



A Rhetorical Reading of George Orwell's *1984*

The brainwashing of Winston in the light of *ethos*, *logos* and *pathos*

En retorisk analys av George Orwells *1984*

Hjärntvätten av Winston belyst genom *ethos*, *logos* och *pathos*

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Abstract

The aim with this essay is to cast a light upon the brainwashing carried out by the totalitarian Party in George Orwell's dystopian novel, *1984*, and induce a deeper understanding of its persuasive effect on Winston Smith, the main character. Winston passionately hates the Party and its leader Big Brother who govern the country Oceania in which he lives. However, after having undergone brainwashing that also includes torture, Winston surrenders to the ideology of the Party and at the end of the novel his hatred towards Big Brother has turned to love. In order to understand Winston's conversion I carry out a close reading of the novel and apply the three rhetorical means of persuasion, *ethos*, *logos* and *pathos*, to the novel and demonstrate when and how these appeals are used on Winston. Against this rhetorical background the analysis shows that the Party's usage of rhetorical appeals can explain why the brainwashing works successfully in its persuasive aim. This result also demonstrates that these three appeals play a prominent role over a course of several years in the Party's indoctrination of Winston. Additionally, the presence of rhetoric proves that there is more than Winston being tortured to his conversion. Thus, Winston is not only tortured into repeating the principles of the party, he is also persuaded into actually believing in them and loving Big Brother by the Party's strategic appeals to *ethos*, *logos* and *pathos*.

Keywords: Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-four, brainwashing, rhetoric, persuasive appeals

Sammanfattning på svenska

Syftet med detta arbete är att belysa hjärntvätten utförd av det totalitära Partiet i George Orwells dystopiska roman, *1984*, och bidra till en djupare förståelse för dess övertygande effekt på huvudkaraktären Winston Smith. Han hatar innerligt Partiet och dess ledare Storebror som styr landet Oceanien, i vilket Winston lever. Efter att ha genomgått hjärntvätt, som också innebär tortyr, överlämnar han sig dock till Partiets ideologi och i slutet av romanen har hans hat för Storebror vänts till kärlek. För att förstå Winstons omvändelse analyserar jag romanen utifrån de tre retoriska övertalningsmedlen, *ethos*, *logos* och *pathos* och påvisar när och hur dessa används mot Winston. Mot denna retoriska bakgrund visar analysen att Partiets användning av dessa medel kan förklara varför hjärntvätten lyckas. Resultatet visar också att dessa medel spelar en viktig roll över en längre period i Partiets indoktrinering av Winston. Dessutom visar närvaron av retorik att hjärntvättens utfall inte endast är avhängigt Partiets tortyr. Winston är således inte enbart genom tortyr tvingad till att repetera Partiets ideologi, han övertygas också att tro omfatta denna och att älska Storebror genom Partiets strategiska användning av *ethos*, *logos* och *pathos*.

Nyckelord: Orwell, Nittonhundraåttiofyra, hjärntvätt, retorik, övertalningsmedel

Introduction

“Do it to Julia!” Winston Smith yells in despair whilst being tortured and faced with his worst fear in Room 101 at The Ministry of Love (Orwell 300). It is a significant moment: Not only does he here betray the love of his life; he is also brainwashed into loving the person he hates the most, namely Big Brother. Big Brother is the leader of the totalitarian Party that governs the country Oceania in George Orwell’s dystopian novel *1984* (1949). In this essay I will seek to demonstrate how Winston is not only tortured into repeating the principles of the Party, but also persuaded to believe in its ideology when his hatred is turned into love.

Through Winton’s eyes the story follows everyday life in Oceania where people are strictly controlled by the Party. Its principles are unquestionable and should someone even think about objecting to them he or she is guilty of *thoughtcrime*. Therefore, to control the citizens, the regime uses advanced surveillance. There is also a special police force, the Thought Police, who spy on people and arrest those who commit *thoughtcrime*. When caught, these thought criminals are brought to the Ministry of Love, a place where brainwashing and torture are carried out to cure individuals of unhealthy thoughts against the Party. According to the Party’s ideology individualism and critical thinking are not needed since the Party will do the thinking for everybody. Its rules are simple: Do not love anyone else except Big Brother and do not hate anything except enemies to the Party. The hatred incited by the Party especially applies to a person called Goldstein, said to be a traitor out there constantly plotting against Oceania.

However, there are people who doubt the Party’s ideology. One of them is Winston. He keenly hates everything about the Party. Winston knows that there is something wrong with the society of Oceania and he rebels against the Party with Julia, who becomes his beloved. Soon enough, though, they are arrested and brought to the Ministry of Love. Here Winston is tortured by the Party member O’Brien and once released from the Ministry, Winston concludes that he loves Big Brother. How is this conversion possible? Clearly, he is tortured, but this does not explain his change of heart. Winston says: “Everybody always confesses. You can’t help it. They torture you” (Orwell 173). But, Julia replies: “Confession is not betrayal. What you say or do doesn’t matter: only feelings matter” (Orwell 173). It would seem that O’Brien, too, shares that view: “When finally you surrender to us, it must be of your own free will” (Orwell 267). That is to say, in the novel it is suggested that torture alone cannot persuade Winston.

