

1984 Audition & Casting Information



RVC Fine & Performing Arts Department Presents 1984

Adapted by Robert Owens, Wilton E Hall, Jr., and William A. Miles, Jr. from the novel by George Orwell. Directed by Jennifer Thompson

**Auditions: August 26 from 4 – 6 pm,
August 27 from 2 – 4 pm in the PAR on
Main Campus**

Got questions or need accommodations?
Contact the director at
J.Thompson@RockValleyCollege.edu. We
are excited to meet you, and we are happy
to support you throughout this process.

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Purpose

The considerations and information in this document represent actual materials and informed assumptions regarding this production based on the script. Due to the nature of the creative process and consent-informed practice, this information and these considerations are subject to change. The currently licensed script includes some specific staging/fight/intimacy stage directions. Not all are negotiable.

It is strongly recommended that all students who are auditioning read the script before deciding to audition or agreeing to serve in an acting, technical, or management assignment.

The information provided in this document is intended to enhance transparency and understanding of the production materials and concepts, thereby aiding potential participants in making informed decisions about their involvement in this production.

Audition/Casting Information

- Auditions are an opportunity for you to have fun and show off your skills and abilities as a performer. We want you to do your best.
- Any RVC student (credit or non-credit) is welcome to audition for any role(s). Priority in the audition, consideration, and casting process will be given to RVC students taking theatre courses.
- We will not be using swings or understudies for this production.
- We are interested in casting individuals in roles that they are willing to play, and that aligns with their gender identity and/or expression, if that is an important factor in their decision to participate. If there is a role that you would not want to be considered for, please do not hesitate to indicate this on your audition form. The audition form will also ask if you have a preference in terms of the role(s) you are willing or not willing to portray.
- Actors may be cast to play multiple smaller roles.
- If we are unable to cast the show with RVC students, we will first look for RVC alumni and then RVC faculty or staff to fill any open roles
- Casting notices will be sent via college email by Monday, August 31 at 7 pm. All auditioners will receive notices of casting decisions.
- First company meeting will be on Wednesday, September 2 at 6 pm in CLI 1252.

Synopsis

This authorized stage adaptation is true to the novel in which Orwell depicts with great power the horrors of man's fate in a society where Big Brother is always watching, where everything that is not prohibited is compulsory. As your cast presents the play, you will be participating in a theatrical event that is both powerful and disturbingly provocative. Orwell himself once said, "I do not believe that the kind of society I describe necessarily will arrive, but I believe that something resembling it could arrive. The moral to be drawn from the dangerous nightmare situation is a simple one: Don't let it happen. It depends on you." (DramaticPublishing.com)

Characters

Character	Pronouns	Description	Considerations
Winston Smith	He/Him	The inquisitive protagonist, who is curious about history, has secret thoughts of rebellion, and becomes intimately involved with Julia. Key traits: inquisitive, fragile, and brave.	Experiences psychological and physical torture Has a close, intimate relationship with Julia – only kissing may be portrayed on stage
Julia	She/Her	Publicly supports Party doctrine; privately enjoys small acts of rebellion; becomes intimately involved with Winston. Key traits: full of life, defiant, and romantic.	Has a close, intimate relationship with Winston – only kissing may be portrayed on stage
O'Brien	He/Him	An inner party official who is secretly a member of the thought police goes as a member of the counter-revolution resistance to entrap Winston. Key traits: intimidating, manipulative, and loyal.	Responsible for the psychological and physical torture of Winston
Landlady	She/Her	Older woman, messy. Her part is written in a dialect that is different than the others. Key traits: boisterous, exuberant, and a little nosy.	
Big Brother's Voice (any)	He/Him	Never seen but plays a large role in plot and worldbuilding; the Party leader and figurehead; there's a cult formed around this character, but it is not revealed if they truly exist or not. Key traits: powerful, omnipresent, and cult of personality.	Never seen Strong, commanding speaking voice
Goldstein's voice (any)*	She/Her They/Them	Never seen but plays a large role in plot and worldbuilding; former leading figure of the Party now the counter-revolutionary leader of the Brotherhood; the symbolic enemy of the state – the feminine version of Big Brother. Key traits: powerful, compassionately convincing, and warm.	
Parsons*	She/Her	Winston's neighbor fully embraces the propaganda of Big Brother. Key traits: loyal, cheerful, and oblivious.	
Syme*	Any	A linguistics expert who is working on the Newspeak Dictionary; a	

