Second, bargaining at the institutional level, when confronted with the formal requirements of socialism, deregulates the whole economy and further contributes to the acceleration of political crises. In both cases, the major responsible agent is the divergence between the logic of controlled development and the praxis of running a socialist economy under the conditions of shortages, tensions, and low mobilization for task performance. This divergence imposes the counterlogic of micro-rationality, and this, in turn, releases a host of unrestrained actions. All of this is, in the end, attributable to the absence of mutual checks and controls that would give a less extemporaneous character to the course of those social processes that escape from the centralist scenario of development. Socialism without democracy produces unintended and uncontrollable egalitarian and irrational results.

NOTES

3. Ibid., 284.
11. Ibid.

Compromising Possessions: Orwell's Political, Analytical, and Literary Purposes in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

EDWIN AMENTA

GEORGE Orwell published *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in June 1949 and was soon struggling to rectify misinterpretations of his politics. From his hospital bed, he dictated a long memo to deny assertions in American book reviews that he had recanted his socialism and had rejected the British Labour government. He also claimed that although the book was not a prediction, if a world like the one in his novel were to come about, the American totalitarian state might go by the name of "hundred-percent Americanism." 1 Because of his illness, Orwell was unable to write enough to counter those who were using his book against him, and the dispute about his politics began a life of its own when he died of tuberculosis in January 1950.

Today, controversy still surrounds Orwell, his politics, and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 2 and the book can be used by many people with contradictory agendas. Of course, there is the standard anti-communist reading. 3 In other readings, critics take technology or other aspects of modern life to be the causes of totalitarianism. 4 Moreover, writers ranging from the neo-conservative to the pro-Soviet claim Orwell and appropriate his vision to confirm their own political views. 5 Even sophisticated critics of Orwell's writing and politics often overlook or ignore his views concerning totalitarianism, one of the main ideas Orwell was pursuing in his novel of ideas. 6 About most novelists, this kind of controversy would not be surprising. In Orwell's case, however, the usual problems should not have

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For helpful comments and suggestions, I thank Keith Baker, Kimberly Blanton, James Cronin, Larry Griffin, Wendy Griswold, Jefren Olsen, Sunita Parikh, Andrew Shapiro, Alan Sica, the Workshop on American Society and Politics at the University of Chicago, and the Editorial Board of Politics & Society.
appeared since he wrote extensively elsewhere about the ideas in the book. If one could not figure out by reading *Nineteen Eighty-Four* where Orwell stood on an issue—on totalitarianism and its worldwide prospects, socialism and its future, the dangers of left-wing intellectuals—one could consult his essays, where these views are spelled out. Reading Orwell is not a matter of reading between the lines; he was an accomplished essayist and propagandist, having served in the BBC during World War II.

Why can *Nineteen Eighty-Four* be used to undermine the political and analytical positions Orwell staked out near the end of his life? Why can so many different interpretations be built on the text—including some that contradict Orwell's other writings? One answer has to do with the form of the book. The negative stance of the anti-utopia makes it hard to tell what the writer stands for. A second answer involves Orwell's politics, which shifted a number of times after he became a socialist in 1936. A third answer, however, overshadows the other two: *Nineteen Eighty-Four* gives lessons that undermine Orwell's analytical and political positions at the time he wrote the book.

Orwell outlined *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in 1943, yet did not begin to write the book until 1946, finishing in 1948. Meantime, Hitler was routed, and the political shape of the world had changed, but Orwell's plan had not. Orwell's outline was about an explicitly fascist world, a world that might have been had Nazi Germany and its allies secured their territorial gains in Europe and Asia, a world that included a fascist United States. The original polemical targets were pacifist and Roman Catholic intellectuals who impeded the British war effort. The original outline could be adapted only roughly to the new conditions. The novel could be salvaged, mainly by recasting the regime as a left-wing totalitarianism, but, hard as he may have tried to avoid this, the old plan compromised claims made by Orwell in his essays and journalism. The novel did not convey his support of the Labour government, his hopes for socialism in the postwar world, or his criticisms of capitalism and of Communists in the Labour Party. Instead, it played into the hands of the Right, especially the American Right, which used the book to attack everything from the Soviet Union to social programs. The book obscured Orwell's own models of totalitarianism and the totalitarian way of thinking, both of which he developed after the novel was outlined.

Part of the problem is the genre Orwell chose for the novel. An anti-utopia is a bad vehicle for a detailed analysis of history or society. First, anti-utopias are negative. People who disagree with Orwell could for other reasons join in the attack on his enemies. The McCarthyite could join the democratic socialist in making fun of what seemed to be an exaggerated communist regime. Moreover, using irony presents a general problem. What an ironist says is not what he believes, but what he does believe is often unclear. Still, one usually gets the point of an unfavorable utopia. Swift, Zamyatin, Huxley, and others did not consider themselves misinterpreted or at least have not been interpreted in so many different ways.

One can also argue that the peculiar style of Orwell's anti-utopia obscures his politics and analytical views. Unlike most books of its kind, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a naturalistic novel with a contemporary setting and few of the high-tech gizmos appearing in other unhappy fantasies. Such a setting poses dangers, because items common to everyday life may be interpreted as the reason things went wrong: for example, the theory that Orwell foresaw the use of television as the bearer of totalitarianism. Some claim that Orwell did not do enough, that he did not give his version of the good society, unlike Swift, Zamyatin, and Huxley, who gave glimpses of what they would consider favorable alternatives. This problem results partly from Orwell's naturalism; unlike Gulliver, Winston and Julia cannot set sail for somewhere better. There was nowhere to go; Orwell's vision encompassed a totalitarian world. A room above an antique shop for furtive trysts constituted no alternative vision of society. Because Orwell had written elsewhere about the sort of world he would like to see, however, the style of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is an obstacle only for the critic who refuses to go beyond the text.

**ORWELL'S POLITICAL LINES: TWO ZIGZAGS**

Orwell became a socialist in 1936 and remained one until his death. He stuck to his socialist beliefs mainly because of his anti-imperialism and supported the Labour government while writing *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Strong as his commitment was, his politics shifted many times after his conversion to socialism. Understanding these shifts is critical for understanding the politics of Orwell's novel.

The story has a familiar beginning. Many English scientists and literary intellectuals joined the tiny Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) or were fellow travelers in the 1930s. Unlike those who joined the CPGB in the 1920s, these intellectuals usually were young, came from privileged backgrounds, attended Oxford or Cambridge, had little prior knowledge of politics, and were unaffected by the internecine struggles of the party's "third" period (1928–35). They admired the Soviet Union and its first five-year plan, feared Germany after the 1933 rise of Hitler, and were alarmed by the quick growth of Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists in 1934. Although the intellectuals were mobilized by the Depression, a key event was the Spanish Civil War, during which many of them suffered casualties. The Moscow trials did not make as big a splash in England as in the United States.
since the English press generally accepted the official version and the English Trotskyite community was small. 9

Compared to the others', Orwell's experiences were somewhat offbeat. He went through the English public school system, but as a scholarship student, not as someone who took such an education as a birthright. Like his father, but unlike most literary intellectuals, Orwell then found himself in the Imperial Service, stationed in Burma. Although he was older than the average convert to socialism, for he had rejected imperialism and tried his hand at professional writing for nearly a decade, he came to socialism at the height of the Popular Front period and began to write about more overtly political subjects. Traveling to Wigan, a coal-mining community, he described it for the Left Book Club, a 1936 creation that in April 1939 claimed more than 60,000 members. When the Spanish war broke out, Orwell was quick to volunteer his services. Events, however, left him among Trotskyites near Barcelona, where little fighting took place. He managed to get himself wounded only after his group had been suppressed by the dominant Communists. Disillusioned by communism, but inspired by Spanish socialism, he continued to write about politics. When World War II began, he was refused enlistment for medical reasons. He joined the Home Guard, a volunteer force of the last resort in case of a German invasion, and became a BBC propagandist.