Therefore, in order to understand how Winston, a rebel, can be persuaded to change his worldview it may be appropriate to consult a tradition which is devoted to the study of

persuasion, namely rhetoric. A rhetorical approach is justified since the brainwashing results in his conversion from hatred to love. This conversion is the result of a persuasive act according to the definition of persuasion in the *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*, where persuasion is defined as the act of changing people by affecting heart and mind (“Persuasion” 575). And, in the words of Kenneth Burke: “Wherever there is persuasion, there is rhetoric” (qtd in Rodden 166). To understand the mechanisms behind persuasion the rhetorical tradition identifies three appeals which affect the outcome of the persuasive act. First there is *ethos*, the appeal to the rhetor’s credibility. Secondly, *logos* is the logic behind the arguments, and *pathos*, finally, concerns the feelings evoked in the audience by the rhetorical discourse (Keith and Lundberg 36-40).

Although the rhetorical tradition has its roots in spoken language, it is nowadays used as an effective tool for analysing literature as well. According to Burke, rhetoric may be found in everything we do and it is not so much a way of approaching language but rather a function embedded within language (see Keith and Lundberg 55). Since my focus is on Winston’s conversion, this essay studies how rhetoric works within the novel, rather than how the novel as a rhetorical discourse impacts upon the reader. In other words, I am focusing on what literary theory calls the intradiegetic level of the narrative, as opposed to its extradiegetic level (Holmberg and Ohlsson 74). In the novel, the Party acts as the rhetor in imposing the persuasion, while Winston functions as the rhetorical audience since he is the one being persuaded. Still, O’Brien performs many of these persuasive acts on the Party’s behalf; hence he is a tool for the Party to act through.

The structure of the narrative is important when studying its rhetoric. John Rodden claims that dystopian or political novels, like *1984*, are arranged in a specific order to develop a convincing argument and seem “to most readers to ‘argue a case’” (Rodden 155). In terms of my focus on the brainwashing that occurs in the novel, *1984* can be said to argue a case in showing how the Party disempowers Winston. Robert Paul Resch draws a similar conclusion: “The ideological project of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is to represent the destruction of human individuality and human community by a totalitarian state” (Resch 141). When studying the claim of a fictive work, Rodden states, it is central to study more than a short piece of the text since its arguments are most often built up over the course of several sections (Rodden 162). In line with Rodden’s reasoning, I will look upon the torture scene when Winston betrays Julia in Room 101 as the culmination of a brainwashing process that takes place over the course of the novel. As I will seek to demonstrate, events that occur before this climax lay the

foundation for what will happen in this room. These events may thus be considered part of the Party's strategic plan for the brainwashing of Winston that results in his conversion.

Even if Oceania is an extreme case, the Party's usage of everyday rhetoric will show that it is not as extreme as it might look, because the Party's power is not obtained solely by its total control. William H. Rehnquist convincingly concludes that "totalitarian regimes need not rely extensively on gulags or other forms of imprisonment to stay in power" (Rehnquist 987). This is apparent in Oceania, he continues, because "[m]ost of the citizens [...] are free to go about their daily lives. But this freedom is no more than that given to a pet dog or cat by its master. Spiritually and intellectually, they are prisoners of Big Brother" (Rehnquist 987). In addition, Michael Yeo states that Winston and Julia prove that the Party's surveillance is not enough to control the citizens as they put on an act of faithfully serving the Party whilst rebelling when they think they are not being observed (Yeo 59). It would seem, then, that the Party's execution of power over the citizens involves more than surveillance or torture. With this novel Orwell sends out a warning since he shows how and why the regime disempowers the people of Oceania, rhetoric being one of its tools. As Orwell said himself: "I don't believe that the kind of society I describe *will* arrive, but I believe something resembling it *could* arrive" (qtd in Lewis 114). For this reason, his agenda remains of topical interest as we are constantly confronted with messages with persuasive motives in our own modern society as well, in the form of commercials, political campaigns etcetera.

In sum, I will argue that the systematic brainwashing of Winston can be analysed by means of the three persuasive appeals identified in classical rhetoric, that is *ethos*, *logos* and *pathos*, and that such an analysis can explain how the brainwashing is successful in its persuasive aim. In the following, I will demonstrate how each of these appeals can provide essential insights into how Winston is turned from hating Big Brother into loving him at the end of the novel.

Ethos: The appeal of O'Brien

Ethos is the aspect of argumentation that concerns the persuader's credibility. Establishing trust is crucial since the argument will be weakened unless the audience addressed perceives the rhetor as trustworthy. Hence a lack of trust can disturb the communication between rhetor and audience (Keith and Lundberg 38-39). In the relationship between Winston and O'Brien, an establishing of trust begins seven years before the sessions at the Ministry of Love. In the novel this process over several years is suggested when Winston says O'Brien told him seven years ago that: "We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness" (Orwell 27). At this

stage, Winston does not know what this phrase means. Nor does he know if O'Brien shares Winston's hatred of Big Brother or if he is loyal to the Party. However, these uncertainties do not affect Winston's attitude towards him: "Nor did it [O'Brien's loyalty] even seem to matter greatly. There was a link of understanding between them, more important than affection or partisanship" (Orwell 27). Proof that O'Brien's statement is carefully planned by the Party becomes apparent later in the novel when Winston meets O'Brien again: "O'Brien nodded without appearance of surprise. 'In the place where there is no darkness,' he said, as though he had recognised the allusion" (Orwell 185). This statement is strategically planned since it serves a function seven years later in proving that O'Brien understands Winston and knows what he is referring to.

