

## English 205 - Essay #2

Your next essay will draw inspiration from the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Think about the issues raised by Orwell and those discussed in class and select one of the following topics to write on. You must quote at least one relevant passage from the novel and use several additional outside sources to support your argument. Consider visiting the Proquest database on the Miramar College Library's website for source material.

### Option 1 - Torture

In Winston Smith's world, enemies of the Party are systematically rounded up and detained. Most are eventually "vaporized," but not before being tortured into confessing their supposed crimes. In our world, international law and indeed existing U.S. statutes forbid the use of torture on detainees. However, some have argued that, in certain cases, torture should be used on prisoners. Under what circumstances do these advocates deem torture necessary? Do you agree with their reasoning? What other viewpoints help clarify this issue?

Here is one link to get you started: <http://waterboarding.org/>

### Option 2 - Control

Consider the means of social control described in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and compare them to the ways in which people are controlled in today's society and the reasons given for doing so. Have any of Orwell's prophecies come to pass? Are we living in an Orwellian world? Craft an argument that discusses your findings and makes a specific claim about them. Be sure to provide evidence to support your argument. Look here for starters: <http://www.orwelltoday.com/>

### Option 3 - Lies

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the Ministry of Truth is responsible for spreading lies to the citizens of Oceania. The novel reveals the reasons behind this campaign, explaining why the falsification of facts is necessary for the sake of the country. Consider this issue in the world we live in today. Is it okay for our leaders to lie to us? Write an argument that explains when, if ever, it is acceptable for a government to lie to the governed. Provide specific examples and good evidence to support your claims. Here is site with a specific example of this:

<http://projects.publicintegrity.org/WarCard/>

### Option 5 - Surveillance

The citizens of Oceania are under constant surveillance and scrutiny by the government in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Privacy does not exist. Consider today's world. What are the limits of personal privacy in our society today? At what point is it acceptable for authority to violate the privacy of ordinary citizens (as opposed to criminals)? In other words, under what circumstances should we be willing to give up this civil liberty for the sake of security? Provide specific examples and good evidence to support your claims. Here is a starting point:

<http://privacy.org/>

## The Essay Itself

The final essay should be 5 pages long, typed, and double-spaced. Include a Works Cited page that lists all of your sources (including Orwell) in MLA format. (See pp 549-568 in *Everything's an Argument* for help.)

I will be looking for an understanding of how to structure argument and how to use good evidence and logical reasoning to support claims. The

Toulmin model may be particularly helpful. Consider the form as applied to one of the above topics: "Claim:] We should be concerned about the influential power of large media companies [Reason:] because the owners of these companies can favor their political views and downplay others, thus unfairly shaping public perception." The warrant here would be something along the lines of: "The personal biases of powerful individuals should not be allowed to outweigh other viewpoints." Of course you would need to provide good support for your reason and warrant and give some attention to rebutting those who may view this issue differently. This particular topic would also require you to look into some background of media monopolies and changes in FCC rulings that have allowed this to come to pass.