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ORWELLIAN PREDICTIONS IN NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR AND THE FAT MAN IN HISTORY

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ABSTRACT

Everyone who studied Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell and The Fat Man in History by Peter Carey strikes a balance between both. Orwell's novel and Carey's short story help the reader to get some definitions straight. They both demonstrate a terrifying vision of totalitarian expectations that make people slaves of a tyrannical regime. Both of the stories are relevant to today's dictator regimes which nip every movement in the bud. Their protagonists take work in hand to make changes. They up against social disorder by putting the reader's thinking cap on to see what ideas they can come up with, and always the result is rebellion. They use their loaf but buckle down to play problems down, bury the past and make a bright future. Despite being accessible and bestseller books, these works are proceeding moral issues of having a will of iron to stamp out the root and branch of injustice. Both the stories teach that life is not roses all the way, but society members must go through fire and water to be free of the yoke of totalitarianism.

Keywords: *George Orwell, Peter Carey, Orwellian, Rebellion, Totalitarianism.*

INTRODUCTION

The Fat Man in History by Peter Carey comes across with Orwellian definitions. Orwellian is an adjective describing a societal condition that George Orwell identified as being destructive to the welfare of an open society of liberty. Politics, Leadership, Revolutions, Corruption, Cannibalism, Future and Experiments are some of the elements of this vividly imagined and plainly written short fiction collection of fables by Carey. Suchlike, George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a masterly work which we are not able to keep eyes off it. This article attempts to prove the comparable elements of these different works of different periods that are as like as two peas. Eric Arthur Blair (1903–50), known as George Orwell, was a journalist, essay writer, and English novelist. His style declared simplicity, aptitude, and humor with the theme of anti-totalitarianism and social injustice. He is famous for the dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) which is one the best works of the Twentieth Century. Orwell's popularity is more than the ins and outs of a noble writer, and his used expressions, terms and line of thought gives free rein to us to adopt in many other literary works. 'Orwellian' is the phrase which describes formal deception, surreptitious investigation, and employment of the past to unveil totalitarian or authoritarian regime. Orwellian classification describes a totalitarian dystopia considered by government regulation and suppression of the people.

Both of Carey and Orwell in *The Fat Man in History* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* employ the fiction theme structure while using digressions to comment on the function of the authority and the

social order. Carey and Orwell use the same narrative techniques to achieve their intentions. Peter Carey (born 7 May 1943) is one of the most regarded Australian novelists and lives in New York, Unites States, but he is famous in Britain. He has won the Booker Prize and the Miles Franklin Award a couple of times. Carey took a job as teaching creative writing at New York University and frequently named as Australia's next candidate for the Nobel Prize in Literature. It seems he has influenced by the works of Franz Kafka, James Joyce, William Faulkner, Gabriel García Márquez and Samuel Beckett. His stories based on collaborating of fable, satire, and fantasy which are similar to post-colonial novelists. Carey writes surreal political stories about a place in the contemporary world, and that is not precisely Australia or anywhere we whole know. Peter Carey published his first book of short stories compiled in 1980 and released as *The Fat Man in History*, which consists of his ten short fictions starts by *The Fat Man in History* that written accessibly, stimulatingly and in an amusing way, without being haughty or murky. There are thematic connections and similarities between all ten stories in this interrelated book. Carey's mixed occult science fictional and naturalistic elements examine human nature from various perspectives. These stories have irregular and cosmopolitan perceptive to ruthless capitalism. *The Fat Man in History* takes place in a surrealist fancy world and is a good illustration of absurd dark comedy with consequently the authentic ideas and metaphors which are stunning and covering so much sense, albeit it does not distract anyone from the main purpose. This story is tight, unpredictable and full of elements that stay in your mind.

The Future in the Past, or the Past-Future

The Fat Man in History and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* narrated by a third person viewpoint. *The Fat Man in History* set in a fractionally different age, perhaps thirty years in the future. It happens in a world that is unrecognizable. Considering its first publication date (1974), it takes place in the future. This is the same situation we face in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. George Orwell's masterpiece published in 1949. *The Fat Man in History* is probably more like a dream state, a bit different standing, both fearsome and familiar. Carey's prose and the way he describes downright bizarre events occur within a realistic framework. All the stories of *The Fat Man in History* take place in an emulate world. Perhaps they come to pass in Australia, United States or somewhere between both, but we are sure that place is an unspecified English-speaking country in a vague post-revolution future. Also, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* consumes the same setting. It occurs in Oceania, one of three intercontinental super-states that divided the world among itself after a World war. It takes place in London, the "chief city of Airstrip One" (Orwell, 1984) the Oceanic province "had been called England or Britain" (Orwell, 1984).