Assuming that the Party had indeed begun its procedure with Winston this early, one could look upon it as an attempt to make Winston trust O'Brien. This would be in accordance with the four ways in which *ethos* can be created: *action*, the rhetor refers to something that he or she has done; *deeds*, achievements that also say something about the persuader's good character are suggested; *understanding*, an awareness of the audience's view is shown by the rhetor; and *expertise*, the rhetor proves to be knowledgeable (Keith and Lundberg 39). That the trust has been built over considerable time can enhance all these features of O'Brien's *ethos* and he uses this to his advantage when torturing Winston by saying such things as: "Don't worry, Winston; you are in my keeping. For seven years I have watched over you" (Orwell 256). In other words, Winston can rest assured that O'Brien has not only watched over him (action), but he has done so in order to make sure Winston comes to no harm (deed). That O'Brien's surveillance is a deed is suggested by his word choice - "watched over" - as this phrase carries a protective meaning ("Watch" 1738). Therefore, the phrase presents an image of O'Brien as a caring man. Furthermore, O'Brien shows an awareness of Winston's situation when he implies that the latter must not worry despite being tortured (understanding), since O'Brien knows what he is doing, having watched over him for so long (expertise). Later, O'Brien admits that the long acquaintance is a strategy of the Party: "This drama that I have played out with you during seven years will be played out over and over again, generation after generation" (Orwell 281).

O'Brien has also been given the opportunity to get to know his targeted victim during these years, which is beneficial for the rhetor. In classical rhetoric, much of the rhetor's proficiency lies in his or her ability to locate the appropriate arguments for the audience and situation in question (Rodden 159). Spying on Winston, the Party learns about his hatred towards the regime, which has resulted in his interest in the time before the Party came to

power. A key to Winston's fascination with history is his work at the Ministry of Truth. On this point, David Wykes states that since Winston's job is to be an *anti-historian* and rewrite history at the Ministry, he attempts to be a true historian off-duty. To Winston, as Wykes continues, history is thus an important part of his rebellion against the Party (Wykes 82). For instance, Winston admires a coral that he has bought at an antique shop: "What appealed to him about it was not so much its beauty as the air it seemed to possess of belonging to an age quite different from the present one" (Orwell 99). Later, the Party makes use of his fascination to make him trust people crucial to the brainwashing of him. This exploitation is shown in Winston's frequent visits to the aforementioned antique shop where he talks to the shop manager, Charrington, about the past. As it turns out, the visits are monitored by the Party. They also lead to an arrest since Charrington proves to be an agent working undercover for the Thought Police who participates when Winston is arrested at the shop (Orwell 230-233).

Similarly, an old ditty from Winston's childhood is significant to the Party's strategy. Winston remembers a few lines and he is fascinated by it since it is from the past. Winston asks Charrington about the rhymes and he manages to fill in some of them, although Winston is anxious to learn the whole piece (Orwell 102, 104). However, O'Brien completes the ditty for a satisfied Winston the last time they meet before Winston is arrested: "With a sort of grave courtesy he [O'Brien] completed the stanza" (Orwell 186). The trust incited by this ditty is observed by Rodden who claims that "Winston [...] is deceived into regarding O'Brien and Charrington as honest men, largely because they know so much about the past, particularly the Oldspeak words of his childhood nursery rhymes" (Rodden 169). The common beliefs, values etcetera of a rhetorical audience, Rodden writes, is described as *doxa* and the rhetor ought to be familiar with and use *doxa* as a way of reaching out to the audience (Rodden 162). Winston's passion for history is used by the Party to establish a benevolent *ethos* for its agents, that is, O'Brien and Charrington.

Ethos also applies to O'Brien's persona; Lennart Hellspong says a good way for the rhetor to seem credible is to show qualities that the audience appreciates (Hellspong 178). A character trait that Winston admires highly throughout the novel is O'Brien's intelligence. This becomes apparent the first time O'Brien is described: "He [Winston] felt deeply drawn to him [and] [...] [hoped] that O'Brien's political orthodoxy was not perfect. Something in his face suggested it irresistibly. And again, perhaps it was not even unorthodoxy that was written in his face, but simply intelligence" (Orwell 13). In addition, his intelligent look makes Winston assume that the former is on his side as O'Brien is able to draw upon the *understanding* related to *ethos* mentioned above: "[T]he thoughts were flowing from one into

the other through their eyes. ‘I am with you,’ O’Brien seemed to be saying to him. ‘I know precisely what you are feeling. [...] But don’t worry, I am on your side! And then the flash of intelligence was gone, and O’Brien’s face was as inscrutable as everybody else’s’ (Orwell 19). Later, at the Ministry of Love, Winston’s admiration has not ceased, even though O’Brien has been torturing him severely: “The peculiar reverence for O’Brien, which nothing seemed able to destroy, flooded Winston’s heart again. How intelligent, he thought, how intelligent!” (Orwell 286). Winston perceives O’Brien as intelligent since he proves that he understands him, which strengthens O’Brien’s *ethos*.

