

From Big Brother to the Digital Panopticon: Media, Surveillance, and Power in Orwell's *1984*

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Abstract

This paper examines the continued relevance of George Orwell's *1984* by analyzing how contemporary digital technologies operate as tools of social and political control. Governments, corporations, and online platforms increasingly employ surveillance systems to monitor and influence individual behavior, reflecting the totalitarian mechanisms depicted in Oceania. Through close textual analysis, the study explores Orwell's representation of truth manipulation and linguistic control through Newspeak, relating these strategies to modern practices such as algorithmic governance and data surveillance. Drawing on Michel Foucault's theories of power and panopticism, the research explores how technological mediation reshapes privacy, autonomy, and social relations. The findings suggest that digital media normalize a culture of constant observation and subtle control. By situating Orwell's vision within a Foucauldian framework, the paper contributes to media studies and calls for a critical reassessment of data ethics and digital freedom.

Keywords: George Orwell, surveillance, media power, digital culture, Michel Foucault, totalitarianism, data manipulation, Newspeak

1. Introduction

History has seen many eras marked by absolute authority and state dominance. George Orwell's *1984* (1949) stands as one of the most powerful literary reflections and enduring warnings against such oppressive forces that threaten individual freedom and human identity. More than seventy years after its publication, Orwell's vision of Oceania, where an all-powerful Party governs under the symbolic figure of Big Brother, stays strikingly relevant. In many respects, elements of the Orwellian condition resonate with contemporary society, such as digital surveillance, algorithmic governance, and media manipulation increasingly shape everyday life.

The rapid expansion of online applications, social media platforms, and data-processing systems poses significant challenges to individual privacy, state security, and corporate confidentiality. These developments parallel the institutional mechanisms of control in Orwell's Oceania, where surveillance is normalized and authority permeates daily existence. As digital communication evolves, language and symbolic systems acquire new persuasive functions within technologically mediated environments. Empirical research shows that although Millennials and Generation Z show high levels of technological fluency, they are also particularly exposed to algorithmic filtering, curated information ecosystems, and misinformation flows (Pariser, 2011; Tufekci, 2017; Zuboff, 2019). Such mediated environments may shape perception and belief formation in subtle but consequential ways.

Several scholars (Morgan, 2013; Keeble, 2020) emphasize that Orwell articulated a profound moral vision centered on truth and freedom, noting that journalism and digital communication continue to oscillate between transparency and propaganda. While substantial research has examined Orwell's critique of totalitarianism, comparatively fewer studies have engaged with his work through Michel Foucault's concept of panopticism, particularly the idea that surveillance fosters self-discipline and conformity.

In *Discipline and Punish* (1977), Foucault conceptualizes surveillance as a productive force that generates obedience within regulated systems rather than merely repressing individuals. This dynamic is vividly illustrated in *1984*, where the Party's pervasive monitoring and psychological conditioning cultivate internalized control among citizens. Building on Foucault's framework, later scholars (Ilgin Kizilgunesler, 2018) argue that surveillance works as a long-term process of training, shaped and intensified by technological development. These perspectives provide a critical foundation for re-examining Orwell's dystopia within contemporary surveillance societies.

Against this theoretical background, the present paper sets up a critical connection between Orwell's dystopian vision and

Foucault's notion of disciplinary power, examining how digital technologies and infrastructures reshape social perception and contribute to the emergence of a contemporary panoptic order. It further engages with recent scholarship (Yuvan, 2024; McBeath, 2017) to situate Orwell's insights within evolving configurations of media power and surveillance.

Thus, this study pursues two primary objectives:

1. To analyze the concepts of surveillance, power, and social discipline across literary and digital spaces through the lens of *1984* and Foucault's theory of panopticism.
2. To investigate linguistic distortion, historical revisionism, data control, and algorithmic governance as contemporary manifestations of authoritarian tendencies.

These aims are achieved through a critical review of relevant scholarship and a close reading of *1984*, a novel that continues to illuminate the ethical, psychological, and linguistic dilemmas of digital modernity.

2. Theoretical Framework

The literature reviewed in this study provides a theoretical foundation that bridges classical and contemporary understandings of surveillance, discipline, and power. The core framework is grounded in Michel Foucault's concept of panopticism, developed in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977). Foucault's model offers a critical lens for understanding how states and institutions exercise social control through surveillance. His theory draws on Bentham's (2009) architectural design of the Panopticon, a circular prison in which inmates are always potentially observable by an unseen guard.

