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**Dystopian Minds: Behavioural Psychology and Control in 'THE CIRCLE'  
by Dave Eggers and 'ORYX AND CRAKE' by Margaret Atwood**

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**Abstract:**

Dystopian fiction, such as Dave Eggers's *The Circle* and Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*, depicts society's anxiety and fear about the future, where unchecked power, technological advancement, and societal decay result in tyranny and the erosion of freedom. These novels are cautionary tales that explore the idea of ecological damage, government supervision, technological dominance, declining individualism, and survival. "The Circle" by David Egger illustrates the ramifications of information overload and behavioral control in society. Manipulation and spreading of information become crucial for governance and behavior modification to further The Circle's goals of conformity. Characters grapple with the manipulation of algorithms, increased surveillance, and the loss of privacy, which jeopardizes personal freedom for technological growth. In "Oryx and Crake," the narrative delves into the post-apocalyptic world where unchecked scientific advancement and technological progress lead to societal collapse. The protagonist, Snowman, reflects on the events leading to society's demise, themes of human relationships, corporate dominance, eco-feminism, the consequence of manipulating nature, and the ethical implications of scientific progress. Ultimately, both novels serve as cautionary tales, highlighting the danger of sacrificing personal freedom and environmental integrity concerning the risk posed by our relationship with technology. It emphasizes the importance and need of maintaining our connection with the natural world and humanity.

**Keywords:** behavioral, psychology, post-apocalyptic, natural world and humanity.

**Introduction**

In the world of fiction that imagines the future, dystopian thinking acts like a mirror reflecting what people are scared about and worried about. Dystopian stories paint grim pictures of what might happen if power goes unchecked, technology advances too far, and society starts falling apart.

Although technological innovations promise a progressive and enlightened society, they also give a possibility of exploitation, corruption, and control. Some dystopian

narratives frequently depict a future where technology becomes a tool of oppression used to subjugate the masses by manipulation and excessive surveillance. These dystopian societies depict the erosion of privacy and freedom. This can be seen in the novel 'The Circle' written by Dave Eggers. The circle offers a chilling exploration of the result of unchecked technological advancement, erosion of privacy, and individual autonomy.

Furthermore, dystopian fiction also presents the result of environmental neglect, resource destruction, and depletion. Humanity's selfishness leads to exploitation of the natural world, leading to ecological catastrophes, pollution, climate change, and global warming. Natural resources, which culminate in an apocalyptic world, are central themes. These narratives show the interconnectedness of humanity and nature, warning of the consequences of selfish actions and ignorance of the environment. The novel 'Oryx and Crake' written by Margaret Atwood, revolves around themes such as apocalypticism, focalization, and manipulation of human behavior for corporate and political gain. It depicts a post-apocalyptic world where society has been wiped out by a global pandemic engineered by the protagonist's friend, Crake. The novel reveals how Crake is disappointed with humanity's shortcomings and genetically engineered species devoid of human flaws. This novel highlights the deep connection between the dystopian mind and behavior control.

Behavioral control is the potential to control or influence an individual's behavior. It can be done by targeting and altering the thinking and thinking of a person or by manipulating their actual behavior. In accordance with the literature, behavioral control is frequently seen as a key factor in the prediction and understanding of human behavior. There are various ways to control behavior. Some methods involve directly targeting behaviors using rules and incentives. Others involve modifying others' thinking in the hopes that their behaviors will be changed as a result. Many reports have shown that people are more psychologically responsive when their thinking is controlled than when their behavior is controlled (Ainslie, 1975)

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) posits that an individual's likelihood of engaging in any healthy behavior correlates directly with their intention to engage in said behavior. This intention is a manifestation of the person's commitment to act, influenced by various factors. According to the TPB, key factors shaping intentions to engage in health behaviors include the individual's attitudes toward the behavior, their perception of subjective group norms related to the behavior, and their perceived control over the behavior (Ajzen, 2020). In essence, the TPB underscores the significance of psychological determinants in predicting and understanding health behaviors, emphasizing the interplay between attitudes, social influences, and perceived control in shaping behavioral intentions (Cheung, 2000).

