

# How We Learned to Love Big Brother

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“He gazed up at the enormous face. Forty years it had taken him to learn what kind of smile was hidden beneath the dark moustache. O cruel, needless misunderstanding! O stubborn, self-willed exile from the loving breast! Two gin-scented tears trickled down the sides of his nose. But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother.”

– George Orwell, 1984

When I started The Corbett Report in 2007, the idea that governments were watching and listening to everything you do was still wild-eyed conspiracy theory. Oh, sure, the fact that the NSA had been secretly and illegally wiretapping Americans since at least 9/11 was, by that point, [mainstream news](#). But those “revelations” (which themselves were old news to conspiracy realists) were not enough to convince the dyed-in-the-wool coincidence theorists that the government was actively engaged in the electronic surveillance of everyone.

We conspiracy realists could (and did) talk till we were blue in the face about the [Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act](#) and [Stellar Wind](#) and Room [641A](#). “The NSA is splitting off the internet trunk lines and running them into locked off server rooms, for crying out loud!” we shouted. “What more do you need to know?”

We talked to NSA whistleblowers like [William Binney](#) and [Russ Tice](#). We learned about [ThinThread and Trailblazer](#), and how mass collection of everything was ready and waiting to go *before* 9/11. We learned how the NSA was [spying on high-ranking officials](#) within the US government itself, including senior Congressional leaders, high-ranking military generals, the entire Supreme Court, and even then-Senator from Illinois and future President, Barack Obama.

We made note of the mainstream media's own casual admissions of the power of the deep state's spying tools. How our phones are listening to us even when they're "off." How smart appliances will be used to spy on us in our own homes. How the FBI can go back and listen to a recording of any phone conversation you've had at any point in the past, even if you weren't under surveillance.

"Big Brother is already here!" we [warned](#). "1984 is today!"

And we were laughed at.

Fast foward to 2020, and now no one is laughing. Instead, they shrug their shoulders. "Yeah, of course the government is tracking us. They have to! It's for our own good!"

So what happened?

The turnaround started in 2013. That's when the public was given another of its phony heroes: Edward Snowden. Now, finally, here was a *real*, honest-to-gosh whistleblower spilling the beans and sharing the documents that proved that the NSA was . . . collecting metadata?

Yes, our wise and crusading Hero For Truth Snowden shined a light on the *real* problem with Big Brother: They aren't filling out the right paperwork, or using the right legal mumbo jumbo to justify their spying. And so this "whistleblower" (who washed out of special forces training and worked for the CIA before becoming a super duper computer god

with access to the NSA's internal network while he was in his 20s, somehow) just wanted to bring this spying into the light so we could have a "conversation" about it!

(Oh, and don't worry guys: He [says](#) there's nothing to any of that silly 9/11 conspiracy stuff or chemtrails or aliens or any of those wild topics, so you don't have to bother thinking about them anymore.)

This was actually something of a relief, even for the people who barked about how Snowden's irresponsible actions had endangered American lives blah blah blah. Because, you see, now we could stop doing all that doublethink about government spying. Yes, the government *is* spying on us! . . . But maybe that's a good thing. At any rate, it's a *debate* we should be having. How much spying is too much? I mean, there *is* a terror threat, after all, and we want to get the bad guys, right. And you [don't have anything to hide](#), do you?

And so we admitted there was a Big Brother.

But that wasn't enough for Big Brother. You can't just be *aware* of what Big Brother is doing. You can't just *tolerate* Big Brother's actions. You have to learn to *love* Big Brother.

And so China caught a cold. And so did Europe. And New York City. And—sure, why not—the rest of the world did, too. Maybe not in that order. Or maybe not at all. Don't fret about the details. The important thing is that (say it with me) *nothing will ever be the same again*.

You will never again be able to leave your house without thinking about the mortal danger that each and every physical interaction with every human being on earth poses.

*What? Get within six feet of someone? . . . Without a mask on? Are you crazy?*

Oh, if only someone could save us from this dreaded scourge!

Hey, wait . . . Whatever happened to that Big Brother guy? Can't he find out everywhere we've been? And everyone we've been in contact with? And if someone gets sick, can't he just go back and force everyone in that chain of connection into quarantine? Hey, it [worked in Korea](#)! Problem solved, right?

And so it was that "[contact tracing](#)" was born. And it spread to [Canada](#) and [Australia](#) and [India](#) and [the UK](#) and (you guessed it) [everywhere else, too](#).

What? The contact tracing apps [don't actually work](#) unless a "critical mass" adopts them? Well then just [make them mandatory](#)! After all, what kind of weirdo doesn't walk around with a phone surgically attached to them at all times, anyway?

I want professional health care providers (and professional contact tracers and government employees and big tech companies and their subcontractors and app developers and extortionware makers and hackers and everyone else in the world) to know where I've been, who I've been talking to, what I've been buying and doing, and when I've been doing it!

I want to be spied on, dammit! It's for my own good!

And that, my friends, is how we won the victory over ourselves. We love Big Brother now.