Honesty is a quality linked to *ethos* in the rhetorical tradition (Keith and Lundberg 38-39). It is also important to the truth-seeking Winston and despite that he deceives Winston throughout the brainwashing, O’Brien appears to have nothing to hide in Winston’s eyes. For instance, O’Brien gives him a book in which Goldstein, the Party’s worst enemy, unravels the logic behind the Party’s ideology (Orwell 191-208). His straightforward language likewise suggests honesty towards Winston. During a torture session, for example, O’Brien tells him the truth behind why the Party wants power: “The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others [...] Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness: only power, pure power” (Orwell 275). O’Brien’s honesty is thus suggested by his plain language when he explains the harsh reality and shows openness about the Party’s agenda.

Lastly, Winston and O’Brien are similar characters in their positions of being superior, which enhances O’Brien’s *ethos*. Winston considers himself superior to the proles, the lowest class in Oceania, which is similar to how O’Brien as an Inner Party member is superior to Winston, a member of the Outer Party. Winston admits, when asked by O’Brien, that: “Yes, I consider myself superior” (Orwell 283). Resch convincingly argues that Winston’s claimed superiority is the reason why he is able to see the logic in being subordinate to O’Brien as his view of society is based on people being superior to one another (Resch 169-170). This has the result, as Resch concludes, that “Winston is unconsciously attracted to O’Brien, from whom he seeks recognition as a fellow superior individual” (Resch 170). Hence this similarity between them is essential for O’Brien when reaching out to Winston. However, a solid *ethos* is merely a necessity for the Party to be able to communicate its persuasive message. Equally important is what arguments this message relies upon to persuade Winston.

Logos: O’Brien’s convincing arguments

In the rhetorical tradition, the valid reason and logic behind the rhetor’s argument is defined as *logos* (Keith and Lundberg 36). Still, in order to recognize how *logos* affects Winston an

awareness of his views is needed, because Hellspong says that an orientation of the audience's perspective is crucial in order to understand the conditions for the persuasive act since the audience's views determine whether the rhetor's message will be accepted or not (Hellspong 179).

Rather than striving for the unthinking careerism of the other Party members that he encounters, Winston, like O'Brien, has a will to power (Resch 156). This means that he is critical of what he sees in Oceania and seeks to grasp the full picture of what is happening in their society, unlike most of the other people in his surroundings. He wants to be more than an unknowing brick in the wall of the Party and Michael Yeo accurately points to how Winston and Julia view the Party's propaganda differently. Winston cannot understand how Julia remains indifferent to whether facts are true or false. Both work at the Ministry of Truth, but Julia writes fiction whereas Winston rewrites news from the past. This gives him a critical awareness, Yeo continues, since the articles he writes contradict his memory (Yeo 58-59). For this reason, Winston's job makes him anxious about the truth. He writes in his diary that: "Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two makes four" (Orwell 84). That is to say, truth is so vital that it equals freedom to Winston. Winston's obsession with truth becomes even more apparent during the torture he suffers. He ponders his confessions to the Party and tries to make what he knows to be lies in them to look like truth as well: "Besides, in a sense it was all true. It was true that he had been the enemy of the party, and in the eyes of the Party there was no distinction between the thought and the deed" (Orwell 255). In short, for the persuasion of Winston to work, the rhetor must be aware of Winston's critical awareness and appeal to *logos* in terms of truth, that is, provide him with facts to convince him to let go of what he considers the truth and embrace a new truth.

Throughout the novel, O'Brien shows that he has this awareness of Winston's views. First, he gives Goldstein's book to Winston (Orwell 184). The book is not only an appeal to *ethos*, but also to *logos* since it explains the logic behind the Party's ideology. For instance, the mechanism of the Party's figment *doublethink* is clarified in the book: "Even in using the word *doublethink* it is necessary to exercise *doublethink* [because it is the act] [t]o tell deliberate lies while genuinely believing in them" (Orwell 223). Likewise, Goldstein's book explains the logic behind the names of the governing ministries, which work with the opposite activities than the names suggest. The Ministry of Truth works with lies, for instance, and the book says: "These contradictions are not accidental, nor do they result from ordinary hypocrisy: they are deliberate exercises in *doublethink*. For it is only by reconciling contradictions that power can be retained indefinitely" (Orwell 225). The Party's logic can

now start to make sense to Winston and after having read a few sections in the book he comes to the conclusion that: “There was truth and there was untruth, and if you clung to the truth even against the whole world, you were not mad” (Orwell 226). This realisation is central to Winston because he states early in the novel that staying sane is what keeps someone human (Orwell 30). Sanity and truth are crucial to Winston and O’Brien is aware of this.