In Dave Eggers' "The Circle," readers are transported into a near-future world dominated by the rise of a powerful tech corporation recognized as the Circle. Within this dystopian landscape, themes of corporate power, tech surveillance, social sharing, and online identity, information overload, social pressure, algorithm manipulation, digital

scrutiny, privacy invasion converge to paint a chilling portrait of a society increasingly controlled by digital forces. As written by Ellen Ullman in 2013 in the New York Times, "The company demands transparency in all things; two of its many slogans are SECRETS ARE LIES and PRIVACY IS THEFT." In the dystopian setting of "The Circle," social sharing evolves into a tool for societal control and manipulation. The company's emphasis on transparency and connectivity conceals a deeper agenda of surveillance and influence, with individuals' online activities monitored and commodified for profit (McKenna, P.J., III, 2023).

Both novels engage with critical questions about autonomy, free will, and the psychological mechanisms that reinforce control. As Michel Foucault argues in *Discipline and Punish*, "visibility is a trap" (Foucault, 1975), a concept that resonates profoundly in both texts, where omnipresent surveillance and bio-political manipulation dictate human behavior.

Eggers' *The Circle* illustrates a world where digital technology is weaponized to create a society that prioritizes transparency over individual freedom. Mae Holland, the protagonist, undergoes a transformation from an eager employee to an unwitting agent of an all-seeing, algorithmic regime. The mantra "SECRETS ARE LIES, SHARING IS CARING, PRIVACY IS THEFT" (Eggers, 2013) encapsulates how psychological conditioning is used to eliminate dissent and reinforce compliance. Critics have pointed out how the novel critiques Silicon Valley's increasing encroachment on personal freedoms. As literary scholar James Shapiro notes, *The Circle* "exposes the fallacy of a utopia where freedom is willingly surrendered in exchange for visibility" (Shapiro, 2018). The novel's psychological underpinnings highlight the dangers of voluntary submission to surveillance, reinforcing theories of social conditioning and compliance developed by B.F. Skinner and Stanley Milgram.

Similarly, Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* delve into the consequences of bioengineering, corporate domination, and psychological manipulation. Crake, the novel's brilliant yet sociopathic architect of a new world order, embodies the Nietzschean "Übermensch" who justifies his actions through cold, scientific rationalism. His belief that "God is a cluster of neurons" (Atwood, 2003) reflects a deterministic approach to human behavior, where emotions and morality are reducible to biological processes.

### **Objectives**

1. Analyze the Use of Behavioural Psychology as a Mechanism of Control and Manipulation
2. Investigate the Influence of Surveillance, Technological Innovations, and Biopolitical Control on Human Behavior and Societal Norms
3. Evaluate the Ethical Dimensions of Scientific and Technological Interventions in Human Life

Compare and Contrast the Narrative Strategies and Thematic Concerns of Eggers and Atwood

### **Methodology**

For this paper, using literary and theoretical analysis of this paper.

### **Analysis**

## **CORPORATE POWER**

In Dave Eggers' "The Circle," the theme of "corporate power" emerges as a dominant motif, illustrating the novel's exploration of the influence wielded by large corporations, particularly in the tech industry. "Corporate power" refers to the authority and control exerted by corporations over various aspects of society, including economic, political, and social realms (Brichall, 2023). In "The Circle," the eponymous tech company embodies the epitome of corporate power with its vast resources, advanced technology, and widespread influence. Protagonist Mae Holland is initially drawn to the Circle's vision of innovation and progress, unaware of the extent of its corporate power. As she becomes more deeply entrenched in the company's culture, Mae begins to witness first-hand the immense influence wielded by the Circle over society. Egger's portrayal of corporate power serves as a cautionary tale, highlighting the potential dangers of unchecked corporate influence. The novel prompts readers to critically examine the role of large corporations in shaping the trajectory of human civilization and the proper inferences of their actions.

In the dystopian world of "The Circle," corporate power extends beyond mere economic dominance to encompass control over individual autonomy and privacy. However, behind the façade of innovation lies a sinister truth: the relentless pursuit of data exploitation for profit and control. Within the Circle's walls, Mae witnessed first-hand the consequences of data exploitation. Individuals' privacy is stripped away, and their private material is commodified and monetized, deprived of their permission. The company's thirst for data knows no bounds, leading to the erosion of privacy and the manipulation of public opinion on a massive scale.

