

**“HE WHO CONTROLS THE PAST CONTROLS THE FUTURE. HE WHO CONTROLS THE PRESENT CONTROLS THE PAST.”**

This quote from George Orwell’s *1984* highlights the governing Party’s technique of altering history to sustain psychological submission of its citizens. Employees of the Records Department within the Ministry of Truth such as the antagonist Winston Smith, contribute to this manipulation of the masses by rewriting public text which no longer aligns with the **Party’s ideals**. The technique is successful conditional to the belief that the past forms a blueprint of future decisions. If the past is treated as a foundation to which to learn to from and reflect upon, then the future is a pre-calculated outcome. It is known that people make future decisions based on current beliefs which are formed by their understanding of the past. In turn, if the present is being controlled, future choices can be controlled. The Party controls the perception of the past by creating one which is hellish, thus predetermining that the citizens will act in accordance to the regulations set on them by the Party, as Party propaganda advocates for a more prosperous future. By controlling the past, the credibility of the present is enhanced as current events are justified. If chocolate rations are restricted, as per the text, but history states that rations were increased, then people are compelled to support the government, in belief that it has raised the standard of living. By eradicating a past which is more affluent than the present, the people of Oceania are compelled to believe that progress is being made. The Party manifests a past which suits itself. It can do so as it is the omniscient power over all other characters in the text. Its omnipotence derived partly from its control of history, as the future direction of the Party was deliberately guided. The quote also implies a questioning of reality. If powerful figures alter history, and it no longer can objectively be viewed, then is reality *real*? The governing body of *1984* harnesses this contradiction of fiction simultaneously being non-fiction through the concept of *doublethink*. The conscious act of doublethink supports the mental oppression of the citizens. They know that chocolate rations have been limited, whilst also believing that rations are increasing, as the Party says so. The Party maintains psychological dominance over its people through the cyclic act of rewriting the past, and the use of doublethink.