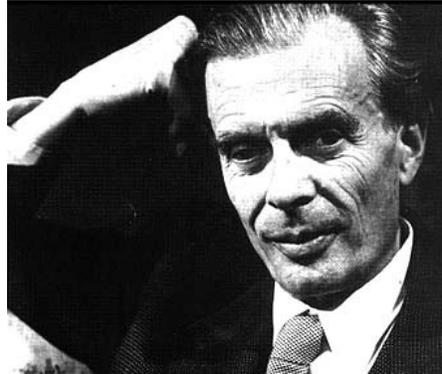


BRAVE NEW WORLD

by Aldous Huxley



THE AUTHOR

Aldous Huxley (1894-1963), the grandson of Thomas Henry Huxley, known as “Darwin’s Bulldog” for his vocal defense of evolutionary theory, grew up in an illustrious family of educators and writers. He gained knowledge in a variety of fields while pursuing a top-notch education at Eton and Oxford, but devoted most of his attention to science and literature. He also contracted a disease in his teenage years that left him almost blind and limited his movements and activities.

After graduating from Oxford in 1916 he began to write, first publishing satires of the English aristocracy. After working as a journalist and publishing several volumes of poetry, he turned to writing novels in the 1920s, culminating in the publication of his masterpiece *Brave New World* in 1932. As the events that he foresaw in his great novel began to become a reality, Huxley, a committed pacifist, left England and moved to California to avoid the war that loomed on the horizon. While in America he tried his hand at screen-writing, but with little success because of the complexity of his writing style. As his despair deepened, he turned to hallucinogenic drugs and the occult. With his last novel, *Island*, published in 1962, he returned to the world of dystopian fantasy that characterized his greatest work, again creating a society where drugs, this time hallucinogens, are central to the society and the plot of the novel.

Along with George Orwell’s *1984*, *Brave New World* is one of the two great dystopian fantasies of the twentieth century. But while Orwell, writing in 1949, spoke of tendencies he could already observe as a result of the totalitarian societies spawned by Hitler and Stalin, Huxley, writing a year before Hitler took power in Germany, anticipated with great prophetic insight the kind of world that would result from the melding of dictatorship and science. Like *1984*, *Brave New World* is more a critique of the direction being taken by the West than it is a horror story of what would happen should the likes of Hitler be victorious. It pictures people who are willing to sacrifice their liberties for peace and prosperity, resulting in a hedonistic society where there is no conflict, no individuality, and ultimately no freedom from the tyranny of pleasure.

PLOT SUMMARY

The book begins in the year A.F. 632 (After Ford; the inventor of the mass-production assembly line is the god of the World State) with the Director of the Central London Hatchery giving a tour of the facility to a group of new students with the help of Mr. Foster. He shows them the machinery used to fertilize embryos and the conveyor belt on which they are brought to the point of decanting (what used to be called "birth"), during which time they are chemically treated and conditioned for their place in society as Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas, or Epsilons - each group with decreasing intelligence and increasing physical strength and endurance. In the process, two-thirds of female embryos are sterilized (they become "freemartins") because a cloning technique ("Bokanovsky's Process") now requires so few actual embryos. They then move on to the nurseries, where they see Pavlovian conditioning techniques applied to a group of Deltas, who are exposed to loud sirens and electric shock when they approach books and flowers. The students are told that Deltas might become rebellious if they read books, and that, while love for nature would cause them to "consume transport," they wouldn't consume anything else, since nature is free, so they are conditioned to hate nature and love instead sports that require them to purchase expensive equipment. The Director then explains hypnopaedia, a technique for teaching people while they sleep (in the process he shocks his students by telling them that, in the primitive past, men and women actually gave birth to children and became *parents* - a word that, along with *mother* and *father*, was considered an obscenity). He notes that hypnopaedia is useless for communicating facts, but does a wonderful job teaching attitudes; they then observe a group of Beta children listening to messages in their sleep that teach them to look down on Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons, while being thankful that they don't have to work as hard as the clever Alphas. The group then goes outside to observe hundreds of naked young children at play, either playing expensive games like Centrifugal Bumble-puppy or playing sex games with one another's bodies. The Director again shocks his charges by telling them that such pursuits were once suppressed and considered immoral, even among those as old as twenty. The tour is then interrupted by the arrival of the Resident Controller for Western Europe, His Fordship Mustapha Mond. The Controller tells the students in gruesome detail about the horrors of family life and the psychological maladjustments it inevitably produced ("Ford" somehow had become conflated with "Freud"). After all, strong feeling inevitably leads to instability. Even after ectogenesis had been perfected, a reactionary movement called Christianity had opposed it and kept women enslaved to childbirth, while democracy had prevented the implementation of the caste system. Finally an enormously destructive world war in the twenty-first century led to universal control, despite a rebellion by culture-lovers that had been put down by force and the destruction of monuments, museums, and books, and the suppression of Christianity and notions of God and immortality. The final solution had been ectogenesis, Pavlovian conditioning, and hypnopaedia - and the invention of soma, a mild narcotic and hallucinogen with no harmful side-effects ("all the advantages of Christianity and alcohol; none of their defects").

