

# Brave New World

Aldous Huxley

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# The New World

- Work and leisure have become mechanized
- Other issues addressed in novel: heredity, conditioning, genetics, brain chemistry
- *Brave New World* is an **anti-humanistic utopia**-totally amoral world
- Warns of a “soulless” future

- World Controllers: Government (Director of Hatcheries)
- Classes: Alphas (highest), Betas, Gammas, Deltas, Epsilons (lowest)
- Children created in bottles, which act as the "womb"
- Grown in Hatcheries-live in bottles on conveyor belts for 9 months
- After reaching "maturation" they are decanted (born)

## People of the Brave New World

- Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons undergo this process
- Process: one egg is divided multiple times to produce anywhere from 8 people to 96 (all from that one egg)
- Like having 96 “twins”
- Imagine that!

## **Bokanovsky's Process**

- In the bottles the eggs are “messed with” to create a specific type desired
  - One example of this is inserting alcohol in the blood surrogate
  - Another is to take out oxygen
- This “process” will create *lower class citizens of the society*
- *Yikes!*

**Process continued...**

- Belief in Promiscuity – Does not accept Monogamy
- Parents don't exist- Women do not have babies
- "Mother" and "Father" are words of smut (filth)
- Essentially, there are no families

***BNW and thoughts about families***

# What other societies exist outside the World State?

- Savage Reservation:
  - Savage community enclosed in a barbed wire electric fence
  - No electricity
  - Much like an Indian Reservation yet far more primitive
  - People here are born here and can't leave
- What happens when people refuse conditioning or are not happy with their place in society?
  - they are sent to Iceland or a similar remote place where they can act as "individuals"—but they then don't get the benefits from the World State

# The UTOPIAN IDEA

- ANCIENT GREEKS
- Socrates- man's role should be predetermined; philosopher's should rule; large group of warriors next in line to keep order; followed by the largest group-workers.
- Plato- had a scientifically organized community idea, a plea for the regulation of population; maintained that some are natural leaders, while others are followers; children should be nurtured (raised) by the State- no marriage union-communal wives (polygamy)



- Sir Thomas Moore- *Utopia*- included ideas such as...
- Population control
- State produced products distributed by the State
- Short work day
- Free education for all
- Compulsory but few laws
- Worst evil? Property ownership

**Middle Ages**

- Francis Bacon- promise of science- harnessing of nature to do man's bidding; science will liberate man
- Jonathon Swift- (*Gulliver's Travels*)- *satire of man's institutions- presents a Utopian land ruled in peace and with integrity*
- *Jean-Jacques Rousseau-Romantic View: society is responsible for all of man's ills; advocated a return to nature and simple life ("the noble savage"); the least government is the best government; Henry David Thoreau (transcendentalism) was a disciple of Rousseau*

## Renaissance

- Began in 18<sup>th</sup> century- early on were religious (Mormons, Mennonites, Shakers, etc)
- Simple communal living; simplified living, “crafty”
- Others:
  - Brook Farm (during Civil War)-Emerson and others
  - Early 20<sup>th</sup> century: many writers explored idea “communal living” – blissful life for man with machines doing all the work- naïve!
  - 1960’s: Communes and hippies- return to the more Romantic Utopian ideal of man living simply

## Utopian Experiments

- Mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century: (post wars): the reverse of Utopia was introduced – bitterly acknowledging man's corruption in the modern world- called ANTI-utopia
- Authors:
  - George Orwell- (*Animal Farm* in 1946 and *1984* in 1948)- *greatest evil is totalitarianism- POWER CORRUPTS*
  - Aldous Huxley- *Brave New World*- mechanized, impersonal world

**Experiments Continued...**

# Aldous Huxley

- Born in England 1894, grandson of famous scientist, Thomas Huxley
- Eton, Oxford -traditional upper-class education
- Eye infection kept him out of Medical School; disappointment “colored” his outlook on life, but did keep him out of WWI
- Tried journalism, then poetry, finally novels
- Wrote primarily about the decadence of modern society-primary problems in his eyes were “over consumption and over population”
- *BNW (1932)*- most serious work--lacked wit and humor of earlier books
- Moved to U.S. in '37; settled in CA; awarded honorary doctoral degree from Univ. of CA in '59; died in L.A. on November 22, 1963

- By Jolynn Walek and Vickie Clock

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