That the book is said to be written by Goldstein is also central in terms of Winston’s worldview. O’Brien admits to having written the book together with other Party members. Goldstein had nothing to do with it. On the contrary, the Party wrote it to explain the logic behind its ideology. The book is therefore a true description. On the other hand, O’Brien continues, its political programme is useless, since the book promotes Goldstein’s view (Orwell 274). The reason for the Party to write the book in his name in the first place, however, can be found in the rhetorical tradition as well; if the persuasive act imposes something that disagrees with the audience’s experiences, the message can be misinterpreted or disregarded (Hellspång 180). To avoid such obstacles there are three criteria of acceptance for successful persuasion which determine whether the audience will accept the logic of the arguments or not: *empiricism*, the audience’s experiences; *doxa*, the audience’s worldview; and *praxis*, the audience’s habits (Hellspång 179-183). Against this background Goldstein’s perspective, as opposed to the one of the Party, is what makes Winston interested in the book. He talks about the book in admiration, calling it *the book* with emphasis and he notices that O’Brien seems to be doing the same (Orwell 184). Winston would not have been open to the book if it was said to be the Party’s work since he rejects its ideology. To Winston, the Party’s perspective collides with these three criteria of acceptance in a way that Goldstein’s does not, given that the rebel’s point of view is also his own.

Still, the book only lays the foundation for when O’Brien appeals to *logos* during the sessions. He uses the knowledge Winston has gained from reading the book against him, as the logic behind the Party’s principles becomes the premise on which the argumentation is founded. In classical rhetoric it is crucial that the audience understands the rhetor’s examples since they cannot work as proof in the argumentation unless understood by the ones they are meant to convince (Keith and Lundberg 38). Since the book makes Winston familiar with the examples that O’Brien will refer to, it helps him to use *logos* in serving the function “to move an audience from one belief to another by walking the audience through reasonable steps” (Keith and Lundberg 36).

Although the book does not teach Winston anything new, it helps to sort his thoughts and to confirm that he is not insane (Orwell 208, 226). This realisation is important to

O'Brien as well, since Winston must believe that he is capable of being sane in order to learn and understand the principles of the Party. O'Brien tells him: "Shall I tell you why we brought you here? To cure you! To make you sane!" (Orwell 265). The book shall prove to Winston that he is capable of being sane and that everything the Party does is logical and already known to him as he is capable of following the logical reasoning in the book. O'Brien says: "Do you remember writing in your diary, 'I understand *how*: I do not understand *why*'? It was when you thought about 'why' that you doubted your own sanity. You have read *the book* [...] Did it tell you anything that you did not know already?" (Orwell 274). Similarly, O'Brien argues that Winston already knows how to execute the Party's principles – he only lacks "self-discipline" (Orwell 261). Put differently, the book is a tool for O'Brien in terms of *logos* since it generates Winston's realisation of sanity and his deeper comprehension of the Party's logic. For this reason, O'Brien is now able to argue that Winston must succumb to this logic since it is the sane alternative. Up till the point when the torture begins O'Brien has adapted to Winston's *doxa* to make Winston accept him in terms of *ethos* and understand the Party's logic by appealing to *logos*. As the next step of the brainwashing O'Brien aims to attack and change Winston's *doxa* since he has not yet accepted the Party's ideology, even if he understands it. Therefore, Winston's strong critical awareness must be faced and defeated since it stands in the way for him to accept the Party's *doxa*.

O'Brien starts by assaulting Winston's logic with physical torture on the rack as he tries to "reset" his reality. During the torture, O'Brien refers to the Party's truth, which means that two and two does not always make four unless the Party says so, because "[w]hatever the Party holds to be truth, *is* truth. It is impossible to see reality except by looking through the eyes of the Party" (Orwell 261). He holds up four fingers and asks Winston how many they are if the Party claims they are five. Winston protests and only screams out five when the physical pain becomes unbearable on the rack, which does not satisfy O'Brien (Orwell 261-262). The re-evaluation of Winston's values that O'Brien hopes to achieve here through torture is similar to what a persuasive act shall perform through logical reasoning in classical rhetoric, described as *accommodation*. *Accommodation* means that the audience changes rudimentary views of the world, induced to do so by the persuasive act (Hellspong 187). Trying to make physical pain serve the same function as accommodative persuasion, O'Brien keeps pushing him and Winston admits to trying to accommodate to the Party's worldview: "I would see five if I could. I am trying to see five" (Orwell 263). Then, tortured to the brink of madness, Winston answers: "'Four, five, six - in all honesty I don't know.' 'Better,' said O'Brien" (Orwell 264). He is satisfied since Winston's reality has been reset when he does

not know what to believe anymore. O'Brien then begins the process of filling Winston with the logical belief of the Party by appealing to *logos* in his argumentation during their sessions at the Ministry. O'Brien admits that this was his aim as the Party "shall squeeze you empty, and then we shall fill you with ourselves" (Orwell 269).

Beginning the process of filling Winston with the Party's logic, O'Brien uses physical pain also to prove the Party's logic in his argumentation. During severe torture, Winston is actually able to see five fingers, or at least he believes them to be five in accordance with the Party's truth. O'Brien argues: "You see now [...] that it is at any rate possible" (Orwell 271). Using torture, O'Brien has created an argument that can be proved by Winston's own experience. As I have already noted with Hellspong, in the rhetorical tradition it is a strategy to use arguments that can be proved in accordance with the audience's own experiences. This *empiricism* favours *logos* since it supports the rhetor's argument (Hellspong 179-180). Describing the Party's strategies O'Brien concludes: "Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing" (Orwell 279). O'Brien is able to combine the power of inflicting pain and the power of persuading someone to change his mind by rational argumentation. He induces pain to create an empiric proof. Then he uses this constructed proof in his attempt to convince Winston to change his *doxa* as he aims to make his torture serve the same function as a persuasive act in line with how *accommodation* is described to work in classical rhetoric.