Orwell first outlined his own moderate socialist program in 1941. Like many British socialists and the postwar Attlee government, Orwell banked on the nationalization of industry to cure unemployment. He was not interested in the details of social policy. He did not call for the rationalization and upgrading of social insurance or for the introduction of National Health or family allowances—the main recommendations of the 1942 Beveridge Report, which the postwar Labour government largely implemented. Also included in Orwell’s plan were the democratization of education, which the Labour Party did not emphasize, and income redistribution. 10 His domestic program was tied to his views of foreign affairs; he emphasized the dissolution of the British Empire. Because he believed that British citizens were stealing from the imperial subject peoples and hence living above their means, Orwell felt that socialism would not bring immediate material gain. Consequently he was unlikely to balk at shortages during a transition to socialism. In other respects, his politics were conservative. His views on the family and the sexes have been called everything from old-fashioned to sexist. 11 He believed in the male breadwinner and the female homemaker. For Orwell, socialism meant a Britain without colonies or rich people, where a man could get decent-paying work without worrying about being fired and

where his wife could prepare the children for equitable, state-sponsored educations.

Although after 1936 he was consistently for socialism and against totalitarianism, his politics were less consistent than such labels imply. Orwell's political line did not follow the well-worn pattern of angling sharply to the left and then sharply to the right. Instead it took the form of two symmetrical zigzags, which define four distinct periods. Orwell began his socialist career in 1936 as a sort of fellow traveler, but mainly as an anti-fascist. After his experience in the Spanish Civil War, he became at the end of 1937 a Trotskyist anti-communist and what might be called an anti-fascist. He joined the Independent Labour Party and prepared to become active in the pacifist movement. When the Hitler-Stalin pact was signed in August 1939, he could no longer be disillusioned by the Soviet Union, but because England itself was threatened, his old anti-fascism reappeared and was directed against Hitler and against anyone in England Orwell perceived as supporting Hitler's cause, especially pacifists. As the war ended, Orwell redirected his attention to Communists, but with considerably less intensity than before. 12

At that time, Orwell began to assume the political stance he held for the rest of his life, an in-house critic of the British Labour Party's left wing. He supported the government against its left-wing critics. His concern with Communists was not inspired by his conspiracy thinking of the 1937-39 period, nor did it parallel McCarthyism. Instead, Orwell worried about the influence of the Soviet myth on a democratic-socialist party and feared that communist influence in the party would obstruct the Attlee government. In the latter regard, his position was similar to that of the government and the party at large, which refused once again to accept the affiliation of the Communist Party in 1946 and expelled pro-communist MPs in 1948 and 1949. Even Labourites friendly to the Soviet Union, such as Harold Laski, often attacked the CPGB, and the main force of the left wing in the government, Aneurin Bevan, the minister of health, had no patience with the parliamentary Labour Party's extreme left wing. 13 Despite his dislike of communist influence, Orwell strongly supported civil rights and objected to the purge of Communists from the Civil Service.

Orwell did not subscribe exactly to the views of the Labour left-wing or the government. He wanted Britain to ally more closely with Europe, a proposal associated with Winston Churchill, the Conservative leader, rather than with the Labour Party. But unlike Churchill, Orwell was hoping for a socialist union of Europe. He disagreed, however, with the Keep Left group of Labour backbenchers and its agitation at the end of 1946 for a British
"third force" in world affairs because he thought that a socialist Europe could not stand on its own and would require the support of the United States. He was concerned more with investing the empire, especially India, than was the government, and he was friendlier to the United States than was the typical Labour left-winger. At the time he wrote *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, he was trying to swing the political line of the left-wing weekly *Tribune*, the journal he most often contributed to, behind the policy of Ernest Bevin, the Labour foreign minister and the architect of the Atlantic Alliance. 14

Often, critics who do not know Orwell’s political history see in him the stereotyped disillusioned man of the Left who later veered right, such as Whittaker Chambers, James Burnham, or John Dos Passos. This interpretation is favored especially by those with no desire to know anything about Orwell except his reputation as a leftist, with no political axe to grind, and with a stiff deadline to meet. Many communist and fellow-traveling intellectuals lost faith after the 1939 Hitler-Stalin pact, the postwar overrunning of Eastern Europe, the revelations of Khrushchev’s de-Stalinization campaign of 1956, or the suppression of the Hungarian revolt later than year and consequently moved to the right or retreated from politics. Some critics note that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* seems more pessimistic than Orwell’s other books and draw an apparently logical conclusion: that Orwell had grown disillusioned with the Labour government. 15

Other writers who see in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* political views Orwell once held but later rejected must have read some of the earlier essays and made inferences from positions Orwell had discarded. This was easy to do inadvertently because Orwell’s essays were originally published in collections with little regard to chronology. 16 Not until 1968 were Orwell’s essays, journalism, and letters collected and arrayed in order. In recent essays, these outdated inferences are employed not only by the honest, who want to make sense of Orwell without spending too much time, but also by the disingenuous, who hope to use Orwell’s voice to amplify their own causes. The less one has read of Orwell’s essays, the easier it is to misinterpret his political stance during the writing of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. 17 The more essays one has read, the more difficult it is to misjudge the politics of his final days and the more care must be exercised in choosing quotations. 18

Knowledgeable writers who admire Orwell superimpose the image of the reasonable, plainspeaking Orwell of the middle and late 1940s on the more insecure and heavy-handed Orwell of the late 1930s and early 1940s. The embarrassing earlier writings are dismissed as aberrations, if they are brought up at all. For discussions of Orwell’s politics, the key piece of writing is the 1946 essay "Why I Write." 19 In the essay, Orwell claimed that all his writings since his political awakening were against totalitarianism and for democratic socialism, as he understood it, but he did not discuss the uneven evolution of his understanding. Most of his friendly critics gave the essay a prominent place. For instance, Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, the editors of the four-volume *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters*, arrange Orwell’s writing in chronological order—with one exception. "Why I Write" comes first. Bernard Crick, Orwell’s biographer, largely takes Orwell at his retrospective word about what his writing career had been about. 20 These critics argue that a careful reading of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* supports Orwell’s political and analytical positions, and they often appear surprised or amused by the controversy.

One sign that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was at odds with many of Orwell’s nonliterary objectives is the false conventional wisdom that grew up about Orwell: that the novel was the final cry of a dying, bitter, and pessimistic man, a man bitter and pessimistic mainly because he was dying. In this view, Orwell’s tuberculosis supposedly pushed him to the right, the illness serving as a substitute for bad experiences with left-wing politics. This interpretation appeals to those who know that Orwell was a socialist, but who cannot reconcile those beliefs with the grim vision in Orwell’s final novel. The line of argument was begun by Orwell’s publisher, Fredric Warburg, who should have known better, and it has been discovered independently again and again. 21 The accuracy of this view, however, has been undermined, especially by Crick, who presents evidence that Orwell had outlined *Nineteen Eighty-Four* long before his death. 22

WORLD FASCISM AND THE ORIGINS OF NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

Orwell’s political zigzags could not help affecting his best-known book. Although *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is often considered an anti-Soviet or anti-communist polemic and satire, Orwell developed the ideas for the book during his anti-fascist phases. Orwell’s vision first came to him when he converted to socialism, before his confirmation in Spain and before he knew much about politics. The possible consequences of worldwide totalitarian (fascist) rule first appeared to Orwell in 1936 when he wrote *The Road to Wigan Pier*. He claimed that fascism aimed for a slave world in which a small clique held all power. Unlike his later vision, Orwell thought that the ruling caste would put science to work, feeding and pacifying the modern slaves. 23 The man who became the author of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* fought in Spain to prevent the coming of the Brave New World.

The vision returned during Orwell’s second anti-fascist phase, when his new political sophistication allowed him to picture the nightmare in detail. The
best evidence that Orwell had fascists and their British sympathizers in mind when he first elaborated the idea for Nineteen Eighty-Four is an outline of the book, completed some time during 1943, perhaps earlier (see Table 1).24 As in the novel, the outline implies that Nineteen Eighty-Four's world was to comprise three superstates. However, in the outline, the three doubtless were Germany, Japan, and the United States, the last being a fascist nation with England under its thumb, rather than the Soviet Union, China, and the United States, as in the novel.