Egger's exploration of data exploitation forces readers to confront uncomfortable truths about the digital age. The novel serves as a stark reminder of the inherent risks posed by the unchecked collection and exploitation of particular facts (Sharma, G., 2023). By shining a light on the insidious practices of information pulling out and surveillance capitalism, Eggers underscores the imperative for better transparency and accountability in the tech industry.

Through Mae's harrowing journey, readers are compelled to question the ethical implications of data exploitation and its impact on individual autonomy and democracy. The novel serves as a rallying cry for greater scrutiny of tech giants and their role in shaping the future of humanity. Ultimately, "The Circle" serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of data exploitation in the digital age. It urges readers to remain vigilant against the encroachment of corporate interests on personal privacy and democratic principles (Laguarta-Bueno, 2018).

Through Mae's struggle to navigate the treacherous waters of data exploitation, Eggers delivers a powerful message about the importance of preserving human dignity and autonomy in an increasingly data-driven world.

## **ONLINE IDENTITY**

In "The Circle" by Dave Eggers, Mae Holland's journey within the titular tech company underscores the theme of "online identity." Online identity refers to "A configuration of a person's distinguishing traits in the online environment" (Kim et al., 2011). Initially, Mae is enthralled by the Circle's ethos of transparency and connectivity, eagerly embracing the opportunity to shape her online persona. However, as she delves deeper into the company's culture, Mae finds herself ensnared in a web of constant surveillance and pressure to conform to societal expectations online. Her struggles to balance authenticity with the demands of maintaining a flawless online image highlight the complexities of managing one's online identity in the digital age. Dave Eggers explores the theme of online identity as a mechanism of behavioral control in a dystopian society. The Circle's pervasive monitoring and manipulation of individuals' online activities serve as a means of exerting power and influencing behavior. By blurring the lines between real and digital identities, the company effectively melds individuals into compliant subjects, fostering a culture of conformity and self-censorship (McKenna, P.J., III, 2023).

This manipulation of online identity reflects Eggers' critique of the erosion of personal autonomy and the dangers of unchecked corporate influence in the digital realm. In a dystopian society, where individuals are constantly monitored and manipulated, online identity becomes a tool for exerting control and shaping behavior to fit societal norms (Rana, 2021). The impact of the theme of online identity in "The Circle" extends beyond the confines of the narrative, serving as a chilling reminder of the potential consequences of relinquishing control over one's digital self (Kumar. S. C, 2023).

Algorithm manipulation serves as a powerful tool of control, allowing The Circle to tailor individuals' online experiences, manipulate their perceptions, and influence their decisions. Through sophisticated algorithms, the company curates the content users see, controls the spread of information, and even dictates social norms and ideologies. In "The Circle," algorithm manipulation is exemplified through the actions of the company's founder, Eamon Bailey, and its protagonist, Mae Holland. Bailey and Mae are both involved in the deliberate alteration of algorithms to control and influence the behavior of The Circle's users (Eggers, 2013).

## **DIGITAL SCRUTINY**

In "The Circle," the intertwining of dystopian minds and behavioral control is epitomized by the pervasive theme of digital scrutiny. The novel paints a chilling portrait of a society where constant surveillance and scrutiny are normalized, leading to a profound erosion of personal privacy and autonomy. Digital scrutiny in "The Circle" reflects a dystopian mindset wherein individuals' every move is monitored, analyzed, and judged. Through the company's sophisticated surveillance technology, The Circle exercises unprecedented control over its users, creating a panopticon-like environment where even the most private moments are subject to scrutiny. In "The Circle," digital scrutiny is a pervasive theme that profoundly impacts the protagonist, Mae Holland, and other characters as they navigate the company's culture of transparency and surveillance. The

novel portrays a society where constant surveillance and scrutiny are normalized, leading to a profound erosion of personal privacy and autonomy.

Mae experiences digital scrutiny firsthand as she becomes increasingly enmeshed in The Circle's digital ecosystem. For example, as she rises through the ranks of the company, she faces scrutiny not only from her superiors but also from her peers and the wider Circle community. Every aspect of her life, both online and offline, is subject to scrutiny and judgment. Furthermore, Mae's experiences with digital scrutiny are mirrored in the character of Annie, her close friend and fellow Circle employee. Annie grapples with the pressure to maintain a perfect online persona and feels the weight of constant scrutiny from her colleagues and the public.

