Zipes 13).

Montag's journey reminds me of the allegory of Plato's cave. The allegory begins with people who are bound in the cave. Montag, alongside Mildred and other people, was like the people in the cave chained to the wall, seeing shadows on the wall of the cave. These people knew nothing except those shadows and thought that that was everything that existed; just like the people in *Fahrenheit 451*, it was their true reality. The government represents the puppeteers who are behind the wall. The puppeteers hold all kinds of artifacts which they project above the wall and create shadows which the people in the cave see and believe are all that exists. Mildred is bound to the cave, and she believes that what she knows is all that exists. Just like the people are surrounded by the walls of the cave, Mildred is surrounded by television walls (Connor 412). The puppeteers are the ones who know the truth, but decide to keep it hidden for their own reasons, the reason usually being power.

Captain Beatty is a puppeteer and he knows that there is more to life, he knows that figures on the wall are simply shadows which he projects. And then there are several individuals who manage to break free and get out of the cave, realizing there is an entire world outside of it. Such people would be Clarisse, Faber, later Montag, and friends he meets as a fugitive. Granger is one of the people outside the cave who waits for others to join and can lead only a few into the light (Connor 413). Bloom's analysis of Plato's *Republic* shows that a philosopher,

an intellectual, cannot enter the cave and bring the light, but rather he must escape into the light and lead the others (Connor 415).

Montag's journey from fireman to fugitive is not just literal, but metaphysical as well, as he goes through a metamorphosis; from a book burner to a living book (Bloom et al. 54). His journey is not just about escaping the authorities, but rising above the illusions placed by the government. This shows that knowledge can be found in anything, but it is important not to hide it. Since people were constantly presented with false happiness, they had no capacity to deal with negative emotions nor the capacity to think. Happiness is not freedom, and cannot be built on lies and restriction. To be limited from thinking means to be limited from freedom as well.

## 2. *Brave New World*

*Brave New World* is a novel written by Aldous Huxley. It focuses on the impact of technology on society. The novel is set in 632 AF, AF standing for 'after Ford', as Henry Ford is considered the idol, a God, so there is only time before and after Ford. The society in this novel is called the World State, its population two billion, and its main focus is to keep people as happy as possible. People in the World State are scientifically bred and hatched in 'uniform batches' like Ford's Model T. People are also divided into castes: Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons, and each caste has its own duties which make the whole society function. These castes are supervised by ten controllers, i.e. Alpha Plus Intellectuals.

Each of the castes is bred differently in order to fulfil its duty; lower castes receive lower levels of oxygen, which affects their brain development. Epsilons are the ones who receive the lowest levels of oxygen, and they are not intelligent as they do not need it for their work. They are also bred to physically develop faster than others. Moreover, while in tubes, the Epsilons' sensitivity to heat or cold is predestined, resulting in people more adapted to the tropic climate, able to work as miners, steel workers or silk spinners, as their minds are preconditioned to thrive on heat. Deltas have been taught to hate flowers and books, which is achieved through numerous sessions.

In this society, freedom does not exist as its main focus is happiness. Happiness is supported by government control, i.e. soma pills and hypnopaedia. The main motto of the World

State is “community, identity, stability”, which means that everyone works together towards the greater good. Although this seems ideal, the analysis will show that this society is far from it. It is also important to note that the world outside the World State exists. There are nine other World States with nine controllers. Another, different world exists as well. This different world is looked down upon as uncivilized and its people are called savages. These people live in reservations, the only places where the world as we know it remains. This is a world in which people have families, friends, close bonds, some know how to read, while others do not, they know of traditions, religions, and God, all of which do not exist in the World State.

## 2.1. Is technology ruining society?

To some people, advanced technology is a sign of progress and betterment, but to others, it signifies disaster and possible catastrophes. In this chapter, the effect of advanced technology on the World State society in *Brave New World* is examined. In the World State, technology is the driving force of society. Each person has their role which enables society to function and make rapid progress. It is important to note that methods used by the government are justified for the sake of the whole society. Since society is built around mass production and consumption, there is a need for a massive number of people who produce and consume on such a large scale. And since progress is the leading force, children need to grow up faster and become the workforce.

This is achieved through advanced technology. Children are no longer born and do not take years to mature. Children are now bred scientifically and raised by the whole community, i.e. the state. Families no longer exist, words ‘mother’ and ‘father’ are not only outdated, but are considered offensive and vulgar. The room in which children are bred is called the Fertilizing room and is run by the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning. As already mentioned, people are divided into castes and out of these castes only Alphas and Betas are made of one egg, meaning one baby, one person.

However, Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons have to go through the Bokanovsky’s process, meaning that one egg is no longer one person, that egg will be divided into 96 buds which will then grow into 96 babies. Thus, the process of having children is sped up tremendously. One mother carries the baby for nine months, but the Bokanovsky’s process

eliminates wombs, as the babies do not need to develop for nine months. This process results in a rapid increase in the population. The Bokanovsky's process is considered to be one of the major instruments of social stability. Since these children are bred from one egg, that means they are all identical, so there are thousands, even millions of identical twins. The entire process of mass production is not only directed at material goods, but at people as well.

The Bokanovsky's process is beneficial for the capitalist society, but it does destroy the notion of individuality and freedom. Firstly, most people are identical, which already excludes their individuality in looks. The way they are raised by the government also excludes personal development. Epsilons are mentally hindered, which means that they are unable to develop their personality from the start. All castes have their own place in the World State, they interact only if they must and are conditioned to not engage in any other interactions besides work. That is one of the ways the government manages to keep people in control. All the castes are conditioned to love the work they do and can never choose to do anything else.

Alongside the Bokanovsky's process there is the Podsnap's technique, the main purpose of which is to accelerate the process of maturing. In these two processes, more than eleven thousand children are fertilized from 150 mature eggs in the span of two years. After children go through these processes, they are transferred from test-tubes to bottles and are on their way to the Social Predestination Room. In this room, children's lives are predestined, it is already decided whether they will be Alphas, Betas, Gammas or other castes, which qualities they will possess, etc. To be able to keep up with mass consumerism, consumers had to be modified, which is why in the World State society no one can choose what they want to be, and everything is already predestined for them (Nicol 42). Children are labelled before they even leave those bottles; their gender is decided as follows: T for males, circles for females and question mark for freemartins. Freemartins are female embryos which have been given a dose of male sex hormone every twenty-four meters, resulting in sterile women. People's behaviour and skills are not only determined but also created for them (Hoffecker 49). It can be stated that people in the World State are conditioned into their identities (Nicol 42). The skills that people have are created in relation to whether they are beneficial for society and whether they support stability and happiness. It becomes easy for people to not worry about the government when all their needs and desires are easily achieved. People are mindlessly producing what they will later mindlessly consume (Nicol 42).

All children, no matter the caste, are preconditioned, and the purpose of it is to make people love what they do: "All conditioning aims at that: making people like their unescapable

social destiny.” (Huxley 12). Absolute conformity is achieved by genetic modification and social and pedagogical training (Lisboa 134). Liking what you do results in happiness, which is the primary goal in the preservation of society. If people do not know any better and if they do not even have the capabilities to understand, they will be happy as that is all that exists for them. Similarly to *Fahrenheit 451*, people seem to be happy, as they do not know any better, what they know is their only reality, but they do not realize that it is limited. Freedom to choose is directly connected to the amount of knowledge an individual has about their possibilities (Arnold 54).

In this process of breeding and fertilizing children, there is a lack of oxygen and some of the embryos still have gills, some of them are starved, and some of the foetuses still have tails. Until those tails fall off, they cannot be intellectually conditioned. When it comes to the conditioning of Deltas, they are taught to hate flowers and books, which is achieved through loud noises and electric shocks. While children are still infants, they are brought into a room with flowers and books. When children approach the books, the sound of a loud explosion can be heard and all of a sudden, children go from excited and giggling to screaming in horror. The same is done with flowers and electric shocks which go through the bodies of little babies. All this is done from a very young age so that children would develop an intrinsic hatred of books and flowers, which are considered to be distractions to life; as the director says, these children will be ‘saved from books and botany all their lives’ (Huxley 17).

Upon hearing the word advanced technology, one would think that it serves the good, which is also the purpose of the World State society, but the more the processes are described in *Brave New World*, the less ideal it seems. It almost presupposes a threat, because it is hard to see why anyone would want to go through this and let their children go through it as well. But in *Brave New World*, this is normality. All children go through vigorous conditioning since they were in tubes until their adulthood, so making them hate books is beneficial, as books could reveal something that they did not know or could even trigger the conditioning they received. Therefore, books here present a threat, just like in *Fahrenheit 451*. They are distractions which should not exist. If they do, that one could see the world for what it is, they could make a person question their society and stop working. And since everything is about mass production, there is no time for distractions and questioning.

Similarly to *Fahrenheit 451*, where the State raises the children while parents are distracted by television, in *Brave New World* children are brought up in the State Conditioning Centers, while the structure of a family no longer exists. People do not experience the love

which family gives and they do not know it is even possible, but they are conditioned to be repulsed by the idea of family and marriage. This is supported by the phrase ‘everybody belongs to everyone else’, meaning that it is socially acceptable for people to have sex with as many people as they want, and it is encouraged, but only within the castes. Only a few women are allowed to reproduce and only under the government’s conditions. People like Bernard Marx, who is an Alpha, are repulsed by that idea, and he is the one who is judged by the other alphas. Others assume that something must be wrong with him as his behaviour is unusual and not in accordance with everybody else’s.

The conditioning is supported by the hypnopaedia, also known as sleep-teaching, a technique that was accidentally discovered, but is now a necessary component in children’s conditioning. And no one can escape it. Hypnopaedia works in a way that phrases are repeated on a continual basis to children during sleep. Hypnopaedia cannot be used for intellectual education, such as the knowledge of the world, as it turned out to not be beneficial, but it is excellent for moral education. What is dangerous about hypnopaedia is that children do not have their own thoughts, their thoughts are actually the State’s thoughts. This means that people do not think for themselves, they do not question their society and all they could possibly think about is what they have been conditioned to through hypnopaedia. With hypnopaedia, people are brainwashed with repetitions until it becomes their truth. Helmholtz Watson’s job was to create songs and slogans which would further solidify the conditioning of hypnopaedia, which shows that the influence of the State is deeply ingrained in the minds of the citizens (Hankins 44).

This raises questions about people’s true happiness, freedom, and individuality. People in the novel do not have original ideas, thoughts, or creative expression. They do not only look identical, but are also carbon copies when it comes to their behaviour and personalities. Their purpose is replaced with hedonism and consumerism (Wilkinson 23). It seems that society functions well this way, but there is someone who disagrees, someone who partially sees through the illusion. That person is Bernard Marx.