The contents of the outline are usually examined in a cursory way because it is used to show that Orwell had his vision long before the end of his life. Crick published the outline to destroy the conventional wisdom, and later critics have invoked it to deny the charge that Zamyatin's We (written in 1921) was stolen by Orwell.25 Their object is to demonstrate that the outline closely resembled the book, and it is undeniable that the 1943 outline contains the elements of Nineteen Eighty-Four's plot and many of its themes. The diary, the love affair, Winston's approaches to his lover, Julia, and to his torturer, O'Brien (referred to as X and Y), the declaration of war against Eastasia, the torture, the confessions—all of these are noted. Among the 18 items listed under the heading "To be brought in" are these familiar ones: "Newspeak," "Statistics," "Sexual code," "The party slogans (War is peace. Ignorance is strength. Freedom is slavery.)," and "The Two Minutes Hate."

Nearly all the items that were not worked into the novel are central to the anti-fascist theme. During the early phases of the war, Orwell did not fear the more outspoken Fascists, such as the British Union of Fascists. They had no mass or elite support and were ignored by Nazi propagandists, who chose Mosley's rival to be their spokesman. What scared Orwell was the possibility of a British quisling government on the order of Petain's in Vichy France, but worse. In his wartime "London Letters to Partisan Review," he often speculated about the prospective makeup of such a collaborationist regime and included three groups referred to in the outline under the headings "Position of R Cs," "Pacificists," and "Interrelation between the party and Trusts."

The mention of trusts suggests a Nazi-like accommodation of capital to the state: the capitalists keep their position and titles, but effective control falls to party officials, who force capitalists to make their production plans dovetail with the war effort. During the early stages of World War II, Orwell was watchful for capitalists who might go in for this sort of arrangement. In his March-April 1942 "London Letter," he points the finger at the right-wing weekly Truth and its brand of defeatism. Although he does not name names, he is impressed by the number of advertisements in it for banks and insurance companies.26 However, trusts have no place in Orwell's Oceania; along with

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Table 1

The 1943 Outline of Nineteen Eighty-Four

For "The Last Man in Europe"

To be brought in:

- Newspeak (one leading article for the "Times").
- Comparison of weights, measures, etc.
- Statistics.
- Window boxes.
- Reeducation.
- Position of R Cs.
- Pacifists.
- Interrelation between the party & the Trusts.
- Position of the proles.
- Sexual code.
- Names of B M &c.
- Films.
- The party [illegible].
- Dual standard of thought.
- Bakers & Ingsoc.
- The party slogans (War is peace. Ignorance is strength. Freedom is slavery.).
- World geography.
- The Two Minutes Hate.

The general lay-out as follows:

PART I
Build up of

a. The system of organized lying on which society is founded.
b. The ways in which this is done (falsification of records, etc.).
c. The nightmare feeling caused by the disappearance of objective truth.
d. Leader-worship, etc.
e. The swindle of Bakers & Ingsoc.
f. Lonliness of the writer. His feeling of being the last man.
g. Equivocal position of the proles, the Christians and others.
h. Antisemitism (& terrible cruelty of war etc.).
i. The writer's approaches to X & Y.
j. The brief interlude of the love affair with Y.

Table 1, continued

PART II

a. Declaration of war against East Asia.
b. The arrests & torture.
c. Continuation of the diary, this time not written down.
d. The final consciousness of failure.

All in long chapters, & therefore the layout more accurately might be this

PART I divided into abt 6 parts, comprising:

i. Lies, hatred, cruelty, loneliness.
   ii. Pictures of London [?] the swindle of Baskerism.
   
   twice. iii. Fantasmagoric effect, rectification, shifting of dates, etc., doubts of own sanity.
   
   iv. Position of the prose, etc.

   30,000 v. Successful approach to X & Y. words
   vi. Love affair with Y. Conversation with X.

PART II to be divided into 3 main parts comprising:

15,000 i. The torture & confession words
15,000 ii. Continuation of diary, mentally. words
5,000 iii. Recognition of own insanity. words?

The fantasimagoric effect produced by:


The Two Minutes Hate. Enemy propaganda & writer's response to it. top hats, he removed capitalists and private enterprise during the fictional upheavals of the 1950s and 1960s.

Two groups of intellectuals also escaped mention. Orwell doubtless would have attacked pacifists, perhaps installing them in the war-making Ministry of Peace. The pacifists correspond to what Orwell called the "quixing intellectual." In the same letter that he makes the accusations against Truth, he registers surprise that the Nazis did not deal with the European intelligentsia more harshly. He remarks that he "could make out at least a preliminary list of the people who would go over"—no doubt including a number of pacifist intellectuals.27 The notation "R Cs" refers to British Roman Catholic intellectuals, whom Orwell criticized as supporters of inequality and as likely recruits to a prospective collaborationist government. He reported in his August 1941 London Letter, "If anything corresponding to a Pétain government were established here, it would have to lean largely on the Catholics. They are the only really conscious, logical, intelligent enemies that democracy has got in England."28 Orwell claimed that Catholic intellectuals were afraid to vent their pro-Hitler views and would merely praise Pétain and Franco or disingenuously offer peace plans favoring the Nazis. A Nineteen Eighty-Four featuring worldwide fascism would probably have had the doctrines of Catholic intellectuals informing the ideology called Ingso, with average Christians countering these intellectuals. The outline refers to the "equivocal position of the prose, the Christians, and others." Orwell believed that the average English Christian was morally sound and unable to make sense of the formulations of Catholic intellectuals. To him, the relationship of Christians to the Roman Catholic intellectuals was similar to that of socialist workers to the left-wing intellectuals. Both prose and Christians were to stand for common decency, and, like the prose, the Christians were probably going to provide a sleeping menace to the regime.

Orwell ran into interpretive trouble with the use of the term Ingso, a Newspeak word that translates as "English Socialism." When Warburg first read the manuscript, he took Orwell's use of this term to mean that Orwell had given up on socialism. Warburg also thought the supposed equivalence between Ingso and English socialism would cost the Labour Party a "cool million" votes in its 1950 campaign against Churchill's Conservatives.29 However, the outline entry referring to Oceania's creed—"Baskerism & Ingso"—has anti-fascist origins and concerns the critique of Catholics. In this context, "English socialism" doubtless was an analogy to Germany's National Socialism and Ingso an analogy to nazism. Since both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany used the abbreviated style, Orwell saw no need to change the term. He tried to cover for the possible misinterpretation of his
support for the Labour Party in an easily overlooked passage. When Winston probes the mind of an elderly prole for remnants of the past, the prole recalls a revolutionary orator who referred to the Labour "y'ears." Apparently the Labour Party was not the agent of Oceania's revolution.

"Bakerism" refers to Albert E. Baker, a canon of York and the rector of Moor Monkton in 1942. Academically, Baker's mission was to demonstrate, speciously, that scientific findings were compatible with Christian doctrines. His 1930 book, *Christianity and Science in the Twentieth Century*, argued, for instance, that evolution is consistent with the existence of the Christian god—without mentioning the account in Genesis. Similarly, Baker claimed that Einstein's general theory of relativity somehow transforms the church's persecution of Galileo into a dispute among fellow scientists:

If Einstein proves to be right, and there is no such thing as absolute motion, then all motions whatever are relative. This applies to rotations as well as to motions in straight lines or in curves, for the theory holds that inertia and gravitation are the same. An old dispute comes up, therefore, for retrial. It appears that Galileo's and his judges were both right. It is all a matter of convenience whether we say that the earth rotates about its axis once in twenty-four hours, or that all bodies rotate about the earth once in twenty-four hours. Whichever of these statements be true, the observed facts are the same. So that many of the confident and sarcastic things that historians of science have said about the conservatism of the Roman Church will have to be rewritten [sic].

Rewritten, indeed. A *Nineteen Eighty-Four* featuring worldwide fascism would probably have had science subsumed under Christianity with many "disputes" like Galileo's coming up for retrials.