Meanwhile, Henry Foster and Lenina Crowne finish their work day and prepare to spend the evening together, though Lenina's friend Fanny disapproves of the fact that the two have been seeing one another for four whole months, since the only healthy approach to sex is promiscuity. Lenina agrees that she should see other men, and considers accepting an invitation from an Alpha Plus named Bernard Marx to go with him to visit a Savage Reservation, despite the fact that people find him odd because he likes to spend time by himself. Bernard Marx, however, inwardly

despises the men and women around him who are part of the system he has come to hate. Before leaving for her date with Foster, Lenina tells Bernard Marx, much to his astonishment, that she wants to go with him to the Reservation. While Foster and Lenina play a game of Obstacle Golf, Bernard visits his friend Helmholtz Watson at the Bureau of Propaganda. He, like Bernard, feels alienated from his society - in his case because of his staggering intellect, rather than Bernard's shortness of stature (surely a result of some flaw in the chemical treatments given before he was decanted). After their golf game, Foster and Lenina fly over a crematorium where the chemicals are recovered from incinerated bodies for recycling, which leads to a discussion of the physical equality of all people. They then go to a dance at the Westminster Abbey Cabaret, after which they return to Foster's apartment for a night of sex. Bernard goes to his fortnightly Solidarity Service, a form of worship in which the sign of the T (the Model T has replaced the Cross as a religious symbol) initiates a soma-induced singing of Solidarity Hymns glorifying loss of identity, and which culminates in a sex orgy.

Despite finding Bernard Marx exceedingly odd, Lenina begins a relationship with him, only to find that he likes long walks in the mountains and quiet conversation rather than sports events with crowds all around or the noise of synthetic music. Worse yet, when they sleep together on their first date, Bernard seems disappointed at such infantile behavior. When Bernard goes to the Director to get a permit for the New Mexico trip, the old man surprisingly reminisces about a trip he took there in his youth. While traveling with a lovely young lady, they were caught in a storm and separated. She was never found. The Director, embarrassed at his inappropriate revelation, threatens Marx with demotion and transfer to Iceland if he does not correct his antisocial behavior. Bernard and Lenina then take an uneventful flight to New Mexico. After a night in a posh hotel, they fly to Malpais on the Reservation, thousands of acres surrounded by electrified barbed wire, where they are dropped off with the promise that they will be picked up the following day. An Indian guide is assigned to show them around. Lenina immediately dislikes the entire experience - the Reservation and its people are dirty, ragged, and openly flaunt their roles as mothers and fathers. They witness a half-pagan, half-Christian religious ritual that includes a bloody flagellation. After the ritual, they meet John, a young man of obviously white ancestry. Within a few moments of meeting his mother Linda, an old, fat, drunken white woman, Bernard realizes that this must be the woman left behind by the Director many years before, and that John must therefore be the Director's son. Linda confirms her Beta heritage and upbringing and continues to mourn for her lost early life. Bernard then asks John to tell his story, and the young savage speaks of his early life of discrimination among the Indians, of hatred for his mother in the community because she could not adjust to the idea that one man was to have one woman; what she saw as normal sexual behavior they unaccountably viewed as immoral promiscuity, so the men used her, the women hated her, and the children mocked both her and her son. The turning point for John came when he learned to read - a skill virtually unknown on the Reservation. One of his mother's lovers brought him a copy of the complete works of Shakespeare, which he devoured and committed to memory with less than complete understanding. Shut out from the rituals practiced by the youth of the community, he became accustomed to solitude. When John finishes his story, Bernard offers to take him and his mother back to London. John, having heard fantastic stories from his mother about her birthplace, readily agrees. While Lenina takes a long soma vacation to sleep off the horrors of the Reservation, Bernard makes the arrangements for his "scientific experiment." John, meanwhile, is beginning to fall in love with Lenina.