Bernard Marx is an expert for hypnopaedia. Throughout the novel, he shows how hypnopaedia affects people. When Lenina, one of the characters, constantly repeats certain phrases, they are a pure result of hypnopaedia, but she does not know that. For example, when she says that “progress is lovely”, that phrase is a result of five hundred repetitions once a week from the age of thirteen to the age of seventeen (Huxley 86). Children do not know that they have undergone the process of hypnopaedia: “Above them, in ten successive layers of

dormitory, the little boys and girls who were still young enough to need an afternoon sleep were busy as everyone else, though they did not know it, listening unconsciously to hypnopaedic lessons in hygiene and sociability, in class-consciousness and the toddler's love-life." (Huxley 128). Hypnopaedia affects language and speech, as people are not able to construct their own views, most of their views are simply instilled into them (Grushow 42). If anyone says or does something against the teaching, they are usually reported to the director; a case that happened to Helmholtz Watson who wrote rhymes on being alone instead of the state's slogans. The students reported him because they believed he was doing something wrong, because it went against their unconscious sleep-teaching lessons. Sleep-teaching is replaced by individual thinking, which does not exist. It can be said that society has a collective memory (Hadomi 113).

Another invention of advanced technology is soma, which are drug-like pills that people use on a daily basis. What soma does to people is make them feel like they are on holiday, in a dream-like state full of bliss and joy. Soma cures people from all the hurt, boredom, and unmet needs. Whatever trouble someone might experience, soma will cure it. The use of soma replaces any desire for thinking, creative expression, interest in history, art or science (Hadomi 113). It is considered to be a mind-altering drug which eliminates the need for conscience (Hoffecker 57). What people do not know is that soma shortens their life span. This corresponds with an experiment on drugs in which D. G. Grahame-Smith argues that drugs can alter the brain and the mind and there is the possibility of altering the aging process, either slowing it down or speeding it up, which is more likely (Grahame-Smith 133).

While people believe that soma is used to make them happy, the truth is that they need to use it, because if they are happy and in a dream-like state, they will never question the authority. The moment one becomes unhappy, one starts to wonder why, which can make the whole system crumble. If a disaster happens, for example, a riot breaks out, people will be given soma and they will forget why they rioted in the first place. Soma is used to preserve the social order. Grahame-Smith also argues that exposure to drugs can cause changes in the brain which remain long after use (133). Moreover, he argues that drugs can alter future behaviour just like various experiences do (Grahame-Smith 133). This is seen in the novel, as people simply cannot live without soma, they are addicted to it and cannot function without it.

The state of misery initiates questioning and people who question the world will not make the economy go round. Factories will be empty if people are not satisfied. That is why soma is distributed every day after work. When people use soma, they remain in that dream-

like state for hours, just enough to get up in the morning for work. And the cycle repeats. Questioning is a distraction, such as flowers, books, nature, creativity, so soma can be seen as a cure for those distractions. But no one seems to see the reason why soma is a big distraction and those who refuse to take it, such as Bernard Marx, are looked down upon. Therefore, freedom is non-existent, people can choose only what they have been conditioned to choose.

Soma makes people live a life they do not have. It makes them dream and fantasize, and when they come back from it, reality is seen as something completely different. Along with soma, feelies, a substitute for the theatre, are used to stimulate the senses rather than the mind (Hankins 43). No one even sees how their society is not perfect and how people live in the illusion of happiness. Bernard is the one who partially sees through it and longs for escape, and John, who came from the reservation, is the one who sees through all the illusions. Although his mother tried to condition him according to the State's rules, she did not succeed. To John, soma is poison. He tries to make others realize that, but there is no escape from it. Even if somebody tries to do something, they will be given a dose of soma and forget everything. If they do not forget, they will be outcasted from society to some place where 'normal' life still exists. It can be concluded that the technology is not used for the betterment of society. It is not only used as a distraction, but it completely ruins the opportunity for people to develop mentally and physically, interact with others, and live their lives.

## 2.2. Should we sacrifice individuality for society's well-being?

In *Brave New World*, one major issue surrounding its citizens is individuality. Such an idea does not exist in the World State. People are not encouraged to be individuals, quite the opposite. To be able to develop individuality, one must be able to choose for himself, and not fall under the influence of the government or society. Individuals should be able to invent themselves (Appiah 312). John S. Mill argues that freedom enables the development of individuality, which is an essential part of life (Appiah 312). If freedom is denied, a person is robbed of their individuality, indicating there is no true individuality (Talbot 600). Since everything revolves around economy and production, individuality could hinder that. The focus is more on the relationship of the individual to technology and consumerism than on the development of individuality (Hadomi 112). That is the reason why children in the World State



are preconditioned and their jobs are already predestined. This presupposes several questions. Should people sacrifice their individuality for society's well-being? How to develop individuality in the World State? Would the rise of individuality bring collapse to the World State?

As previously mentioned, children are not raised in families, but in Social Predestination Rooms, and the goal for the children is to grow up as fast as possible so that they can join the workforce. This does not even give the children the opportunity to enjoy their childhood, let alone develop their individuality. Children do not get to decide anything about their lives, beginning from their development in the artificial wombs to the day they die. While they are in tubes, the caste they will belong to is already decided, as well as their likes and dislikes, thoughts and actions. Nothing is the result of free will. Free will exists only as a disguise. People in the World State believe they are happy and free, but that can hardly be true if all the belief systems are built by one person and no other belief systems exist or are formed along the way.

Moreover, when it comes to castes, all of them besides Alphas and Betas are all identical in their looks, meaning that this already excludes the individuality of one's looks. There are no differences in face shapes, eye colours, eyebrow shapes, etc. Although that may not seem important, it does play a role in someone's individuality. It is not only the personality that makes people different, but also everything else, including their looks, their way of thinking and speaking. Mill argues that individuality is not important just for the sake of diversity, but for self-expression (Appiah 313). John Dewey also argues that classifying people into groups neglects their individuality (Morgan 437). What is good for one person may be a hindrance to another because different people acquire different conditions to develop (Appiah 316). Individuality is something unique and intrinsic, and not something that can be compared or put in one box (Morgan 437). Many people have developed close bonds, so certain phrases remind them of someone, others speak in a particular way which they themselves may not realize, while others do; this all makes them who they are. This is one of the ways people are able to connect to others. The more power an individual has over their life, the more freedom they have to be themselves (Talbot 603).

Differences are non-existent in the World State. Everyone thinks the same, so there is not a person who might propose an interesting question or express an unconventional thought. There are no conversations about uncommon ideas. People have been wondering for ages about the world, death, purpose, universe, stars, other people. There are texts written with thoughts of

ancient philosophers about their views of life and the universe which are discussed today. Similar conversations cannot happen in the World State, no one asks about death, the afterlife, or the universe. All those topics are considered a waste of time and people discussing those questions are frowned upon.

In short, they do not make the economy go around, so they are not worth exploring. Freedom enables people to be the best version of themselves. A person's path in life is the best because it is their own, but that does not exist here (Appiah 317). Freedom allows people to be creative and to develop their own values, thoughts, and opinions. John Dewey has encouraged the development of individuality as something that is important to humans as it provides an intrinsic value (Morgan 436). For individuality, freedom is necessary. Since freedom does not exist in the World State, the State shapes people's identities and does not allow them the opportunity to do it themselves. The conceptions of life become what the state wants, and not what the individual wishes.

In order to ensure that people do not ever think about various topics, conditioning comes into place. When children are preconditioned before they were even born, it is easy for them to not question the world, since they do not know what is possible. It is like a circle, and the circle is all these people know, and they do not even know that something behind the circle could possibly exist. All children, no matter the caste, are preconditioned with various phrases which results in them not having their own thoughts. This just scratches the surface of the non-existent individuality in all the citizens of the World State.

Children, and then adults, have no original thoughts, ideas or behaviour. They do not even get to decide what they like or dislike, since that is already preconditioned, as is the case with Deltas, who are taught to hate flowers and books. Epsilons were developed in a way that intelligence is not an important component of their life, meaning they are not very smart, but they are good at physical labour. It does not seem that someone can be happy when they do not even have a chance to develop normally. A person cannot even question if their brains are not developed for thinking. Those people have been deprived of their right to equality and dignity, they have been denied freedom (Appiah 332).

From an outside perspective, living in the World State seems like a nightmare. People in the World State have no hobbies or interests as they are all considered major distraction and do not serve the state. Since people do not read books, they have no knowledge and they cannot even develop any interests, have individual thoughts or act differently. All they know is what

they have been taught. People are not given any freedom to develop individually, broaden their knowledge, change jobs, etc. The State has complete control over everyone's life, but in such a deliberate way that its citizens do not recognize it. This kind of state today would be called the greatest deceiver of all time; to exploit people and to reduce them to nothing but a number in the workforce, and make them believe they are the happiest people who live in the greatest country.

Since these people are limited in every area of life and know nothing else, everyone who dares to show a little bit of their individuality or a different thought is ostracized and ridiculed by society, as any desire for individuality is looked down upon. Having no close bonds or a support system, it seems quite normal for the outsider to crumble under everyone and give in to the pressure of society. Such a character in *Brave New World* is Bernard Marx. Although an Alpha, the highest of all the castes, he is ridiculed for his looks and everyone considers him weird because of his thoughts, his way of speaking and his disdain for soma. This is why he often feels small and worthless. The peer pressure from other Alphas is too strong and Bernard struggles daily to prove his worthiness. Nonetheless, he defies social norms.

When he brings John to the World State from the savage reservation, he feels better. The feelings of pride and extra attention go to his head. John, on the other hand, is sure of himself, but not prideful. He simply knows who he is and does not let others change him, which brings him extreme ridicule. John states that he would rather have discomfort, God, poetry, books, freedom than live a fake life of happiness, as he is aware of the danger of conformity (Coleman 8). To him, the notion of being human carries the notion of freedom (Hoffecker 55). He is not treated as an equal, but as an exotic creature (Lisboa 135). In the words of Mustafa Mond, John wishes for his right to be unhappy, which goes against the World State. As history is filled with wars and disasters, an illusion of freedom and happiness was created to ensure peace, but the price of it were freedom and individuality. John simply cannot express himself in a world that is indoctrinated, as he brings instability with his mere presence, which goes against all teachings (Hoffecker 51). Looking at John's example, who is so sure of himself, who enjoys life at the reservation and despises the World State, it seems that not even he could rise above society's pressure. In the end, after he realizes the horrific things he did under the influence of soma, he commits suicide.

In comparison to other people, John is nurturing and caring, loves his mother and cries for her when she dies. He is a bridge between the World State and the savage reservation, but he does not belong to either of them (Hadomi 115). On the other hand, Alphas

and other castes do not really understand the concept of emotions, all they care about is happiness. If one is not happy, all they have to do is take soma. Nobody deals with problems, which causes everyone to act like robots, as there are no real emotions or close relations. Even though their slogan is 'Everybody belongs to everyone else', one would think that at least some sort of a close bond exists between people, but it does not. It seems that this slogan only applies to sexual relations among the castes, but people are not there for each other. Just like they are a means for economy, in the same way, they are a means to each other for pleasure, but strictly pleasure and nothing more.

Any notion of feelings, family, close bonds, mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers or anything similar is frowned upon and borderline forbidden. History, culture, art, memory, unique or emotional expression are condemned in the World State. Those words do not even exist in their vocabulary. Comparing this to the world we know now, it really does seem like some faraway dystopian place. Most people today cannot imagine a society in which families do not exist, nobody feels sad or loves their parents.