A firm advocate of internationalism, Baker also edited a 1942 volume heralding the Five Point Plan of Pope Pius XII: the equality of rights for all nations, an end to the arms race, a sort of revamped League of Nations, a revision of treaties to meet "the real needs and the just demands of nations and populations," and something about the Sermon on the Mount. What Orwell apparently objected to was Baker's timing. Hitler had already made one-Europe a reality, and the plan seemed to confer legitimacy on the 1942 status quo. From the beginning of the war, Orwell feared that a compromise peace would lead to a division of the world by superpowers, with the British colonies remaining in bondage. He argued the following as late as September 1943:

For years past the more intelligent imperialists have been in favour of compromising with the Fascists, even if they had to give away a good deal in order to do so, because they have seen that only thus could imperialism be salvaged. . . . If we carry the war to a destructive conclusion, the British Empire will either be lost, or democratized, or survive in something like its present form if there were other sated imperialist powers which had an interest in preserving the existing world system. If we came to an understanding with Germany and Japan we might diminish our possessions . . . but we should at least be confirmed in what we had already. The world would be split up between three or four great imperial powers who, for the time being, would have no motive for quarrelling. Germany would be the neutralizing Russia, Japan would be there to prevent the development of China. Given such a world system, India could be kept in subjection indefinitely. And more than this, it is doubtful whether a compromise peace could follow any other lines.

From the fall of France in June 1940 through 1942, Orwell was hopeful about radical social change in Britain. He thought that Britain could not win the war unless it first underwent a socialist transformation; he ignored the possibility that once the Soviet Union and the United States joined the fight, the tide had turned. At the end of 1942, however, Orwell began to fear that the Right would outlast the war and block social change. In his March-April 1943 "London Letter," for instance, he is pessimistic about the chances of the recently released Beveridge Report. However, most of the letter complains about the United States' reactionary influence on Britain: its imperial pretensions, its giving the British ruling class a new lease on life, and the animosity between American soldiers stationed in London and English workers. This mood apparently accounts for Britain's subjection by the United States instead of by Germany. Regardless of the identity of the rulers, the makeup of the quisling regime was pro-fascist.

Anti-Semitism figures heavily in the outline, but is played down in the novel. The outline refers to "Effect of lies & hatred produced by: Films. Extracts of anti-Jew propaganda. B'casts." This seems to be based on the use of film by Nazi Germany in its hate campaigns. What survives in the novel is Winston's description of a newsreel showing the bombing of a ship of refugees. One victim is a woman who "might have been" Jewish. However, the Two Minutes hate was directed at enemies of the regime, and the official history books attribute all the bad things of the past to capitalism. Orwell toned down the anti-Semitism and other race hatred as late as 1948, when he was reworking and retyping the rough draft. The 1947 rough draft of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* makes it clear that Jews are murdered in Oceania because they are Jews. Also noteworthy in the 1947 draft, but absent in the book, is a description of a film about the lynching of American blacks. One view is that race hatred was deleted because Orwell did not want to disgust readers with sickening descriptions. However, the passage remained disgusting, so perhaps he did not want to alienate American readers and undermine his high opinion of the United States. It is equally likely that Orwell eliminated race hatred and genocide from the book to make the totalitarian regime seem left-wing.

Some items from the outline survived, but apply to the anti-fascist, anti-quisling critique. There are three superstates instead of two. Almost as
important is "the sexual code," a stringent rule remaining from the time when Orwell imagined Roman Catholics running the show. Despite the Stalinist emphasis on the family in the late 1920s, the sexual code of Oceania does not fit left-wing views on love and marriage, starting with Engels, who viewed marriage as a property relationship. Yet the code was impossible to remove from the novel; otherwise the plot would have had to been scrapped since the love affair was a capital offense.

FROM WORLD FASCISM TO WORLD COMMUNISM

By the time Orwell got around to writing *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the world had changed. Most important, the Axis powers were routed in 1945, leaving two world powers, the United States and the USSR. In the process, the atomic bomb made its first marks on the world. Moreover, the Labour government assumed office a month before V-J day, with its first mandate to build socialism. During this period, Orwell made analytical breakthroughs. Although he outlined the book in 1943, he developed neither a model of the totalitarian habit of mind nor a model of totalitarianism until later.

In the wake of these events, Orwell had to shift the focus of the work to make it plausible. If it were to be salvaged, the novel had to go left: world communism instead of world fascism had to become the focus. Germany and Japan could be replaced by the USSR and China. Roman Catholic and pacifist intellectuals had no chance of gaining political power, and anti-Semites and other racists were shamed and discredited by the Nazi atrocities. Yet they, too, could be replaced, and even the atomic bomb could be worked into it. The change involved some rethinking since there was nothing in the outline about a left-wing totalitarianism or the history of the Soviet Union. Big Brother and Goldstein, with their resemblances to Stalin and Trotsky, were not in the outline. Nor were the revolution, the role of the capitalists in the history books, the party uniform of overalls, or even the chessboard that puzzles the broken revolutionaries and Winston. Nevertheless, Orwell did not change the plot or the main characters.

He tried to squeeze his new analytical concerns to fit the outline's constraints. He could take to task "nationalists," a term he appropriated in 1945, but whose new meaning was soon forgotten. For Orwell, *nationalist* meant something closer to "ideologue" and was defined as a power-hungry intellectual loyal to some larger unit (but not necessarily a nation-state) with obsessions, unstable beliefs, an indifference to reality, and a concern with advancing the prestige of his group. Orwell listed a number of belief systems under this rubric, including pacifism, political Catholicism, anti-Semitism, communism, Trotskyism, "color feeling," and "class feeling." 39

Orwell thought that the rise of the nationalist way of thinking was a precondition of totalitarianism. The ideologue in general replaced the specific groups noted in the outline.

Orwell also attempted to incorporate his new political concerns. He could poke fun at Communists posing as Labour MPs, but the implicit criticism of the United States had to be toned down. Although Orwell did not want Britain to be linked tightly to the United States, for he hoped for the emergence of an independent, socialist Europe, he greatly preferred the democratic freedoms of the United States to the police methods of the Soviet Union. Accordingly in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Airstrip One is given a large degree of autonomy within Oceania (dominated by the United States) and was not ruled by a quisling regime, as originally outlined, serving the interests of a fascist United States as Vichy France served Nazi Germany.

However, keeping the story the same and changing only the names worked to defeat Orwell's polemical and theoretical goals. Because the plot did not change, the novel's hysterical voice is wrong for Orwell's criticisms of the "crypto" Communists and seems more fitting for his earlier fears about the pacifists and Fascists. The book ends on a hopeful note about a future in which communist-like regimes ruled the world. Yet Orwell was unafraid of Communists at the time. For one thing, the English communist literary clique was in eclipse. For another, Orwell saw the "cryptos," such as the Labour MP Konni Zilliacus, as nuisances to the government who could be undermined with a little publicity.40 Moreover, Orwell argued that the Western Communist parties were no threat because most of their recruits quickly cooled on the party, leaving only a hard core of ineffective fanatics and career bureaucrats. In his view, the suppression of Communists was not worth the cost in democratic freedoms.41 And Orwell did not see in the Soviet Union an immediate military threat to England or Western Europe.42 If totalitarianism were coming to England or the United States, he believed it would be promoted by indigenous "nationalists" during a crisis rather than by external force. Like many leftists of his day, Orwell considered capitalism doomed and believed that there was no telling what might happen in the wake of its demise.43 Yet the immediate fears of the early 1940s, a German invasion or a compromise peace, were gone. Gone, too, were his personal insecurities: the reckless waste of talent on propaganda 44 and the moral equivocation of working for a coalition government dominated by the Right that might win the war while thwarting socialism and reasserting imperialism. The tone of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* seems in line with Orwell's fears of the early 1940s and resembles his earlier unsportsmanlike dealings with the pacifists. It contrasts with the cooler and more temperate *Animal Farm*, which
directly concerns the Soviet Union and which was completed in early 1944, after Orwell had outlined Nineteen Eighty-Four.

