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Could Current Technology be used for Totalitarian Control of One's Thoughts and Actions as  
Done in the Novel 1984?

Current technologies that we have today have the same function as the technologies in the novel *1984*. Our current technologies are more advanced and have enhanced the features of technologies from *1984*. Many features that are added in the technologies not only make lives much easier, but can increase the risk of totalitarian control of one's thoughts and actions as done in *1984* by those who use those features for power.

One of the inventions mentioned in *1984* would be the helicopter. The basics of the helicopter is being able to hover at a long height and fly very quickly to a destination to which the police used the helicopter for a malicious purpose. That would be snooping into people's business from a faraway distance and the police will do any actions it can take to spy on citizens. Examples are looking through windows of people's houses and spinning around in circles of the area police's choosing to patrol for hours (Orwell 90). This type of spying can also apply to today's situation but at least for a good cause as it is to catch criminals to prevent any more harm to society.

Another technology that was used for totalitarian control in *1984* is telescreen or in short, TV. On one end of the TV, or the screen part, it transmits a real-time or recorded video for the citizens of Oceania to watch to gain information of what is happening around in the area that the people are in. Then, on the other end of the TV, there is also a screen for the totalitarian

government to watch, monitoring every citizen's behavior for the smallest detail as descriptive as possible to make the citizens look like a criminal. It can go up to the person's reflexive motion, face expression, and thoughtcrime (Part 1 Chapter 1 Page 90). Both sides have cameras and microphones to capture what is said or what actions have been done monitoring a citizen's behavior.

Speakwrite and Microphone in *1984* is used to record documents and is also used as evidence as a trade-off. The purpose of speakwrite pairing with microphones is to rewrite history to be able to control the population. Orwell used the speakwrite to transcript Big Brother's speech to possibly make Big Brother think that an action that needs to be done is already done (Orwell 213). By Orwell knowing what Big Brother is and the goal, Orwell uses the speakwrite to transcript Big Brother's plan to seem done. In another word, Orwell saw Big Brother's plans as immoral and took advantage of technology to control Big Brother's action.

Today, a technology that can be used for surveillance and can have potential for bad usage is a drone; the helicopter can still be used to check on an area for a long period of time too, but the rotor spinning is very loud making the runaway know the whereabouts of the helicopter, the drone is way more quieter if the police want to take a stealth approach to monitor. Drones are small and compact, but make a very big impact because the bottom area or front of the drone can be modified by attaching a powerful camera and optionally a flashlight that is able to pick up a live feed and zoom in from a far away distance to spy on someone (Dhruv). The drone is so tiny and accelerating that people won't even notice the drone nearby because the drone is hovering right above. Hypothetically, the drone can do much worse things such as being used as a plantar device when invading homes.

Recently, telescreens are becoming more invasive than ever with many advanced-like features such as advanced intelligence “AI”, social media or cloud storage. Recent research says that Meta smart glasses can be paired with an invasive search engine called PimEyes to dox anyone in a few seconds, saving a huge chunk of time from searching on the internet for an answer (Ashley). When publishing a person's face online by any method such as uploading a video to a social media platform, PimEyes is able to capture, scan, and redirect a link to the person who is trying to invade someone’s privacy. The student who conducted the research says to opt out of PimEyes for privacy protection. In extension, the Meta smart glasses look like regular glasses which allows the doxxer to get away easily and near impossible to identify who they are. In fact, the meta smart glasses can be indistinguishable from the rest when it is recording with the red dot showing up in front of the lens.

Mobile phones and audio devices and cameras that have an input feature are often overlooked in today’s society. Without realizing, someone can record a conversation with a device that has an audio recording feature and turn it in as evidence. Mobile phones replace physical microphone and speakwrite with the digital version and with much simpler design inspired by an invention that can be used for a much easier task. With devices, if anyone has access to a person’s device such as password or picture of the face (assuming the person registered for face password), the person who is eavesdropping on personal business can learn stuff to use against that person just by looking at the history or gallery of that person's life. An age old rumor that is still going on is when the phone is not powered off, the phone picks up what a person is saying and sells what is spoken to marketers. That is the reason why someone keeps seeing advertisements displayed on the internet convenient to them without realizing it. In an article “Does Your Phone Listens to You?”, an image shows that 70% of people who own a

phone noticed that the advertisement matched what they needed. An upgrade to speakwrite is voice recognition where an app can recognize the voice of the person; how it sounds, the intensity of the vibration, and more to list creating an identity profile about the person. Some known apps that recognize voices are Alexa and Google Assistant.

All in all, the technologies that we use and see every day have a high potential for totalitarian control of one's thought and action just like *1984*. It doesn't have to be the big government keeping an eye on anyone like Big Brother from *1984*, but anyone else can also spy on the chosen person. Although, being spied on by a business anyone else doesn't need to know about can be inevitable, actions can be taken to increase privacy. Without privacy, people are able to control a person that can limit the freedom of speech they have. As a matter of fact, anyone who doesn't realize that privacy is a huge concern should act now as it's better late than never. There are many tools available online that can prevent a person's information from being tracked and monitored, but should be careful with registering and subscribing on the internet as any web can sell email to marketers too. In final words, be careful what is posted online and what trustworthy person to share personal information with because there can be a time where all of those actions backtrack for harm rather than good.

## Sources

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