The motto of the World State is stated at the beginning of *Brave New World*, 'community, identity, stability'. Upon closer inspection, it seems that the World State only follows stability, but not community and identity. As already mentioned, people are not close to each other within the castes, let alone outside the castes. Castes only interact if necessary, but there is no such thing as Alphas being friends with Gammas or other castes. And there is only a surface level of identity, related to their belonging to castes. Everything is done for the good of society and everything that is considered a threat is forbidden. The only freedom that exists is the freedom for sexual desire. However, the State does not use threats, torture or any other means of punishment, as punishment is not beneficial, the indoctrinated majority has proven to be more powerful than force (Nicol 49). It is the people who want something, not the government, but the reason they want it is indoctrination.

Individuality is considered to be one of the biggest threats to the well-being of society. The influence of the State is inescapable. Everyone is so conditioned that they simply cannot think for themselves. That is similar to the concept of herd mentality. To answer the first question, people were never given a choice whether to sacrifice individuality or not, they were simply forced. They were never even aware that there could be a choice. Only individuals like Bernard Marx have somewhat developed individuality, others do not even think about the concept of it.

Based on all of that, I do not think it would be possible for people to develop individuality. In the same way it took years for the World States to take control, it would take decades to bring it back to what it was. However, this again would presuppose the question: would individuality bring back instability? Since people decided to end wars, get rid of books, monuments and many other things in order to bring stability and happiness, uncovering the truth could potentially cause instability and wars again. This leads to the answer to the last question; the rise of individuality would probably bring the collapse to this World State and possibly the nine others. It could also, hypothetically, bring decades, if not centuries of instability all around the world.

People would first get angry because of the lack or disappearance of soma, riots would break out, the State would not be able to control its citizens anymore, and it would soon collapse. If stability was brought to people in other ways in which they could decide about their own lives, there would be less chance for riots and wars. Although it is clear that these people are only experiencing the illusion of happiness, a sudden change would completely break the system and the consequences would be massive. Moreover, if people did have individuality, their own morals, rules and ways of living, they would probably not allow certain things which are normal in the World State. Child erotic play has always been considered abnormal and immoral, but in the World State, it is normal for hundreds of children as young as six to be naked in front of each other and experiment sexually. People probably would not get rid of the notion of families, God, traditions, etc.

It is also interesting to note that people in the World State have no individuality whatsoever, but they think of themselves as better, and as people in contrast to people who live in reservations. People in reservations still live typical, old lives, having God, religions, morals, traditions, families, books (...), but they are considered savages and apes, not a part of the civilized world. They are looked at as some species from another planet, their ways of living are obscene, unconventional and ridiculed.

Analysing this novel leads to the conclusion that extremes are never good and could either lead to disasters or ignorance. Important takeaways from *Brave New World* are that it is important for each individual to develop their identity, to be secure in it and to always think, question and act when something is not right. It is stated in the novel that the World States were formed because of years and years of instability, famine and wars. If people, for example, questioned the actions of certain people and acted, maybe wars would not happen and there

would be no reason for the formation of the World States. Again, it is all hypothetical, but this novel illustrates what might happen to reality in a matter of a few decades.

### 3. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a 1949 novel written by Eric Arthur Blair, under the pen name George Orwell. The novel follows the life of Winston Smith and his life in Oceania. Oceania is one of the three super-states ruling the world. The other two include Eurasia and Eastasia. Winston Smith is staying in an area which is called the Airstrip One (former England) in London. People in Oceania are divided into inner and outer Party members and proles, and they are governed by the Big Brother.

Big Brother is the one who controls Oceania and makes all the rules concerning the behaviour of Party members, but nobody has ever seen him. There are numerous posters of him all around Oceania, but he has never made a public appearance. Why that is so is never stated in the novel. He is described as a man with a big black moustache and black hair, invincible and fearless protector who has a mysterious and calm aura (Orwell 17-18). He is credited for all the inventions and successes in Oceania: “At the apex of the pyramid comes Big Brother. Big Brother is infallible and all-powerful. Every success, every achievement, every victory, every scientific discovery, all knowledge, all wisdom, all happiness, all virtue, are held to issues directly from his leadership and inspiration.” (Orwell 237). His image is used as the focusing point of the Party as it is easier for people to love and fear one person than an organization or the system.

Below the Big Brother are inner and outer Party members. Inner Party members make up around six million people or two percent of the population in Oceania. They are described as the brain of Oceania, while outer Party members are its hands. Outer Party members make up around thirteen percent, and below them are the proles. Proles are the majority of the population, around eighty-five percent and are considered to be of the lowest status.

The Party is divided into four ministries: the Ministry of Truth, the Ministry of Love, the Ministry of Peace and the Ministry of Plenty. The Ministry of Truth is concerned with news, education, fine arts and entertainment. The Ministry of Love is concerned with power and order, the Ministry of Peace with war and the Ministry of Plenty with economy. The language which

they speak is English, but the Party is aiming to replace it with a new version called Newspeak. The purpose of Newspeak is to decrease the number of words in the English language, thus limiting speech and ultimately thinking. Limiting thinking is the Party's main concern. It wants to control its members and every aspect of life in order to gain absolute power. Another way the Party manages to gain control is with the use of technology. As technology advanced and TVs became more popular, the Party started using them as a way of spying on its members.

All Party members are monitored by the telescreens and the members of Thought Police and there is no way to escape it. Proles, however, are not monitored by the Party. The reason for this will be explained further in the chapter. All Party members must show loyalty to the Big Brother and the Party. If anyone is suspected to have betrayed the Party in any way, even in their thoughts or in sleep, they disappear and it is not clear what happens to them. The ways in which the Party control its citizens and the reason why it aims to gain absolute power will be analysed in the following chapters.

### 3.1. The dangers of surveillance

In Oceania, the Party aims to gain complete control and power over its citizens, i.e. the Party members. It does so by monitoring and spying, hiding and changing information, forbidding any close relations, enforcing the feelings of hate and anger through Two Minute Hate and Hate Weeks. The control of human behaviour and thought is the main concern. One of the first things the Party did was alter all the information and it does so repeatedly. In the Ministry of Truth, there is a Records Department where Winston Smith works. His job is to alter any information he receives to benefit the Party. In this way, people cannot possibly know what is true anymore and they cannot rely on any physical evidence, as it does not exist. That is to ensure that no standard of comparison exists. Thorp states that history in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* must constantly be revised so it can preserve the myth of perfection (12).

Throughout the novel, there are many instances where the alteration of documents is showcased. For example, Winston receives various news articles in which he has to change a certain phrase or an entire paragraph to make it seem like the Party was right or to make Big Brother predict that something would happen. After changing the document, the original is sent down to the memory hole where it is burned and no evidence of it ever existing remains. No

copy which could in any way contradict the new document remains either. The lie “would pass into the permanent records and become truth” (Orwell 53).

Alteration is applied to everything that was intelligible, including books, pamphlets, posters, periodicals, leaflets, and even photographs, films, cartoons and soundtracks. Anything that could in any way jeopardize the ideology of the Party is erased. This process has been happening ever since the Party seized the throne. But nobody even knows when that happened because the Party changed all the historical documents to make it seem like it has always been in charge and time before it never existed. Without any external signs which might serve as evidence, it becomes easy for the Party to destroy the memory of its citizens and impose their views. Everything that has any connection with individuality, thinking, freedom, nonconformity carries negative connotations. The individual becomes dependent on the Party for their own memory (Allen 24). Those who have the ability to think for themselves are automatically called thought criminals.

Another example is the Party creating or erasing people. The Party could fake photographs and various documents to create another person. Information about the production and goods has been changed as well. The Party keeps lowering the standards of living and makes it seem as if they have risen. For example, people were thanking Big Brother for raising the chocolate ration to 20g a week, and the day before it was announced that it was reduced to that amount. Through this example it can be seen how much people are manipulated to the point where they accept information so easily. It is not stated in the novel whether there are many people like Winston who see through the lies. It could be that people do remember what was said the day before, but they are afraid of what could happen to them, as anyone who even thinks something against the Party disappears. And without any opposition, the Party can continue its practices and move towards achieving absolute power.

If the Party says to people to not trust the evidence of their own senses, it has to be so. When it comes to the surroundings, i.e. all the statues, memorial stones, buildings and names of streets, they were all changed if they could in any way indicate anything about the past. Citizens had no objective knowledge of history, what they received from the Party was considered the truth. Winston believes that an individual only has control within the few cubic centimetres of their mind, that this was the only place the Thought Police could not get to, but that turns out to be false. His belief that the Party cannot reach the innermost self is proven wrong. Winston soon realizes the true power of the Party.



It is not enough to just change all the information either. In order to gain complete control, the Party must monitor its citizens; what they do at home, who they talk to, what they are talking about, etc. With the development of technology, the telescreen came into use. It became the watcher, designed to simultaneously receive and transmit information. Every Party member has a telescreen in their home that watches and listens to every word they say. It is possible to turn the volume down on the telescreen, but it is impossible to turn it off. Any sound that a person makes is picked by the telescreen, and if something out of the ordinary is said, the Thought Police arrives, takes the person and no one hears from them anymore.

The telescreen does not only watch and listen, but it also broadcasts news, propaganda, military music and hate speeches. With a telescreen in the house of every Party member, it is clear that no privacy exists. Any conversation or facial expression could cause a problem for the Party member. Telescreens are also present in the workplace and all around the city. The only place they are not present are the houses of proles and in areas where they reside as the Party does not consider them a threat. The real danger of telescreens lies in the deprivation of people's right to privacy, to exchanging opinions freely, to criticizing anyone and anything, or to simply put it, to exist.

In one instance, Winston complains how he cannot think straight as the telescreen plays military music. Without being able to turn off the telescreen, Party members are forced to listen to whatever the telescreen is broadcasting on a daily basis. There is rarely a moment when a person has some quiet time for themselves; only during sleep can people get rest from the telescreen. As already mentioned, by having telescreens in the house, people have to be careful of every facial expression they make, even unconsciously. If the telescreen is broadcasting something about the war or the Party ideology and a member makes a facial expression of agitation, it could be a sign that they are against the Party.

Additionally, people are not safe in their sleep either; if a Party member speaks in their sleep, the Thought Police could capture them. This kind of monitoring puts people in a state of constant stress, fear and survival mode. A person who is watched every hour of the day cannot relax and enjoy the day or anything they do. Throughout the novel, it can be seen how Winston is constantly on guard, he never seems relaxed and always analyses whether he said something wrong or made a certain facial expression.

It is clear that unlike the first two novels, in which the governments try to make people happy to stop them from seeing reality, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* the government aims to keep

people in fear and keep them powerless. It does not matter if they are unhappy, what they think or what they want to do, they must always know they are powerless. That sense of powerlessness becomes normality in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and makes people obedient, which is exactly what the Party wants. Winston follows the rules for the sake of survival. Through the use of propaganda, the Party is able to persuade the masses as there is uniformity in the group, while individuality is non-existent (Gray 27-28). And technology and control may result in people becoming dehumanized (Beauchamp 4).