The decision to go left also restricted the variety of ideologues represented in the book. Only the left-wing ones could remain: the Communist, the Trotskyist, and the slavish admirer of the working class. The Roman Catholic and pacifist intellectuals and the rest were inconsistent with a left-wing totalitarian regime, which would probably stamp them out, rather than tolerate and use them. The idea comes across that the Left has a monopoly on doublethink since the book seemed to complain specifically about Stalinists and Trotskyists. Orwell found it impossible to elucidate his idea of "nationalism," which was a general if obscure critique. Perhaps this problem was inherent from the start, as consistency would require that some types of ideologues would have to be left out. However, a quisling Airstrip One undoubtedly would have netted a more ideologically promiscuous group of "nationalists," not only right-wing ones; the pacifists were often left-wing in sentiment or at least pro-Soviet. Another possible result was that the protagonist had to carry much of the satirical and polemical burden; Winston Smith, too, became a "nationalist," a sort of Trotskyist with color feeling, making him an unsuitable mouthpiece for Orwell's own views.45

Moreover, giving England a left-wing totalitarian regime created difficulties in portraying the United States and opened the way for a right-wing reading. Orwell seemed to think that the threat to democracy in the United States was from the Right rather than the Left, as the comment about "hundred-percent Americanism" implies. The original conception of the U.S. regime was probably similar to the one in Sinclair Lewis's It Can't Happen Here, in which a politician resembling Huey Long, aided by a radio preacher resembling Father Coughlin, constructs an American police state. In the 1947 draft, Orwell had American racists committing horrors, but the Communist Party USA was anything but racist. Yet Orwell could not have a left-wing totalitarian regime in England and a right-wing one in the United States. The compromise was to say little about the major component of Oceania and to give places like England a large amount of autonomy. Granting this fictional autonomy might forestall criticisms from the Labour Left that Britain was falling under the control of the United States and might avoid undercutting Orwell's support of Bevin.

The effect for the American reader is that a communist-like regime has taken power under sketchy circumstances. The possibility that the Soviet Union was somehow responsible is not ruled out. Whereas American readers might be unconcerned that the United States had absorbed Britain, they might be alarmed if it appeared that the Soviet Union had taken over Western Europe. Although anti-communism in the United States had not yet turned into McCarthyism when Orwell was writing his book—the Army-McCarthy hearings were in the future—the way was open for the later use of the book by Americans wanting to suppress the Communist Party or even to start a preemptive war against the Soviet Union.

In any case, trying to conduct public relations for the United States was an impossible job. The relative popularity of the United States and Soviet Union among Labour Party members and its left wing changed rapidly during the postwar period, especially in the period from 1946 through 1948 when Orwell wrote his book. When Orwell began writing his book, the Labour Left had a low opinion of the United States, but that opinion rose as Orwell wrote. The United States silenced the criticisms brought by the abrupt ending of Lend-Lease in August 1945 and by the enunciation of the heavy-handed Truman Doctrine in March 1947 when it announced the Marshall Plan in June 1947 and appropriated money for it in March 1948. In that same month, the Soviet Union undermined its immediate postwar popularity among the Labour Left and in England generally with the coup in Czechoslovakia and afterward with the blockade of Berlin.46 A year after the publication of Nineteen Eighty-Four, however, the United States lost its advantage among the Labour Left by fighting in Korea.47 Orwell believed in the power of the written word, but he could not eclipse these events.

Another effect of the turn leftward was that Orwell could not criticize capitalism and economic inequality because in the novel the capitalists were eliminated during the revolutions of the 1950s and consigned to their role in the official history books. Had Orwell stuck to the original plan of imposing totalitarianism from the right instead of from the left, he could have attacked capitalism. By "interrelationship between the party and the Trusts," Orwell clearly had in mind a gradual erosion of capitalism, rather than its dramatic overthrow. During World War II, Orwell argued that war demanded equality of treatment and was on the lookout for economic class differences. For instance, he scoured the classified ads in the newspapers to see if butlers and maids were wanted.48 He also argued that the inefficiencies of capitalism put Britain at a disadvantage in its war with nations with more centralized economies, such as Germany's. At places in Nineteen Eighty-Four, Orwell seems to criticize capitalist society. Most of the items of mass culture in Oceania, such as trashy novels and yellow newspapers, are products of capitalism. Specifically, the writing machines that produced "prolefeed" correspond to comments in Orwell's essays about classified ads for schools to aid prospective writers of blockbusters.49 Nineteen Eighty-Four is set in a
noncapitalist society, however, and Western readers can plausibly believe that
the satire applies to societies other than their own.

THE TOTALITARIAN HYPOTHESIS

The most important problem caused by the change to left-wing totalitarianism is that it obscured Orwell's model of totalitarianism. Orwell did not work out a model of totalitarianism until after the war—well after he had outlined the novel. Instead, he made sharp distinctions between Stalin's Russia and Hitler's Germany throughout the course of the war; only afterward did he point more often to the similarities, and even then these had to do with internal aspects of the regimes. His adherence to the outlined plot of the novel and his recasting of the regime as a left-wing totalitarianism made it difficult to bring across his later ideas on the subject. There is some controversy about when Orwell first subscribed to the totalitarian hypothesis: when did he decide that Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia were close approximations? Crick claims that Orwell came around in 1938, but this was during his Trotskyist phase, when he saw many similarities between Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia, and Conservative England. Orwell did not equate the Hitler and Stalin regimes, and even during World War II he was careful to distinguish the two. Only in 1944 did he consistently use the term totalitarianism to describe Stalin's Russia. At that point he referred to its internal totalitarianism to set it apart from the world order envisioned by Hitler.

Some of the trouble has to do with the odd career of the term totalitarianism. In an Orwellian way, it has come to mean almost the opposite of its initial meaning. Coined in the 1930s, the word was applied proudly by Mussolini to his own regime, to set it apart from democracies. During the late 1930s and early 1940s, the term was applied to all fascist regimes, Italian or otherwise. In the 1940s and 1950s, political and academic writers took over the term, augmenting its meaning to refer to what was common in both nazism and Soviet communism. In the late 1950s and 1960s, the nazi sense of the word dropped away because there were few Nazis left, and the term meant regimes and persons that might otherwise be called communist. Nowadays the Reagan administration applies the word mainly in distinction to "authoritarianism," uncritically supporting right-wing dictatorships and opposing left-wing ones. 50

Orwell is partly responsible for some of the obscurity in the use of the term. For someone who argued that obscure writing was essential to totalitarian habits of mind, he uses the term sloppily. In "Why I Write," he claims that all of his writing is against totalitarianism, but neglects to point out how his understanding and use of the word changed over time. Like most people, Orwell first used totalitarian to mean the various fascist dictatorships and their adherents; only later did he add the Soviet regime. But he never made it clear when he switched. His use of the word seems to refer mainly to fascism until early 1944, after Nineteen Eighty-Four had been outlined. 51

Although Orwell knew much about Communist parties before the war began, he knew little about fascism and almost nothing about Hitler's version of it. His ordeal in Spain and the fallout from it led him to find something out about Communists. That they could be in the vanguard of an antirevolutionary movement caught him by surprise. He began to review books on the subject, especially by writers with firsthand knowledge, and he developed his own views on the matter. His fascination with Communists was not, however, matched by a fascination with Fascists. The fact that both the British Conservatives, Communists, and fellow travelers opposed fascism so vehemently made him reluctant to examine it. He was so concerned with the reconciliation of his enemies that he had become a sort of anti-anti-fascist. Like anti-anti-communists of the 1950s, he opposed those doing things in the name of anti-fascism. He did not commit himself to print on Hitler's variety of totalitarianism until early 1940, in a review of Mein Kampf. 52 During the period immediately before the Hitler-Stalin pact, Orwell seemed to believe that fascism was a natural development of capitalism and referred to the war preparations of democratic countries as the "fascising process." In comparing the British and German empires and regimes, he used the phrase "Tweedledum and Tweedledee." The interwar Orwell saw fascism almost everywhere. There was, of course, fascism in Germany and Italy. However, the Soviet Union seemed similar, and all it would take to push the capitalist democracies over the edge was a general war.

After the pact, Orwell turned his attention to fascism and strongly supported the British war effort. He turned away from fiction and concentrated on polemics and propaganda. In his tract The Lion and the Unicorn (1941), he undertook a comparative analysis of political sytems, carefully distinguishing fascism from socialism. Although he noted the similarities between Stalin's Russia and Hitler's Germany, he did not equate their political systems. For Orwell, socialism involved common ownership of the means of production and could solve problems of consumption and production that capitalism could not. Orwell seemed to have in mind a comparison of the poor performances of the British and U.S. economies with Soviet and German economic gains, as war preparations ended the Depression. Common ownership was necessary, but not sufficient to effect real socialism. People must possess basic democratic freedoms, some control
over their government, and live according to fairly equal standards. The Soviet case proved that common ownership without political democracy allowed the state to be run by a self-elected political party, and consequently privilege returned.