No sooner do they arrive back in London than the Director follows through on his threat to send Bernard to Iceland. Before he can act, however, Bernard presents evidence that the Director is guilty of the worst kind of antisocial behavior - he introduces Linda and John to the high-caste workers in the Director's immediate employ. The Director leaves the room in shame, and soon resigns his post. The publicity surrounding the scandal creates a demand among the higher-ups to meet John, the Savage, and Bernard and, to a lesser degree Lenina, bask in reflected glory. Bernard suddenly finds that people seek him out and he is able to get any girl he wants; Lenina is invited to speaking engagements and dated by the highest elements of society. John, meanwhile, hates this "brave new world" into which he has been introduced. He is appalled by the drugged stupor in which his mother continually rests, by the cloned people custom-made for niches in the world of work, and especially by the loose morals of everyone around him. On a visit to Eton to observe the educational system of upper-caste youth, John is distraught to find the young people laughing at a film showing his culture, and appalled by the entire conditioning program, especially the death conditioning, in which even young children are taught to associate death with play, and thus take it as a matter of course. That night, Lenina takes John to the feelies - a sort of movie in which the viewer enjoys the tactile sensations portrayed on screen. John is disgusted by the whole thing, which Lenina can't understand; she understands even less when he drops her off at her apartment and refuses to come in and make love to her. Later, Bernard invites a group of important people to his apartment to meet the Savage, but John refuses to come. The guests become angry, and openly show how much they despise Bernard, communicating perfectly clearly that they only paid attention to him in the first place in order to get near the Savage. Once he gets over his depression, Bernard realizes that John was right, that such people were not friends worth having. Bernard soon introduces John to Helmholtz Watson, and the two hit it off immediately, especially when John introduces Helmholtz to Shakespeare. The friendship collapses, however, when Helmholtz finds *Romeo and Juliet* hilarious.

Lenina, meanwhile, wants to sleep with John in the worst way and is frustrated by his refusal to cooperate. Taking Fanny's advice, she decides to seduce him. She goes to his apartment and is taken aback when he tries to propose to her. Sickened at the very thought of marriage and monogamy, she strips and begins the seduction, but he is horrified at her harlotry and rejects her, threatening to kill her if she doesn't cease and desist immediately. She flees to the bathroom to escape his violence and get dressed, and only comes out when he is summoned by a phone call telling him that his mother Linda is dying. He goes to the hospital, but finds that she doesn't even recognize him; she is heavily drugged and dreaming of her affairs back in Malpais. He tries to shake her back to reality, but fails, and grieves as she breathes her last. The young children who have been brought into the ward for death conditioning, surrounded by cheerful music, toys, and games, are shocked by this strange man who is crying because someone has died. As John leaves the hospital, he witnesses a distribution of soma to the workers who are finishing their shifts. Suddenly filled with rage, he grabs the soma and begins throwing it out the window, raging at the shocked sets of Deltas that they are free, whether they like it or not. Faced with being deprived of their soma rations, they riot, attacking John and trying to kill him. A quick phone call brings Bernard and Helmholtz to the scene, and the latter joins John in disposing of the soma. Soon the police arrive and anesthetize everyone with soma gas. The Deltas are soon loving and peaceful again and leave quietly, and the police arrest John and his two friends and take them to the office of the Controller. When they arrive at Mustapha Mond's study, they find it filled with books and other forbidden items. He gives them a discourse on why truth and beauty, art and science, must be suppressed in order to produce happiness, explaining that a world made up

of Alphas would disintegrate into civil war very quickly. When he tells them that they will be sent away to islands, Bernard begs mercy, but is quickly anesthetized and removed from the room. Helmholtz understands that spending the rest of his life with others who refuse to conform will be a reward rather than a punishment, and asks to go to the Falkland Islands, where the climate is uncomfortable enough to stimulate really good writing. In the conversation that ensues between the Savage and Mustapha Mond, the latter points out the necessity of sacrificing art, philosophy, and religion in order to obtain happiness. The Savage argues that such a life is not worth living, and insists that he would choose unhappiness over such an empty existence.