Protagonists are Against Althorn in the Flesh of System

Futuristic short absurd and sociological oriented science fiction of *The Fat Man in History* is about a group of men who live in a house. Alexander Finch, overweight and obese, walks out of a department store with blue bed sheets and some cans of smoked oysters he has stolen, that fill the large pockets with his floppy trousers. After the revolution, being fat or being an oppressor, are the same. With the revolution and collapse of the previous regime, everything has changed:

To be fat is to be an oppressor, to be greedy, to be pre-revolutionary. It is impossible to say if it arose from the people or was fed to them by the propaganda of the revolution. Certainly in the years before the revolution most fat men were either Americans, stooges for the Americans, or wealthy supporters of the Americans. But in those years the people were of a more reasonable mind and could accept the idea



of fat men like Alexander Finch being against the Americans and against the old Danko regime. (Carey, 1993)

In the same boat, the protagonist of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston Smith, is a member of the Outer Party and works for the Ministry of Truth which is responsible for historical revisionism. His job is to rephrase past newspaper articles. The result is that the historical record always supports the current party line. Smith is a hardworking worker, but he secretly hates the Party and dreams of upheaval against the party's leader. Both Orwell and Carey's protagonists are isolated and playing with fire. They live in fear and trembling, and they do not keep up with the times. They keep body and soul together and coming to grips with the question of freedom. Off the top of their head, they work like a slave who has a grudge against the government and tries to make a clean breast of the whole thing.

In *The Fat Man in History*, entrapment and Isolation are common attributes of whole characters. This comes across in many forms; both physical and mental. The characters are both entrapped and isolated by their behavior and the environment: "He is Alexander Finch, thirty-five years old, very fat, very tired, and suddenly, hopelessly sad." (Carey, 1993) They can change their behavior to avoid this, but make a rod for their own back. They symbolize phlegmatic everyman. Being fat in that society accepted as a sign of greed. These groups of overweight men represent a group of revolutionists in their community, and the fat here is synonymous with reactionary. There are genetic lotteries that provide them with a whole new shape and obese men living in solution are against the revolution. These extraordinary tales are all grounded in prototypical human reactions. Carey's characters have depth, and their actions are often self-centered and through their thoughts and actions are hoist by their own petard. Many of his characters are social failures and are ineffective against an exterior force. Although *The Fat Man in History's* characters has isolated by environment and also by their behavior, they have less chance of release and cannot find their feet to avoid this situation and come out in the wash. They cannot hold their head high and are in a fog. They give themselves a lot of stick, and through the end of the story, they have egg on their face. This situation is like the characters of Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Winston Smith grew up after World War II in the ruins of London, during the revolution and the civil war, after which the Party supposed power. Winston's family disappeared, and he placed in an orphanage as the party's public servant. He has a dull life in a one-room flat on maintenance nourishment of black bread and meals that washed away.

Alexander Finch, the protagonist of *The Fat Man in History* as the 'Fat Man' between other characters simulates an isolated character deported from society. Finch and his friends are hopeless people who lost their job and ought to continue their hopeless life. They know they are over the hill; but despite cracking up and coming to the worst, feeling not regretful about fat. Both of Carey and Orwell's protagonists are odd and exhibit personal fables of a fabulist. They reveal anxieties about human nature by knowing that it would come to a no right end. They are hopeless characters who want to forget their facts. Finch was the reporter of people went from bad to worse. Now bad luck seems to have dogged his footsteps from the beginning. It never rains for them, but it pours. Like Smith in *Ninety Eighty-Four*, they are disoriented characters and because of showing no wise, deserve to take a lot of stick.

Under the Yoke of Science-Fictional Expansion

It is difficult to summarize the contents of *The Fat Man in History*, It contains almost as much stuff for even a novel and the style is difficult to describe. Like *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Carey's



story combines elements of science fiction and surrealism while still somehow having an authentic flavor of the late '40s and '70s when they were written. A weird machine, named as the Genetic Lottery, enables to swap bodies with other people. Orwell and Carey's imagination fired with genius while their callous intelligence is frighteningly cannibalistic. Surrealism and realism in *The Fat Man in History* create a world which is mysterious, serious and fantastic. The story follows a sarcastic sense of comedy also horrid and bizarre, a realistic tone, a controlled treatment of suggestive and a narrator whose character is as ambiguous and shadowy as his experience in a convincing structure. Surrealism in Carey's work is an intense sense of absurd paradoxes and contradictions of contemporary life and problematic nature of usual life facts. Character's absurd experiences are a metaphor for the undemanding ferocity of present-day technological society. For instance, Genetic Lottery machine catches on with the reader during the story in a way that reader shuts its eyes to weird elements, rests assured and says: the very idea! This is the same situation we confront within *Ninety Eighty-Four*. The inhabitants of Oceania live in apartments equipped with telescreens and microphones to be watched or listened. Orwell's world featured telescreens on every street, programming the public with party's propaganda. Orwell portrays terrifying images and conveys horrifying truths in a calm voice and mixes expertly with the hidden horrors of his message. Doubt and hunch also strength the misunderstood situation. Carey and Orwell try to show the frightening people got their hands on power and are feeling equal than others.

