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Compare/Contrast Essay

(Incomplete Sample)

George Orwell, 1984

Mrs. Rutan

AP Literature and Composition

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**Our Duty as Citizens**

*I pledge alliance to the flag of the United States of America*…at an early age we are taught respect for our government. We are told to stand and pledge to our flag, to our country, and for many of us, America is the supreme being—a government of unwavering integrity and perfection. We are taught as children to love and appreciate the American democracy which our ancestors fought for. But is there a time where we need to stop and reflect on just *who*, and *what* our government really is?

As Americans we are fortunate because our government, for the most part, is honest and productive. Others aren’t. Historically we have seen many governments take over their people and the tyranny becomes customary, accepted, and standard. Sometimes the masses consent to these horrific types of government without question. Author George Orwell—inspired by the real life governments of Stalin and Hitler—shows us the way a government can corrupt and destroy humanity in his book, 1984. While his book was written just as WWII was ending, his themes and critique of the world is just as valid today as it was so many years ago. A more contemporary assessment of fraudulent governments is also seen in director James McTeigue’s film, *V for Vendetta*. Both Orwell and McTeigue show us corrupt governments, but push it further to show us how the people themselves should be held accountable for the totalitarian rule around them. Both creators show the audience that they need to stand up and question our governments whenever possible, so we don’t fall into a dystopian world of our making. It is this message that makes 1984 and *V for Vendetta* a great compliment to each other.

1984 and *V for Vendetta* share surface level similarities including: being set in Great Britain, a secret police force (The Fingermen and Thought Police), and interrogations and torturing by their governments (EV getting black-bagged and Winston’s time in the Ministry Of Love). Perhaps the strongest similarity is the fact the people are partly to blame for the way their government is…