

Theme in *1984* by George Orwell

Theme: statement (complete sentence) of a main idea of the literature. It needs to be general enough to be relevant to us here and now but specific enough to still be supported by the work of literature. It's not just a one-word topic, like "doublethink." However, if you can answer the question "what does this novel say about doublethink?" you might have a theme.

If someone repeats a lie enough times, it becomes true. (Party repeats lies until many people believe them so they are effectively true.)

Brute force and torture are often used to control people in a totalitarian society. (Winston and Julia are tortured; public executions used to make people enthusiastic about punishment and obedience.)

Total control is delicate and must be well-maintained in order to stay intact. (Party must keep people isolated through marriage rules; torture in Room 101.)

People do corrupt things to gain and keep power. (Party lies, uses force; Newspeak; marriage rules and destruction of family bonds.)

Absolute power suppresses freedom and individuality. (Newspeak standardizes thought; telescreens used to control people; blandness and all one brand of products.)

Technology is often used for totalitarian control. (telescreens)