

BOOK CLUB IN A BOX

INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOST

BEFORE YOUR DISCUSSION

- Email an invitation to your book club members
- The Following bookstore is offering 10% off the purchase of this book:
 - *King's English Bookshop in Salt Lake City*
- **While We Watched** is available to stream at pbsutah.org/while-we-watched
- Join the 'Book Club in a Box Discussion Group' on Facebook for ideas, helpful links, etc.

DURING YOUR DISCUSSION

- Make PBS Utah materials in the box available to your group
- Show clips from the episodes

- Take photos of your book club members, the food you prepare, and anything else you find meaningful to your discussion

AFTER YOUR DISCUSSION

- Share photos and ideas with others on the Facebook group
- Invite your book club members to join the Facebook Group via email
- Complete host survey
(Link will be emailed to you after your discussion)



BOOK CLUB IN A BOX

GET INVOLVED!

ORGANIZATIONS:

- **Amplify Utah**
amplifyutah.org
- **The Utah Investigative Journalism Project**
utahinvestigative.org
- **The Great Salt Lake Collaborative**
greatsaltlakenews.org
- **SLCC Community Writing Center**
slcc.edu/cwc
- **Mapping Literary Utah**
mappingliteraryutah.org
- **National Association for Media Literacy Education**
namle.net
- **PEN America: The Freedom to Write**
pen.org
- **Support and subscribe to your local print and digital newspapers**
- **Watch more films from POV**
pbs.org/pov
- **Get unbiased and fact based news from the PBS NewsHour**
pbs.org/newshour
- **Learn about issues that are important to Utahns**
pbsutah.org/utahinsight





WHILE WE WATCHED

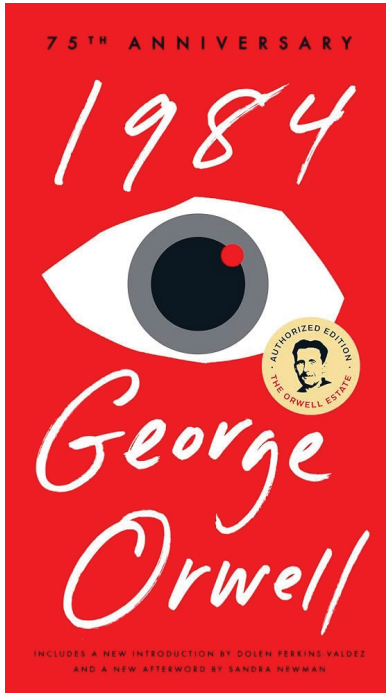
A timely depiction of a newsroom in crisis, **While We Watched** follows Ravish Kumar for two years as he battles a barrage of fake news, falling ratings, and the resulting cutbacks while struggling to maintain fact-based analysis. Will his show survive or become a swan song of reason-drowning out in sensationalism, misinformation, and ratings-driven editorial decisions?

Co-presented with The Center for Asian American Media (CAAM).



FILMMAKER BIO | VINAY SHUKLA

Vinay Shukla is a filmmaker, producer, and a leading figure in the Indian documentary landscape. His debut feature in 2016, the non-fiction political thriller, *An Insignificant Man* (co-directed with Khushboo Ranka) was internationally acclaimed, set a new anti-censorship precedent, and went on to become the most theatrically successful documentary film in India. His short film *Bureaucracy Sonata* (2011), won the HBO Best Short Film Award at the South Asian International Film Festival in 2012. His work has attracted distinguished partnerships with Sundance, DocSociety, NFDC India, Asian Network of Documentaries, IDFA, and IDFA Bertha. His work has been previously celebrated at Warsaw Film Festival, Busan International Film Festival, BFI London, Sheffield Doc/Fest, among other leading festivals in the world. Vinay has also produced the globally renowned political strategy board game 'SHASN', and its sequel, 'SHASN: AZADI'. Vinay's highly-anticipated second feature film, **While We Watched** — a non-fiction newsroom drama — is premiering at the 2022 Toronto International Film Festival.

