

Aldous Huxley's Brave New World :Ignorance and Failure to Recognize the Purpose of the Human Spirit .

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Abstract

Today, there are strong debates and questions about the extraordinary breakthrough in science as a never ending pool of knowledge . People facing the 21st century are trying to determine whether these new realities of life will enhance it and bring life as they know it to a great unprecedented level , or if these new products will contribute and perhaps even cause the destruction of society and life . This concern is reminiscent of the horror that is found in Huxley's fictional utopian world where the dehumanizing of man occurs in the interests of the "Community , Identity , Stability " the world state's motto .

Huxley's ***Brave New World*** (1932) shows that in order for a utopian society to achieve a state of stability , a loss of individuality , and the undoing of Mother Nature must occur . The successful engineering of these conditions produces a world where people are finally living " happily ever after" but at a great cost .Huxley's description of a futuristic society that replaces freedom and morality with the false obsession of identity and physical pleasure is the painful price that society would pay when the needs of progress deny the identity of human beings and consider them as valueless in comparison with the importance of machines .

This research paper is divided into three sections; the first is divided into two parts , the first is an introduction that tackles the negative side of the novel , while the second part deals with ***BNW*** as a study of dehumanization . The second section also contains two parts ; the first part is the cost of stability that the ***New World*** aims to reach , while the

second part deals with the symbolic characters who played roles in paying the cost of the *New World's* stability in the previous part . The third section is a conclusion as this novel is not only science fiction , but also a foresight into the destiny of coming years .

Section One :

Part I : Introduction

Brave New World is a dystopian novel by Aldous Huxley(1894-1963) , first published in 1932 . Set in London in "the year" 2540 . The novel anticipates developments in reproductive technology , biological engineering , and sleep-learning that combine to change society . People all around the world are part of a totalitarian state , free from war , hatred , poverty , disease , and pain . They enjoy leisure time , material wealth , and physical pleasure .In it , the author questions the value of 1931 London using satire and irony to portray a futuristic world in which many of the contemporary trends in British and American societies have been taken to extremes .

Actually , Huxley meant to write a satirical and fictional novel , but it turned out to be a scientific prophecy . He wanted to warn the former (his contemporary) society of the danger of scientific progress , or progress in general . The danger occurs when the weapons , media and industry , science and technology play a crucial role . The main thrust of science and technology thus has served oppressors and hindered the expansion of peace and freedom .

Huxley's analysis of society and science can be traced back to one guiding principle that was taken from the famous historian **Lord Acton** (1834-1902) and his writing about the corruption of power : that power is corrupting and absolute power corrupts absolutely . If power is corrupting , then all technologies and social arrangements that allow concentrations of power should be resisted . The abuse of power and violence are the surest way to reach corruption in which mass production depends on them mainly in Huxley's novel .Thus, he believes that nonviolence is the only hopeful way .

On the other hand , the whole society in *Brave New World* focuses on progress and is fond of it . People , in the novel , long to be born again with all technological devices and facilities , so that they could use them . They do not want to look at the past ; their new world is happy without dangers or wars or problems , and progress has been the method of achieving this situation . Without such a system of mass production in terms of creating embryos , stability would not have been achieved . In factories of mass production , human beings could be also created to fit the needs of the new society . But Huxley wants to warn his readers that there is a big danger in progress because of the horrible consequences when technologies are applied without rational methods . To gain progress , man should be so rational , so aware of everything that he may abuse science . With this satire , Huxley tells us that instead of living in a perfect utopia with all these technological facilities , as in *BNW* , the world might turn out to be dystopia , as it happens in the novel . Progress also may cost people to lose feelings, individualism , and humanity . So , we have to decide between completely dehumanized progress and real love , feelings ,and simplicity. The Science here is potentially dehumanizing force. Robbing the human race of that makes us distinctive our creativity , our ability to love , reason and belonging to God .