Winston has not yet accepted the Party's ideology, but having proved to Winston that the Party's truth can be the truth O'Brien shall also prove the Party's logic behind *doublethink*. He does so by demonstrating that *doublethink* is possible. In the rhetorical tradition, this strategy is an appeal to *logos* as the rhetor proves the validity of an argument by the support of *real examples* (Keith and Lundberg 38). O'Brien's example is the photograph of a soldier which Winston has held as proof that the past exists. After having burnt the photo that, according to the Party, has never existed, O'Brien exercises *doublethink*: "I do not remember it," said O'Brien. Winston's heart sank. That was doublethink. He had a feeling of deadly helplessness. If he could have been certain that O'Brien was lying, it would not have seemed to matter. But it was perfectly possible that O'Brien had really forgotten the photograph" (Orwell 259). Resch states that *doublethink* is absolutely rational for and can be carried out by O'Brien and other Inner Party members since they gain from it. In contrast, *doublethink* is hard for Outer Party members, like Winston, since it does not benefit them in the same way (Resch 166-167). Tellingly, Resch concludes that "there is no plausible motive for a member of the Outer Party to exercise it" (Resch 167). However, at the Ministry,

O'Brien shows that *doublethink* is rational to him with such conviction that Winston must see the truth in this. Put differently, he attempts to create a motive for Winston to exercise *doublethink* too, by appealing to Winston's own proclivity for rationality. In the process, O'Brien's solidly established *ethos* also enhances the *logos* he appeals to in his arguments: "He is not pretending, thought Winston; he is not a hypocrite; he believes every word he says" (Orwell 268). What O'Brien says, especially in reply to Winston's counterarguments, is thus another appeal to *logos*, because: "Whatever he [Winston] said, the swift answer crushed him like a bludgeon" (Orwell 278).

Arguing his case, O'Brien explains that the Party controls everything since the Party is everything and therefore "I could float off this floor like a soap bubble if I wished to" (Orwell 277). Here he makes use of a *hypothetical example*. The rhetor can use such an example when no good real examples exist or when something made up can put across the point in a better way to the audience in question (Keith and Lundberg 38). O'Brien also uses what the rhetorical tradition calls *syllogisms*. This way of forming an argument is based on the idea that "two true premises (propositions or statements) validly imply a third statement, the conclusion of the argument" (Keith and Lundberg 36). This way of reasoning is suggested when O'Brien proves that what he said in the past was true (that they shall meet in place with no darkness) and what he claims about the present is true (O'Brien knows what Winston is thinking right now on the rack). Ergo, since these predictions are correct, his conclusion - that Winston will succumb - will come true as well (Orwell 256-257). O'Brien strengthens his argument further by explaining what else he can do in the future with the help of the rack: "I have it in my power to inflict pain on you at any moment and to whatever degree I choose" (Orwell 257).

Besides these ways of proving his case, O'Brien uses *inductive proof*. Bo Renberg writes that *inductive proof* means that the audience can come to a general conclusion by the means of one single but carefully chosen argument. Such argument, in turn, can be in the shape of an *analogy*. This is a special simile that works to extend an image and make the argument clearer to the audience (Renberg 34-35). O'Brien uses an *analogy* to make Winston see that there is no use in fighting any longer, because the Party has already won and will continue to do so since its principles of power are perfect: "If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—for ever" (Orwell 280). When O'Brien appeals to *logos* his arguments weaken Winston's truth. The only reasonable action is thus to succumb.

Pathos: The feelings evoked in Winston

Pathos is the appeal to the audience's feelings and how the persuader can change and make use of them in order to induce positive emotions favouring both the rhetor and the arguments, that is, *ethos* and *logos* (Keith and Lundberg 39-40). *Pathos* is therefore a powerful means of persuasion. In the novel, Winston shows awareness of this power and he is anxious not to let his emotions be affected: "[I]n the mind he had surrendered, but he had hoped to keep the inner heart inviolate" (Orwell 293). However, as Yeo suggests, his rebellion does not only show that the Party has not yet reached his core, but in opening up and showing this core in private Winston also reveals to the Party how to get to it since he is actually being watched (Yeo 54-55). In line with this reasoning, the Party can be said to let him commit *thoughtcrime*, for example the visits to the antique shop, as a strategy to learn more about him - his wishes and fears - in order to get to his heart later at the Ministry of Love. Yeo also mentions Jeremy Bentham who identifies two ways of spying that can be used by regimes, police forces etcetera: First, there is panoptical surveillance, which serves the purpose to check if people break the rules. The second is "surreptitious surveillance, which he [Bentham] credited with being able to 'pry into the secret recesses of the human heart' to detect what people were really thinking" (Yeo 54). In 1984, the regime is watching the citizens for these two purposes as the Party not only knows that Winston rebels, but it has been able to plan his rebellion in terms of *pathos* as well because of its way of practicing surveillance.

