

Brave New World, by Aldous Huxley

Introduction

English literature teachers make a serious mistake in not interpreting *Brave New World* as a Catholic dystopia. Huxley was Catholic, and almost everything in the novel is informed by this religion. Its concern with reproduction, parentage, polyamory, sacrifice, suffering, and the worship of technology testifies to the author's Catholic beliefs. As a Catholic, Huxley was horrified by communism and consumerism because the former is explicitly atheistic and the latter leads to the worship of manmade products. His aversion to both systems is evident throughout his novel. As such, *Brave New World* has nothing to teach us about living in harmony with Nature, without manmade authorities, without money. Indeed, since no religion is interested in health and happiness, Huxley has nothing to teach us about either.

Nevertheless, some of Huxley's dystopian visions might be coming true.

Watch this video and comment on it and *Brave New World*:

Science Is Starting to Catch Up to the Sci-Fi Film "Gattaca" (and to BNW)

<https://www.activistpost.com/2019/03/science-is-starting-to-catch-up-to-the-sci-fi-film-gattaca.html>

Explain what the following terms mean in the novel.

- Decant
- Epsilon
- Soma
- Shakespeare
- M----- (what's the significance of the dashes)
- Hypnopaedia
- Bokanovsky's process

Short Answer Questions

1. Look up dystopia or negative utopia and explain why *Brave New World* is considered a novel in that genre.
2. Read and comment on the paragraph on page 99 or 149 that begins "I know. But that's all the more reason for severity."

3. Read and comment on the paragraph on page 149 or 226 that begins “Because our world is not the same as Othello’s world.” You might read the essay at <http://www.sirbacon.org/links/huxley2.htm>, ... but this isn’t necessary.
4. John Savage and Mustapha Mond discuss civilization in chapter 17. John says two startling things: “What you need is something with tears for a change. Nothing costs enough here” and “But I don’t want comfort. I want God, I want poetry, I want real danger, I want freedom, I want goodness. I want sin.” Take the side of Mond and Savage and clarify the points of view of each.
5. What is the significance of choosing Henry Ford as “God?”
6. The name John Savage could be considered ironic. Explain how.
7. Though Huxley’s brave new world seems less human than our world, explain the positive aspects of his society. What aspects would you particularly like and why?
8. Which character in the novel would you be and why?
9. What is most illogical or improbable about Huxley’s civilization?

Creative Writing Topic

1. Write a report by Mustapha Mond detailing his experiment with John the Savage. Conclude the report with Mustapha’s assessment of John’s final act.

Long Answer Topics

1. The implicit Catholic bias of *Brave New World* is also evident in its portrayal of capitalist, communist and Native American cultures. Discuss this bias and how they are present in the novel.
2. *Brave New World* illustrates strong Catholic or Christian themes like the superiority of men over women, the guilt of mankind, the virtue of suffering and sacrifice, as well as sexual abstinence and an interest in keeping human sexuality strictly for sexual reproduction. Explore these topics and how they relate to the novel.
3. In Aldous Huxley’s dystopian novel (check definition), people have no freedom, no spirituality, no ability to enjoy being alone, no love of art or music, no love of children, and—they don’t care about anything. They are happy because they are brainwashed and drugged, drugged chemically and drugged by a culture that only stimulates the senses, and by a literature that is only a series of biased and simplistic clichés (check dictionary). Instead of families, this world has high tech, bio-engineering laboratories that create children for each class of workers. Discuss this 1932 vision of the future. How has it become true and how has it not come true and what, in general, are your opinions about Huxley’s worries.

Research/Information Source

<http://somaweb.org/>