		party loyalist. Key traits: intelligent, perceptive, and passionate.	
Loudspeaker voice*	Any	Is heard providing all of the announcements at the Ministry of Truth. Key traits: strong, clear voice, good diction, and cheerful.	
Messenger*	Any	An employee at the Ministry of Truth; delivers tasks to employees,	
Coffee Vendor*	Any	The barista at the Ministry of Truth.	
First Guard*	Any	Strong submissive servant of Big Brother at the Ministry of Truth.	Simulated violence against others
Second Guard*	Any	Strong submissive servant of Big Brother at the Ministry of Truth.	Simulated violence against others
Gladys*	She/Her	Parson's active and energetic teenage daughter who loves to play spy/police games in the apartment building.	
Martin*	Any	O'Brien's servant who is silently complicit within the Inner Party's power structure. Key traits: submissive, obedient, and mysterious.	
Waitress/Waiter*	Any	Servers at the diner where the secret meetings occur.	

**This will likely be 3-5 actors playing all of these roles.*

Rehearsal Information

Rehearsals will be held on the Main Campus in either the PEC Dance Studio or the PAR in the ERC.

As a way of prioritizing mental, physical, emotional, and academic health for everyone involved in RVC Theatre Department productions, we may adjust the schedule accordingly.

Please be as thorough and specific as possible on your audition form when listing both regular and irregular conflicts with the dates above. The information provided will inform both final casting and rehearsal schedule decisions.

Most rehearsals are scheduled Tuesdays – Thursdays from 6 – 9 pm, Saturdays from 10 am – 2 pm. Not all actors will be called for all rehearsals.

Performances

Performances (in the ERC Performing Arts Room). They are free and open to the public.

- Thursday, November 5: 6:30 pm call, 7:30 pm curtain
- Friday, November 6: 6:30 call, 7:30 curtain
- Saturday, November 7: 6:30 pm call, 7:30 pm curtain
- Sunday, November 8: 1 pm call, 2 pm curtain
- Strike: to be held immediately following the final performance

Access-Related Considerations

CONSENT and TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICES

Theatre is therapeutic, but it is not therapy. All collaboration on this production will originate from a place of consent – in all things AND for all participating – including, but not limited to, intimacy, staging, costuming, violence/combat, and overall production safety.

YOUR VOICE WILL BE HEARD

The Company (Cast, Crew, Design Team, et al) will establish a Company Agreement at the first rehearsal, outlining expectations, responsibilities, and accountability for participating in this production. Each member of the Company will adopt and ratify the agreement by signature.

Production Element Considerations

The production will use bright lights, projection, and sound effects/music.

Physical and Vocal Considerations

- The production includes the fast-paced learning of lines and blocking.
- The production requires all performers to move props, and while minimal, the scenic elements on and off stage.

Intimacy/Violence Considerations

The director will serve as the intimacy director as well as the fight choreographer. All actors may be asked to engage in physical contact, including possible exaggerated violence and non-romantic and romantic close contact.

Subject Matter and Language Considerations

1984 addresses subject matter that some may find activating, including themes of oppression, government control, poverty, censorship, nationalism, and surveillance.

Audition Materials

Copies of the script are available in the director's office by appointment during the workday. Please contact the director at J.Thompson@RockValleyCollege.edu to set up a time to read the script. If you are auditioning for a character other than one listed below, please indicate that on your audition form, and select from the materials below.

Audition Materials: Winston

- Prepare the Act III monologue on page 80 provided.
- Prepare a cut of Act I, Scene 2 as marked. The stage manager will be your scene partner.
- Memorization is not required. You are welcome to hold and read from your script. Copies will be provided at auditions.