For Foucault, however, the Panopticon is not merely an architectural design but a model of "disciplinary power," defined as a form of power that produces docile and self-regulating subjects through normalization, internalization, and continuous visibility. Power functions most effectively when it is internalized; individuals begin to monitor and correct themselves even in the absence of direct coercion. Discipline, in this sense, does not simply control bodies—it organizes space, time, behavior, and thought in ways that render individuals predictable, measurable, and governable (Foucault, 1977). Thus, panopticism signifies not merely constant observation but a psychological and social condition that produces compliance by shaping subjectivity itself.

In this study, Foucault's framework is applied to analyze the Party's mechanisms of domination in *1984*. The telescreens, the Thought Police, and the slogan "Big Brother is watching you" foster self-surveillance and self-censorship, reinforcing the Party's authority. Foucault (1977) argues that power is both oppressive and productive, shaping identities, desires, and behaviors so that submission appears natural. This dynamic is exemplified in Winston Smith's gradual capitulation, illustrating how fear, linguistic manipulation, and distorted truth blur the boundary between observer and observed.

In contemporary contexts, Foucault's model evolves into what scholars describe as digital or algorithmic panopticism. Researchers (Kizilgunesler, 2018; Lyon, 2018; Zuboff, 2019; Andrejevic, 2019) contend that surveillance now extends beyond physical observation to data analytics, metadata tracking, and predictive algorithms. Here, disciplinary power runs not through confinement within physical walls but through systems of quantification, ranking, profiling, and behavioral prediction. Digital infrastructures encourage users to self-optimize, self-brand, and conform to algorithmic norms of visibility and engagement.

The contemporary digital panopticon does not confine bodies within architectural spaces; rather, it constructs a continuous web of connectivity in which interactions are recorded, commercialized, and regulated, often by global technology corporations such as Google, X (Twitter), ByteDance, Microsoft, Alibaba, Amazon, and Meta. Importantly, this structure exemplifies disciplinary power because it produces subjects who voluntarily participate in their own visibility, internalize performance metrics (likes, shares, followers), and regulate their behavior according to platform expectations. Surveillance thus becomes normalized and embedded in everyday digital practice.

By synthesizing Foucauldian disciplinary power with Orwell's representation of totalitarian control, this framework situates *1984* within a continuum that spans Bentham's Panopticon and contemporary algorithmic surveillance. The crucial link between classical and digital panopticism lies in the production of self-disciplining subjects: in both contexts, individuals modify conduct in anticipation of being seen. This conceptual integration clarifies how technology, language, and ideology converge to produce compliant digital subjects, forming the analytical basis for the study's methodology and subsequent discussion.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, interpretive research design grounded in close textual analysis and critical theory. Its primary methodological innovation lies in the systematic integration of Michel Foucault's concept of disciplinary power as an analytical layer through which parallels between *1984* and contemporary digital surveillance are reassessed. Rather than merely drawing thematic similarities, the study operationalizes Foucauldian panopticism as a working analytical framework for examining how surveillance produces subjectivity, normalizes behavior, and internalizes control.

The methodology proceeds in three stages. The first stage consists of a close reading of *1984*, focusing on key motifs—Newspeak, the Thought Police, telescreens, and Big Brother, to identify representations of surveillance,

linguistic control, and self-regulation. These elements are interpreted through Foucault's (1977) definition of disciplinary power as a productive mechanism that forms "docile bodies" through visibility, normalization, and internalized monitoring. In this study, disciplinary power is understood as the process by which individuals become self-regulating subjects in anticipation of being observed.

The second stage involves theoretical mapping. Foucauldian concepts, panopticism, normalization, governmentality, and productive power, are explicitly applied to both Orwell's fictional regime and contemporary digital infrastructures. This step constitutes the novelty of the study, as it moves beyond descriptive parallelism and demonstrates structurally how algorithmic governance, data profiling, engagement metrics, and platform visibility function as contemporary disciplinary mechanisms.

Importantly, this study does not treat *1984* as empirical evidence of present-day realities but as a heuristic and interpretive lens, a literary framework for critically interrogating contemporary surveillance cultures. This approach follows established practices in cultural and media studies, where literary texts are employed as diagnostic tools for socio-political formations (McBeath, 2017; Lyon, 2018). However, the study supports a methodological caveat: it does not equate Orwell's totalitarian regime with contemporary liberal-democratic systems but instead analyzes structural continuities in techniques of power while acknowledging historical differences.