As a part of Huxley's satire in this novel , he visualizes a planet without moral control , presided over by a single world government . Designer humans are created in laboratories to fit the needs of a society whose highest goals are utilitarianism and happiness , which is the ultimate objective of humanity . But, family is gone and so is any sense of spirituality . The new trinity in Huxley's mind would be Henry Ford (the idol) , soma (a wonder drug) , and sex .

In *BNW* , Huxley tackles the idea of creating stable society depending mainly on a totalitarian regime to exercise power . Community, the first motto, is established by dividing the population into segments in which the Alphas functions as intellectual superiors , and another caste , called “ Epsilons” performs menial labor . Identity is established in the Conditioning Center where embryos are separated into five groups . Stability is maintained through the limitation placed on the intelligence of each group (**WWW.Thomas**) .

Part II: Brave New World :A Study of Dehumanization .

BNW is a prophetic against Western hedonist society and its addictions . The basic purpose of society here is perverted . Instead of the co-operation of the individuals, that makes society worthwhile , individuality is subverted . People are cloned like spare parts for a social machine . Moreover , progress suppressed history of people while the latter is useful when it helps progress to be on the right way . People of the *New World* have not heard anything about wars , literature ,or art . They are so conditioned and have nothing to do with the past and the habits of the former times . They do not want to disturb their minds with “silly events” that could do nothing for progress . They know only a little about how children were born in the past and the relationship between the members of a family . They simply can not understand these feelings , the emotions that people feel . Everything has changed and the habits of this New World are not the same of the past . People do not have information about the past and its importance in giving man’s identity . This way, their attitude towards history is completely of rejection :

In brief," the Director summed up, "the parents were the father and the mother." The smut that was really science fell with a crash into the boys' eye-avoiding silence. "Mother," he repeated loudly rubbing in the science; and, leaning back in his chair, "These," he said gravely, "are unpleasant facts; I know it. But then most historical facts are unpleasant.

(BNW, Chap.2)

In the New World , there are no wasters , everything is used even the dead bodies are useful for its people consume all things, whereas consumerism is what they try to develop .

People live in a political system that is so similar to communism , as it is a dictatorship in which everything belongs to public possession . In addition, the rulers try to control everything even the way of thinking .

They control the people's mind with two methods : behaviorism and hypnopaedia . Behaviorism is a form of psychology , and it might be the key for a better society .Huxley depends a lot in building up his novel on theory of J.P. Pavlov (1849-1936) . John B. Watson is also a very important figure in the development of Behaviorism . Watson radically wants to eliminate the traditional concepts of psychology and soul. Psychology for Watson is the observation of behavior . This behavior , what the organism does is seen as a reaction or response to a stimulate . Huxley ironically , makes full use of these theories to involve them into **BNW** in the Conditioning Rooms with the babies being conditioned to dislike books and flowers . To build an ideal society needs seeking for betterment of individuals and hiding their defects and the unfavorable parents' behaviors may result undesired emotions that does not serve progress (**WWW.Pradas**).

Then , there is hypnopaedia that can influence people's minds . Huxley uses it to be applied to conditioned children ,but it is a non-violent form of manipulation (Ibid) . A child in this method is subject to both series and repeated phrases or slogans through his sleeping . The message of these phrases will get into his brain . The slogans are repeated by some determined voices and the messages are usually imperatives about the sexual code .By repeating phrases over and over while the children sleep , the government can condition each person to accept his role in the world around him and to behave in what the government deems to be a "safe" manner . The aim behind this is to stabilize the moral attitudes and beliefs . Huxley uses this way in his novel as a satirical expression to manipulate people in the modern society .