Party members are not only monitored by telescreens, police patrols, and helicopters, as children have a huge role in spying on the Party members and accusing them of crimes. In the previous two novels, the states were raising the children to make them the perfect non-resistant citizens, while in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* parents are still raising children, but the impact of the Party prevails. Children are trained to be spies, to tell on anyone who says anything against the Party, even their parents. Winston describes that children are horrible, full of hate towards enemies and traitors.

It is almost normal for parents to be scared of their own children, as any word, move or expression could make them a traitor and their child would not hesitate to call the Thought Police on them: “The children, on the other hand, were systematically turned against their parents and taught to spy on them and report their deviations. The family had become in effect an extension of the Thought Police. It was a device by means of which everyone could be surrounded night and day by informers who knew him intimately” (Orwell 152). It is clear that there was no place where an individual could be themselves freely. One can argue that there is no such thing as happiness and freedom in Oceania, all people are simply prisoners, some to less extent, and some to more.

The reasons for control and power are revealed in the book of Emmanuel Goldstein, the state’s main enemy, and by O’Brien during Winston’s torture. In the book “The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism” by Goldstein, it is revealed that people are divided into three classes, the High, the Middle and the Low. And the world has been split into three great super-states, Oceania, Eastasia and Eurasia. All three have been permanently at war, yet there seems to be no reason for it. None of the three super-states aim to conquer one another. War is used as a distraction, as it is said to be the war for labour power. This constant war is more preferable than peace because it uses excess productive capabilities and keeps the three nations in control (Luegenbiehl 294).

Between the three super-states are disputed areas which include equatorial Africa, countries of the Middle East, the Pole, Southern India and the Indonesian Archipelago. All the wars occur in those disputed areas and never beyond the borders. Inhabitants are reduced to a status of slaves who work under the rule of one conqueror until the other one gets his turn. The work that these people do does not add to the world's economy and overall wealth. Whatever they produce is used for the purposes of the war. The reason for this continuous war is to keep up with the industry without raising the general standard of living.

The people living in the three super-states never really experience the war, yet they are living in a constant state of fear because of the Thought Police. People in the disputed areas experience both the war and the state of fear and survival, but to no avail. In this world, they are the scapegoats. People are living in fear and agony, dying every day and working like slaves to produce the ammunition to kill them just because the governments of the three super-states do not want anybody to live a life of leisure. It is all about power and the only way that the governments can keep their power is to keep everybody in a hierarchy. If there are continuous wars that keep people in that hierarchy, where all the science and technology stopped developing, there is no sign of progress. Society remains in the same place, yet it seems like it is moving towards something. The society in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is more primitive and undeveloped than it was before, yet people are not aware of it since all the information is distorted.

There is an additional reason why surveillance is dangerous: if a Party member gets caught, they will endure extreme torture and pain. Some people in Oceania committed suicide when they were discovered as the enemies of the Party. It was less painful for them to commit suicide than to endure extreme torture from the Thought Police. The brutality of the state is best seen in Winston's torture. When he is caught alongside Julia, they are separated and he does not know whether she is still alive. Winston is taken to the Ministry of Love and put into a room with constant lights and no windows. There is no way of knowing whether it is day or night, whether he is above the ground or ten floors beneath, how many people there are in the Ministry, whether workers or prisoners, and what they might do to him. Winston can also not tell how much time has passed, it could have been days, weeks or months. All he knows is that torture awaits him, and in the end, he will have to confess.

People who are caught by the Thought Police must confess to their crimes. The confession is seen as a formality, but one cannot just confess, they have to endure the torture. The lights constantly being on makes Winston completely lose track of time. At first, he does

not know if it is the morning or the night. Later on, he does not know whether it has been two days or more that he has been imprisoned. He does not receive any food either, which makes him nauseous. He is also beaten constantly. He cannot remember for how long they have beaten him, how many times he passed out and what they used to beat him up with. He would be rolling on the floor, crouching in pain, but it does not stop the men who beat him.

Over time, beating becomes less frequent, but Winston endures things such as hair pulling, being slapped in the face, standing on one leg, being forbidden from urinating or having lights flashed into his eyes until he cries. The aim of this is to humiliate him, to destroy him mentally, emotionally and physically. The Party does not only use espionage and torture to keep people obedient, but also mass psychology (Thorp 10). The Party manages to get inside the mind of the individual and is therefore able to change the reality that the individual is seeing (Thorp 10). They want to strip him of any reasoning and arguing. These men scream at him, threaten to call the guards to beat him again, twist his words and much more. Winston is not really in a state of consciousness, he is described as “a mouth that uttered, a hand that signed, whatever was demanded of him” (Orwell 278).

Winston, like many other prisoners, confesses to non-existent crimes such as the assassination of prominent Party members, embezzlement of public funds, sale of military secrets, espionage, sabotage of every kind, murdering his wife, etc. It is easier for him to confess everything they accused him of than to endure more pain. Winston’s torture showcases the way the government treats the traitors, even if they are not the traitors. Even if somebody is a traitor, there is no system of justice that would punish that person in a humane way. The Party seems like a dictatorship and there is no law protecting people, whether they are for or against the system.

The actual duration of Winston’s torture is not clearly stated in the novel. After his confession, he is taken to the infamous Room 101. In this room, Winston tries hard to hold onto his identity and freedom, to keep himself sane, but the torture in Room 101 denies him that (Tanenbaum 34). Winston is tied down and unable to move while they try to convince him that he is insane. He is said to suffer from defective memory. This means that people are accused of being normal, and now O’Brien, who is the perpetrator, tries to change Winston’s reality into his own. The party aims to gain control by convincing people that they cannot see correctly, that their memory is tricking them into believing things that never happened. The Party also gives false hope by saying that such disease is curable and that they will help all those who are affected.

During Winston's interrogation, if he says something that opposes the Party, he experiences a wave of shock all over his body, which he cannot avoid, since he cannot move. Shock after shock and Winston slowly starts doubting himself. The Party says that they control all the records, meaning memories as well. Those who do not control their own memories end up in the Ministry of Love and they are said to have failed in humility and self-discipline. In the eyes of the Party, only those who are disciplined can see the true reality. With this it is clear that the Party wants to brainwash all those who oppose it in any way, going so far as to torture people and convince them through torture that their minds are deceiving them. The Party manages to get inside the mind. Such is the power of the Party, that even Winston's phobia of rats does not stay hidden, his behaviour and psyche are constantly monitored, and nothing can be hidden (Thorp 10).

In O'Brien's words, reality is not external, it exists only in the human mind, i.e. in the mind of the Party which is collective and immortal, meaning that only the reality of the Party is the truth. Individual interpretations of life are considered a crime as the Party is the one who interprets the truth for the people (Thorp 11). Everything outside of the Party's mind is simply a lie. The Party denies all the information that Winston has as it goes against its ideology. Only by looking through the eyes of the Party can an individual see the true reality. O'Brien wants Winston to relearn this if he wants to be a normal member of society. Winston's example shows how any individual who dares to think for himself will be portrayed as crazy and mentally deranged, as a person who needs help. By doing so, any form of individuality and freedom ceases to exist. It is impossible for an individual to develop in those circumstances and maintain their identity. If people cannot think for themselves, they cannot say they are free.

No government that goes to such lengths to prove the "truth" can be seen as good and beneficial. It is clear that such a government does not care about its people and their well-being, it does not care about their choices either. Its only goal is to maintain power and if it has to crush other people, kill them, portray them as crazy, that is exactly what it is going to do to push its narrative. If the narrative of the Party is that two and two are five, that is what everyone in society has to see as the one and only truth. Their truth is absolute and all else are lies and delusions. Since not everyone thinks the same way, such as Winston, the government has to rely on various methods such as the torture described above.

Through excruciating torture, the government members reprogram the mind of the estranged individual so that he forgets everything he deems as true and accepts the new truth as the only one. James Burnham argues that anything can become the truth if the ruling party wants

that, which supports the claim that the Party's reality is the only real one (Lasch 56). Is it also interesting to note that people deeply admire Big Brother, and it is presumed during the torture that O'Brien is actually Big Brother. As much as Winston despises Big Brother, he feels some kind of love and admiration for him even though he tortured him. Big Brother is an embodiment of power, all-seeing, all-knowing, and inescapable. Winston is tortured into submission to that everlasting power, and he learns to love it. This is the irony of the Ministry of Love, its name implies love and goodness, but it uses all kinds of methods of manipulation and mind-altering to cause people pain, and they still grow love for it.

It is also revealed that the Party only cares about the thoughts because they realized through history that killing their enemies does not do anything, as another one will always come. Therefore, the government figured out that the only way to get rid of enemies is to change them and not destroy them. In a way, the Party aims to convince people that they love them so much that they only want to cure those who are ill and not punish them. During history, people died for their beliefs, they were killed in front of others, and many would still rise. As long as people resisted, they could not be destroyed, that is why Winston's surrendering must be of his own free will.

If everyone is reprogrammed through torture, there will be no enemies to rise against the system. That is why the Party says: "And above all we do not allow the dead to rise up against us" (Orwell 291). One could not die for their beliefs anymore as in the end "Everyone is washed clean." (Orwell 292). The spirit of a person is completely destroyed: "Things will happen to you from which you could not recover, if you lived a thousand years. Never again will you be capable of ordinary human feeling. Everything will be dead inside you. Never again will you be capable of love, or friendship, or joy of living, or laughter, or curiosity, or courage, or integrity. You will be hollow. We shall squeeze you empty, and then we shall fill you with ourselves." (Orwell 293). In the end, Winston ends up as a mindless puppet who loves Big Brother like everyone else (Thorp 9).

The reason why the Party monitors and controls its citizens is purely because of power. The Party claims that humans are cowards who cannot endure freedom and face the truth, therefore they need to be governed. The Party presents itself as the guardian of the weak, but it does not aim to help and actually protect people. The Party does not care about people, it wants power for itself only, but pure power, not wealth or comfort. Big Brother is the embodiment of the Party and that is why he is immortal. He is not even a man, but rather a collective. The Party

believes that people alone are always defeated, which is the reason why the Party's slogan says, "Freedom is Slavery" (Orwell 302).

According to the Party, to be a slave is to be free. If a person is a slave to the system, they will be all-powerful and immortal, but alone they do not stand a chance. But to make a person obedient, they must completely reject freedom and identity and submit to the Party. But that is simply not enough – suffering is necessary. To ensure complete loyalty to the Party, the person's spirit must be crushed completely. This is why the Party turns people against each other, no one can trust each other anymore, there is no love and loyalty except for the Party. The more power the Party gains, the less tolerant it will be. Progress will be pointed only towards pain and suffering and the future can be imagined as "a boot stamping on a human face – for ever" (Orwell 305). This leads to the issue discussed next chapter: how much freedom, then, is too much for the citizens of Oceania? If the Party aims to be less and less tolerant, is this suffering worth the supposed freedom?

