

1984: Worse Than Expected?

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George Bradford (David Watson)

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Somehow, the giant organizations which produce and disseminate all of this junk employ our very fear of technology to further its “unprecedented control” over our lives. The contemporary worship of this tremendous power arises from our actual powerlessness in the face of it, and the corporate-conjured image of our empowerment by technology corresponds directly to technology’s disabling suppression of human action. “Taking control with technology” adds up to our complete surrender to it—its taking control of us.

As frightening as is the world pictured by Orwell, it ultimately falls short of the reality. The equipment and techniques employed by the totalitarian state in his novel are crude compared to the instruments available in today’s police agencies, prison control units, and data banks...And just to make crystal clear the uncanny relationship between literary intuition and reality, on New Year’s Day, 1984, the newspapers reported “a major expansion” by the FBI of a nationalized computerized file on people thought to be potential lawbreakers.

Our only power lies in our ability to renew a human discourse based on community, solidarity, and reciprocity; destroying the monopoly of speech enjoyed by the apparatus—destroying the universal deference to machine, experts, and information. Such a response demands not only the abolition of politics and the economy, but the mass media and mass production system as well

If we cannot abolish the code by recreating culture and meaning autonomously, we will suffer the inevitable outcome, be it machine-induced cataclysm or mutilation beyond recognition of the human spirit:: The practical result is the same; it’s the Machine or us.

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