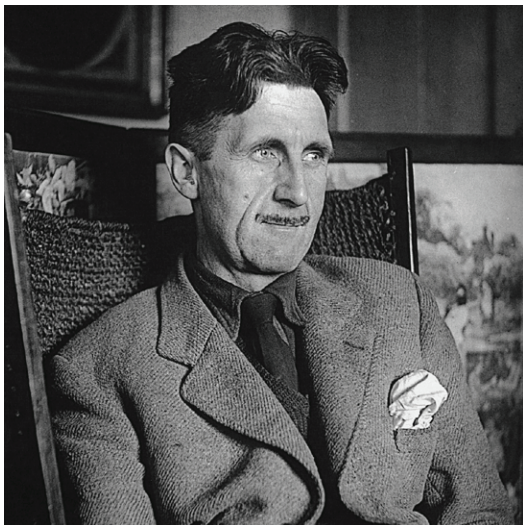


1984

"The Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was their final, most essential command."

Winston Smith toes the Party line, rewriting history to satisfy the demands of the Ministry of Truth. With each lie he writes, Winston grows to hate the Party that seeks power for its own sake and persecutes those who dare to commit thoughtcrimes. But as he starts to think for himself, Winston can't escape the fact that Big Brother is always watching...

A startling and haunting vision of the world, *1984* is so powerful that it is completely convincing from start to finish. No one can deny the influence of this novel, its hold on the imaginations of multiple generations of readers, or the resiliency of its admonitions — a legacy that seems only to grow over time.



AUTHOR | GEORGE ORWELL

George Orwell (1903–1950) served with the Imperial Police in Burma, fought with the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War, and was a member of the Home Guard and a writer for the BBC during World War II. He is the author of many works of nonfiction and fiction. He is best known for his novels *1984* and *Animal Farm*.

Written 75 years ago, *1984* was Orwell's chilling prophecy about the future. And while the year 1984 has come and gone, his dystopian vision of a government that will do anything to control the narrative is timelier than ever.

1. It's been 75 years since Orwell wrote *1984*, and though that year has come and gone, his dystopian vision has been called a "chilling prophecy" about a "government that will do anything to control the narrative." What parallels do you see in American politics, news media, and social media that can be applied to the society developed by the Party in Oceania?
2. India, with 1.4 billion people, and the U.S., with a population of 336 million, are the two largest democracies in the world. What characteristics and values come to mind when you think of what makes a democracy? How would you describe what democracy looks like in the U.S. today? How, according to the film, is democracy presented in modern-day India?
3. When *1984* was released in 1949, Orwell reflected that "Totalitarianism, if not fought against, could triumph anywhere." Considering this, compare your descriptions of democracy in America and India to that of Orwell's fictional society, a nation controlled at every level by its government. What freedoms and liberties exist in these democracies that don't in Oceania? What similarities do you see?
4. After reading Goldstein's book, Winston reflects, "Being in a minority, even a minority, of one, did not make you mad. There is truth and there is untruth, and if you cling to truth even against the whole world, you were not mad." How does this idea apply both to Winston as he navigates the Party's control and to Ravish Kumar as he maneuvers misinformation and how to address it on air?
5. A year before *1984* was published, a Hindu National assassinated Mohandas Gandhi, believing he had been too pro-Pakistan during the Partition of India. Much has been written about the influence of Stalin's dictatorship, World War II, and the emergence of the Cold War on the dystopian novel, but Orwell said its British setting was simply a location. What ties do you see between media coverage of rising Indian nationalism as portrayed in the film and the people of Oceania's dedication to the Party through events like Hate Week and groups like Junior Spies?
6. *1984* raises concerns about the dangers of surveillance and invasion of privacy. How do current debates about big tech surveillance, data privacy, and social listening echo Orwell's concerns?
7. Both the film and the book explore themes of government influence or control over individual autonomy. What does discourse – or the lack thereof – look like in American social media and on cable news networks, and how has it affected civil liberties, freedom of speech, and governmental overreach?
8. Orwell invented a new lexicon for *1984*, known as "Newspeak" in which the Party deliberately simplifies language to limit freedom of thought. Phrases like "Big Brother" and "thoughtcrime," for example, became commonplace. Are there similar buzzwords in today's political discourse that evoke themes of misinformation and fabrication of facts? How does this reflection of reality resonate with contemporary discussions about truth decay, alternative facts, and post-truth politics? Consider and discuss examples from the film and what you see on U.S. cable news networks and on social media.
9. Along with surveillance, censorship is one of the most overt themes depicted in *1984*. How does this contribute to the suppression of dissent and the enforcement of conformity? Contrast this idea with scenes from *While We Watched*, where Ravish and fellow journalists at NDTV India face intimidation for criticizing the government and its presentation of "truth." How do these examples reflect the challenges to free speech and press freedom in contemporary India? What parallels do you see in the United States?
10. **While We Watched** ends on a high note when Ravish wins the Ramon Magsaysay Award, which honors individuals whose "selfless service has offered their societies,