### 3.2. How much freedom is too much freedom?

The previous chapter analyses the way in which the government controls its citizens by monitoring them on a daily basis and the danger such control poses. In this chapter, I will examine the consequences of surveillance on society. I am interested in seeing how much freedom is too much freedom for the citizens of Oceania and whether this can even be called freedom. Since every part of one's life is controlled, it is best to start with childhood.

In Oceania, children do not get to live through their childhood. They do not have the freedom to explore, to question the world, to have fun. Some do not even get to grow up. At the beginning of the novel, Winston is without father, mother and sister, as they have simply disappeared and he never saw them again. He has no idea what happened to them and has barely any recollection of his childhood. Winston does remember certain things, such as not having enough to eat, spending his afternoons with other boys rummaging through trash, the room in which he lived with his family, his mother telling him not to be greedy with food and ending up in a Reclamation Centre, i.e. the colony for homeless children. This is the only description in the novel of what childhood looked like when Winston was young.

Winston then describes how different children are in the world run by the Party. As already stated in the previous chapter, children of the year 1984 were trained to be spies and they were full of hatred. This is in stark contrast with the usual notion of children being described as light-hearted, innocent, curious, playful... Most of the children's play revolved around finding traitors, describing how they should be hanged, and wanting to watch the enemies of the Party being killed. They regularly participated in Hate Weeks as well. It is stated that the government raises them as spies in school, but there are no thorough descriptions of a regular school day in the novel. From these descriptions it is clear that children never experience the childhood in the true sense of the word: playing around with others, making up games, thinking of ways to do something, asking questions about why something is so, playing with any kind of toys, board games, etc. Children never get the chance to simply be children since they are burdened with spy duties and catching enemies from an early age. From an outside perspective, they do not have freedom, but to them, it is normal since they do not know of anything else.

When it comes to food, the Party announces from time to time that food standards have risen, that more food has been produced, etc. Those are all lies as standards of living have been decreasing. Winston remembers how he was constantly hungry during his childhood. It has not changed much since. For example, chocolate is described as dull and brown, tasting like the smoke of a rubbish fire, but the chocolate that Julia brings to Winston is dark, shiny, and smells and tastes differently, much better than the chocolate they normally have. Julia also manages to get some food from the black market that Party members cannot buy anywhere else. Winston is even surprised when Julia brings him real sugar and not the saccharine version they had. She brings him other stuff, including bread, a pot of jam, coffee and tea. To anyone reading this, such food seems completely normal and nothing out of the ordinary, but to Party members, that is a luxury. The food they eat could be described as a watered-down version of food they used to have. A small packet of tea is not something Party members normally have, and lemons or oranges are things of the past.

With telescreens everywhere, no member has the freedom of privacy. The only time Winston feels like he has privacy is when he rents a room in the prole area, as they have no telescreens to monitor them. Only in that room does Winston feel some sort of security. This place feels like home to him, one he does not have to escape from. The only downside is that he cannot stay there as much as he wants. Therefore, privacy is considered to be a valuable



thing that almost no one has the privilege to have. Because there is no privacy, people cannot hide anything, and that is why having something forbidden is dangerous.

Even keeping a diary or simply a notebook and a pen would be too much freedom. At the beginning of the novel, Winston buys a diary and a pen in one shop in the prole area, two things that could get him killed. These examples highlight that people do not really know what they have and how much freedom they have until it is stripped away, even if the examples are taken from a fiction novel. Writing is considered a thought crime since it could showcase original thoughts which might oppose the Party's ideology. Not only were people stripped of artistic creativity and self-expression, but those were non-existent to them (Allen 24). There is so much more to life besides work, there is meaning in friends, family, love, creativity, creation, but that is exactly what the Party does not allow (Tanenbaum 33).

Similarly to diaries, books are also forbidden, besides the ones written by the Party. No other books, indicating any kind of historical fact, poetry, foreign languages, literature, remained. Because of that, people in Oceania have no knowledge of history. It can even be concluded that they do not know anything about the outside world. People only know the information given to them. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, newspapers cannot indicate that something has happened as the Party replaces the information in no time. There is no written source that could prove anything. Therefore, people are stripped of their freedom to acquire and explore all kinds of knowledge, including mathematics, science, languages, medicine, etc.

It is never stated in the novel, but there is a possibility that other people remember the truth the way Winston does, but they are also afraid to say something, so they just accept the new truth. But the majority seems to be brainwashed into believing anything that the Party gives them. This would explain the Party's slogan: "Who controls the past, controls the future: who controls the present controls the past" (Orwell 40). Because there is no written record and no person to say anything otherwise, it is impossible to know whether the past was better and whether the Party is wrong. As far as the people in Oceania know, the Party has always been there and there was no time before it.

The Party's restrictions are implemented in social life as well. The life of citizens in Oceania is a life of solitude. Since people are limited in almost everything on a daily basis, it is no wonder that any kind of close relationship does not exist. Friends do not exist anymore, only comrades. But comrades could never replace friends, since such relationships are mostly

formal. People in Oceania do not have friends to hang out with, to talk about any kind of interests or problems. Everyone and anyone in Oceania might be a traitor and no one wants to take that risk. It is rather unusual to see two or more people simply spending time together as that is something that would raise suspicions of the Thought Police.

The Party also imposes control on family relations as even members of the family can report each other to the Thought Police. Most Party members are either alone or lost a spouse. Winston used to be married and at times even he forgets that. He spent only fifteen months with his wife, but they separated since they had no children. Marriages in the Party are not a matter of love, but a duty to the Party. Emotions do not exist in the marriage either. Winston only gives a brief description of his former wife Katharine. Her behaviour indicates that she represents most people in the Party; she is empty-minded, she has no thoughts in her mind other than the Party slogans.

A family filled with love does not exist in the Party. The women in the Party are the same, conditioned to be chaste, not allowed to experience love, lust or sexual desire. Sexual puritanism is deeply ingrained in the Party's ideology. Any kind of desire, be it desire for food, travel, love or rebellion is considered a thoughtcrime. As Julia describes to Winston, sexuality is considered dangerous because people might feel happy after making love and might not care about Hate Weeks and Big Brother. Because of that, they teach young girls in school to suppress any desire and to see sex only as a duty and nothing more. Sexual relations are only allowed for procreation, otherwise it is considered dangerous, as it would give people some kind of independence from the Party (Le Roy 136). Since people were not allowed to enjoy sex and not have it often, it would induce hysteria which could then be used as a driving force for riots, protests and hate. People are restricted in everything, including their bodies (Lang 166). Therefore, Winston's relationship with Julia is seen as an act of rebellion (Tanenbaum 32). Their sexual relationship is also seen as a protest against the Party's sexual puritanism (Blakemore 351).

Since the Party cannot really stop people from having families and feeling at least something towards their children, it systematically turns the children against their parents, hence the spies. Children no longer see their parents as mother and father but as possible traitors to the Party. In this way, people are surrounded at all times. Since people are not allowed to express emotions, they cannot create strong family bonds. People are not safe expressing love interests; if one partner wants to enjoy sex, the other one could be suspicious of that and hand them to the Thought Police. People could be accused of anything any time. Because of this,

there is no trust among people, everyone is distant and wary of others even family members. In this way, Party members become extremely isolated which further evokes emotions of distress, sadness, anger, bitterness and aggression. They cannot form meaningful relationships that would add to their life and their overall happiness. This also ensures that Party members cannot form groups and retaliate against them, keeping their hierarchy in order.

Another area affected by the Party is language. Party members are not allowed to learn any other language, and no vocabulary and grammar books exist. This is to ensure that no one can communicate with a person from another country, such as Eastasia or Eurasia, and possibly find out any information that is different from what the Party is saying. They might discover that everything is a lie. The purpose of changing the language is to limit people's way of speaking and ultimately thinking. There is power in language as it is a living memory and offers a safe space for inner resistance (Courtine 70). That is why the Party aims to reshape the language, as it can use it to shape reality into its own version. Therefore, language becomes 'pure' and clean from any original thoughts (Blakemore 354).

If there are no words in which people can express themselves, they will not be able to commit thought crimes. The Party wants the old words to become intelligible, so that they are able to destroy people's memories and have them rely on the Party (Blakemore 354). The eleventh edition is said to be the last one in which the people speak more differently than ever before. Every day, certain Party members work on destroying hundreds of words and inventing their own, so the people who know English as it is have to relearn it. With this, the range of thinking shrinks until it becomes impossible. The Party's slogans already show the corrosion of the mind, "Freedom is Slavery", "War is Peace" and "Ignorance is Strength" are inverted and show the attack on the rational mind (Le Roy 135). The attack on the language is seen as the final attack on freedom since everything is pretty much forbidden besides thinking.

This new language in which they have to speak is called Newspeak and its vocabulary is reducing every year. The fewer words people can use, the smaller their range of consciousness and thoughts. The death of language symbolizes the death of a person, since for Orwell, language is seen as a direct expression of human character (Lang 169-170). Thoughts adapt themselves to the words and forms of the language that are available, thus the decrease leads to a change in the range of thought (Lang 171). Through all these examples, it can be seen that the Party is incredibly smart and has thoroughly planned out everything. It seems that every area of life is carefully dissected and then gradually changed. It is said that by 2050, no human being will be able to have the conversation that people had in 1984. All human experience is

essentially linguistic, including history, memories, and literature, with its death, any possibility for rebellion and acquiring knowledge will stop (Blakemore 355).

The aim is to minimize the range of vocabulary and ultimately make the thoughtcrime impossible since no one will have the words to express themselves. Language is under constant revision, as creative thought is the main enemy of the Party. As long as people can express themselves, they have the ability to rebel. Without words, people cannot conceptualize ideas, therefore they cannot rebel. All existing literature will be replaced with Newspeak versions and Party slogans. The Party aims to completely eradicate thinking, which seems like the ultimate blow to freedom. The only evidence of truth is considered to be in the mind, but with the erasure of thinking, all evidence existing in the mind will cease to exist as well. There will be no more evidence suggesting otherwise. The Party aims to destroy the individual's ability to create (Tanenbaum 33). With the absolute control of the Party, individuality, creativity and any kind of expression ceases to exist. An individual creative mind is dead (Tanenbaum 33). The mind is the hardest thing for the Party to control, which is why they aim to restrict the language and erase the ability to think, as individuals can always question and rebel, but with the restriction of language, they will have no words to express themselves. For Winston, true freedom is individual thought, being free from the Party's collective mind (Tanenbaum 34).

Lastly, freedom is divided between the two groups, one being the Party members and the other being the proletarians, or in short, proles. Both of these groups are not free, but the degree of their freedom is varying. In the novel it is stated that proles and Party members barely interact, so Party members do not have much knowledge about the proles.

Starting with childhood, it is not clear how prole children spend their childhood besides going to school and starting work, while the childhoods of Party members are mostly spent by spy training, espionage and hate. When it comes to education, Party members are taught the Party ideology, that is to love Big Brother, to despise traitors, and to never go against the Party. Not much is mentioned about the proles besides their education declining. For instance, when Winston has a conversation with an old man trying to find out more about life before the Party, the old man is said to know a bunch of rubbish, but nothing of importance.