Accordingly ,the teaching the inhabitants of Brave New World receive is more of a method of programming than a process of learning , thinking , and discovering . people will think what the state wants them to think , they are ruled completely but they are unaware of this . Their minds are conditioned with the premises and slogans of the New World . People have no free will to think and decide , they are not allowed to think but just to do . To be free means to think first , but **New World's** citizens have no options and they are not able to analyze the different choices ,but there is no any other choice because the State and the

Controllers decide for them .There is no real identity as the motto of the Utopian World, **All Equal to All**, reads . Everything dissolves in the system and People are all the same . The whole world is like one , everyone is part of the society , everyone is useful for it and this is apart of the motto “**Community** “. There is no individuality , no decision of one’s own ; everything that is done is done for the community’s benefit . There is no context outside community and no rejection for self individuality and this is apparent through the repetition of the phrase “*everyone belongs to everyone else* “throughout the novel .

Obviously , people of *BNW* have to renounce things as feelings, beauty , truth ,and frankness to achieve their stupid happiness . They have no right to question their real needs . Even science must be controlled for it may menace stability of the society . This needs a lot of sacrifice and society has to keep itself immobile. It does not want any change that may modify the “perfect” world . Science can bring stability , but it can also cause extra thinking and investigations . Its people have to limit themselves to what is giving to them by the Controllers :

Now—such is progress—the old men work, the old men copulate, the old men have no time, no leisure from pleasure, not a moment to sit down and think—or if ever by some unlucky chance such a crevice of time should yawn in the solid substance of their distractions, there is always soma, delicious soma, half a gramme for a half-holiday, a gramme for a week-end, two grammes for a trip to the gorgeous East, three for a dark eternity on the moon; returning whence they find themselves on the other side of the crevice, safe on the solid ground of daily labor and distraction, scampering from feely to feely, from girl to pneumatic girl.

(BNW. Chap.3)

In the conversation between the Savage “John” , a curious mixture of the old and the new , and Mustapha Mond , a World Controller , they talked about literature and Shakespeare and how people of their New

World are unable to read Shakespeare and why such a genre is prohibited . The reason is always making people indifferent to old things even if they are beautiful, and people also will not understand the meaning of tragedies of some plays as *Othello* or *Hamlet* that have some concepts like death, revenge, sacrifice, jealousy, and betrayal because there is social stability .

In *BNW* , God has no existence , He does not have any sense in the society to warn people not to do mistakes, but those citizens have no mistakes for they live in perfection . In fact, religion compensates men for all their losses , but in the utopian world there are no losses . Definitely , people do feel that God exists but the Controllers believe that this feeling has no use now for people do not think "in the determined way" . God manages things , punishes the unpleasant vices ,yet in the Brave World vices are the perfect behavior .

On the other hand , the concept of sex in *BNW* is quite different from the real world for sexual freedom is legalized. Free sexual relations are encouraged especially for the young, to discourage any sense of love .If sexual relations start so early , the citizens can never fully appreciate the act of love and the feelings that go with it. This is due to the teaching of the young that a person is educated well if his birth is controlled and his emotion is numbed .Promiscuity is normal , the common thing in the utopian society . The citizens are not appreciating the value of sex and sexual relations for they are interesting the flesh rather than emotions . In this New World , liberalization of sexual moral seems to be an affront to love and emotion . Happiness here is programmed through sexual freedom and a drug (soma) which creates feelings of euphoria (**WWW. Paulsell**).

In *BNW* , children are encouraged from a young age to play sexual games in preparation for a life of promiscuity “ **Barring a little surreptitious auto-erotism and homosexuality absolutely nothing** “(*BNW*, Chap.4). Huxley , in fact , depends on Freudian belief that a mother would always be a child’s first love and a child’s instinct cannot be fulfilled because he cannot have the mother entirely to himself , and he

cannot also remain innocent because he develops a sense of competitiveness towards his father , whom he regards as a rival for the mother's affection !(WWW. Paulsell) . *BNW* applies Freud's thesis so that the citizens do not have their passionate feelings repressed , which , otherwise , may generate dissatisfaction . So , sex in this World is a common thing that everyone has a right to practice even among children :

In a little grassy bay between tall clumps of Mediterranean heather, two children, a little boy of about seven and a little girl who might have been a year older, were playing, very gravely and with all the focused attention of scientists intent on a labor of discovery, a rudimentary sexual game .