Asia, and the world successful solutions to some of the most intractable problems of human development.”

Where do you see examples of similar integrity and commitment to truth in U.S. new media, by advocacy groups, and in local government? What can YOU do, individually to promote factual, unbiased information?



MARCIE YOUNG CANCIO

A veteran newspaper reporter, magazine editor, digital executive producer, and television news managing editor, Marcie Young Cancio joined the University of Utah's communication faculty in 2023 after five years at Salt Lake Community College as assistant professor of journalism and digital media. Born and raised in Salt Lake City, Marcie earned her master's from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism and fostered a news career at *The Charlotte Observer*, Condé Nast, *Salt Lake* magazine, KUTV 2News and KGO-TV, Disney's ABC station in the Bay Area. In the summer of 2020, she founded Amplify Utah to help bolster representative storytelling in local media through student and emerging journalism and to amplify voices from across the greater Salt Lake community and state. She's a big fan of journalism that empowers and elevates, and believes we can build a better, more equitable society one story at a time. When she's not doing journalism, Marcie loves being outdoors with her pups and kid, listening to live music, or exploring Salt Lake's food and drink scene.

A nod to both the Party's "filthy" government-issued Victory coffee and the whimsical pre-Oceania poem recalling "oranges and lemons, say the bells of St. Clement's," this sweet cake can lighten the mood of 1984's dreary dystopian landscape. You can also make this recipe with regular lemons if the Meyer variety is unavailable. The flavor won't be exact, but the cake will still be delicious.



INGREDIENTS

Streusel

- 1 ¾ cups of unbleached all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup of packed light-brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 ½ sticks (¾ cup) cold unsalted butter

Cake

- 5 Meyer lemons, cut into paper-thin slices, ends discarded; plus 3 tablespoons finely grated zest (from 4-5 lemons)
- 2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 ½ teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 stick (½ cup) unsalted butter, room temperature, plus more for the pan
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup sour cream

Glaze

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 3 to 4 tablespoons fresh Meyer lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

Streusel

1. Mix flour, brown sugar, and salt. Using a pastry cutter or your fingers, cut butter into the flour mixture until small to medium clumps form. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use, up to 3 days.

Cake

1. In a large skillet of simmering water, cook lemon slices 1 minute. Drain and repeat. Arrange lemon slices in a single layer on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a 9-inch angel-food-cake pan. Sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. In a mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat together butter, granulated sugar, and lemon zest on medium speed in a large bowl until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat in eggs, one at a time, then vanilla. Reduce speed to low. Beat in flour mixture in three additions, alternating with sour cream, beginning and ending with flour mixture and beating until combined after each addition.
3. Spoon half of batter evenly into pan. Arrange half of lemon slices in a single layer over batter. Spread remaining batter evenly over top. Cover with remaining lemon slices in a single layer. Sprinkle chilled streusel evenly over batter.
4. Bake until cake is golden brown and a tester inserted in center comes out clean, about 55 minutes. Transfer pan to a wire rack set over a baking sheet; let cool in pan 15 minutes. Run a knife around edges of pan and remove outer ring. Let cool on rack 15 minutes more. Run a knife around center tube. Slide two wide spatulas between bottom of cake and pan, and lift cake to remove from center tube. Let cool completely on rack.

Glaze

1. Just before serving, stir together confectioners' sugar and lemon juice in a medium bowl. Drizzle over cooled cake, letting excess drip down sides. Let glaze set before slicing, about 5 minutes.