

## Destruction of Individuality

George Orwell's 1984 and the movie V for Vendetta both demonstrate a similar theme of the totalitarian government and the perils that follow with such system. In 1984, Orwell portrays the destruction of humanity by using different symbols such as the thought police, Big Brother, and telescreen. Likewise, the movie V for Vendetta depicts representations of the manipulation of the British parliament by employing the Fingermen, Norsefire Party, and BTN. These three symbols in each work render an idea of how the authority can take over the privilege to claim one's desires and individualism physically, intellectually and emotionally.

Orwell and James McTeigue portray the physical torture one may be with afflicted from the totalitarian government in their works. In the novel 1984, the thought police report anyone who is caught committing "thoughtcrime." When a person exhibits disapproval or distaste that shows that he or she is going against what the Party claims, they are accused of "facecrime" and eventually vaporized from the Party. "A nervous tic, an unconscious look of anxiety, a habit of muttering yourself" (62) are key signs that notifies the thought police to detect how an individual emotionally feel inside. By making the people strive to survive and stay away from committing "facecrime," the Party is physically torturing the citizens by coercing them to restrain their facial expressions. Similarly, the identical type of police exists in V for Vendetta known as the Fingermen. When Evey breaks the curfew, the Fingermen legally gain the power to decide how they should punish her. Although she manages to avoid this punishment from V's assistance, they ultimately intend to rape her and kill her, which blatantly pictures the physical torture the Fingermen afflicts on people. Evey says to V "They were going to rape me, kill me..." after he saves her.

As people in these two works endeavor their best to evade from any physical agony, they start to lose their identity and their power to dream their aspirations.

Moreover, these two works portray how an individual is intellectually manipulated through the government's false announcements. The enormous telescreen in every citizen's room reports a continual stream of propaganda. The telescreen blasts the country's shortcomings and failures and makes them appear as triumphant successes that the Party accomplished. While Winston is at the cafeteria, the telescreen announces that there would be no reduction of chocolate; however, "Winston was aware, the chocolate ration was to be reduced from thirty grams to twenty at the end of the present week" (39) but other citizens accepted and were intellectually controlled by this spurious fact. Much like how the telescreen controls people's brain, BTN in V for Vendetta serves as a way of Party reaching all of its citizens in Britain and conveying its messages. BTN delivers false messages to people just as what the telescreen does. The poppet reports "Now, this is only an initial report, but at this time, it's believed that during this heroic raid, the terrorist was shot and killed"; the BTN News reports that the "terrorist" V was murdered trying to be a hero, which eventually ended his attempt to take over the BTN tower. In reality, however, V escapes and takes Evey to his place. The BTN news delivers this way in order to make the citizens believe that rebellion that goes against the government does not exist. By observing the roles of the telescreen and the BTN, one can clearly be wary of how the authority can demolish people's humanity through controlling their intellectuals.

The two works illustrate emotional pain an individual goes through with myriad of restrictions that the government puts on its people. Because Big Brother is always vigilant of what people do anytime and anywhere through the telescreen, this

dominates the private lives of the citizens. The telescreen prevents the citizens from conducting any action that goes against what the Party asserts, which is why Winston emotionally suffers so much when he has sex with Julia. "Sexual intercourse was to be looked on as a slightly disgusting minor operation, like having an enema" (69) The government allows its citizens to have sex for only procreative duties for producing party members and illegalizes any sexual intercourse that is done solely for pleasure and love. Orwell describes "But the physical difficulty of meeting was enormous" (110) when Winston contemplates about how he can be furtive. Although he finds a place where he can get away from the telescreen, he resents the fact that he abides in a society where he is not able to exhibit his emotional feelings for his love through sex. In the movie, the Norsefire Party causes emotional pain as it restricts an individual to have his or her freedom to desire. Because the government does not grant the privilege to choose one's own sexual identity, Gordon, one of Evey's superiors in BTN, disguises himself as a heterosexual. Furthermore, Gordon secretly keeps his antiques from the past along with several homoerotic pictures in his "secret room"; he does this since the Party does not allow anyone to own any of the materials that Gordon possesses. The Norsefire Party brings a huge emotional pain to Gordon in that it represses him to reveal himself as a homosexual and have any objects that stimulate him to ponder about the past. Gordon expresses his admiration of V to Evey as he says "You wear a mask for so long, you forget who you were beneath it." The people who are governed by the Big Brother and the Norsefire Party endure emotional torture from the totalitarian society in that they have to constrain their desires and hopes in order to keep themselves away from being tormented by the Party.

Orwell and McTeigue utilize the three symbols in each of their works to clearly represent the hazards that may take over our lives in our forthcoming future.

The thought police and the Fingermen display the pain people suffer physically from “facecrime” and their incapability of staying away from being mistreated. The two also warn how people can be intellectually manipulated through constant stream of propaganda. Most importantly, they describe how emotional pain of restricting to desire contributes the most in destroying humanity. Through witnessing the dangers that the characters confront in these works, it is crucial for every individual to question what he or she may misconceive and strive to not keep the “boot stamping on the human face.”