Books Het Up the Calm Before the Storm

Orwell and Carey try to take a totalitarian regime and its point of the matter in a trice. In Carey's short story, the cruelty of nature seems to be the critical element. Man is a thug with sadistic acts, but what makes it endurable, is the knowledge. Carey suggests that life ultimately is capable of even higher brutality. Men act with the hope of affecting, but nature's final cruelty is to prove itself once again. Both protagonists of *The Fat Man in History* and *Ninety Eighty-Four* are bent to understand the tyranny system which they have controlled by and also try to find themselves. Being aware how they burn themselves out, they attempt to find food for thought. *The Fat Man in History*'s protagonist pays half of his fare to buy a book. He knows about troubles he will confront with but does not give up reading. Always he is worried about the Botticelli book: "Finch is sitting in the kitchen leafing through the Botticelli book he has just bought. It took half the pension money. Everyone is out. He turns each page gently, loving the expensive paper as much as the reproductions" (Carey, 1993). At the end of the story, books show their effects by getting people under control, what proofs why books always give the government the shivers. "Revolution in a Closed Society—A Study of Leadership among the FatBy Nancy Bowlby: Leaders were selected for their ability to provide materially for the welfare of the group as a whole" (Carey, 1993).

Ninety Eighty-Four's protagonist puts all his eggs in one basket and brings the facts to light. Winston Smith knows: "It's the one thing they can't do. They can make you say anything—ANYTHING—but they can't make you believe it. They can't get inside you" (Orwell, 1984). Whereas the story gives out, we understand how Winston weighed up correctly. During the brainwashing and torture, they tell him ship-shapely: "We control matter because we control the mind. Reality is inside the skull" (Orwell, 1984). Winston insists on reading Goldstein's book while he profoundly knows the government accepts it as a crime: "He had committed—would still have committed, even if he had never set pen to paper—the essential crime that contained



all others in itself. Thought-crime, they called it. Thought-crime was not a thing that could be concealed forever. You might dodge successfully for a while, even for years, but sooner or later they were bound to get you” (Orwell, 1984). Emmanuel Goldstein is a former leader of The Party, the counter-revolutionary author of The Book titled as *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*, and leader of the opposition party. He is the symbolic Enemy of the State and the national nemesis whom ideologically bonds the people of Oceania with The Party. The Book explains that government cannot be defeated, even with the combined forces of other superstates. To hide contradictions, history is rewritten to clarify the new union which accepts it.

Time Will Tell the History

The Fat Man in History is a thoughtful work with an attempt to illuminate the truth and bald fact. Carey’s interest in history indirectly means him to objective historical narrative and explanations of events. The story deals with the problem of a fat man after the revolution when obesity known as a revolutionary movement in that modern society. “History” in the title of the story reveals the setting place in the future and the fact of the story which does not have a history. This “History” of the story circulates history in the lives of the characters: Alexander Finch, Milligan, Glino, May, Fantoni and the man who will not give his name, considering that historically this period is not “a good time to be a fat man” (Carey, 1993). Carey’s “History” is open to bout and defeat, and passes through some challenges of mind storm, similar in feeling and tone to: “He has accepted some new knowledge and the acceptance makes him feel strong although he has no real idea of what the knowledge is” (Carey, 1993).

“Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past,” (Orwell, 1984) is one of the slogans of the party in *Ninety Eighty-Four*. Winston Smith, the protagonist, spent his days changing public records, historical documents, and old newspapers to make the world of the past seem favorable to the party, thus changing history. Winston works in the Ministry of Truth, whose mission is the “day-to-day falsification of the past...[which] is as necessary to the stability of the regime as the work of repression” (Orwell, 1984). Winston as an editor is responsible for historical revisionism and making the government of Oceania seem omniscient. Winston rewrites records and notices the deleted people as “unpersons” (Orwell, 1984) and incinerates the original documents as “memory hole,” (Orwell, 1984) but suddenly he becomes fascinated by the real past and tries to learn more about it. The entire system based on deception of history. Party forced to change all historical information in the Ministry of Truth where Winston works. Winston knows what he is doing. They remove memory from the minds of people. People accept this condition because the government told that it was much worse before the revolution. Nobody knows if it is true, and then they should not complain about any unreported historical affair.