The Party then makes use of the feelings evoked in Winston incited by his controlled disobedience. An important note is the view upon feelings in the novel which is similar to the view upon logical reasoning as feelings, too, can be, in Winston's words, *re-learned* (Orwell 172). That being said, feelings central to the brainwashing of Winston concern an appeal to comfort, protection, and belonging related to family. Why these feelings are used and what they shall evoke is explained in Goldstein's book: "[The Party] systematically undermines the solidarity of the family, and it calls its leader by a name which is a direct appeal to the sentiment of family loyalty" (Orwell 225). Winston has no family anymore and he barely remembers them (Orwell 31). This is not unique for Winston; all relationships between child and parent are tense in Oceania, mainly because of the Party's youth league. There the children are taught to love Big Brother, how to become good spies for the Party etcetera and Winston concludes: "It was almost normal for people over thirty to be frightened of their own children" (Orwell 26-27). The Party makes sure to break the affectionate relationship within families to be able to fill the emotional shortage this creates in individuals with familial feelings towards Big Brother instead.

The Party aims to create a feeling of shortage by emptying the minds of people with the wrong ideas. Then it is possible to fill them with a new ideology since the Party has created a feeling of lack when robbing them of their own way of making sense of the world. This strategy can be traced to *pathos* as well, because in the *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric* it is stated that feelings and cravings, that is, *pathos*, lead people to act in a certain way according to Aristotle (“Pathos 558”). What is more: “Considered as a motivation for judgment, *pathos* is his [Aristotle’s] term for those pleasant or painful dispositions that lead men to change their minds” (“Pathos” 558). An appeal to *pathos* is thus linked to our cravings, since people can act in the way they do because they feel a shortage of something. According to the same Encyclopedia “these cravings [...] depend upon belief: first, that what has been perceived is indeed a lack; and second, that the means proposed to satisfy that lack will indeed do so” (“Pathos 558). In line with this reasoning, the Party makes sure to create yet another lack for Winston when he and Julia are allowed to have sex and fall in love before being arrested. The Party lets them feel all the forbidden emotions but, when caught, what they have been allowed to experience is removed. That is to say, by separating them at the Ministry of Love, the Party creates another feeling of lack for them in using their love for each other, which can be compensated for by the love for Big Brother.

Big Brother’s looks is also important in the Party’s appeal to *pathos*. As Yeo concludes: “On the poster, Big Brother is depicted as being ruggedly handsome; an image we can suppose is calculated to dispose people to like if not love him [...] [T]he image works in the same way to persuade not just to the belief that he is watching [...] but also to the belief that it is a good that he is, that the watching is comforting” (Yeo 56). An example of this image is found when Winston sits at a café at the end of the novel. He hears a victory report from the war and experiences this feeling of being protected by Big Brother that Yeo mentions: “He looked up again at the portrait of Big Brother. The colossus that bestrode the world! The rock against which the hordes of Asia [Oceania’s current enemy] dashed themselves in vain!” (Orwell 310). Similarly, in the *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric* images are said to be particularly useful for waking emotions in the audience according to classic rhetoric (“Pathos” 555). Also, a “part of a rhetor’s task is to associate the subject with such images” (“Pathos” 555). In short, Big Brother’s image is a planned appeal to *pathos*.

O’Brien’s role in terms of *pathos* is important given that Winston develops feelings towards him too. His manner serves to evoke feelings of subordination in Winston and a belief that he is in the need of education. That O’Brien’s aim is to create such a relation is suggested during the torture: “He [O’Brien] had the air of a doctor, a teacher, even a priest,

anxious to explain and persuade rather than to punish” (Orwell 257). These attributes are not separate from his solid *ethos*, but they reveal what Winston feels about him and how he perceives the relationship between them. During the torture, O’Brien sometimes behaves like a comforting adult whilst Winston is compared to a child: “Abruptly he was sitting up with O’Brien’s arm round his shoulders [...] For a moment he clung to O’Brien like a baby, curiously comforted by the heavy arm round his shoulders” (Orwell 262-263). Likewise, O’Brien is given the attributes of a teacher. He talks with the “air of a schoolmaster questioning a promising pupil” (Orwell 279), and explains that “I am taking trouble with you, Winston [...] because you are worth trouble” (Orwell 258). Tellingly, Winston concludes that “O’Brien knew everything” (Orwell 275). Furthermore, O’Brien shows some compassion as he provides occasional comfort (Orwell 262, 285). He also performs sporadic acts of mercy in the sense that he lets Winston regain his strength (Orwell 287). Doing this, O’Brien arouses a feeling of appreciation in Winston and enhances the image of O’Brien being a patient tutor and Winston being the obstinate student. Winston admits to this subordination and it makes him feel shameful (Orwell 254). During one session when Winston has been tortured and received positive feedback, he says: “He had never loved him [O’Brien] so deeply as at this moment, and not merely because he had stopped the pain” (Orwell 264). It is therefore clear that Winston loves O’Brien also because of his positive feedback that eases his shame. Winston’s feelings for him are a conscious appeal to *pathos* since O’Brien has created the subordinate relation.