The next morning, Bernard and Helmholtz visit John to say goodbye before they go off to their respective island exiles. John tells them that he asked permission to join them but was refused. He insists that, somehow, he will escape the oppressiveness of this Brave New World he had been so eager to explore. He flees London and chooses an abandoned lighthouse as his place of shelter. After arriving, he spends time in fasting, prayer, and physical disciplines, including stretching his arms out as if on a cross and holding them there through excruciating pain. He plans to plant a garden and hunt for game, for which purpose he makes a bow and arrow. His disciplines included self-flagellation, and one day three Deltas see him beating himself. Three days later, reporters arrive at John's hideaway, but he drives them away with kicks and the threat of beatings. Soon he begins to think of Lenina as he had seen her at their last meeting. To drive away his lustful thoughts, he leaps into a thorn-filled juniper bush, then seizes his whip and begins to flagellate himself. Unbeknownst to John, his orgy of physical punishment is filmed by a concealed director of feelies, who within two weeks puts *The Savage of Surrey* in every theater in Western Europe. The day after the release of the feely, a huge crowd gathers curiously around John's hideout and begins chanting for him to flagellate himself for their entertainment. Then a helicopter lands and Lenina emerges, and John rushes at her and begins to beat her with the whip. Finally the crowd tires of the spectacle and goes home, but when an even larger crowd arrives the next morning, they find the Savage dangling from a noose in the lighthouse.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

- Bernard Marx - An Alpha who, because of a mistake during his developmental phase, is significantly smaller than his peers, and thus viewed as different. His sense of inferiority leads him to become a critic of his society.
- Lenina Crowne - An Alpha who works at the Central Hatchery and Conditioning Center, she is largely orthodox in her views, but sometimes engages in minor rebellion such as sleeping with one man for an extended period of time. She visits the Reservation with Bernard, where she meets John. She at various times is desired by Henry Foster, Bernard Marx, and John the Savage, but she is never able to understand the unorthodox values of Bernard or John.
- Henry Foster - Assistant to the Director of the Central Hatchery, he is one of Lenina's lovers, and a typical Alpha male in the society of the novel.
- The Director - He administers the Central Hatchery, and threatens to exile Bernard for his unorthodox behavior, but loses his job and is disgraced when Bernard discovers and

reveals his dark secret - that he took Linda to the Reservation, fathered a child with her, then abandoned her.

- Mustapha Mond - Resident World Controller of Western Europe, was originally a scientist who pursued forbidden research. He was offered the choice of exile or becoming a controller, and he chose the latter. He thus understands the rebellious impulses of Marx, Helmholtz, and the Savage, but uses his understanding to try to disabuse them of their foolish fantasies.
- John (the Savage) - The son of the Director and Linda, he grows up on a Reservation in New Mexico. He is an outcast from Indian society because of the accident of his birth, but is equally alienated from civilized society when he is taken to London. His understanding of the world is derived largely from the plays of Shakespeare, much of which he has memorized.
- Linda - A Beta female, she is impregnated by the Director on a trip to the Reservation, is abandoned, and later gives birth to John. She becomes an outcast on the Reservation because of her promiscuous behavior. Upon returning to London, she becomes addicted to soma and dies as a result.
- Fanny Crowne - Lenina's best friend and confidant, she constantly warns her about her flirtations with unorthodox behavior.
- Helmholtz Watson - Bernard's friend, he is a writer and lecturer who feels that his talents are being wasted. His disaffection with the state takes a much more philosophical form than that of Bernard.