(BNW . Chap.4)

Huxley shows how sexual promiscuity cheapens love ; it does not express it . The Savage , John , fancies lovely Lenina no less than she fancies him , but he loves her too . He feels having sex would dishonor her . He is unable to live without lusting for Lenina and constantly punishes himself physically and mentally for these thoughts . At the very end of the novel , John attacks Lenina as she joins the crowd of onlookers and succumbs to an orgy of drugs and sex . In the morning John horrified by what he has done to Lenina and disgusted by himself , commits suicide in grief (WWW.Wikipedia) .

People of this World can find beauty in acting sex but not in art . Beauty is very important to them in daily life , in women , parties, or sex but not in literature . One of the things that shows the society in *BNW* so different is the lack of spirituality in which people are produced in factories without the existence of mothers and fathers , the absence of families . Each person is raised in a test tube rather than a mother's womb , and the government controls every stage of this development

from embryo to maturity . Paradoxically , with the absence of unity and family , the novel points out the lack of values and family structures while children grow up . They are obliged to dislike roses and books , the two symbols of beauty , feelings, past ,and history through electric shock while they are still babies .The State chooses how and what each child will learn . The parental relationship of father and mother to a child is totally neglected .

Section Two

Part I : The Cost of Stability .

Huxley enables us to recognize that there is horrible evils beside goods in achieving stability . He pushes us to choose : either our misery-ridden but still richly human world , or rigid , conditioned society . In this satirical novel, man succeeded in eliminating disease ,war , hatred , pain ,aggression ,poverty ,and anxiety but this victory comes at a heavy price . It costs a lot for this stability ignores humanity for it creates a government which believes that stability can be achieved if people think and look the same . It demands robots , not people .Ignorance of emotions is the big cost this stability has paid. It is the fuel that derives man to act on a belief or a dream , to become a better person , to grow and learn and to love (**WWW.Gehlhaus**) . This government of Brave New World discourages emotions and does its best to eliminate any deep feeling or passion . Huxley shows that the government fears any negative emotions, according to them, when the Controller states :"**Actual happiness always looks pretty squalid in comparison with the over-compensations for misery**"(BNW, Chap. 11) .

Surely, dehumanization finds its way into society when emotion and humanity have been eliminated . Art and personal expression can be effected by the restricted stability . Wisdom does not arise from stable happiness , but rather from tragedies of man . Without literature , without pain , people will never think and learn , they will live in a stable society where nothing will ever change . Man, in the New World , consumes , fornicates , takes a violent passion surrogate (soma) , and operates the machinery that makes it all possible , but man does not read , write, think,

love , or govern himself . Art, virtues , religion , family , and friendship are all valueless .

Religion , a product of an individual's thinking of creation , is gone . People in the story neither taught religion nor thought of God . Instead of thinking of afterlife , they remain true to their society when a character states : **“Fine to think we can go on being socially useful even after we're dead “(BNW, Chap. 4) .**They are conditioned so highly to be run by the state depending on the mother nature and liberated from emotional ties ” **They are refused any opportunity to plan their own property , change their role , rank or employment in society . Or even live permanently with another person of their choice “(Ibid, Chap, 2).** Everyone in the BNW is essentially parentless , they are not born to a mother or father . Instead , a single fertilized egg is cloned repeatedly until ninety-six separate embryos are present . From the cloning process the identical embryos are put in tubes and then grow until they are ready to be born (**WWW.Gehlhaus**).

Huxley's novel is , of course , science fiction but, yesterday's science fiction is rapidly becoming today's fact . He is also able to make penetrating insights to anticipate what may happen in the coming years and what kind of cost that society may pay for the sake of stability . For example ; Huxley makes the point that nuclear power is complex and potentially destructive and therefore a bad option . He prefers instead the development of regional energy self-sufficiency , which would minimize the social power held by any group .