This theme of digital scrutiny underscores the insidious ways in which behavioral control can manifest within dystopian societies, where the boundaries between public and private spheres are blurred, and individual autonomy is sacrificed in the name of societal conformity (Trefler & Johnson, 2015).

#### **PRIVACY INVASION**

In "The Circle," the nexus of dystopian minds and behavioral control is poignantly illustrated through the theme of privacy invasion. The novel portrays a dystopian society where the erosion of personal privacy is not only recognized but devotedly encouraged by the all-powerful tech company, The Circle. Mae experiences the invasive nature of privacy invasion firsthand as she becomes increasingly enmeshed in The Circle's digital ecosystem. Her personal information is routinely collected, analyzed, and used without her explicit consent, leading to a loss of autonomy and privacy. This invasion of privacy extends beyond Mae to other characters within the novel, highlighting the pervasive reach of The Circle's surveillance apparatus. The constant scrutiny and surveillance create a chilling atmosphere where individuals' every move is monitored and judged, eroding personal freedoms and autonomy. The story serves as a warning about the risks of unrestricted monitoring and the degradation of personal privacy in the digital era through Mae's experiences and those of other characters. It underscores the importance of protecting personal freedoms and autonomy in the face of increasing technological advancement and corporate control. The erosion of privacy leads to a chilling normalization of surveillance culture, where the boundaries between public and private spheres are blurred beyond recognition. This normalization exacerbates the sense of information overload experienced by characters, intensifying feelings of anxiety and alienation.

#### **ANALYSIS OF 'ORYX AND CRAKE'**

Oryx and Crake is a very dark dystopian novel published in 2003. It was written by Margaret Atwood; it is the first in the Madd Addam trilogy. This novel introduces us to a post-apocalyptic scenario in which our planet is on the edge of destruction, and humans have almost eradicated and substituted for a new genetically engineered race. The novel follows Snowman in the post-apocalyptic world where he cares for crackers, and there is a change between Snowman's narrative and the pre-apocalyptic narrative of Jimmy, who is also friends with Crake. The novel explores themes of evolution, extension, scientific



progress, and the way that relationships can affect actions.

## **DYSTOPIA**

The novel features a society trailing an ideal of perfection, people's differentiation, categorization, a wide acceptance of the loss of privacy, and increased surveillance in the name of advancement "for the greater good." The 20<sup>th</sup> century's dystopian writings are mostly time-based on oppression. Dystopia is easily perceived through the actual desire for a utopia that is capable of any device to reach its goal. (Etrangeres, 2012)

Atwood's first dystopian work was "The Handmaid's Tale," and it seems she used similar patterns in the novel *Oryx and Crake*, as there is no sight of innovative dystopia. The author tries to strike readers and make them aware that her fiction is already underway. (Etrangeres, 2012). The majority of the Critics state that Atwood's work is dystopian, but the author disagrees with it, saying that her works are "utopian," which she defines as "the imagined perfect society and its opposite—because each contains a latent version of the other" ("The Road to Utopian"). Atwood's definition of Utopia finds rationality with Lyman Tower Sargent's concept of "critical dystopia." (Martin. J, 2019) Soraya Copley states, "The pollution of the environment and the food chain by reckless humanity is not a new subject in dystopian writing. It has been a major preoccupation in a range of feminist dystopian texts for over forty years, and it continues today with a renewed emphasis on post-apocalyptic and eco-critical dystopia" (Martin. J, 2019). Another critic, Sarah A. Appleton, says the narrator, Jimmy's role in the novel is so complex and considers the narrated events as not real but the result of his hallucinations:

"Jimmy may also be cluing us into the possibility that the world he inhabits does not exist; this world may only dwell in his imagination: it is the nothing that is. As countless references in the text to a myriad of dystopian fiction attest, this post-world may have been conjured by Jimmy and composed of fragments of films, books, and video game plots. Moreover, the individuals he holds responsible—Crake and Oryx—may also be mere "shadows," figments of his tortured mind. Indeed, Crake and Oryx may represent portions of his psyche: superego and id, shadow and animal, mind and soul, Thanatos, and eros." (Martin. J, 2019)

