

Freedom & Prohibitions

Introduction

What is freedom? For us, it is the possibility to do whatever you want. To pursue the hobbies you like, to choose a job that fits you, having relationships freely of your choice, to speak your mind and many other things. The only restriction, to do what you want, are the laws and consequences you will have to face. Although it is necessary to have laws for a functioning society, the question we want to ask is, when does a law restrict our freedom too much?

For this IDAF we took our inspiration from George Orwell a famous author, which created a future world how he expected it. It is an awful world, ruled by the Government or how it is called in the book "Big Brother".

1984 freedom and prohibitions

In the novel 1984 there are very strict rules about how the society must behave. They are being called rules because: "In fact, there are no official laws anymore. So, nothing was illegal but if it were detected it was certain that it would be punished by death." (Page 9, lines 5-7)

One of the rules for example, is that any kind of intimate relationships are forbidden. (Page 74, lines 28-30, Chapter 6) Winston the protagonist explained it like this; that Marriages were permitted, but they had to be officially approved and were to be undertaken for the sole purpose of begetting children who would grow up to be responsible Party members. Permission would be denied if the couple showed any signs of being physically attracted to each other. (Page 75, lines 21-28, Chapter 6) Winston and Julia violated this rule, since they are falling in love with each other.

Even thinking in opposition to the regime is a treacherous offence. If a different opinion than which the government is dictating is exposed, the person will be captured by the thought police and is going to be tortured. The Thought Police (Thinkpol) are the secret police of the superstate Oceania, who discover and punish thoughtcrime, personal and political thoughts unapproved by the government. Because it is impossible to speak your mind freely, without getting yourself in danger, Winston owns secretly a diary in which he writes down his thoughts. This is a very dangerous act, but it helps Winston to keep sane. (Page 22, lines 7-13)

There were also strict rules about what clothes you could wear. The uniform of the Party are blue overalls that are worn by men and women alike. The overalls are worn by both inner Party members, like O'Brien, and outer Party members, such as Julia and Winston.

The overalls have a number of purposes. Because both the very powerful and privileged inner Party members and the oppressed outer Party members wear the same uniform, this creates the illusion that everyone in the Party is the same. In fact, nothing could be further from the case: O'Brien lives at a level of luxury almost incomprehensible to people like Julia and Winston.

Second, the overalls are ugly, helping to dehumanize Party members. They also desexualize Party members, helping to reinforce the idea that sex is not for pleasure but for procreation.

A important topic in the novel is the monitoring through telescreens. Telescreens are interactive screens which are everywhere, particularly in people's homes. They are used by the state to actively spy on people and monitoring their acts and behaviour, which are big violations of personal freedom. It was not allowed to do anything about them. This is a way for the government to control the people and punish their behaviour.

If disobeying people get caught, they get in prison, get punished as long until they forget their own personality, their insecurities and their critical thinking. "The type of torture the Party employs is so intense that the people subjected to it are ready to betray anything and anyone in order to avoid it." Others, will just disappear, or how it is called in the novel: "vaporized". (329 line 23- 28)

Situation today

Fortunately, our current situation is not as bad as Orwell predicted it. In Switzerland are as well laws, which are reasonable and are not concerning our personality. We can think, say and wear whatever we want.

Since the end of the year 2019 the global situation changed drastically, because of the ongoing Virus COVID19. In Switzerland, a democratic country, the government alone gave orders and enacted laws with the help of the emergency law. For example, there were laws in terms of; numbers of people in groups, mask requirement, short work, home office, ban of events and so on. In contrast to the novel 1984, we know the motivation behind these laws and are able to comprehend them.

Today we do not really know how safe a mobile phone is, it can track us and the data of us will be used without us knowing, many companies use our data for free to gain money. A lot about this topic is still very unclear, because we do not really know how much we are controlled by our smart phones. And this is already a violation of our personal freedom.

A lot of citizens in Switzerland see monitoring as a way to keep safe. For example on the 13 of June, the Swiss electorate will vote on a new anti-terror law. This law is causing controversy beyond the country's borders. Some see it as better protection for the population, others as a threat to personal rights.

Specifically, the law allows the Federal Office of Police (Fedpol) to take a series of measures against so-called dangerous persons who are suspected of posing a threat. This also applies if "there is insufficient evidence to initiate criminal proceedings".

We think this is a very dangerous law because it gives the Federal Office of Police enormous power over people when they can arrest someone even without enough evidence. It is also a restriction on our personal freedom and an intrusion on our private rights. But a lot of people agree with that, because of safety reasons.

We may be supervised by the government, but we do not getting punished for our personal decisions and style of life.

First of all, we want to give a short overview, so that you can imagine how it will look and be like in 2084.

In our future the world has become more populated, and cities will be enlarged. The transport systems will include Trains and metros but improved to be able to move with rails high up in the air, to transport people from one skyscraper to another without causing traffic in streets. In general, the world will be in peace (no world or atomic wars) and the world has found a way to compensate the emissions of the Greenhouse effect by new technologies. So, this is no longer a major problem. Most of the people go still to work and their all day live is like ours now.

Now we will take a closer look at the freedom we will have and what will be prohibited.

The overall monitoring has increased, but the democracy of Switzerland had agreed, that it would be restricted to only public places for safety reasons. Unlike in 1984 we will not be tracked by a telescreen or something similar at home. Mobile phones, which were a critical topic, will be much more protected than now concerning data protection. Because of our ability to start initiatives and be a part of the politics, we will have stronger laws concerning the use of data from people.

With the technology of bitcoins, our data is protected from enterprises which sold our data. Also they conceal our expenditure.

New laws are responsible for equal rights will be between man, women and any other genders in Switzerland. Today equal rights between different genders are not achieved, there is still a lot to do. Also privileges between different skin colours are a problem today which are no longer existing in 2084.

The general laws will be like today in Switzerland.

The democratic system of Switzerland will be used in most countries because it is one of the best options to involve the people. Sadly, not every country leader has the same intentions, Russia, Somalia and China will have an increased lack of privacy and freedom. Which reminds us strong to 1984. They are permanently tracked by the government abusing their mobile phones. The dictators lead a reign of terror.

The democratic Countries are still trying to find a solution with these countries, without starting a war.