The third stage contextualizes the findings within contemporary scholarship on surveillance capitalism, algorithmic governance, and digital subject formation (Zuboff, 2019; Andrejevic, 2019). Through this layered analytical procedure, textual analysis, Foucauldian theoretical application, and contemporary contextualization, the study shows how *1984* functions both as a literary work and as a critical framework for examining the evolving interrelationship between surveillance, media power, and digital subjects in the twenty-first century.

4. Analysis and Discussion

This section advances the central analytical objective of the study: to examine how Orwell's symbolic representations of control in *1984* may be interpreted through Michel Foucault's theory of disciplinary power and cautiously related to contemporary digital surveillance practices. To address earlier concerns regarding structure and scope, the discussion goes ahead according to a clearly defined analytical hierarchy derived from Foucault's framework, namely, discourse (language regulation), visibility (surveillance and observation), and subject formation (internalized compliance). This progression reflects Foucault's (1977) argument that modern power works through normalization, internalization, and the production of self-regulating subjects rather than through overt repression alone.

Although written in the mid-twentieth century, Orwell's novel remains a critical reflection on authoritarian power, ideological manipulation, and the erosion of individual autonomy. However, this analysis does not equate Orwell's totalitarian regime directly with contemporary democratic societies. Instead, it identifies structural parallels in techniques of power, particularly those that function through discursive regulation, continuous visibility, and participatory compliance. Drawing on Foucault's (1977) understanding of surveillance as a productive technology of power, this section interprets *1984* as a literary dramatization of panoptic discipline. In the novel, surveillance runs not merely as physical monitoring but as a psychological mechanism that produces conformity through internalization. Contemporary scholarship (Zuboff, 2019) similarly proves that digital infrastructures transform personal data into instruments of behavioral regulation and predictive governance.

So, the first subsection examines discursive discipline through the symbol of Newspeak, thereby establishing the foundational mechanism of linguistic normalization before moving to visibility and subject formation in subsequent sections.

4.1 Newspeak and Linguistic Discipline

In *1984*, the relationship between discourse, power, and surveillance is structurally embedded in the regime's manipulation of language. Rather than functioning solely as a tool of censorship, Newspeak operates as a disciplinary mechanism that restructures the field of possible thought. By systematically reducing vocabulary and eliminating semantic nuance, the Party seeks to render "thoughtcrime" linguistically impossible. The restriction of language thus becomes a strategy not only of suppression but of cognitive regulation.

As Youvan (2024) and Harsted (2023) observe, Newspeak represents a form of epistemic control that narrows interpretive possibilities and diminishes critical reflection. Ferrari (2020) similarly argues that linguistic minimalism constitutes a political act, as control over language shapes collective memory and perception. From a Foucauldian perspective, this process exemplifies disciplinary power at the level of discourse: power regulates what can be articulated, remembered, and imagined, thereby shaping subjectivity itself (Foucault, 1977). Discipline, in this sense, is productive—it forms compliant subjects by structuring the limits of intelligibility rather than by prohibiting speech outright.

This interpretation allows for a cautious comparison with contemporary digital environments. The study does not claim that digital communication reproduces Newspeak in a literal sense; instead, it identifies structural similarities in mechanisms of discursive prioritization and visibility. Fairclough (2015) contends that capitalist societies commodify

discourse, privileging dominant ideological frames in everyday communication. In digital contexts, this process is intensified through algorithmic curation and data-driven personalization.

Pariser (2011) warns that personalization algorithms create “filter bubbles,” restricting exposure to diverse perspectives. Morozov (2011) notes that digital platforms collect behavioral data to tailor content and advertising flows, while Keeble (2020) highlights ongoing tensions between journalism, propaganda, and truth production in contemporary media systems. From a Foucauldian standpoint, such algorithmic filtering represents a form of discursive discipline: speech is not silenced directly but organized hierarchically through ranking, amplification, and invisibilization.

Thus, while overt state censorship may be less prominent in many contemporary societies, the regulatory logic of normalization persists. In both Orwell’s fictional regime and contemporary algorithmic infrastructures, power runs by structuring the horizon of what appears credible, visible, and meaningful. The relevance of Newspeak therefore lies not in direct equivalence but in its conceptual illustration of how language becomes a medium through which disciplinary power shapes cognition and collective memory.

4.2 Big Brother and the Digital Panopticon

In *1984*, Big Brother functions as more than a symbol of authoritarian authority; he represents the internalization of surveillance as a mechanism of disciplinary power. His omnipresent gaze does not merely observe bodies but produces self-regulating subjects who anticipate observation and adjust their behavior accordingly. This dynamic corresponds directly to Foucault’s (1977) conception of panopticism, in which visibility becomes a technology of power. Through continuous observability, individuals internalize the gaze and discipline themselves without the constant need for physical enforcement.