Winston: Act III, p. 80

WINSTON. Freedom is slavery. *[pause]* Big Brother is Power. *[pause]* Two plus two make five. *[he sits up and counts on his fingers, proving it to himself over and over again]* How long have I been here? How long? They've been good to me lately. They even give me food . . . nice food . . . food from Big Brother *[He rummages in his rags and finds a small piece of bread. He gobbles a piece and throws the rest of it into the darkness upstage. The squeaking and scurrying of the rats increases for a moment. Winston reacts in terror.]* When will they shoot me? *[pause]* Jones, Aaronson and Rutherford were guilty of the crimes they were charged with. Of course they were. I made all the other up. *[pause]* When will Big Brother shoot me? When? Soon, perhaps. I hope soon. I want him to shoot me. *[pause]* I wonder why I ever rebelled. It's all so easy if you try. O'Brien says he can float off the floor like a soap bubble and I can make myself see him do it . . . and then he does it. All happenings are in the mind. Whatever happens in all minds truly happens. *[He looks at four fingers.]* Yes, five. I have a five-finger hand. *[pause]* How much longer before they shoot me? Five days? *[He holds up four fingers again and looks at them.]* They always shoot you in the back of the neck when you are walking down a corridor. I'll know when it's coming, and the second before it happens I won't change a muscle in my face. I'll think right, feel right, dream right – up till that very moment. Then – I'll hate them while the bullet is on the way to my brain . . . when it is too late to call it back. Oh, how long . . . how long? *[pause. Complete silence for a lone moment. Suddenly he cries out as if in pain.]* Julia! Julia! Julia! My love, Julia!

Winston: Act I, Scene 2, p. 31-32

WINSTON *[Hissing at Julia]* Stay there. They won't be able to see you. *[He hurries back to UC and turns down the volume on his telescreen as low as it will go. The voice fades into a low murmur, little more than a muffled sound. At the same time, the spotlight on it dims almost completely out. Winston returns to Julie.]* What are you doing here?

JULIA I had to come.

WINSTON Right in the view of the telescreen. Oh, Julia. . . Julia. You know we agreed never – never – to be seen together.

JULIA They can't watch everybody all the time. Can they?

WINSTON I don't know. If they can – if they saw you come in, we'll know it soon enough.

JULIA Darling, I had to come.

WINSTON It will be death for us both if they catch you here.

JULIA Don't look that way – please. I know it is a gamble. Please don't be angry. Kiss me. *[softly pleading]* Please.

WINSTON *[kissing her quickly]* Oh Julia! What if someone saw you in the hallway?

JULIA Everyone is listening to the propaganda. I'm not stupid, Winston. I take risks, yes, but they are calculated risks. Only a child saw me.

WINSTON No Parson's brat?

JULIA Who's Parsons?

WINSTON That fat cow who works in the next office. You've seen her. She's my neighbor – right across the hall.

JULIA I'm sorry . . . but I've got such good news. I had to tell you.

WINSTON Then tell me quickly. You must leave before the guards close the streets. What is it?

JULIA We can be married!

WINSTON What!

JULIA We can be married. I've found someone to marry us.

WINSTON You couldn't have. It's not allowed.

JULIA It may not be allowed, but it's going to happen.

WINSTON How? Where? Whom did you find?

JULIA [*laughing*] One question at a time.

WINSTON Then for heaven's sake, tell me about it. Quickly.

JULIA Well, some of the proles still have churches.

WINSTON [*astonished*] I didn't know that.

JULIA They're all hidden and hard to find, but a few still exist.

WINSTON And you found one?

JULIA Um-hum.

WINSTON And someone who can marry us?

JULIA Um-hum, an old priest or minister or – well, I don't exactly know what he is. But he says he can marry us.

WINSTON [*happily excited*] When? When will he do it?

JULIA Any time.

WINSTON Tomorrow?

JULIA No. Next week sometime. [*She sees his disappointment*] I've been elected block chairman of the Anti-Sex Week Committee. Our meetings start tomorrow. [*She giggles*] Wouldn't they be surprised if they knew?

WINSTON We can really be married next week?

JULIA Yes.

WINSTON It may be a trap.