Both groups are also occupied by work, with proles starting work at twelve, while Party members might start working even earlier, since the children usually work as their parents' spies. While the proles work to maintain their livelihood, Party members work to change all information to fit the Party's ideology and to eradicate possible threats. Both groups are not

allowed to travel anywhere outside Oceania, but in contrast, proles can freely walk anywhere in their area without being suspicious. If a Party member walks around a prole area or follows a different route, they can be suspected as traitors.

When it comes to language, nothing is mentioned about Newspeak and the proles, therefore it seems that Newspeak does not affect them, while members of the Party are expected to learn Newspeak. So far it seems that proles are in a much better position than Party members, and rightfully so. Party members need to learn Newspeak so that their thinking is limited. Proles, on the other hand, are not limited by that, they can say and think whatever they want. Only individuals among the proles suspected to pose a threat are eliminated by the Thought Police.

In the Party, the situation is much different. As previously explained, any deviation in thinking or acting is seen as a threat. No member can escape the radar of the Party. They are always watched, every movement in their body or face could get them vaporized. There is no freedom of choice whatsoever. And here lies the great difference between proles and Party members. Although proles are not free either, they have the freedom that Party members can only dream about. Proles can express emotions of anger, bitterness, happiness, sadness if they want, they can think about writing, hobbies, the meaning of life, they can have fun; Party members cannot.

Although proles are not considered humans, while Party members are, Party members resemble robotic creatures who work and breathe, since no thought, expression, joy, interest, love or anything similar is allowed. How can one be human if they are stripped of everything that makes them humane? How can one live in a constant state of stress and hate, for no other reason but the fact that it is expected? Since Party members are limited in everything down to every relationship and interaction, they cannot have any kind of meaningful and lasting connection with another human being. Proles can have friends, family, relationships, they can enter and exit relationships freely. Which leads to another question: how exactly is the freedom of proles limited?

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, only animals and humans are considered free. But they are not considered humans, their status is much lower. Although they are not allowed to travel and speak another language, they seem to be limited in their consciousness. It is mentioned multiple times in the novel that proles will never wake up. When the revolution started in Oceania, the Party presented itself as the saviour of proles from capitalism, as the guardian of the weak. The

Party believed that proles were too weak and needed to be guided, so they set up a system and then left them to themselves.

Proles are not aware of the hierarchy and the way the system is set up because they are distracted and they cannot see anything outside their daily life. As long as they enjoy the comforts of life, such as football, films, beer, pubs, gambling and pornography, they will never awaken. That kind of system was set up by the Party to keep them in control and to become completely unaware of their power. They have no standard of comparison, so they cannot know whether something is better or not.

Based on everything written so far, it seems that proles are living in ignorant bliss, but it is in the tiny cracks that the truth starts to reveal itself. Winston mentioned how proles are excited to play the lottery, that the big prizes are the only things that keep them going and keep them excited for another week. It seems that they are not really happy either, which is not surprising, since the Party believes that proles only need to be influenced in a negative way and kept in their own lane. If they can cure their sadness and disappointment with alcohol and gambling, they will still not revolt as there is no need to. Since proles make up 85% of the population in Oceania, they could easily overthrow the Party, but they are simply not aware of the system and their power.

They cannot revolt against something that is non-existent to them. Since proles are distracted in every aspect of their lives, there is only a slight chance that one day they will revolt and change the course of the world. Winston thinks that the only hope lies in the proles, that they are the ones who will change the world for the better, while O'Brien is certain they will never revolt as long as all distractions are served to them every hour of every day: "From the proletarians nothing is to be feared. Left to themselves, they will continue from generation to generation and from century to century, working, breeding and dying, not only without any impulse to rebel, but without the power of grasping that the world could be other than it is." (Orwell 239). The hope lies in them as the Party can manipulate the environment, but not the essence; Winston still believes that is the answer to the Party's regime (Thorp 14).

The question of freedom can go in several directions, but with no definite answer. Will proles be able to change the hierarchy and change the world for the better? Will they seize the power and set up their own system that might be even more restricted? Will they advance or will they meet their demise? Will they punish those who were once in power? What about proles in other areas of the world? Will proles be able to achieve harmony all around the world? These

are the questions that stem from the line “if there is hope, it lies in the proles” (Orwell 80). The only definite answer is that even a little freedom is too much freedom. In the eyes of the Party, freedom is eradicated and then presented as absolute freedom. If one lives in the illusion and sees it as the only reality, they can never know that it is actually an illusion. This illusion of freedom is granted to people as long as it keeps them in control. That means that to be free is to be controlled.

#### 4. Patterns of dystopian societies across *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

Certain patterns of dystopian societies appear in all three novels. To analyse these patterns, three types of analyses will be used: content analysis, comparative, and pattern analysis. Content analysis is used to determine the presence of certain themes, concepts or words within the given data; with this, it is possible to identify and analyse the concepts in *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. To be able to analyse the novels and recognize the patterns, the novels must be broken down into code categories to summarize all the data (“Content analysis”). It is important to identify those code categories, recognize the pattern in all three novels and then compare them to see in which way they relate to each other.

Code categories included in this thesis are control, censorship, surveillance, technology, education, distractions, violence, outcasts, relationships, artificial happiness, individuality and freedom.

In the first code category, control, patterns across all three novels include heavy government control. All three governments attempt to control every possible aspect of people’s lives. People must never question the authority. In *Fahrenheit 451* people are occupied with television so they do not have the time nor the capacity to question the authority. In *Brave New World*, people’s lives are determined before they are even born. They cannot choose which caste they belong to, they cannot choose their gender, their thoughts or their job. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* showcases the most extreme case of government control. People have no privacy, interests or relationships. Their government attempts to completely eliminate thinking and it does so by changing their language.

To be able to control people, certain information also needs to be changed. This is where the second code category comes into place. In order to control, everything that opposes the government must be censored. The government in *Fahrenheit 451* does so by banning and burning books. By doing so, they erase all the information that could potentially reveal the truth and punish the people who hide books. In *Brave New World*, people's thoughts are the government's thoughts, which is achieved through hypnopaedia. Any opinion that goes against hypnopaedia's teaching is immediately reported to the director. People are taught to hate books or any interests that could potentially hinder the production. Although information is hidden from them, it does not have to be, since people are taught to despise any deviation in thinking. Since hypnopaedia is used from an early age, the government does not have to go to such extremes to hide information. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, all information is changed on a daily basis. Everything is censored to the point where people cannot trust themselves, let alone any newspaper article or photograph. Any information that could reveal the truth is either changed or erased, including information in movies, books, posters, newspapers, buildings, names of streets, etc.

Another aspect of control is surveillance, which is the next code category. Surveillance is present in all three novels. In the first novel, people are monitored by their neighbours, the firemen and the Mechanical Hound in order to ensure they are not hiding books. In *Brave New World*, children are monitored from an early age to ensure they acquire the state's teaching correctly, even by their peers. Citizens in *Brave New World* do not have to be worried about the police, since anyone they are in contact with can report them to the director. Their teaching is deeply ingrained in them and anything that stands out to them is considered to be weird and dangerous. And in the last novel, people are monitored every hour of every day by everyone, including the Thought Police, telescreens, helicopters, police patrols, comrades, children or anyone who just suspects that someone might be a traitor.

Technology plays an important role in monitoring and controlling people. In *Fahrenheit 451*, technology is used to distract people from meaningful things, from thinking and engaging in conversations with others. In *Brave New World*, technology is used to speed up the birthing and maturing process. Children are no longer born, but bred scientifically, which ensures a large workforce. And hypnopaedia is used to control people's thinking, all thoughts that citizens have are actually thoughts of the government. In this way, the government ensures there is no deviation in thinking. And in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, technology is used for monitoring people. Telescreens were designed to record any word or facial expression and



simultaneously transmit information. If Big Brother transmits a certain message, the telescreen can pick up on a person's facial expression while hearing that information and discern between those who are loyal to the Party and those who are traitors.

In all three novels, the standards for education are low. Children's minds are filled with meaningless information that is of no use. They can repeat it, but they have no understanding and they cannot choose later on what kind of knowledge they want to have. Their capacity to understand complex things is low and they have no desire for learning. It is no surprise that people do not question their governments as most of them are not taught to think and to question authority, which is the main reason behind poor education. Governments do not want their citizens to be aware, to question and criticize them. If they are never taught how to understand certain concepts, to question them and express their own opinions, they will not have the capacity to judge the government's decisions.

Another code category present is distractions. As mentioned above, technology plays an important role in distracting people. When people are not working, they are distracted by television or soma pills. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Party members are so occupied with excessive work that they barely have any free time and for a good reason. The Party does not want its members to have any free time, their work is a distraction from all the rules that the government imposes, while the proles are distracted by television, sports, gambling and drinking. In *Fahrenheit 451*, people are distracted by watching simplified TV shows and movies which are meant to entertain them after work and deter them from questioning why books are banned and why the firemen are burning the houses. In *Brave New World*, people are distracted by soma, drug-like pills which make people enter a fantasy-like world. The amount of soma that people get is just enough to keep them in a fantasy state until they have to get up for work, and it becomes an unbreakable cycle.

The pattern of violence is present in all three novels, which makes up for another code category. People in *Fahrenheit 451* experience shootings, reckless driving, bullying and violence among those who are exposed for owning books. In *Brave New World*, when children are separated into castes, they experience violence as part of their teaching. While most people in *Brave New World* do not experience violence as adults, they do as children to make sure it does not happen later. In case a riot and violence does break out, it is easily stopped with soma. And in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, people who are deemed traitors experience severe trauma and violence when taken to the Ministry of Love. The Thought Police uses all kinds of torture to

break a person's body, mind and will. They torture them until there is nothing left of them and then they impose their own views.

As long as the governments try to impose their own rules, there will always be outcasts, which is the next code category. All outcasts have something in common, and that is seeing through their government's illusions and opposing it. How they end up is different for everyone. In *Fahrenheit 451*, the old professor Faber went into hiding as he feared for his life, Clarisse is presumed to be killed and Guy Montag escaped. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, anyone who is perceived as a traitor is vaporized, meaning that they disappear and it seems like they never existed. The only novel which has a more humanized approach to the outcasts is *Brave New World*. In the World State, outcasts are reported to the director and they can choose where they want to be expelled. They can no longer stay in the World State, but are offered a choice to go to another place and be 'miserable' there instead of being happy.

All this control, surveillance, violence and censorship have a massive impact on an individual and their relationships with other people. This leads to the final code categories: relationships with other people, people's individuality, artificial happiness and freedom. As for the relationships, they are mostly superficial in all three novels. People do not have close and meaningful relationships with others. In the first novel, people have friends and families, but they are distant, there are no close bonds between them. Conversations have no depth. In *Brave New World*, people can only form friendships within the castes, there is no such thing as Epsilons and Alphas being friends or forming families. There is no notion of family, the words 'mothers' and 'fathers' are considered offensive. Forming romantic relationships is deemed unusual and those who want to form such relationships are considered weird and mostly end up alone. The only close relationships that exist in *Brave New World* are the relationships of savages. And in the last novel, the term 'friends' does not exist, all Party members are merely comrades. Romantic relationships exist only as a duty to the Party to provide offspring. Any close relationships are considered suspicious. The proles, similarly to savages, have close bonds, but neither are not considered humans, but rather objects of ridicule and disgust. The governments aim to separate people as much as possible since in close relationships lies unity, which they do not want. If everyone is alienated, they will never have the courage to stand up against the system.