NOTABLE QUOTATIONS

“A squat grey building of only thirty-four stories. Over the main entrance the words, Central London hatchery and Conditioning Centre, and, in a shield, the World State's motto, Community, Identity, Stability.” (ch.1, p.1)

“And that is the secret of happiness and virtue - liking what you've got to do. All conditioning aims at that: making people like their inescapable social destiny.” (Director, ch.1, p.10)

“History is bunk.” (Henry Ford, ch.3, p.22)

“Every one belongs to every one else.” (Hypnopaedic proverb, ch.3, p.26)

“Fortunate boys! No pains have been spared to make your lives emotionally easy - to preserve you, so far as that is possible, from having emotions at all.” (Mustapha Mond, ch.3, p.29)

“Ending is better than mending.” (Hypnopaedic proverb, ch.3, p.33)

“What the two men shared was the knowledge that they were individuals.” (ch.4, p.45)

“Feel how the Greater Being comes!
Rejoice and, in rejoicings, die!
Melt in the music of the drums!
For I am you and you are I.” (Solidarity Hymn, ch.5, p.55)

“If one’s different, one’s bound to be lonely.” (John, ch.8, p.92)

“O brave new world that has such people in it.” (John, ch.8, p.94)

“That’s all the more reason for severity. His intellectual eminence carries with it corresponding moral responsibilities. The greater a man’s talents, the greater his power to lead astray. It is better that one should suffer than that many should be corrupted. Consider the matter dispassionately, Mr. Foster, and you will see that no offense is so heinous as unorthodoxy of behavior. Murder kills only the individual - and, after all, what is an individual?” (Director, ch.10, p.99)

“It was a masterly piece of work. But once you began admitting explanations in terms of purpose - well, you didn’t know what the result might be. It was the sort of idea that might easily decondition the more unsettled minds among the higher castes - make them lose their faith in happiness as the Sovereign Good and take to believing, instead, that the goal was somewhere beyond, somewhere outside the present human sphere; that the purpose of life was not the maintenance of well-being, but some intensification and refining of consciousness, some enlargement of knowledge.” (Mustapha Mond, ch.12, p.119)

“One of the principal functions of a friend is to suffer (in a milder and symbolic form) the punishment that we should like, but are unable, to inflict upon our enemies.” (ch.12, p.121)

“‘O brave new world!’ Miranda was proclaiming the possibility of loveliness, the possibility of transforming even the nightmare into something fine and noble. ‘O brave new world!’ It was a challenge, a command.” (ch.15, p.143)

“Because our world is not the same as Othello’s world. You can’t make flivvers without steel - and you can’t make tragedies without social instability. The world’s stable now. People are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can’t get. They’re well off; they’re safe; they’re never ill; they’re not afraid of death; they’re blissfully ignorant of passion and old age; they’re plagued with no mothers or fathers; they’ve got no wives, or children, or lovers to feel strongly about; they’re so conditioned that they practically can’t help behaving as they ought to behave. And if anything should go wrong, there’s soma.” (Mustapha Mond, ch.16, p.149)

“We don’t want to change. Every change is a menace to stability.” (Mustapha Mond, ch.16, p.153)

“And why should we go hunting for a substitute for youthful desires, when youthful desires never fail? A substitute for distractions, when we go on enjoying all the old fooleries to the very last? What need have we of repose when our minds and bodies continue to delight in activity? of consolation, when we have soma? of something immovable, when there is the social order?” (Mustapha Mond, ch.17, p.159)

“God isn’t compatible with machinery and scientific medicine and universal happiness. You must make your choice.” (Mustapha Mond, ch.17, p.159)

“People believe in God because they’ve been conditioned to believe in God.” (Mustapha Mond, ch.17, p.159)

“And there’s always soma to calm your anger, to reconcile you to your enemies, to make you patient and longsuffering. In the past you could only accomplish these things by making a great effort and after years of hard moral training. Now, you swallow two or three half-gramme tablets, and there you are. Anybody can be virtuous now. You can carry at least half your morality about in a bottle. Christianity without tears - that’s what soma is.” (Mustapha Mond, ch.17, p.162)

“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.” (John, ch.17, p.163)

“I’m claiming the right to be unhappy.” (John, ch.17, p.163)

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Discuss the following in a five-paragraph essay:

1. Discuss the relevance of the quotation from John Henry Cardinal Newman in chapter seventeen of Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*. How accurately does the quotation pinpoint the flaws of the society Huxley portrays? Is Newman’s antidote one that Huxley would advocate? Why or why not? Support your answer with specifics from the novel.
2. Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*, George Orwell’s *1984*, and Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* all contain characters who, though part of the power structure of their oppressive societies, fully understand what those societies have rejected. All three characters are used for expository purposes, but also serve as antagonists to the central figures in the stories. Compare and contrast the characters of Mustapha Mond, O’Brien, and Captain Beatty, both in terms of their roles in the plots of the novels and the ways in which they contribute to the reader’s understanding of the societies of which they are a part.