Orwell defined fascism according to the German case. He saw fascism as a form of capitalism that took from socialism features that provide more efficiency for war purposes. There was no real change in power so far as individuals and social classes were concerned. Capitalists, managers, and workers kept these positions when the Nazis came to power, but the Nazi party controlled all enterprises, the capitalist becoming a sort of manager in his own factory. There were no murders of categories of people for economic reasons. The Nazis went to war partly to impose their own ugly vision on the world and partly because war, conquering, death, and excitement constituted the Nazi appeal. Orwell's definition showed some similarities between the Soviet and German regimes. In both cases, there were no democratic freedoms or democratic political institutions; each was ruled by a party that allowed no political opponents and that granted itself economic privileges. Also, in each case the economy was more or less collectivized.

More striking were the differences. If Orwell believed that fascism and the Soviet perversion of socialism were the same thing, one would have expected him to smooth over the differences instead of highlighting them. And since this analysis came before Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, Orwell was not softening his attack to avoid angering an ally. It is especially noteworthy that Orwell grouped the Soviet model under the rubric of socialism, rather than grouping the Soviet Union and Germany under the same category, such as totalitarianism. First, the Soviet form of socialism involved a societal upheaval in which the economic privileges of the upper classes were removed. Second, unlike Soviet communism, fascism was a war machine. Third, the aims of the two systems were radically different. Failure though it was, socialism in its Soviet form at first aimed for a "world-state of free and equal beings," whereas nazism aimed at the opposite. The Nazis were motivated by inequality—believing in and financing theories of racial superiority—and wanted to install a worldwide caste system. The high priests were the Nazis; immediately below them were the German people; below them, the rest of Europe; and on the bottom, all people of color, to be reduced to slavery. During the war, the man whose vision came to define totalitarianism for millions was distancing himself from the totalitarian hypothesis.

In an August 1944 letter to the English critic John Middleton Murry, Orwell made clear what he meant by totalitarianism. Orwell berated Murry for his pacifist beliefs and worked over one of his standard themes: the cowardliness of pacifists. This alleged fear that gripped pacifists was intellectual, not physical. Pacifists called for Britain to lay down its arms, but never the Soviet Union because that would anger the left-wing intelligentsia: "And I cannot escape the impression that you avoid or groze [sic] over the whole subject of Russian militarism and internal totalitarianism because it not only conflicts with your declared pacifism but because to speak clearly about it would also involve you in the only kind of unpopularity an intellectual cares about." This was the first time he made this distinction in his terminology, criticizing the Soviet Union's internal totalitarianism: its dictatorship and lack of democratic freedoms. From this time on, for Orwell totalitarianism concerned internal matters.

**ORWELL'S MODEL OF TOTALITARIANISM**

As the war ended, Orwell began to build his own model of totalitarianism. The model was a type construction, describing totalitarian rule in its ideal or pure form, rather than a theory about its origins or about totalitarian movements, which remained elusive to him. Unlike his model of "nationalism" (the totalitarian mind-set), his model of totalitarianism was not set out in any one article, but was scattered throughout his writings in 1946 and afterward on subjects ranging from James Burnham to *Gulliver's Travels*. Orwell could not, however, bring across in the novel his later ideas on the subject. Notably, his view of totalitarianism is confused with more widely known theories, such as Hannah Arendt's theory of totalitarianism or the "managerial" theory of Burnham, who influenced Orwell, but whom Orwell criticized. He might have made *Nineteen Eighty-Four* correspond more closely to his model, but he would have needed to change the plot considerably.

For one thing, Orwell left in the torture scenes. Mainly because of them, his theory is often confused with Arendt's. Unlike her, Orwell did not connect totalitarian rule to totalitarian movements and the atomization of society, so the only room for confusion is over the analysis of totalitarian rule. Although on that issue Arendt and Orwell overlap somewhat, her view of totalitarianism comprises ideology and terror. Of these two, terror is more important, becoming total and irrational; it is not merely a means to the end of keeping subjects in line, as was the case under previous despotsisms. Ideologies, too, have their place. She finds the ideologies of the Soviet Union and Hitler's Germany more or less the same; both call for world
conquest. These ideologies motivate elites and are pursued with ruthless logic. Categories of people, such as Jews or rich peasants, are exterminated according to ideological plan. Since Goldstein's book is an ideological treatise and constitutes the bible of the Brotherhood, it can be invoked as evidence of Orwell's adherence to Arendt's model.

However, Orwell's theory stands apart from Arendt's and those of others because of its emphasis on lying and making people believe lies. Terror is necessary only insofar as lies have not yet completely taken root and the totalitarian habit of mind has not yet advanced beyond the original disciples. In its purest form totalitarianism dispenses with terror. The preconditions of totalitarianism include the centralization of the economy under one-party rule, that is, without the most basic safeguard of democracy. For Orwell, organized lying under totalitarianism extends to science as well as history and literature. It requires the spread of the totalitarian way of thinking, a cultural condition. The lies can be almost anything the leader says since the leader acts according to his own lights, not according to ideological plan. All holy books are subject to change, and the emphasis is on revelation, rather than dogma. No ideological tenet is so strong that the leader cannot break it if expediency demands it. The problem of totalitarianism is that although any leader is limited, he must appear infallible. Thus, newspapers, books, and so on have to be constantly changed to keep up appearances. "The organized lying practiced by totalitarian states is not . . . a temporary expedient of the same nature as military deception. It is something integral to totalitarianism, something that would still continue even if concentration camps and secret police forces had ceased to be necessary." 59 Organized lying is secured by totalitarian habits of mind, by the changing of records, and by the narrowing of language, making heretical thinking impossible.

Although Orwell discussed organized lying as early as 1942 and it appeared in the 1943 outline, only later did he point to lying as the central ingredient of internal totalitarianism and begin to work out the implications of this model, such as totalitarian states' attitudes toward military conquests or their ability to compete with democracies. On the latter issue, Orwell recanted his 1941 view (in The Lion and the Unicorn) that nations with socialized economies have an inherent advantage in war over capitalist nations. He felt then that capitalist England was on the brink of disaster because it was economically unprepared for war—unlike Germany with its more socialistic economy. For the mature Orwell, the distinction was between totalitarianism and democracy, rather than capitalism and socialism.

The main implication of his model was that totalitarian states were not as militarily frightening as they seemed during World War II. First, world conquest or a world stalemate among big powers is not part of some grand totalitarian plan. Instead, the foreign policy of a totalitarian state is bound by domestic considerations; the world must be made safe for outrageous lies. Organized lying required world conquest or at least a world stalemate with sealed borders. From this perspective, when Hitler tried to realize a blueprint for world conquest and slavery, he deviated from the model. Second, Orwell thought that democracies had little to fear from totalitarianisms, however warlike, because totalitarian nations discouraged science; the doctrine of the omniscience of the leader was inconsistent with scientific breakthroughs. Accordingly, totalitarianisms would fall behind in a technological arms race and lose wars with democracies because of their inferior weapons. 60 In short, totalitarian nations were driven to wars, which for the same reasons they were unlikely to win.