JULIA [*mock severity*] Winston Smith, are you trying to get out of marrying me?

WINSTON [*putting his arms around her*] Not for anything. I want to marry you more than I've ever wanted anything.

Audition Materials: Julia

- Prepare a cut of Act I, Scene 2 as marked. The stage manager will be your scene partner.
- Memorization is not required. You are welcome to hold and read from your script. Copies will be available at auditions.

JULIA: Act I, Scene 2, p. 31-32

WINSTON *[Hissing at Julia]* Stay there. They won't be able to see you. *[He hurries back to UC and turns down the volume on his telescreen as low as it will go. The voice fades into a low murmur, little more than a muffled sound. At the same time, the spotlight on it dims almost completely out. Winston returns to Julie.]* What are you doing here?

JULIA I had to come.

WINSTON Right in the view of the telescreen. Oh, Julia. . . Julia. You know we agreed never – never – to be seen together.

JULIA They can't watch everybody all the time. Can they?

WINSTON I don't know. If they can – if they saw you come in, we'll know it soon enough.

JULIA Darling, I had to come.

WINSTON It will be death for us both if they catch you here.

JULIA Don't look that way – please. I know it is a gamble. Please don't be angry. Kiss me. *[softly pleading]* Please.

WINSTON *[kissing her quickly]* Oh Julia! What if someone saw you in the hallway?

JULIA Everyone is listening to the propaganda. I'm not stupid, Winston. I take risks, yes, but they are calculated risks. Only a child saw me.

WINSTON No Parson's brat?

JULIA Who's Parsons?

WINSTON That fat cow who works in the next office. You've seen her. She's my neighbor – right across the hall.

JULIA I'm sorry . . . but I've got such good news. I had to tell you.

WINSTON Then tell me quickly. You must leave before the guards close the streets. What is it?

JULIA We can be married!

WINSTON What!

JULIA We can be married. I've found someone to marry us.

WINSTON You couldn't have. It's not allowed.

JULIA It may not be allowed, but it's going to happen.

WINSTON How? Where? Whom did you find?

JULIA *[laughing]* One question at a time.

WINSTON Then for heaven's sake, tell me about it. Quickly.

JULIA Well, some of the proles still have churches.

WINSTON *[astonished]* I didn't know that.

JULIA They're all hidden and hard to find, but a few still exist.

WINSTON And you found one?

JULIA Um-hum.

WINSTON And someone who can marry us?

JULIA Um-hum, an old priest or minister or – well, I don't exactly know what he is. But he says he can marry us.

WINSTON [*happily excited*] When? When will he do it?

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WINSTON Tomorrow?

JULIA No. Next week sometime. [*She sees his disappointment*] I've been elected block chairman of the Anti-Sex Week Committee. Our meetings start tomorrow. [*She giggles*] Wouldn't they be surprised if they knew?

WINSTON We can really be married next week?

JULIA Yes.

WINSTON It may be a trap.

JULIA [*mock severity*] Winston Smith, are you trying to get out of marrying me?

WINSTON [*putting his arms around her*] Not for anything. I want to marry you more than I've ever wanted anything.

Audition Materials: O'Brien

- Prepare a cut of Act II, pages 53 – 55 as marked. The stage manager will be your scene partner.
- Memorization is not required. You are welcome to hold and read from your script. Copies will be provided at auditions.

O'BRIEN Don't be upset. It's not blood. It's called wine. You have to read about it in books, no doubt. Not much of it gets to the Outer Party, I fear. But, I think it is fitting that we should begin by drinking a toast. [*He stands*] To our leader: To . . . Emmanuel Goldstein! [*The three drink their wine. O'Brien only sips his. Both Winston and Julia swallow the entire glassful*]

WINSTON Then there is such a person as Goldstein?

O'BRIEN Yes, and he is alive. Where? I don't know.

WINSTON And the conspiracy – the – the – organization? It's real?

JULIA It isn't just something the Thought Police made up?

