

Uniforms

1984:

In the book “1984 (Nineteen Eighty-Four)” from George Orwell the clothes of the Party members are pictures like blue or black overalls, which are worn by men and women (part 1, chapter 1, p. 4, l. 9). This is the uniform that they wear for the rest of their lives to enforce unity among all of them. This creates the illusion that everyone in the Party is the same. They also desexualize members, helping to reinforce the idea that sex is not for pleasure but for procreation. The outer party members wore blue overalls in contrast to the inner party members who wore black overalls (part 1, chapter 1, p. 13, l. 12). However, the uniforms didn’t work for everyone. The rich men called capitalists wear long black coat which was called a frock coat, and a queer, shiny hat shaped like a stovepipe, which was called a top hat. This was the uniform of the capitalists, and no one else was allowed to wear it. (part 1, chapter 7, p. 84, l. 4 – 6) “Big Brother” is head over everyone else, much like principles, and they forced the “party” to wear a certain thing so they would all believe a certain way. Having these uniforms did make some believe a certain way, but it also made some rebell. Everyone did every single thing the same from dressing, exercising, and many more, this made them “unified” but also not their own person. Even though you could be on your own and do your own things to help out you didn’t get to express your feelings or show individuality. In the novel Winston gets in trouble in the end for expressing his “feelings” towards certain things multiple times throughout his time in prison. Winston was in prison and he was being forced to believe and be like everyone else. Winston wished to be dressed in blue shorts, grey shirt and red neckerchief of the spies (part 1, chapter 5, p. 64, l. 22 – 26). His opinion was that everyone looked ugly in their uniform overalls (part 1, chapter 5, p.69, l. 13 – 14). During the whole novel Winston tried to stick to his own belief and be himself, but at the end of the novel they forced him to be just like everyone else; “He had won the victory over himself. He loved big brother (part 3, chapter 6, p. 342, l. 29). At this moment Winston had lost all of his individuality because he was forced to be like everyone else. (Orwell, 1984)



illustration 1: uniforms 1984

2021:

Masks:

Since March 2020 we live in an extraordinary situation. This is because of the Coronavirus, which led to a worldwide pandemic. The coronavirus is a respiratory illness, which can have a severe course of disease for many people. Many affected people are in hospital because of the virus and there have been numerous deaths around the world. To protect ourselves and the other people, we have to wear face masks in many places. We have to wear masks for example in the mall, at school, at work (in principle we have make home office if this is possible), in the restaurants, in public transport, during sport activities and by the medical institutes. Because of the fact that it is compulsory to wear the mask, it can be compared to the uniforms of 1984. However, they do not take away our individuality and personality as described in the book 1984 from George Orwell.

There are different kind of face masks. When used correctly, hygiene masks primarily protect other persons from infection (external protection). To a certain extent, such masks also have a protective effect for the wearer (self-protection). It depends on which mask you wear.

The hygiene mask (or medical face mask) is generally the most recommended to wear. For the reason that they protect especially other people from infection (external protection). To a certain extent, such masks also have a protective effect for the wearer self (self-protection).

The fabric masks also protects especially other people from infection. However, these masks may not be worn in all places. For example, in a hospital you can not wear them. Several fashion brands produce their very own fabric face masks. There are many different types of face masks such as funny designed masks and masks which show sport club or masks from a specific fashion brand like Zara, Nike, Under Armour, Off white and Reebok.

The respiratory masks (also called FFP2-mask) have been developed for self-protection against aerosols and fine dust during certain types of work. In the medical setting, they are only recommended for certain, particularly risky clinical procedures.

It is important that the mask is worn only once and then thrown away. They can be disposed in normal household waste. A hygiene mask can be worn for up to eight hours. We have to pay attention to the moisture penetration of the mask - the wetter the mask, the lower the protective effect.

In Addition, some people do their own **self-made-mask**. There is no binding quality standard for these masks. This means that the quality and also the protective effect of the masks can vary greatly. Therefore, there is no generally valid statement about their protective effect.

In the year 1984 (how it is described in the Book 1984 from George Orwell) the outer party members wore blue overalls and the inner party members black overalls. This principle does not exist with the masks. Everybody can wear the mask, that he wants to (expect the fabric masks may not be worn for example in the hospital as mentioned above). However, at work, some people have to wear this type of mask, which is required by the employer. Often, employees in clothing stores or general brand stores have to wear a mask with the respective logo in it. Mostly, these are fabric masks, because with them you can easily sew or glue something on it. (admin, 2021)

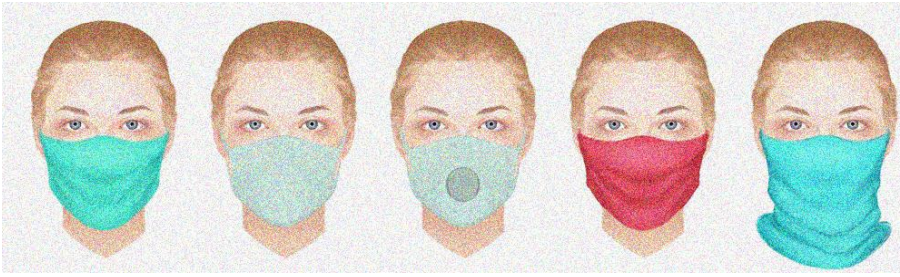


illustration 2: types of masks

Uniforms at work:

Even today, many professions still require the wearing of uniforms. Here are a few examples of professions that still wear a uniform: bank employees, soldiers, supermarket employees, doctors, and so on. The wearing of uniforms is not about to take away the individuality and personality of the employees (same as for the masks), like it was in 1984. Also many sport clubs have their own uniforms. For instance many football clubs have their own football shirt. This is to recognize to which club which player belongs. This can be compared well with the uniforms of 1984. The outer party members wore a blue overall, the inner party member a black overall and the capitalists worn a frock coat and a top hat. Like this way you knew directly who belonged to which party.



illustration 3: uniforms

To sum up here are the differences to 1984 and things which are similar to 1984:

different	similar
In 1984 they had to wear all the same overalls to show that they are alle the same. Nobody was able to do his or her own thing or to express feelings and show individuality. In 2021 the masks or the uniforms in general do not want to show that everybody is the same or that someone is not allowed to show individuality. It is a mark for a club, a profession, a company, etc.	Thanks to the blue (worn by outer party members) and black (worn by inner party members) overalls and the frock coats and top hats (worn by capitalists) you could recognized very well who belonged to which party. This can be well-compared with today (2021). For example by football clubs you can very quickly see who belongs to which team because of the same jerseys or because of the inscription on the jerseys. This is also the case with many professional uniforms.

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