From a Foucauldian perspective, the significance of Big Brother lies not in centralized tyranny alone but in the production of normalized conduct through internalized surveillance. Discipline operates through the anticipation of being seen. In this sense, the Party’s power in *1984* exemplifies governmentality—power exercised through subtle regulation of conduct rather than through explicit coercion.

In contemporary digital environments, this mechanism has been technologically reconfigured. Morgan (2018) describes the current condition as “inverted totalitarianism,” wherein democratic discourse coexists with opaque systems of technological regulation. Individuals voluntarily exchange personal data for convenience and connectivity, thereby participating in their own monitoring. Lyon (2018) further argues that contemporary surveillance operates simultaneously as a panopticon (the few monitoring the many) and a synopticon (the many observing the few), particularly within social media environments where users are both spectators and the observed.

Andrejevic (2019) emphasizes that algorithmic governance depends upon voluntary data production, while Couldry and Mejias (2019) conceptualize this process as “data colonialism,” in which digital infrastructures systematically extract and monetize human experience. Zuboff (2019) introduces the concept of “instrumentarian power,” referring to behavioral modification achieved through predictive analytics and personalization rather than overt repression.

The connection to Foucauldian discipline becomes clearer when we consider that digital platforms normalize visibility, quantify behavior through metrics (likes, shares, engagement rates), and encourage users to self-optimize according to algorithmic expectations. In this way, contemporary surveillance does not merely control individuals; it shapes conduct, preferences, and self-presentation through continuous evaluation.

Thus, the contemporary “Big Brother” should not be understood as a singular authoritarian figure but as a diffuse network of algorithms, data flows, and infrastructural systems that monitor, predict, and commodify human activity. The digital panopticon extends Foucauldian disciplinary power into algorithmic environments, where visibility functions as a mechanism of normalization and self-regulation rather than direct coercion.

Harsted (2023) claims that predictive systems gradually reduce resistance to manipulation by making behavioral guidance appear natural and inevitable. McBeath (2017) reaffirms Orwell’s relevance in explaining the psychology of self-surveillance, while Ressa (2022) warns that technologically amplified misinformation may foster authoritarian tendencies.

Importantly, this comparison does not suggest that contemporary digital societies replicate Orwell’s totalitarian regime. Rather, it demonstrates how similar disciplinary mechanisms, visibility, normalization, and internalized compliance, operate within different political and technological contexts. In both cases, power proves most effective when it is internalized by the governed themselves, thus reinforcing Foucault’s (1977) central insight.

4.3 Centralized Surveillance and Networked Participation

To further clarify the transformation of disciplinary power, it is useful to contrast the centralized surveillance structure of Orwell’s Oceania with the networked participatory model characteristic of digital societies. In *1984*, authority is hierarchically consolidated within the Party. Surveillance runs vertically, emanating from a centralized source. Every domestic and public space fall under the gaze of Big Brother, erasing distinctions between private and public life. Discipline is imposed through coercion, indoctrination, and continuous monitoring within a rigid institutional framework.

In contrast, contemporary surveillance appears decentralized and participatory. Han (2017) argues that modern individuals frequently engage in voluntary self-exposure, rendering overt coercion unnecessary. Galloway (2006) describes this as “distributed control,” in which users actively contribute to their own visibility through digital interaction. Social media platforms, location-tracking technologies, and data-sharing applications generate extensive repositories of behavioral data that track and predict activity.

This transformation aligns with Deleuze’s (1992) concept of the “Societies of Control,” where regulation runs through continuous networks rather than enclosed institutional spaces. However, the apparent decentralization of surveillance does not eliminate hierarchical power structures. Sahu and Sahu (2024) caution that participatory surveillance is still structurally governed by algorithmic systems owned and managed by corporate and state actors.

From a Foucauldian standpoint, this shift does not mark the disappearance of discipline but its mutation. In centralized regimes, discipline is visible and vertically imposed. In networked digital environments, discipline becomes horizontal, diffused, and embedded in everyday practices of participation. Individuals willingly conform to platform norms, visibility standards, and algorithmic metrics, thereby internalizing regulation.

Consequently, the transition from centralized authoritarian surveillance to networked digital monitoring does not signify emancipation. Rather, it reconfigures domination into subtler forms sustained by voluntary engagement and normalized connectivity. Surveillance becomes more pervasive precisely because it is experienced as convenience, participation, or self-expression.