Orwell's Theory and Goldstein's Book

In Nineteen Eighty-Four, Winston Smith becomes an opponent of the regime, joins the "Brotherhood," and clandestinely acquires the treatise of the revolutionary leader Emmanuel Goldstein: The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism. The book, as it is called, includes a political analysis of Oceania's regime and the world and a program of revolutionary action. It is uncertain how far to believe this book, because O'Brien, Winston's torturer, later claims to have written it. However trustworthy the book might be, many critics confuse it with Orwell's theory of totalitarianism. 61 This is a tricky issue because some of Orwell's theory is contained in it, but there is more to it than that. The book would not have existed had Nineteen Eighty-Four been written as outlined in 1943. Orwell foresaw neither Goldstein's book nor a right-wing analogue, and the book within the book was not even part of the version Orwell began writing in 1946; he added it only in 1947. 62

The book serves a number of functions. One of these is to recount the story of how worldwide communism took hold; had the war gone differently, the story of how Germany, Japan, and the United States achieved world power would have been unnecessary. Goldstein's book also allows Orwell to make fun of the Trotskyite type of "nationalist" and to point out his disregard of human equality and, specifically, of Burnham, an American Trotskyite who eventually moved to the far right. However, the book also employs Burnham's three-superstate model, a geopolitical scheme that Orwell saw as a possibility for the world's future. Orwell's use of the model in Nineteen Eighty-Four is more device than prediction, but because Orwell used it, people sometimes equate Orwell's ideas and politics with Burnham's. 63
There is some overlap between Orwell's theory of totalitarianism and the book. For one thing, Orwell thought that the nonhereditary recruitment of the Communist party resembled that of the Catholic church, ensuring the longevity of the party and its world view, as opposed to the change and instability of hereditary class systems.64 For another, the description of doublethink is a summary of Orwell's "nationalism." Yet Goldstein is not Orwell. Goldstein's book begins with a model of social groups. Instead of a Marxist class analysis, a Weberian status group model, or Orwell's own analysis in The Road to Wigan Pier, the book borrows the model of elites, a never-ending scramble among high, middle, and low, from the "Italian school" of social theory, including writers such as Gaetano Mosca, Vilfredo Pareto, and Roberto Michels. Although Burnham had been drawn to this way of thinking and praised it in his 1942 book, The Machiavellians, Orwell argued that anyone who believed in "cycles of history" was an enemy of equality.65 Following Marx, Orwell believed that the economic progress of capitalism made possible the elimination of want and the class system. In attributing this model of elites to the perhaps nonexistent leader of the Brotherhood, Orwell shows Goldstein to be lacking in democratic values and argues for the futility of his perhaps nonexistent movement.

Orwell's model of totalitarianism diverges from Burnham's managerialism in other respects. Orwell never saw "managers" as the ruling elite of a totalitarian nation; he had hoped that the new middle class of scientists and technicians would provide skills necessary to democratic socialism.66 In Nineteen Eighty-Four, the state is run by the doublethink virtuoso, rather than the technocrat. Orwell never believed that democratic socialism was impossible to achieve or that a later turn toward democracy was inherent in totalitarian dictatorships, as did Burnham.67 In the immediate postwar years, Burnham disowned managerialism and his three-state model and moved to the far right.

Although Orwell saw a totalitarian world as one plausible scenario for the future, in Nineteen Eighty-Four he used Burnham's model as a device to allow the totalitarian habit of mind to run its course.68 The geopolitics of the novel are contrived toward stability, so as to make possible the lying integral to totalitarianism. As Goldstein's book tells it, the world comprises three superstates: Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia. Each of these is ruled by a single party, roughly similar to Oceania's, and the three are engaged in an ineffective, never-ending war. Alliances shift back and forth, but no state can win a firm advantage over any other. In any case, the usual reasons for war no longer exist. There are no smaller states to battle over as proxies, each state has control over areas rich in raw materials, and there are no battles for markets because there are no capitalists. War is good for one thing: "to use up the products of the machine without raising the standard of living." All this implies that industrial and military technique can be allowed to rust, and therefore lying can flourish in Oceania and elsewhere. The military disadvantages of totalitarianism vanish because all states are totalitarian.

The number of states is important for reasons other than stability. If there were only two superstates in the novel, Orwell could not have achieved an effect outlined in 1943; Winston needs to doubt his own memory on a matter so simple as the name of the enemy Oceania is at war with. The 1943 outline ends with, "The fantasmagoric effect produced by: Were we at war with East Asia in 1974? at war with Eurasia in 1978?... Impossibility of detecting similar memories in anyone else." Without the third state, Oceania cannot shift alliances. The bipolar postwar world did not fit the reality of Nineteen Eighty-Four.

**CONCLUSION**

Orwell died complaining that his political views were distorted by reviewers of his last book, Nineteen Eighty-Four. Even some of his friends thought that he had abandoned socialism. This occurred even though nowhere in the journalism and essays of his final days did he repudiate socialism and he reaffirmed his support of the Labour government in essays written as the novel was being written, even if he did have quibbles about one or another of its policies. As a result of his bleak final novel, a conventional interpretation formed, stressing the warping effect of tuberculosis on Orwell's thinking.

Interpretations of Orwell proliferated as different people and groups tried to understand him or to enlist him posthumously in their various and contradictory causes. Pressing Orwell and Nineteen Eighty-Four into service was easy to do for a number of reasons. Some have to do with the vagueness of the anti-utopian novel and with the specific way Orwell's was written. Other reasons have to do with the tortuous history of Orwell's political views. Although he remained a socialist throughout, his party allegiances and his polemical targets shifted over time. These problems can be overcome, however, by critics able and willing to consult Orwell's essays, journalism, and letters.

What mattered more was the evolution of Nineteen Eighty-Four itself. The 1943 outline for the book originally focused on world fascism and the regime that might have been imposed on England if world fascism had prevailed. By the time he wrote the book, between 1946 and 1948, world fascism was neither a threat nor a plausible scenario for a novel. Orwell
traded fascism for communism, while keeping the plot intact. He had a specific idea for an anti-utopian novel, including a strict sexual code, terror, and three world powers with switching alliances. Although the new setting ruled out a critique of capitalism, perhaps he hoped that the changeover would fit his new polemical campaign against pro-communist Labour MPs and his campaign among the Labour Left to stop their attacks on the United States. The book did not fit the battle against the MPs because the tone of the book was too strident, its outlook too bleak, its criticisms too strong. Running interference for the United States was either needless or impossible. Bad as the fit was, Orwell did not abandon his idea for an anti-utopia, a genre he had been concerned with at least as long as he had been a socialist.

The impact of Nineteen Eighty-Four was so overpowering that that the novel overshadowed Orwell's own writings on the subjects of totalitarianism and the totalitarian habit of mind. Orwell's critique of "nationalists" or ideologues was obscure and difficult to follow even in his essays. Once his sample of ideologues was confined to the left wing, the matter became more confusing. More important was Orwell's concern with fascism and totalitarianism, which dated from the Spanish Civil War. However, he did not develop an analytical model of totalitarianism until the middle 1940s, after the novel had been outlined. As a result, aspects of the society depicted in the novel were taken by serious critics to be Orwell's model of totalitarianism, which was conflated with Arendt's or Burnham's and was ultimately ignored.

All of this is not to give a definitive interpretation of a text as complex as Nineteen Eighty-Four. Neither do I want to say where Orwell would have stood politically were he alive today. Maybe he would have adhered to what is left of the Labour Party, maybe not. Two beliefs central to Orwell's political outlook proved to be mistaken: that capitalism was doomed in the near future and that political independence for colonies would largely solve their problems. Had he lived longer, Orwell would somehow have had to address these issues; moreover, he would have had to contend with great personal wealth. Instead, I show what Orwell had in mind when he originally outlined Nineteen Eighty-Four, sketch his political and theoretical positions at the time of his death, and try to account for why the political and analytical lessons of the novel undermined those he was offering in his essays and journalism. The riddle is solved if Orwell thought that his contribution to the anti-utopian genre of literature would not compromise his political beliefs or his analytical views of totalitarianism.

NOTES
3. The original reception in the United States set the anti-communist tone, as the novel was condensed in Reader's Digest and illustrated portions ran in Life. The remarks in the Life companion editorial were not out of the ordinary and went so far as to see the novel as an attack on the welfare state: "Many readers in England will find that his book reinforces a growing suspicion that some of the British Labourites revel in austerity and would love to preserve it... Some of the most dedicated of the proponents of the U.S. welfare state—Henry Wallace being one—have appeared as remote from their fellows as Big Brother." "Thirty-Five Years Hence," Life, July 4, 1949, 18. For a summary of the early reviews, see Crick, George Orwell, 563–65. For a discussion of the use of Nineteen Eighty-Four by the American Right in the 1950s, see John P. Rossi, "America's View of George Orwell," in Kupping, "Nineteen Eighty-Four" to 1984, 194–95.
4. See Anthony Burgess, 1985 (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1978). W. J. West presents a more sophisticated form of this argument in his introduction to the recent George Orwell, Orwell: The War Broadcasts, ed. W. J. West (London: Duckworth, 1985), 60–67. West argues that many of the models for the Ministry of Truth were taken from the BBC, where Orwell worked during World War II. He concludes that the wartime Ministry of Information (MOI) seemed "nontotalitarian" to Orwell, and that Orwell fears "steamed largely from his wartime experience at the hands of the MOI.
5. A recent book by David Smith and Michael Mosher seems to claim Orwell from a pro-Soviet point of view. Orwell for Beginners (London: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1984). The initial hostile critics of the novel were mainly sympathetic to the Soviet Union. They read the novel as cold-war propaganda and an attack on the Soviet Union and therefore on socialism in general. On the other hand, Normal Podhoretz claims that if Orwell were alive today he would be a neo-conservative and would specifically reject the current Labour Party policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament, oppose the nuclear freeze, and the unilateral Western pledge against first use of nuclear weapons. "If Orwell Were Alive Today," Harpers, Jan. 1983, 30–37.
7. For this argument, see Ian Slater, Orwell: The Road to Airstrip One (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 243–44.