O'BRIEN No, it's real enough. The Brotherhood, we call it. [*He looks at his wristwatch*] It is unwise even for a member of the Inner Party to turn off the telescreen for more than a few minutes. We have about twelve minutes left. Incidentally, you ought not to have come here together. That was very unwise. [*He grins like a small boy*] Doubleplus ungood, in fact. When you leave, you will leave separately. You, Comrade Julia . . . You will leave first. [*He turns directly to Winston, ignoring Julia*] Now, then, what are you prepared to do?

WINSTON Anything we are capable of doing.

O'BRIEN [*questioning him rapid-fire, like an attorney*] You are prepared to give your life?

WINSTON Yes

O'BRIEN You are prepared to commit murder?

WINSTON Yes.

O'BRIEN You are prepared to commit acts of sabotage . . . to cause the deaths of hundreds of innocent people?

WINSTON Yes.

O'BRIEN To betray your country?

WINSTON Yes

O'BRIEN You are prepared to cheat, to forge, to blackmail?

WINSTON Yes

O'BRIEN To do anything to weaken the power of the party?

WINSTON Yes. Anything.

O'BRIEN You would, if necessary, throw acid in a child's face?

WINSTON Yes

O'BRIEN You are prepared to lose your identity and live out the rest of your life as a waiter or dock worker?

WINSTON Yes.

O'BRIEN Are you prepared to commit suicide – if and when we order you to do so?

WINSTON Yes

O'BRIEN Are you prepared, the two of you, to separate and never see one another again?

JULIA No! *[O'Brien snaps his head around to face Julia. For a moment no one speaks. Finally, Winston adds:]*

WINSTON No.

O'BRIEN You did well to tell me. It is necessary for us to know everything. *[He speaks to Julia.]* You understand that even if he survives, it may be as a different person. His face, the color of his hair – even his voice – might be different. And you, yourself: our surgeons can later change people beyond recognition. Sometimes it is necessary to amputate a limb. *[Julia is visibly terrified but manages to nod her assent]* Good. Then that is settled. *[Turns to Martin]* You had better go to the pantry, Martin. I shall switch on in a few minutes. Take a good look at these comrades' faces before you go. You will be seeing them again. I may not. *[Martin rises and stands in front of Winston and Julia, looking from face to face, then turns and silently exits. O'Brien relights his pipe and begins to pace up and down the room]* You probably imagine the Brotherhood as a huge underworld of conspirators – meeting secretly in cellars – scribbling messages on walls – recognizing one another by code words. That is nonsense. Nothing of the sort exists. The members of the Brotherhood have no way of recognizing one another, and it is impossible for any one member to be aware of the identity of more than a few of the others. Goldstein himself, if he fell into the hands of the Thought Police, could not give them a complete list of members. No such list exists. The Brotherhood can't be wiped out because nothing holds it together except an idea – which is indestructible. You will never have anything to sustain you but the idea . . . You will work for a while, you will be caught, you confess, and then – you will die. Those are the only results you will ever see.

Audition Materials: Landlady

- Prepare a cut of Act II, pages 44 - 47 as marked. The stage manager will be your scene partner.
- There are two instances where she sings a few lines of a song. Feel free to use your creativity to develop a melody for this. She does not have to be a good singer necessarily; we are not looking for perfection. Landlady is definitely not perfect.
- Memorization is not required. You are welcome to hold and read from your script. Copies will be provided at auditions.

LANDLADY Well, 'ere you are. I did manage to find a bit of curtain for you. *(She tosses the curtain onto the bed, half covering Julia)* Not that it'll do you much good, it's that old. *(she looks appraisingly first at Winston, then at Julia)* Now, if it was old prints you 'appened to be interested in – *(she gestures at a picture of a church)* -or old furniture – *(she moves across toward L)* – these things is for sale, you know.

WINSTON *(following the Landlady attracted by the picture of the church)* I think I've seen this before . . . *(Makes discovery)* Say! The frame is fastened to the wall.

LANDLADY Sure tis. Can't trust nobody. Kids 'round 'ere'll steal anything they can sell. You can unscrew it, I dare say – if you want to move it.

JULIA I know that building. It's the War Museum.

LANDLADY That's as may be, but used to be a church, it did. It was bombed back in . . . oh, years ago. St. Clement's Dane, its name was. *(She folds her hands behind her back and recites like a schoolgirl)* "Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St. Clement's."

