

Orwell Keynote in 1984

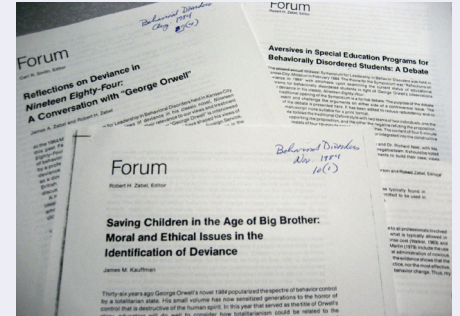
Over its 40-year history, many esteemed individuals in the field of emotional/behavioral disorders have shared their perspectives and knowledge at the Symposium. Few have been as internationally renowned and influential as George Orwell, author of literary classics including *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen-Eighty-Four*, which many of us studied in high school.



How was it possible for Orwell to appear at MSLBD in 1984? The real Orwell died in 1950. However, in the year 1984, a surrogate “Orwell” (a historian and Orwell scholar) was interviewed by a special educator who asked him about his views of deviance and treatment as portrayed in his book, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. “Orwell” shared his depictions of the central character, Winston Smith, whose thinking, feeling and behavior did not conform with the authoritarian, dystopian society in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. “Orwell” also commented on the



relevance of his views to contemporary definitions and treatments of persons considered deviant, including children with EBD. As much as possible, “Orwell” used actual words from Orwell’s works.



An transcript was published in Behavior Disorders (Zabel & Zabel, 1984, *Behavioral Disorders* 9(4), 264-276) and the videotape of Orwell’s visit is available at: <https://archive.org/details/Mslbd1984AnInterviewWithGeorgeOrwellReflectionsOnDevianceIn1984>. In addition, James Kauffman’s speech at the 1984 Symposium, “Saving children in the age of Big Brother: Moral and ethical issues in identification of deviance”, was also published in *Behavioral Disorders*, 10, 60-70. The video of this session is available at: <https://archive.org/details/Mslbd1984SavingChildrenInTheAgeOfBigBrother>).

an article in MSLBD’s *ReThinking Behavior* considered the on-going relevance of Orwell’s insights regarding contemporary social and political conditions, and their implications for defining and treating of children and youth with challenging behavior. It was titled, “Revisiting *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: Fake news, science, and the truth” (Zabel, et al., *ReThinking Behavior*, Spring, 2019).