Fat Fascism: Fascism’s Rape of the Mind

The Fat Man in History provides comments on modern society under the skin of Fat Fascism. Carey notices how society and government, control revolutionaries by calling them Freedom Fighters. Totalitarian government like other similar systems accepts them as freedom fighters with the aim of cleaning them as the leadership of any predictable movement. The government after revolution halts everyone who seems to have a leadership power. When they ask: “What’s a fascist?” (Carey, 1993), the government abuses their weakness that is their poor knowledge: “He has accepted some new knowledge, and the acceptance makes him feel strong although he



has no real idea of what the knowledge is” (Carey, 1993). Characters of *The Fat Man in History* have lost count of everything. Despite knowing Florence Nightingale devil spirit, they show soft pedal on her. Florence is a spy, but they do not do anything, fall quiet and burn out themselves. Lack of knowledge is extendable to every modern society and nation, but your mind boggles at the amount of asininity they content themselves! The Fascist system to control communities uses self-destroying tactics of being self-enemy. *The Fat man in History* alarms about a totalitarian regime which people treated as inferior beings in, but as both signs of the coin might is merely about the body fascism of society. This political story breaks the surface by an improbable idea that tears the membrane between dreams and life. It shows labor movement’s caricature of capitalism of the Wild West as a wholly cumbersome giant.

Likewise, Orwell’s explanation of state power is multi-layered and ironic. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, both the state that seeks orderly rule and state that abuses its citizens without regard for justice are the same. Fascists have their idea of the nation. The nation has a concept in itself and is not as the same as the people, and the people could not lead the nation. The Leader as the root of the organization is capable of the whole thing. Fat Fascism of *the Fat Man in History* shows its different aspects in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The protagonist, Winston Smith, keeps a journal of negative thoughts and opinions about the Party and its leader that uncovered by the Thought-Police. He lives in a society “thought crime does not entail death. Thought crime IS death” (Orwell, 1984). They scare Winston stiff by psychologically draining interrogation that he must accept if a leader wants two plus two costs five!

Utopian Society is a Far Out of Revolutionary Society

In an identifiable modern society of *The Fat Man in History*, Carey holds forth on mentioning Revolutionary societies. In the story, the power of the supposed alterations comes from their association with the present. *The Fat Man in History* declares how social behaves controlled during the history. It shows the terrible situation of asphyxiation and isolation of people in society. American society is an alternate universe as the symbol of any place in the world. There is a vast difference between Orwellian and Carey’s revolutionary definitions. In *The Fat Man in History*, people lost their hope from the system. The new self-destroyer system is out of sorts and is not on the level. After the revolution, every matter is worse than before. They let the revolution has its head, but it got people’s goat. The new totalitarian government put an end to every movement, and everyone had leadership ability with self-destroying tactics. Consequently, fat men are trying to explore 16 October Avenue (Royal Parade). They “arrange anything... to blow up the 16 October Statue” (Carey, 1993). They hate this date of Revolution and are now trying to get things back on an even keel as soon as possible. Thus, Carey says revolutions seem much of a muchness, and we do not know if they will return empty-handed again or not. Despite Carey’s pessimistic view about changes, Orwellian characters of *The Fat Man in History* hope to refine the condition.

Moreover, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* experiences a similar situation. Winston and Julia are aware of historical events of the party and their society. They know about the civil war featuring “confused street fighting in London itself,” (Orwell, 1984) and the societal postwar reorganization, which the Party retrospectively calls “the Revolution” (Orwell, 1984). Early in the novel, Winston begins writing a personal diary. He wistfully addresses it “To the future or the past, to a time when thought is free.” (Orwell, 1984) Thus, everyone is approximating “Winston Smith, and must look to revolutionary acts of telling the truth to light the way to a



time, when, thought is free.” (Richard Mynick, 2010) After serving in Burma as Indian Imperial Police and fighting for Republicans in Spanish Civil War in 1937 and writing a fully political novel of *Animal Farm* (1945), Orwell was an old hand at describing revolutionary elements. His interrelation of power, dictatorship, and revolution is introspective: “Power is not a means, it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship” (Orwell, 1984).

CONCLUSION

George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Peter Carey’s *The Fat Man in History* have shared ideas. Their protagonists take work in hand to make changes. They up against social clutter by putting the reader’s thinking cap on to see what ideas they can come up with, and always revolution is the solution. They use their loaf but buckle down to play problems down, bury the past and make a bright future. It is not necessary to achieve their goal, but they teach a lesson to us: If someone has the purpose, grasps the nettle

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