11. For the view that Orwell's "androcentrism" or sexism was unusually strong even for his own day and led to the deep pessimism of Nineteen Eighty-Four, see Debra Patai, The Orwell Mystique: A Study in Male Ideology (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), ch. 1. For the view that Orwell's view of women was a misguided attempt to use women and the family to shore up the social structure, see Leslie Tennelle, "I'm Not Literary, Dear: George Orwell on Women and the Family," in The Future of Nineteen Eighty-Four, ed. Ejlcer J. Jansen (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1984), 47–63.

12. For the major changes in Orwell's politics, see Edwin Amenta, "George Orwell's Political Lines" (Unpublished paper, University of Chicago, 1984.)


16. Two volumes of essays published in the wake of Nineteen Eighty-Four are Shooting an Elephant (1950) and England Your England (1953), whose American title was Such, Such Were the Joys. Both of these volumes include essays from various periods of Orwell's political development.

17. In a recent essay, Robert Tucker argues that Orwell was impressed by the sheer success of totalitarian regimes, an argument that Orwell discarded during his later years. "Does Big Brother Really Exist?" in Howe, "1984" Revisited, 89–102.

18. See Smith and Mosher, Orwell for Beginners; and Podhoretz, "If Orwell Were Alive Today." Smith and Mosher need somehow to dismiss all of Orwell's anti-Soviet statements, whereas Podhoretz must ignore Orwell's abhorrence of nuclear weapons.


21. Warburg's report is reprinted in All Authors Are Equal, 103–6. The most elaborate statement of the conventional wisdom is by Isaac Rosenfeld, "Decency and Death," Partisan Review 17, no. 5 (May 1950): 514–18. For a recent reaffirmation, see David Widgery, "Reclaiming Orwell," in "Nineteen Eighty-Four" in 1984: Autonomy, Control, and Communication, ed. Crispin Aubrey and Paul Chilton (London: Comedia Publishing Group, 1983), 21. The other standard "nonpolitical" interpretation of Orwell's pessimism still has its supporters and concerns Orwell's bad experiences at St. Cyprian's, a boarding school, as they were described in "Such, Such Were the Joys," reprinted in Collected Essays, 4: 330–68. This idea began to take hold when that essay was first published in 1953 in the United States, and was first suggested by Stephen Spender, "One Man's Conscience," New Republic (Mar. 16, 1953), 18–19. The perspective is more commonly associated with Anthony West, who pursues this idea at length in a review of Orwell's 1936 novel, Keep the Aspidistra Flying, which was reprinted in 1956. "Hidden Damage," New Yorker, Jan. 28, 1956, 86–92. For a recent reworking of this argument, see Gorman Beauchamp, "From Bingo to Big Brother: Orwell on Power and Sadism," in Jansen, The Future of Nineteen Eighty-Four, 65–86. This line of argument, however, does not take into account Orwell's politics and suggests that Orwell was hopeless since childhood. On the essay "Such, Such Were the Joys," see Crick, George Orwell, 586–89.

22. For the outline and its background, see Crick, George Orwell, 582–85. In addition, Orwell's letters indicate that he planned to write another novel: "Letter to F. J. Warburg" (Dec. 21, 1948), in Collected Essays, 4: 459; and "Letter to Giroux" (Apr. 14, 1949), in Collected Essays, 4: 495.


24. For the outline, see Crick, George Orwell, 582–85. The one other writer who sees Nineteen Eighty-Four as the result of Orwell's reaction to fascism is Alex Comfort, a wartime pacifist and one of Orwell's polemical targets. In his essay, Comfort advances no evidence and offers dubious theories about why Orwell feared fascism. "1939 and 1984: George Orwell and the Vision of Judgment" in On Nineteen Eighty-Four, ed. Peter Stansky (New York and San Francisco: W. H. Freeman & Co., 1983), 15–22. Few initial reviewers saw Nineteen Eighty-Four as applying to fascism. One who did was Golo Mann, the German historian. His 1949 review is reprinted in Meyers, George Orwell, 277–81. For a recent review of futuristic anti-fascist novels, see Andy Croft, "Worlds Without End Foisted upon the Future—Some Antecedents of Nineteen Eighty-Four," in Inside the Myth. Orwell: Views from the Left, ed. Christopher Norris (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1984), 183–216.

Moreover, in a letter asking for a copy of We, Orwell notes that he has been making notes for that "kind of book." "Letter to Gleb Struve" (Feb. 17, 1944), in Collected Essays, 3: 95–96. It seems possible that Orwell borrowed some minor features from Zamyatin. For instance, Orwell's teletypes were not mentioned in the outline and seem to be a technological update of Zamyatin's glass houses.


29. Warburg, All Authors Are Equal, p. 104.


33. "Review" of Bagg My Neighbor by Lionel Fieldsen; Sept. 1943, in Collected Essays, 2: 313. The first remarks concerning Orwell's worries about a compromise peace are the following: "Patriots and Revolutionaries," in The Betrayal of the Left, ed. Victor Gollancz (London; Gollancz, 1941), 238–39; and The Lion and the Unicorn (Feb. 1941), in Collected Essays, 2: 88–90.


35. Nineteen Eighty-Four, p. 11.

36. Nineteen Eighty-Four: The Facsimile, ed. Peter Davison (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984), 30. In the 1947 draft, Winston describes another film in which a black woman is lynched and has a spontaneous abortion; crazed Southern whites then use the fetus as a soccer ball.

37. Davidov, the editor of the facsimile, subscribes to this view ibid., p. 47.

38. China's civil war was not settled until after the novel was written. The novel has Japan as part of Eurasia and not part of Oceania and the whole of the European continent as part of Eurasia and not split among Eurasia and Oceania, as one would expect if the geopolitics conformed to postwar realities. In his postwar essays, Orwell refers to the prospect of "two or three" superstates. "You and the Atom Bomb" (Oct. 19, 1945), in Collected Essays, 4: 8; and "Toward European Unity (July–Aug. 1947), in Collected Essays, 4: 371. When Orwell discusses the existing superpowers, he refers to the United States and the Soviet Union. "Burnham's View of the Contemporary World Struggle" (Mar. 1947), in Collected Essays, 4: 323–26.


43. Toward European Unity (July–Aug. 1947), in Collected Essays, 3: 53–54; and "Writers and Leviathan" (June 1948), in Collected Essays, 4: 412.
A "Social Issue" in American Politics: Reflections on Kristin Luker's Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood

Introduction

THEDA SKOCPOL

WHETHER government should allow women to obtain abortions has been one of the most passionate issues in the domestic politics of the United States during the past two decades. Most political analysts, however, have focused on such subjects as monetary and industrial policies; social insurance and antipoverty programs; the clash of interest groups, classes, and ethnic groups; and voters' calculations of their relative advantages as taxpayers and as recipients of public benefits. The abortion question is awkward for pluralists, students of electoral behavior, neo-Marxists, and rational choice theorists alike, and they have all tended to ignore it.

The politics of abortion casts light on aspects of the modern welfare state that are usually downplayed in the economic theories of contemporary social science. The abortion issue reminds us that welfare states not only distribute benefits and services, they also make zero-sum regulatory decisions about which people may have absolute and utterly contradictory values. Similarly, the abortion issue dramatizes the point—well understood by feminist scholars, but less so by others—that welfare states deal with subjects other than economic growth and employment, class relations and labor control, and insecurities due to the vagaries of markets and the life cycle. The interventions—and abstentions—of welfare states also involve gender identities, family relations, and sexual behavior. Questions of family, gender,