WINSTON What's that?

LANDLADY Oh . . . "Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St. Clement's." That was a rhyme we 'ad when I was a little girl. 'Ow it goes on I don't remember, but I do know that it ended: "'ere comes a candle to light you to bed, 'ere comes a chopper to chop off your 'ead." IT was a kind of dance. They 'eld out their arms for you to pass under and when they came to "'ere comes the chopper to chop off your 'ead," they brought their arms down and caught you. It was just names of churches. All the London churches was in it – all the big ones, that is.

WINSTON *(Tentatively)* You must have seen great changes since you were a young girl.

LANDLADY *(after a pause)* The gin was better! . . . There was beer, too, mild beer. Wallop, we used to call it when I was a girl. Fourpence a pint. That was before the war, of course.

JULIA Which war was that?

LANDLADY *(vaguely)* It's all wars, dearie. *(sits on bed with grown)* Ow, me feet. Don't suppose you got any extra show coupons, do you?

WINSTON *(shortly)* No, we don't. *(Tries again to probe the past)* What I really wanted to know was this: Did we have more freedom those days than you have now?

LANDLADY *(vaguely)* Freedom?

WINSTON Yes, freedom – to live where you want . . . to marry whom you want. Freedom to – to do as you wish

JULIA *(picking it up)* To dress the way you want. To wear a hat, even. A pretty hat.

LANDLADY (*brightening*) 'ats! Funny you should mention them. The same thing come into my 'ead only yesterday. I was just thinking, I ain't seen a 'at with ribbons in years. Last time I wore one was at my sister-in-law's funeral. And that was, well, I can't give you a date but it must a been fifty years ago. Of course, it was only 'ired for the occasion, you understand.

WINSTON It isn't very important about the hats. The point is: Are you treated more like a human being today. In the old days, the rich people, the people at the top . . .

LANDLADY The 'ouse of Lords

WINSTON The House of Lords, if you like. What I'm asking is, were those people able to treat you as an inferior simply because they were rich and you were poor? Did you have to knuckle under them?

LANDLADY Oh, they liked you to drop 'em a curtsy now and again. It showed respect, like. I didn't agree with it, myself, but I done it often enough. 'ad to, as you might say. (*Winston steps to the Landlady and touches her on the arm, stopping her.*)

WINSTON I haven't made myself clear. You lived half your life before the Revolution. Would you say, from what you remember, that life before the Revolution was better than it is now – or worse? If you could choose, would you prefer to live then or now? (*The Landlady looks up meditatively at Winston and then at Julia. She hitches herself up off the bed and lumbers heavily across the room. She turns back to them*)

LANDLADY I know what you expect me to say. You expect me to say I'd sooner be young again. Most people'd say they'd sooner be young, if you arst 'em. You got your 'ealth and strength when you're young. When you get to my time of life you ain't never well. I suffer something wicked from my feet, and my kidneys is jest terrible. On the other 'and there's great advantages in being an old woman. You ain't got the same worries. No truck with men, and that's a great thing. (*Pause. Then she smiles broadly – and bursts into song*)

It was only an 'opeless fancy,
It passed like an Ipril dye,
But a look an' a word an' the dreams they stirred,
They 'ave stolen my 'eart awye!

(*Pause. She looks at them, speaks quietly for the first time*) That's really the point, isn't it? I've 'ad me dreams – an' I can remember what they was like.

JULIA You remember?

LANDLADY (*still quiet*) Sam's gone now, but what we 'ad, no Big Brother can take awye (*she taps her breast*) I remember it 'ere! (*Pause*)

They sye that time 'eals all things,
They ye you can always forget;
But the smiles an' the tears across the years
They twist my 'eartstrings yet!

(*She grins once more, crookedly this time, and immediately reverts to type*) Well, ta ta, dearies. If there's anything you need, just stick your 'eads through the window and 'oller for it. I pro'ly wan't 'ave it, but you can 'oller. (*She exits*)

(This is a living document as of 8/17/2026 and is subject to change/edits.)