

1984 Did Not End Well

When we read George Orwell's novel *1984* in high school or college, until the very end we hoped for a happy ending. Winston and Julia would find The Brotherhood, overthrow the tyranny of Big Brother and The Party, and live happily ever after in their newly liberated homeland.

But there is no such happy ending. Winston is betrayed by O'Brien, in whom he had placed his trust and hope. He and Julia are apprehended by the Thought Police and taken to the deceptively named Ministry of Truth where in Room 101 they are each confronted by their worst fears.

They betray each other, submit to The Party, and learn to love Big Brother.

It is tempting, as we witness the Trumpian assault on science, education, healthcare, the environment, the free press, our democracy, and the very idea of what it means to be an American, to engage in the sort of magical thinking that doomed Winston and Julia. It is tempting to imagine that after the next election, after Trump finally goes away, we will return to being a society that honors truth, tolerance, diversity, and basic human decency.

It is tempting to wait for someone to save us from Trumpian dystopia the way The Hammer Thrower in the famous Apple ad promising that "1984 won't be like *1984*" shattered the screen and broke the spell of Big Brother.

Wake up. Like members of The Party in Orwell's *1984*, the lower case gop (gutless obsequious puppets) of Donald Trump's new Republican Party will never stand up to him.

We must pick up the hammer and throw it ourselves.



She is not coming to save us. We must save ourselves.