## **MANIPULATION**

Today's society is mostly based on manipulation, whether in genetics, pharma, or any science field. In the novel *Oryx and Crake*, manipulation maneuvers from one domain to another, one area to another, and even one form to another, from genetic modification to manipulation of languages and thoughts, which surrounds the character Jimmy. To brief you individually, first, let us sneak into genetic manipulation that has reached the breeding of species and the innovation of new ones based on our greedy needs for monetary benefits, which has become a rational tool for us to reach our goals. Genetic modification can be seen as a game that, day by day, becomes an addictive entertainment tool. (Etrangeres, 2012)

In the novel *Oryx and Crake*, the manipulation is more broadly developed to the extent in characters that it is impossible to revoke where complete blind belief of the people

and manipulation become the strong tool for powerful people. Further, the manipulation of language becomes a powerful tool as it directly strikes people's minds and affects our thoughts, leading to the power of control over the human body as needed. (Etrangeres, 2012)

Finally, manipulation becomes the heart of novels through language and thoughts; here in *Oryx and Crakes*, the character Jimmy, the depictive anti-hero is manipulated by a society of his own. Karen F. Stain calls this work "anti-utopian speculative fiction – adventure romance – Menippean satire." (Etrangeres, 2012)

#### GENETIC ENGINEERING

In Margaret Atwood's dystopian novel "*Oryx and Crake*," the stage is set in a familiar but distant future where the ecosystem lies in ruins and is devastated by human atrocities. Against this bathe backdrop, the protagonist Snowman emerges as one of the few survivors of this catastrophe that is the pandemic of humanity making. Snowman is left to roam the Westland, where he scours the remains of civilization; desperate to survive, he fights loneliness, despair, and haunting memories of the lost world (Barış, A. Ğ. I. R. (2022).)

The snowman who we thought to be alone is not alone. In this post-apocalyptic landscape, he encounters certain creatures. All products of mankind are in pursuit of scientific advancements through genetic engineering. These include grotesque hybrids raised for organ transplantation and other unnatural creatures, and then there are wolves, which are cunning amalgamations of dog and wolf, which embroider both loyalty and ferocity in equal measure. There are also certain beings called the Crakers, innocent and beautiful beings immune to disease yet strangely devoid of individuality, their existence a testament to humanity's hubris (Barış, A. Ğ. I. R. (2022).)

The snowman struggles to navigate this harsh new reality, which is not so good that it makes his thoughts inevitably turn to the past to the time when he was known as Jimmy. In Atwood's world, society is divided into different runs, such as isolated compounds inhabited by elite scientists and technicians and other land inhabited by masses. It is within this stark dichotomy that Jimmy's story unfolds. His father owns a company that specializes in cultivating organs for transplantation, while Jimmy and his friend Crake spend their day watching films and surfing the internet. Crake, with his intellect and curiosity, is drawn to the world of genetic engineering, where he finds both purpose and Solace. It is through his eyes that we witness the true extent of humans' atrocities as he is introduced to the top-secret research project known as "paradise." This project includes the cloning process, embryonic organs, and genetic manipulation to achieve eternal youth, health, and beauty, but Crack obsession with the work grows, so he presents towards Snowman and his infatuation with Oryx, who is an assistant that holds the key to unlocking the mysteries of genetic engineering? There is a love triangle that soon spirals into jealousy, betrayal, and ultimately revenge, which sets the motion of a chain of events that will alter the course of human history (Barış, A. Ğ. I. R, 2022).

In Atwood's novel, there exists a profound meditation on the nature of scientific



probes and their ethical implications. Through the genetic engineering point of view, she explores the delicate balance between innovation and responsibility and the fine line between the creator and the destroyer in a world where scientific and technological advancement has pushed the way moral wisdom and the boundaries between humans and nature have been blurred. The author forces us to confront the repercussions of our actions and the delicate nature of our existence. Even in these desperate times, there lies hope even in the ashes of the old world. A new chapter begins that holds the promise of redemption and renewal through the view of a snowman; we bear witness to the rise of a new era that is not exploited by the greed of humans but by responsibility and compassion. He dreams of a world where humans and nature can coexist with harmony and happiness (Barış, A. Ğ. I. R, 2022).

