

## How does trust and mistrust impact individuals?

### How is meaning created?

- » Language (quotes)
- » Plot
- » Characters
- » Structure
- » Themes and symbols
- » Literary features
- » Context
- » Genre → Stasiland; non-fiction journalism includes a bias → 1984; fiction with an active voice.

***‘Relations between people were conditioned by the fact that one or the other of you could be one of them. Everyone suspected everyone else, and the mistrust this bred was the foundation of social existence.’ – Stasiland***

***‘Quite likely the person at the next table was a spy of the Thought Police...’ – 1984***

- » Characters:

1984 -

- Winston and Julia (broken)
- **Winston and O’Brien (lie)**
- Winston and Mr Charrington (lie)
- Big Brother and Thought Police/informers (true)
- Big Brother and surveillance (true)
- **Parson’s and his children (mistrust)**
- Winston and the Proles (misplaced)

Stasiland –

- Miriam and Charlie (true)
- Julia and the GDR (for protection)
- GDR and Stasi/informers (debatable)
- Julia and men (mistrust)
- Anna and her interviewees (goes both ways in their representation)

- » Symbols and Themes:

1984 –

- Telescreens
- Big Brother
- Propaganda
- Resistance vs Submission (trusting allies)
- Love and connection (trusting those you care for e.g. Winston & Julia and Big Brother & control)

Stasiland –

- The Wall (trust in its protection for some. The Stasi trusted in its permanence.)
- Resistance vs Submission
- Love and connection (Miriam & Charlie and Frau Paul & Torsten)

- » Additional ideas:

- Trust in justice
- Trust in **Ostalgie**
- Mistrust in the government

- Trust in history (misplaced)

Body Paragraph 1:

In a society founded on mistrust, deceiving appearances lead to misplaced trust.

- **Winston and O'Brien**
- Winston and Mr Charrington
- Winston and Julia

Body Paragraph 2:

- Faithful trust amongst allies overcomes political adversity
- Miriam and Charlie
- Miriam trusting Anna as someone she can tell her life story to
- Miriam trusting Anna to accurately tell her story

Body Paragraph 3:

- Both the GDR and Big Brother trust in their respective informers to maintain their autocracy.
- Loyalty is central in trust, as is subservience of informers
- **Big Brother's dependency on the Thought Police**
- **the GDR's reliance on the Stasi**

Body Paragraph 4:

- A trust in government propaganda is central in psychologically controlling masses.
- GDR blocks Western media and other influences
- GDR corrects history
- **"There is no employment in the GDR" – perfect state**
- Big Brother rewrites history
- Party slogans brainwash citizens

THE ESSAY:

Authoritarian governments often walk a fine line between trust and mistrust to preserve power. The German Democratic Republic within Anna Funder's *Stasiland* and the Inner Party of George Orwell's futuristic dystopia, *1984*, parallel in their representations of regimes relying on a balance between trust and mistrust. Trust towards informers, encapsulated as the Stasi and Thought Police of the respective texts, is essential in totalitarianism, as is a trust in citizens accepting government propaganda. *1984* explores how, when "mistrust...[is] the foundation of social existence", misplaced trust is often detrimental. Opposing this, the creative journalistic text of *Stasiland* embodies trusting allies overcoming political adversity. In this way, both texts allude to a lack of trust in governance by subservient citizens.

As autocratical political systems breed mistrust amongst their populous, mistaking a foe for friend may be a critical error. Rebellious protagonist of *1984*, Winston Smith, consistently misjudges character, resulting in misplaced trust. As Winston was "deeply drawn" to Party agent O'Brien, in belief that his "political orthodoxy was not perfect", he perceives that O'Brien is an ally, ultimately divulging thoughts of resistance against Big Brother. Similarly, Winston sublets a room of "curiously inviting" storeowner, Mr Charrington, whom Winston bought the glass paperweight and illegal diary from. Winston's ill-placed trust into a man with "benevolent nose and mild eyes" sees Mr Charrington, member of the Thought Police, turn in Winston, to be interrogated by O'Brien. Through betrayal of Winston's trust, Orwell examines the toxicity of distrusting citizens.

Contrasting Orwell's dreary depiction of mistrust amongst civilians, Anna Funder uses Miriam as a vehicle to convey a message of trust capable of overcoming political submission. A metaphorical two-way street exists within the trust between Miriam and Anna. Miriam relies on Anna to accurately interpret and retell her story, and so Anna oscillates

between narrator and character. As Funder's authorial message includes "the need [for people] to know...and the need for justice", she courageously tells of Miriam's suffering at the hand of the State as "when [she] got out of prison [she] basically was no longer human". Funder trusts that the audience will empathise with victims of the GDR, for Miriam to quell her subservience. In parallel, Anna, as interviewer and narrator, places her trust in Miriam to truthfully tell her story, to uncover the suffering under the GDR's regime. Through a deserving Miriam, to "be heard", Funder trusts her interviewees to honestly speak up against political suppression.

Pervasive bureaucracies trust in their informers to acquire power over citizens. The "internal army" of the Stasi within the GDR and the Thought Police of the Inner Party encompass the informers of Stasiland and 1984, respectively. As the Stasi created the "most perfected surveillance", the information they gathered on the general populace was overwhelming, contributing to the GDR's maintenance of omnipotence. "Everyone suspected everyone else", creating a culture of paranoia, which Funder implies, feeds directly into fascism. In the same vein, characters within the Outer Party of 1984 feared that it was "quite likely the person at the very next table was a spy of the Thought Police". Both informing groups show similarities in their meticulous methodologies and prevalence as "there was estimated one Stasi for every six people." As the regimes of each text depend on the "intimate information" of its people, the governing body trusts in its informers to remain loyal and strategic.

Alongside extensive surveillance, authoritarian governments rely on state propaganda to psychologically manipulate the masses. The GDR position themselves as an "idealistic state" as "there is no unemployment in the GDR", and living conditions are seemingly improving. It is implied that 'the Republic' trust that propaganda in the form of language and news will lead to further acceptance of its values. Following the collapse of the Berlin Wall, a symbol of pervasion, 'The Black Channel' presented by Karl-Eduard von Schnitzler contributes to ongoing anti-imperialism propaganda. Big Brother and the Inner Party also heavily trust in propaganda by means of Newspeak and historical altercations. Party slogans such as "Big Brother is watching you" maintain mental control over citizens of Oceania whilst restrictions of language ensure "unorthodox thoughts" are impossible "to even conceptualize". An imperative component of oppressive government is the plethora of propaganda which brainwashes civilians into submission.

The authors of 1984 and Stasiland complement each other in their depictions of trust versus mistrust within each of their texts. A factual, interview-style progression of Stasiland gives insight into individual relations of trust, such as that between Miriam, Charlie and Anna Funder herself. Both texts illuminate a dictatorship's trust in propaganda and information to maintain social hierarchy, however, the scientific fiction 1984 also delves into the consequences of trusting deceptive individuals in a repressive culture.