Most of Huxley's insights are fully relevant more than half a century after they were first published (**WWW.Martin**) . For example, The Gulf War (1991) was an attempt to control oil supplies . Another example , when Huxley concerns about nuclear power and his support for decentralized energy sources (**Ibid**) . Indeed , he stands against many terms that affect people and societies as well nowadays as nationalism , centralization , dehumanization , and mobilization for the interests of political elites .

Part II : Symbolic Characters in Brave New World .

BNW does not merely satirize the development of society , but also provides a frustrated outlook on the future . It symbolizes many aspects containing even the names of its characters ,for Huxley gave each one his or her significance and indication in the New World . Huxley's characters are given names chosen from significant individuals in the World as follows :

- Bernard Marx : Refers to Claude Bernard and Karl Marx .
- Henry Foster : Parallel to William Foster , an American communist who ran for President in 1924 , 1928 , and 1932 .
- Henry Ford : A messianic figure to The World State worshiped by society.

Ford is used as a replacement for the word Lord or God . The starting date for their calendar is the date on which Henry Ford introduced the Model T (replacing the Christian Cross) , equivalent to 1908 , their dates are prefaced by A.F., as after Ford .

- Lenina Crowne : Crown is a metonym referring to the monarch and monarchial government ; her first name recalls Valdimir Lenin and the Russian Revolution of 1917. She is a laboratory worker in the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre . She is a personification of the new Society , happy and pneumatic , a compliment in this society referring to sexual performance , conformist in her behavior .
- Mustapha Mond :The head of the local society is named after a particularly modernistic pair , Mustapha Kemal Ataturk and Sir Alfred Mond . The former was a leader who modernized Turkey , while the latter was head of Imperial Chemical Industries , a leader in modern labor relations in Britain .
- Darwin Bonaparte : Combines scientist Charles Darwin with French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte (**WWW. Wikipedia**) .

On the other hand , Soma , a drug , creates feelings of euphoria . It gives rise to only a shallow , unempathetic and intellectually uninteresting well-being (**WWW.Huxley**) . Soma keeps the population of the New World comfortable with their lot . Soma does not merely stupefy , it is a way to keep their lives for they are empty of spirituality or higher meaning . People resort to soma when they feel depressed , angry or have intrusive negative thoughts .

Apparently , taking soma does not give Bernard Marx more than a cheap thrill or make him happy with his station in life . John the Savage , on the other hand , commits suicide soon after taking soma . Linda , the Savage's mother , takes much soma in excess . It acts as a respiratory depressant and Linda eventually dies of an overdose .

Section Three : Conclusions

Brave New World is a masterpiece of science fiction . Huxley has imaginatively employed scientific facts and theories to produce a classic of its kind . He makes the unbelievable seem believable . His interest in science , its use and misuse , points out the accuracy of his presentation and the horror of his envisioned Utopia . Huxley concludes that man has little chance to save himself and he is moving rapidly towards self-destruction . He sees himself as a voice crying in the wilderness .

BNW also presents prophetic elements for year by year we see more and more of Huxley's fantasy becoming reality , and we are moving all in the direction of this kind of utopian society as an Eden or a hell .

Huxley examines scientific advances, if they could destroy human and political values or not? . He expresses this concern satirically as how a society could ignore individual dignity in the process of worshipping science and machines ?

The novel comes to a clear conclusion that the corrupted power does not come out of the advancement of science, but rather the misuse of this advancement when the moral standards have been lowered and substituted by dehumanization, affronted love and emotion , and ignorance of individuality. On the other hand, people of the New World

have no idea about war , bloodshed , suffering, disease , or social conflict . But for those few highlights , the society pays a very high price . There is no love , family, science , art, religion , and history . It is a society where organization has been taken to the extreme

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