This leads to people's individuality, which is the next code category. Through analysis of these three novels, it is clear that the majority of people have no individuality. It is more a group individuality, everyone acts, thinks and speaks the same, apart from several individuals.

No one has something that is uniquely them, something that could make a person stand out. Anyone who does stand out is immediately deemed as an outcast and there is no sympathy for those who are different. Individuality also plays a role in the government's control, which is why the governments want to erase it. Each person is considered to be a separate individual, someone different and unique, someone who has their own opinions, attitudes and behaviours. Because of these differences, such people become unpredictable and the government does not want that. Whoever is unpredictable is harder to control, harder to keep in the hierarchy, but if everyone is raised on the same model, there are higher chances that those people end up the same. And if differences are frowned upon and not praised, individuals are more likely to adopt behaviours of their peers in order to fit in. But because everyone is the same, there is no depth in people's character, which greatly plays into someone's happiness and freedom.

Happiness relies on who people are on the inside and happiness has a different meaning for each person. What governments in these novels do is create their own mould of what happiness and freedom should be for people, without giving them the freedom to choose if they want it or not. Most people cannot live up to the standard that was set up, which is the reason why distractions are used on a daily basis. If people are constantly distracted, they do not have time to think whether they are happy or unhappy and why that is so. In *Fahrenheit 451*, everyone seems happy, there is barely any indication that it could be otherwise. In *Brave New World*, ultimate happiness is the goal, but it is achieved mostly with the use of technology, the state raising the children and the use of soma. If anyone is unhappy, the only solution is to use soma. This contradicts John's view, who finds it weird that everyone is happy all the time and does not experience any other emotions, as if it were forbidden to feel any negative emotions. This is why Bernard Marx always feels like an outcast, he does not want to use soma and often experiences a range of emotions. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, happiness is disguised as anger, control and stability. As long as people are controlled, all is well. But they must love to be angry, they must love to hate. As long as people hate, they will never revolt. They are united in hate, and it is seen as the highest form of love towards Big Brother and the Party.

All these categories are interconnected and work together to keep people in control. This leads to the last code category, which is freedom. All the control, violence, censorship, surveillance and other categories affect freedom. In all three novels, control is necessary in order to limit freedom. All governments have their own aims. To achieve them, certain measures have to be taken. Since the main aim is to hold power, it is essential for the governments to create their own version of freedom, hence the illusion. Since the governments hold all the

power and knowledge, they can create whatever illusion they want and serve it to people. If someone refuses, punishments are imposed on them. Those punishments include death, incarceration, torture, disappearances, brainwashing. Although these novels are different, they are all similar in these code categories. It can be concluded that, ultimately, freedom only exists as a created illusion. The true notion of freedom is non-existent in all three novels and governments have succeeded in controlling their own people. These are only fiction. However, the question is, can something like this happen in our world in the future? The answer to this question is examined in the next chapter.

## 5. *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* serve as a warning for current and future society

Considering the severity of the control that governments in *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* display over their citizens, this chapter examines how this control can serve as a warning for current and future societies. It has already been concluded that freedom and individuality do not exist in these societies, but which, if any, societies in the real world can be described as dystopian and controlling? And how has their rule affected their citizens?

Starting with some examples from history, the first on the list is the Nazi Germany. The era of Hitler's reign has been marked by dictatorship, propaganda, nationalism, concentration camps and murders ("Nazism"). Hatred towards other races was supported and encouraged. To ensure absolute power and support, heavy use of propaganda was present in all aspects. Book burning and the symbol of swastika corresponds with the book burning and uniforms with the symbol of salamander and phoenix in *Fahrenheit 451* (Zipes 5). Police called the Gestapo was founded, and they eliminated all the opposition; everyone who was against the regime was arrested and sent to the concentration camps ("Gestapo"). German Stasi was another police agency active after World War II in East Germany, whose main role was to implement surveillance and espionage. The Stasi also worked to infiltrate into the private sphere of life. To achieve that, a wide network of informants who would spy on their neighbours, friends, family members and coworkers was developed (Cameron). The German Stasi is quite similar to the

Thought Police in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with their espionage and a wide web of information on people.

Simultaneously, not so far away, Mussolini's regime in Italy was marked by extreme surveillance of its citizens (Fonio 80). Secret police Ceka was founded after the Russian Cheka. Its purpose was to gather information on education, skills, moral tendencies, criminal records, private life, movements within and outside the country, again corresponding with surveillance of the Party members by the Thought Police in *Nineteen Eighty-four* (Fonio 83). The evidence of extreme surveillance is supported by files where movements of foreigners were monitored, foreign university students would be monitored for several years, even when they were not part of any political activity in the country (Fonio 84). Citizens would fall under suspicion of treason if they did not wear uniforms at rallies, similarly to how the Party members would be suspected of betrayal. During that time, Fascist Italy was considered to be an all-seeing state, similarly to Oceania in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. All opposition was sentenced to *confine* or *ammonizione*, which meant that severe restrictions on activities and movements were imposed (Fonio 82). Much like Big Brother and his persona, Mussolini used news and cinema to promote his image in the best light. The centre of his propaganda became a small cinematic firm called Luce. All the movies and campaigns made there were used to promote the image of Mussolini and fascism and had to be approved by Mussolini himself (Sorlin 112).

Stalin's Soviet Union was not much different. It was also marked by the heavy use of propaganda, lies, concentration camps and surveillance. All these countries relied heavily on control to maintain their power and used all kinds of measures to prolong it. Russian Cheka or VCHEKA was one of the first agencies dealing with the investigation of espionage and counterrevolution (Pringle). All the people deemed as enemies were arrested and executed. No member of the Soviet Union was safe, regardless of their status in society. Those who were not executed were sent to forced-labour camps, better known as gulags. With the rise of technology, KGB was founded. It focused on technology, surveillance, foreign intelligence, espionage, etc. (Pringle). Surveillance, torture and executions also correspond to the regime in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

In the last 50 years, many countries have experienced some type of regime and government control. In South America, Argentina, Brazil and Chile had problems with their governments' control (Winn 5). In Argentina's Dirty War, a campaign led by the military, censorship was imposed, and the country fell under complete military control. The regime also

founded a secret police agency to monitor its citizens. As the pattern goes, the opposition was arrested and persecuted (“Dirty War”).

The most notable example that is currently happening in the world is the regime of North Korea. Based on the available information and treatment of its citizens, North Korea is considered to be one of the most repressive countries at the moment (Soo Park 2). Similarly to North Korea, the regime in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is the most repressive out of all three novels. The country is under complete government control, which means that there is no independent media, any opposition parties are forbidden, and trade unions do not exist (“Human Rights”), which is also true for people in Oceania. Neither North Koreans nor the Party members are allowed to freely express their opinions. Movement, too, is restricted for both the Party members and North Koreans. All those who decide to rebel are punished. UN Commission of the Inquiry stated in a report on human rights that the North Korean government committed crimes against humanity, including imprisonment, murder, torture, extermination and others (“Human Rights”). The same thing can be said for the Thought Police, which tortured the Party members. Another major issue is the ongoing propaganda which is present in the lives of every North Korean and in the lives of Party members through military propaganda and music, hate speeches and hate weeks. The country also constantly emphasizes the importance of their leader who is seen as ‘the father of the nation’, similarly to the way Big Brother is seen and loved (David-West 587).

Although North Korea is one of the best-known examples of a repressive regime, many other countries are experiencing a similar fate. Considering the history of Africa and the Middle East, both have been marked by wars, famine, deaths and disasters of all kinds. It is no surprise that numerous countries in these areas are still experiencing turmoil. Dictators, regimes, military overthrowing, assassinations and the oppression of gender rights seem to be a constant in these countries (LeBas and Rostami-Povey). Human rights seem to be an issue for many countries.

These examples indicate that government control in fiction is not far from reality. It is the only constant both in reality and fiction. As examined in the previous chapter, certain methods of control are present. Censorship was present in all three novels, as well as in Mussolini’s Italy, and now in North Korea, and it is present in other countries as well. Freedom is never ultimate, but always conditioned. Some have it to more extent, some to less.

Since the issue of this thesis is government control in *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, I want to examine exactly how these novels can serve as a warning, taking into consideration reality as well. *Fahrenheit 451* teaches us about the importance of knowledge and censorship. The knowledge that could potentially reveal the control was banned, while all kinds of unnecessary information was used as long it prolonged the propaganda. What role does that play in our reality? Chin Shih Huang, who was a dictator in China, determined to burn all books so that he could control the nation, for he believed that books taught people to think dangerous thoughts and rebel against authority (Buck 169). The banning of books always comes first when the nation is about to fall into dictatorship, which is exactly what happened in *Fahrenheit 451* (Buck 169). To hinder people from knowledge means that government can easily mould society as it wants. Similarly to the way the firemen did not know it was their duty to save, but to burn, the same thing can happen to many other professions. People's ignorance can be used in a negative way to cause more hurt to others, for no other reason but the fact that it is now deemed normal.

In *Brave New World*, sexual experimentation between children is considered normal, while in our reality it is not, but through decades of government control, such abnormal things can become acceptable. It can become a normality if people's moral compasses are completely switched off. It became normal for people in these novels to spy on their family and neighbours and report them to the police simply based on suspicion. That could become our reality as well. People could become so used to the new normal that they can no longer differentiate between what is morally right or wrong. They could become more susceptible to government propaganda and fail to recognize that they are being brainwashed.

Those who decide to question reality are punished, which can be seen both in these novels and in real life. Prisons, labour-camps, torture are not unknown to our world. Outsiders also serve as a warning to others to never rebel against the system. To simply have a different opinion could cost a person their life, as well as their family's life. Since no one is allowed to be different in any way, everyone becomes the same, and individuality becomes non-existent. This is already happening in our world to a smaller extent to people who are quick to go with the crowd. This is why having a strong identity and individuality is of major significance. The stronger the identity, the less susceptible people are to any kind of propaganda. This goes hand in hand with the importance of growth. People learn and develop by experiencing good and bad situations, people and emotions. Removing anything negative under the guise of happiness and

protection does not give the opportunity to people to learn and evolve. Being able to evolve makes humanity evolve, while the inability to change often leads to destruction.

When it comes to book burning, to say that books are burned for the sake of happiness means that the government wants people to live in a state of ignorance, unaware of everything that is happening. In *Fahrenheit 451*, knowledge is connected to negativity, to sadness and suffering, while TV shows are not. TV shows are a means by which governments program people the way they want to. It is not only about being able to name authors and read books, but also about the right to read anything, and to acquire knowledge on any topic.