Moreover, O’Brien says: “We are the priests of power [...] God is power” (Orwell 276). Using these terms he draws upon Winston’s subordination again when he explains how he shall face this power (Orwell 276-277). O’Brien tries to make Winston comply by using his desire for sanity. He says that Winston “would not make the act of submission which is the price of sanity” (Orwell 261). These religious allusions suggest the loss of a religious belief in Oceania, which the Party makes use of. This loss is no coincidence because in his writing Orwell, as David Wykes says, tried to answer what happens when religious belief disappears (Wykes 95). Furthermore, Wykes continues, Orwell viewed humans as beings not only searching for the comforts of life, but also having a need of something that gives life meaning, which must be fulfilled by something else if not found in religion (Wykes 95-96). In the novel, this idea is shown when Winston tells O’Brien that he does not believe in God (Orwell 282), which suits the Party because then a spiritual need, similar to the one concerning family and love, can be filled as well. Without a God to worship, Big Brother can be worshipped. In Goldstein’s book it says: “[Big Brother’s] function is to act as a focusing point for love, fear

and reverence, emotions which are more easily felt towards an individual than towards an organisation” (Orwell 217). Big Brother thus, similarly to a God, organises and appeals to the feelings - *pathos* - of the people.

Winston’s view of himself is also crucial to why he finally succumbs in the end since his self-perception is shook up due to how O’Brien makes him realise his own weakness. As mentioned, to impose a new perspective on something with the help of emotions is an important function of *pathos* according to Aristotle. Furthermore, he claimed that “the task of the *rhētōr* is to initiate a reflection on the unreflective elements that constitute an underlying belief. If some of them can be changed, the audience may shift from one emotion to another, and so their entire judgement about the circumstances may change” (qtd in “Pathos” 559). In line with Aristotle’s reasoning, Winston is gradually pushed towards accepting the Party’s ideology as he goes from feeling confident, although inferior to O’Brien, to worthless under the torture.

Firstly, O’Brien plays a recording in which Winston promises to commit the worst of crimes when fighting the Party for Goldstein (Orwell 283). This recording proves that Winston is by no means better than the Party and he cannot judge its immorality since he has promised to perform immoral acts himself. Secondly, his betrayal of Julia, the woman he loves, is the climax not only of the brainwashing but also of the novel as a whole since it determines Winston’s new perception of himself, as other critics confirm. According to Resch, for instance, the moment Winston screams ‘Do it to Julia!’ is the moment “that breaks Winston’s will and propels him into the open arms of Big Brother” (Resch 171). Before Winston is brought to Room 101, he and O’Brien agree that betraying Julia is the only thing the Party has not yet managed him to do (Orwell 286). When he betrays her he has nothing left to defend. He is broken down to the last bit and forced to reconsider his view of himself.

Once released from the ministry, Winston and Julia meet again at the end of the novel. They appear to be peaceful. They discuss their betrayal of one another and conclude that this determined their breakdown. For, as Julia says, “after that, you don’t feel the same towards the other person any longer” (Orwell 306). The lost love between them is perhaps the most convincing argument of the Party since they promised to keep loving each other before they were arrested (Orwell 173-174). They also felt confident that the Party could not change feelings; as Julia puts it: “they can’t get inside you” (Orwell 174). However, their erroneous conviction does not seem to bother them. Rather, Winston appears to be relieved by the realization that he and Julia was wrong, which is suggested in his line of thoughts in the very last lines of the novel: “[E]verything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won the

victory over himself. He loved Big Brother” (Orwell 311). All that is left for Winston is a convincing rhetorical discourse which suggests that loving Big Brother is the only logical choice, heart and mind finding no other option. That is why Winston reaches the peace suggested above from his completed conversion.

Conclusion

To conclude, this essay has shown that the brainwashing of Winston is carefully planned and carried out by the Party over a period of several years. This is suggested by O’Brien who reveals that everything that happens has been predicted by the Party. Additionally, the way the Party carries out the persuasion of Winston can be described in terms of the rhetorical appeals *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*, throughout the brainwashing process. The usage of rhetorical tools is therefore a useful way of discovering the heart of a rhetorical novel like *1984*. What is more, my rhetorical reading does not only demonstrate that these appeals are taken into account, but also explains why Winston gives in to the Party. Hence, the Party can be said to act as a rhetorical agent in the novel by using several tools, O’Brien being one of them, and rhetorical appeals to execute its persuasion. Winston, then, is not only the main character in the novel but functions also as a rhetorical audience in relation to the Party.

The Party’s usage of the rhetorical appeals shows that physical torture merely is one aspect of the brainwashing of Winston, since the torture makes him confess, but rhetorical persuasion makes him believe. The Party’s surveillance fills the dual function of checking if people commit *thoughtcrime*, and of learning more about the rebels in order to be able to persuade them. For this reason, the power of the Party is not so much found in the pain it inflicts upon the citizens or the strict surveillance in Oceania, but rather in the Party’s usage of rhetoric, since rhetoric enables the Party not only to execute power, but also to obtain it. Against this rhetorical background, the presence of rhetoric and the way the Party uses its power for evil deeds constitute a warning in the sense that Winston, as a character of a novel, can be an example of what a rhetorical discourse used in a vicious way can do to a human mind.

The novel shows throughout that a rebel can be persuaded through carefully planned brainwashing with the help of persuasive appeals. Because of O’Brien’s *ethos*, the Party’s carefully selected *logos*, and accurate appeals to *pathos*, the Party manages to persuade Winston and generate a conversion from hatred to love at the Ministry of Love after the climax of the story when Winston screams in despair that they should do it to Julia.

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