This transformation confirms the broader argument of this study: disciplinary power evolves rather than disappears. While Orwell dramatizes centralized authoritarian surveillance, contemporary digital infrastructures exemplify its networked, participatory, and algorithmically mediated form.

4.4 Surveillance, Selfhood, and Truth Manipulation

Foucault (1977) argues that surveillance does not merely observe individuals but actively produces them, shaping subjectivity through disciplinary mechanisms. Disciplinary power functions by organizing visibility in such a way that individuals internalize normative expectations and regulate themselves accordingly. This theoretical insight finds a literary dramatization in *1984*, where Winston Smith’s gradual psychological collapse illustrates how continuous surveillance erodes autonomous selfhood. Winston’s transformation does not occur solely through physical coercion but through sustained exposure to ideological conditioning, forced confession, and the manipulation of truth, mechanisms that reconstitute identity itself.

Importantly, this study does not treat Orwell’s fictional regime as directly equivalent to contemporary digital societies. Rather, it interprets Winston’s trajectory as a literary model of how surveillance may function as a formative force, restructuring consciousness and producing compliant subjects. In contemporary digital environments, related, though structurally distinct dynamics may be observed. Social media platforms simultaneously encourage individual expression and reinforce conformity through visibility metrics, algorithmic evaluation, and reputational systems. Bauman and Lyon (2013) describe this condition as “liquid surveillance,” wherein transparency becomes socially valorized and privacy becomes commodified.

Identity in digital culture is often mediated through quantification—likes, shares, followers, engagement scores, thereby aligning self-presentation with algorithmic norms. From a Foucauldian standpoint, this is a mutation of disciplinary power: individuals become both subjects and instruments of surveillance, participating in their own evaluation. However, caution is necessary. Galloway (2006) emphasizes that contemporary digital control differs from totalitarian coercion in that it operates through participation rather than overt repression. Sharma (2023) similarly argues that perceived digital freedom may conceal deeper systems of behavioral conditioning, in which autonomy is voluntarily exchanged for connectivity and visibility.

Orwell’s concept of doublethink, defined as the capacity to hold contradictory beliefs simultaneously, resonates in contemporary information ecosystems characterized by fragmented realities. Han (2017) states that constant online presence has become equated with social existence, while absence risks marginalization. Harsin (2020) further notes that algorithmic curation blurs distinctions between fact and opinion, producing emotionally reinforced interpretive communities.

In Foucauldian terms, this does not imply that truth disappears; rather, it demonstrates that truth functions as a discursive formation sustained through power relations. In both Oceania and digitally mediated societies, control over the circulation and prioritization of information influences the construction of reality. The comparison, therefore, underscores not historical equivalence but structural continuity in how surveillance, discourse, and power converge to shape subjectivity.

4.5 Resistance, Critical Consciousness, and the Digital Reconfiguration of Power

Despite the pervasive surveillance depicted in *1984* and the normalization of digital monitoring in contemporary societies, the possibility of resistance is still theoretically central. Cole (2022) interprets *1984* not solely as a dystopian narrative but as a morally generative text that invites ethical reflection and collective imagination. Similarly, Foucault (1980) claims that power is never absolute; where power operates, resistance inevitably emerges. For Foucault, resistance begins with critical awareness—the recognition that disciplinary mechanisms function through normalization and internalization rather than solely through force.

In digital contexts, emerging critiques of data extraction, intrusive surveillance, and algorithmic opacity reflect ongoing

renegotiations of power. Tufekci (2017) and Morozov (2013) argue that digital technologies embedded in control structures may also enable exposure of institutional power and amplify marginalized voices. Yet, Orwell's caution remains instructive: resistance working within dominant infrastructures risks co-optation. Digital activism may inadvertently reproduce surveillance logic when dissent becomes measurable through engagement metrics, monetized visibility, and platform governance.

The enduring relevance of *1984* therefore lies not only in its dystopian warning but in its call for critical literacy regarding the interdependence of language, technology, and ideology. Foucault (1980) emphasizes that the first act of resistance is interpretive, to recognize how surveillance becomes normalized and how subjects internalize regulatory expectations.

The synthesis of Orwell's literary insight and Foucauldian theory reveals a paradox of modernity: technological advancement expands communicative possibilities while simultaneously intensifying subtle mechanisms of regulation. Whereas Orwell's regime secured compliance through fear and coercion, contemporary digital systems often cultivate compliance through participation, personalization, and affective engagement. The shift from architectural confinement to algorithmic visibility does not invalidate Orwell's vision; rather, it rearticulates it within technologically mediated environments.