The novel *Brave New World* shows the implications of technology and human rights. People in the novel are separated into castes, and each one is developed for a certain purpose. Children, while they are still fertilized eggs, have no choice but to live the way they were predestined by the state. Children do not choose how and where they will be born, their parents usually decide on that, but in this case, the government is the one deciding about their lives. While people in the real world may have advantages or disadvantages when it comes to their place of living, education, skills (...), people in *Brave New World* cannot succeed even through all the disadvantages that someone might experience. Epsilons are simply not developed to do anything besides physical work, and not because of an unfortunate turn of events.

In today's world, this would bring major issues regarding human rights. As far as it is known, today's world is not close to the development of artificial wombs, but the possibility is always present. Children in *Brave New World* developed extremely fast, all for the sake of production and capitalism. This raises several questions. How moral is it to stunt and deprive someone of childhood because of mass production, and is capitalism worth sacrificing people's lives? It is transparent that people should have the right to their childhood, even though this is not the case for everyone. While *Brave New World* is a work of fiction, child labour is still present in many countries in Asia, Africa and South America (Sarkar and UNICEF).

Is the price of capitalism and development worth all that? In *Brave New World*, people are more like robots who serve capitalism and not human beings. Today, the pace of capitalism is accelerating daily, which teaches us how important it is for human beings to remain humane, and not turn into automated robots. While production is important for survival, there still needs to be a clear line on what is normal and what is exploitation.

Continuing on the issue of choice, all people in *Brave New World* are conditioned by the State. It is a scary thought that one day humanity might evolve to the point where the



government conditions people from birth. Because of this conditioning, there is no space for an individual to develop their own thoughts. Philosopher René Descartes stated, “Cogito, ergo sum” (“I think, therefore I am”); with this in mind, can people know who they truly are if they cannot think for themselves (“Cogito, ergo sum”)? There is no freedom in choosing interests, careers, opinions. How are people supposed to figure out what they want and find out the truth about the world if they do not even have the capacity for that? If all their thoughts are actually the state’s thoughts, it can be deduced that people are merely a number in the capitalist society. Only robots with one purpose: to produce what is demanded. Something like this cannot be called life.

Today’s world is filled with judgment despite differences, and this novel goes on to show how this issue can only deepen. Outsiders in *Brave New World* are not considered humans, but savages, they are not seen as equal. This is evident in our world as well. Despite many advocating for equality, many people are still treated as unequal. The novel *Brave New World* shows that people should not put others into reservations simply for being different and see themselves as superior, while others are considered subordinate and treated as such. It emphasizes that intellectual growth is significant, and ignorance, feelings of superiority and an inflated ego could lead to hurting others just because they are different from everyone else.

People should take history into consideration, whether it be history of wars and suffering, or the history of novels which indicate problems in society. If not, people could get to a point where oppression is worse than described in these novels and societies are more restricted and filled with hate. Societies in these novels show how humanity could evolve, but the reality can be much worse. Additionally, drug-like pills used for happiness are a clear indicator that people are not happy. This is one of the reasons why it is necessary for people to have hobbies and all kinds of interests. In *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, no one has any kind of interests, as they are forbidden.

To achieve personal growth and happiness, and ultimately freedom, people need to explore their interests, acquire skills, knowledge, explore various questions, theories. Riots and opposition are brought to a halt with soma. In the real world, no problems would be solved if they were stopped with drugs and the governments would continue implementing their control. This indicates the possible danger of producing similar drugs, as it ultimately keeps people in control. Country leaders must be able to handle the uncomfortable truth, approach various situations, riots and injustices in the right manner, and rightfully change in a way that is good

for everyone. Shutting people down and not giving them the freedom to speak will not solve anything.

Furthermore, these novels emphasize the importance of relationships, whether romantic, family or friends. In all three novels, people are distant and cold, bonds are mostly superficial and do not trust anyone. Failing to form trustworthy and close bonds makes people lonely and isolated, which is excellent for the government. If everyone thinks they are alone, they will never unite to fight any injustices. Additionally, the novels do not discuss enough the way such control affects people. Human beings have always formed close bonds with others, so the lack of it could cause problems. By forming close bonds, people learn from each other, share moments with each other, receive and give support and love. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, emotions of hate, anger and fear are constantly pushed down on people, while positivity is forbidden. This also instils survival mode in people, as well as a lack of trust. Again, this was done on purpose by the government to keep people divided. If they are afraid and constantly feel helpless, they will never revolt against the system that oppresses them. If united, the system will crumble.

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* shows how unreliable history can become. Constant changing of the facts shows how reality and truth can easily be distorted and turned into something completely different. It leads to a point where people cannot trust their memory anymore and are accused of having false memories. People in Oceania are stripped of all freedom, which is a scenario likely to occur in our world. Such examples can be seen in history with constant surveillance, propaganda, punishments and control. Beauchamps states that *Nineteen Eight-four* is a satire and a warning, but not a prophecy (3).

The Party lies about food, clothes, history, people, which is similar to Kim Jong Un's statement that North Korea is the greatest nation in the world, but the reality is different (David-West 581). This is why it is important to not enable the system of control as it can spread all around the world. While North Korea and several other countries are in a similar system of control, it goes on to show that it can happen anytime, anywhere. In *Fahrenheit 451*, the character Faber is afraid to speak up, while the firemen are enablers, showing how not speaking up and letting others to set up the system can easily lead to oppression. If, hypothetically, Croatia or some other country's government decides to set up a dictatorship and gain absolute control over the citizens, it would be of utmost importance to resist. If not, citizens could end up in similar situations as characters from the novels or even worse.

These novels teach us that people should always strive to stop injustices, as they could spread and lead to oppression or slavery. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* also unveils how knowing languages is significant, as people in Oceania were not allowed to learn any other languages while their own was being changed and they were slowly being forced to comply with it. Limiting people's vocabulary limits their way of thinking.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, there was no privacy, which can likely occur in our world too. There is already an issue of data privacy. With the rise of technology and social media, every website, social media post, click or swipe collects data on billions of people (Aho and Duffield 3). Tech firms use this data to analyse people and accommodate their needs and wants (Aho and Duffield 3). In the case of complete surveillance and dictatorship, these databases can be used against the citizens. If a person decides to comment against the system, their IP address can easily be found, and something that was once considered beneficial can be used to track and punish people.

People should always have the choice to decide about their lives, to find where happiness and contentment lie, to discover where sadness comes from. One should have the right to wonder about the world, to question the world, to debate, to discover. The beauty of life is found in curiosity about ourselves and the world. As mentioned in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the government can pose as the guardian of the weak, act as protectors, but that is wrong. A person cannot find strength if always protected. It seems that people are protected from experiencing life, and it is made out to be a crime. That way, people are stripped of their humanity, becoming merely a number whose purpose becomes to work and die. Banishing people from expanding their vocabularies and learning languages closes the doors to other worlds, new experiences, new people and new lessons. Limiting someone's thinking leads to people acting like automated robots doing only the work that is required. Can they say they lived? Having the ability to think, we can say we are here, we are living. Destroying thinking ultimately destroys people's spirits.

This is a matter of freedom and the right to experience all that one desires, as John the Savage said in *Brave New World*: he wanted the right to experience the good and the bad; happiness, joy, grief, sadness, diseases. To him, the highest and the only form of freedom was the right to experience all aspects of life and not be restrained from them. All throughout history, people have gone through trials and tribulations, endured the worst of the worst, but still had the freedom to choose. If they cannot have happiness, the least they should have is freedom. Living in a fake state of happiness created by the few, people are stripped of experiencing life

at its fullest. How can one know what happiness is if they have not experienced an ounce of sadness? How to differentiate the two states if only one is allowed?

If thinking stops, are new inventions possible? Destroying thinking could lead to an automated future and destruction. Throughout history, many of the world's civilizations were lost. One constant question is, what happened to Atlantis? Were they too advanced, which led to their destruction? What about the complete opposite? Although the system in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* claims that it is built to last and will never cease to exist, that is questionable. Could regression lead to an identical destiny? While the answer is debatable, one thing is clear: people should never stray away from their humanity.

While that may not be realized, civilization could make a step towards the wrong path at any given moment. That is why we should keep people like Guy Montag and Bernard Marx in mind, as it is essential to not turn a blind eye to what is happening around us. It is often said that history is written by the victors. The example of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* shows that that saying may be true, and if no one stands up, the lies become the truth. The question remains: will people fight, or will they keep quiet?

## CONCLUSION

The focus of this thesis was to analyse the government control and the methods these governments use in the novels *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to impose mechanisms of control onto their citizens. Three types of analyses - content, pattern and comparative analysis, were used to identify the main issues in all three novels. The analysis makes it apparent that these governments do not strive to make society better and their citizens happy. Their aim is to simply gain power for their own satisfaction, while the citizens remain in the illusion of happiness. In all three novels, people are not happy and free, while restrictions and punishments are imposed on them, which generates issues of human rights.

Individuality and happiness are interconnected with freedom and all three work together. One cannot be granted the supposed freedom and then not be allowed to express himself freely. Most of the people in all three novels have no individuality, while the very few who do are in constant fear and conflict. The governments use methods of surveillance, censorship, punishments and torture to control their citizens. Their focus is to distract people from the truth. Apart from distracting people, the governments also want to eradicate thinking which is the major threat to their systems.

The main character of *Fahrenheit 451*, Guy Montag, represents the importance of knowledge and resistance. His character shows that knowledge and thinking are valuable and should never be forbidden. *Brave New World* indicates that the rise of technology can be used in a negative way to control people. With the discovery of hypnopaedia, citizens of the World State never get the opportunity to fully realize their intellectual potential. Some are not developed enough, while those who are developed are never taught how to think. There is an immense danger when people's thoughts become the state's thoughts, as citizens in *Brave New World* can no longer distinguish between what is right and what is wrong. To them, it is all about happiness, but this bliss and happiness cannot be achieved without the use of a substance, highlighting their imperfect regime.

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* showcases a society of extremes. Surveillance, spying, punishment and torture have become a normality. In this society, happiness is not important, while freedom is non-existent. People of Oceania have been stripped of all their rights. It has

become a crime to think, or more so to be alive. To die for something, to die as a free person, is no longer possible. Even in the final moments, people cannot escape the oppression.

These novels show us that it is of major significance to identify societal issues and work to solve them in humane ways. Imposing restrictions on every aspect of life strips people of their birthright to be free citizens of the world. It creates more destruction than good. Maintaining and developing a strong identity and critical thinking is of major significance. The stronger the identity and the ability to think and question, the less it is possible for people to fall for propaganda and lies.

*Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are works of fiction, but even in works of fiction, lessons can be learned. These novels cannot predict the future, but can show the possible future if wrong steps are taken, and if wrong people come to power. In this race for the ultimate power, all sense of freedom and humanity is lost. In the novels, divided people do not have much power, but united, it is possible for them to crush the system that oppresses them. Characters like Guy Montag, Clarisse and Bernard Marx show the importance of resistance, despite the pressure, ridicule, and punishments. When freedom becomes endangered, people have a duty to protect it, and that is the main lesson of *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

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