### **GAMIFICATION OF REALITY**

The dystopian novel "Oryx and Crake" by Margaret dives into the events that lead to the catastrophic extension that wipes out humanity from the face of the earth; this analysis explores various factors that contribute to the uppercase, including terrorism, technology, media, and ecological concerns. The author's narration also addresses the danger of violent online content accessibility to such material and the potential for violence through the internet. It also examines the evolving landscape of cyber terrorism and terrorism in the modern era, considering advancements in technology and science, the potential for biological and nuclear warfare, and the unethical use of genetic engineering; it also explores the suppression of environmental agendas by capitalist authoritarianism (Hodge, P. M, 2021).

Online social media platforms, unlike other traditional media outlets, can provide unfiltered communication and real-time connection. The virtual world content is interpreted within the context of online social networking and hypertext. It holds a layer of meaning to literary text. Modern video games, with their interactive and competitive elements, impress the players psychologically, resulting in a certain case of addiction, which symbolizes hypertext in their multilayered interactivity; players, actions, and decisions in video games influence the game's outcome. This is similar to how readers interact with the hypertext, thereby blurring the line between the author and the reader (Hodge, P. M, 2021).

In this novel, the characters, Jimmy and Crake, involve themselves in an online world, which is filled with explicit and violent content, thereby decent dens to traditional human suffering; they consume arrange of material, which includes animal cruelty, assisted suicide sites, shaping their perception of reality to the negative side of the human tendency as they become what they consume, their perception of the world becomes fragmented and disconnected, which reflects a society driven by consumerism and detached from natural human experience which shows the dangerous side of the online activities that is discussed lately. It is very important to pose certain limitations to online activities and their users (Hodge, P. M, 2021).

This extremely hyper-realistic portrayal of the world, which is consumed by online

entertainment and virtual experiences, shadows the novels, ultra-capitalist bio, political regime, the characters, consumption of violent material, and stimulated entertainment, including other harming content, mirrors, societies, decay of art and normalization of violence. Ultimately, the novel highlights the danger of society with digital distractions and the commodification of human experiences, which leads to little empathy and connection to reality in this world (Hodge, P. M, 2021).

This enlarged analysis of the narration's exploration of the complex role and play between technology, media, and human behavior in shaping dystopian societies. Through the novel, the readers are prompted to see the implications of greed that led to the technology, advancement, and erosion of authentic and genuine human connection in an increasingly digital world. This led to a loose connection between humans and nature, where the generation is always connected to their technological instruments like phones and computers, which makes them decrease time spent with nature and the world (Hodge, P. M, 2021).

## **CONCLUSION**

Our in-depth analysis of "The Circle" and "Oryx and Crake" has revealed the alarming ways in which dystopian societies can manipulate and control individuals through technology, corporate power, and social pressure. The "Circle" talks about how the Web can deepen and vitalize democracy. We should not only look at what the technology can do on its own. We must also look at how the tech industry is regulated and connected to other spheres of society. We have to consider how it plays together with democracy as a form of government, which depends on a separation of state, market, and civil society; in the given context, the novel inserts itself into the discourse on democracy by introducing the concept of "demoxie." Eggers doesn't simply transpose digital technology into a future where the notion of democracy has become obsolete in describing the dynamics of digital social communities. Instead, the novel remains firmly rooted in Enlightenment traditions of democratic thought, implicitly drawing upon the values and norms of this discourse. In essence, Eggers' work engages with democratic ideals even within the realm of digital social interactions, showcasing a continuity with historical democratic principles and philosophies. Oryx and Crake have focused on the world, which was dramatically reworked within the twentieth century by fast advances in technology, and the next century promises much more to come. Science fiction directly addresses the problems these new technologies create. It is this relevance to the lives of contemporary readers that prevents science fiction from even being an important branch of literature. Milton and Dostoevsky never wrote about the implications of genetic engineering, so it follows that such a concern can have no place in great literature. Already, we have entered into a dystopian society secretly; we can't resist it. We need to survive in that society. Her central message is that powerful biological technologies in the hands of a deranged madman could be dangerous, which is undeniably true and entirely and perfectly useless to Twenty-first-century readers seeking to return to grips with these new technologies. Biotechnology and recombinant DNA technology are going to be a vital and inevitable part of our future. Through these novels,

we can see how the erosion of privacy, the manipulation of information, and the pressure to conform can lead to a loss of individuality and autonomy. We have witnessed the consequences of such control, including the suppression of dissent, the perpetuation of inequality, and the destruction of human relationships.

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