The preceding analysis shows that *1984* and Foucault's panopticism converge in illuminating how surveillance, discourse, and power shape subjectivity. From Newspeak and Big Brother to data capitalism and algorithmic governance (Zuboff, 2019; Lyon, 2018), the logic of discipline persists in transformed configurations. Surveillance today is often less visibly coercive yet more deeply internalized, operating through consent, connectivity, and digital participation.

Thus, *1984* functions not as a literal prediction but as a critical heuristic for examining the ethical and political implications of contemporary surveillance cultures. By situating Orwell within a Foucauldian framework, this study underscores the necessity of cultivating critical consciousness as a condition for resisting the normalization of digital discipline.

4.6 Implications and Limitations

The implications of this analysis extend beyond literary interpretation and theoretical comparison. If disciplinary power in the digital age operates through normalization, participation, and algorithmic mediation, then critical digital literacy becomes a civic and ethical necessity rather than merely an academic concern. The study proves that surveillance today functions less through visible coercion and more through consent, visibility metrics, and data-driven personalization. As a result, awareness of how algorithmic systems structure perception, prioritize information, and shape identity formation is essential for preserving autonomy within digitally mediated societies.

From an educational and socio-cultural perspective, this finding underscores the importance of fostering critical engagement with digital media. Integrating *1984* into contemporary curricula can provide students with a conceptual framework for understanding the politics of visibility, data extraction, and mediated truth. Ethical digital participation requires not only technological competence but also interpretive awareness of how discourse, surveillance, and power intersect. As Morozov (2013) cautions, technological solutionism may obscure deeper ideological structures; therefore, reflective and informed engagement with digital systems is crucial for resisting normalization of surveillance practices.

At the same time, this study acknowledges its limitations. The research adopts a qualitative and interpretive methodology grounded in theoretical mapping rather than empirical analysis of algorithmic systems. The comparison between Orwell's fictional regime and contemporary surveillance structures is structural and conceptual, not historical or political equivalence. The study does not claim that contemporary digital societies replicate totalitarian conditions; instead, it finds analogous mechanisms of normalization and internalization within differing institutional contexts.

Future research may extend this inquiry by incorporating empirical approaches, including algorithmic communication analysis, cross-cultural studies of surveillance acceptance, or quantitative investigations of digital self-regulation and self-censorship. Such developments would complement the theoretical insights presented here and further clarify the evolving relationship between surveillance, media infrastructures, and subject formation.

5. Conclusion

This study examined *1984* through the lens of Foucault's theory of panopticism to prove how surveillance, media domination, and ideological control persist in reconfigured forms within the digital age. The analysis has shown that Orwell's concerns about the suppression of individual thought, manipulation of truth, and control of language remain conceptually relevant in contemporary contexts characterized by algorithmic governance and data capitalism. As McBeath (2017) observes, Orwell endures because each generation confronts new configurations of technological power and ethical uncertainty.

Consistent with its refined objectives, the study first set up Foucauldian disciplinary power as a critical framework for understanding how surveillance produces self-regulating subjects through normalization and internalization (Foucault, 1977). Second, it proved how algorithmic control, datafication, and linguistic commodification transform Orwell's dystopian imagination into a contemporary analytical lens. In today's media ecosystem, truth is algorithmically curated and ideologically filtered, while digital identities are constructed through behavioral prediction and data extraction—developments aligned with

Zuboff's (2019) concept of surveillance capitalism and Foucault's theory of productive power.

Importantly, this study does not argue that contemporary societies replicate Orwell's totalitarian regime. Rather, it contends that the mechanisms through which power shapes subjectivity, visibility, normalization, and discursive regulation have evolved technologically while keeping structural continuity. The transition from centralized authoritarian surveillance to networked digital monitoring stands for not the disappearance of discipline but its transformation into participatory and algorithmically mediated forms. Finally, Orwell's *1984* functions not as a literal prophecy but as a critical heuristic for examining the ethical and political implications of digitally mediated power. By situating Orwell within a Foucauldian framework, this research underscores the necessity of cultivating critical consciousness as a precondition for resisting the normalization of surveillance. In an era defined by connectivity and data circulation, freedom depends less on the absence of monitoring than on sustained awareness of how visibility, language, and technological infrastructures shape the conditions of autonomy.

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