3. Scientists have long argued about the relative importance of heredity and environment in shaping human life. Those who favor one or the other as the key to human behavior will often seek to manipulate the one on which they focus for the common good. Some critics have noted that two great dystopian fantasies, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984*, portray societies in which genetic engineering and behavioral conditioning, respectively, have run amok. Is this an accurate assessment of the two novels, or is the central difference between the two more complex? Support your conclusion with specifics from both stories.
4. Compare and contrast the ways in which the totalitarian societies of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984* retain control of their respective peoples. What do the differences in their tactics say about the messages and themes of the two books? Be specific.
5. Compare and contrast the explanations for why freedom is bad for society found in chapter seventeen of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and in the story of "The Grand Inquisitor" in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Be sure to deal with the viewpoints of the authors of the books as well as the viewpoints expressed by Mustapha Mond and the Grand Inquisitor, and evaluate the explanations biblically.
6. The greatest dystopian fantasies are often prophetic, speaking of future societies whose characteristics appear in the world in the years that follow the publications of the novels. Alternatively, they may be cautionary, warning of what might happen should things continue as they appear to be going. Three of the greatest dystopian fantasies of the twentieth century are Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, George Orwell's *1984*, and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*. Discuss whether these novels should be viewed primarily as prophetic or cautionary, supporting your conclusions with details from the stories.
7. Discuss the role played by the works of Shakespeare in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. John the Savage quotes them extensively, allowing him to voice his thoughts and reactions to the worlds he observes. How do the words of Shakespeare help Huxley to convey the leading themes of the novel?
8. Discuss the significance of the title of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. In your discussion, be sure to relate the title to its source, William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. What parallels exist between Shakespeare's play and Huxley's novel? How does the use of the term "brave new world" change as the novel progresses?
9. At the end of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, John the Savage commits suicide because he is unable to find a society to which he can belong. Commenting on the novel later in life, Huxley said that the only thing he would have changed is that he would have given John a third alternative to madness or suicide. What do you think that alternative might have been? Devise an alternate ending for the novel and defend your choice, showing how it fits the rest of the story.

10. Discuss the sincerity of the three leading critics of the society in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. To what extent do Bernard Marx, Helmholtz Watson, and John the Savage understand the society they criticize? To what extent do they really object to it? What does each character really want? Support your conclusions with specifics from the text.
11. To what extent and in what ways is Helmholtz Watson a foil for Bernard Marx in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*? Choose specific characteristics of the two men for which their differences serve to bring out the personalities of each.
12. Analyze the economics of the state pictured in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. To what extent does Huxley successfully foretell the economic principles and practices of modern America? Use specifics from the novel in answering the question.
13. Discuss the pervasive hedonism of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. What does Huxley see as the dangers inherent in hedonism? To what extent have these dangers come to permeate modern American society? Be sure to use specifics, both from the novel and from contemporary culture.
14. Discuss the role of technology in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. Do you consider Huxley to be an enemy of technology? Does he see it as inherently evil, or does he instead criticize its abuses while advocating responsible use? Use details from the novel to support your conclusions.
15. To what extent does Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* picture truth and happiness as incompatible? To what extent does the stability of the society depend on keeping its citizens in a continual state of denial, despite the attempts to satisfy every desire they could possibly have?
16. Discuss the relationship between free sex and alienation in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. Why do you think that the citizens of Huxley's society are unable to develop real human relationships? Is this the intention of the rulers of the society? Why? Support your answer with details from the novel.
17. In Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, why does the author choose Henry Ford as the prototypical figure, the veritable god, of his dystopian society? What characteristics of Ford make him ideal as a symbol of all that is wrong with Huxley's brave new world? Be specific.
18. In Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, the author makes use of two protagonists, Bernard Marx and John the Savage, with each dominating half of the novel. Why do you think he does this? Is this approach better for Huxley's purposes than the choice of a single character on whom to focus? Are the two foils? Defend your arguments with specifics from the story.

19. In Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, Mustapha Mond argues that truth and happiness are incompatible. Why does he maintain that this is the case? Evaluate the arguments he gives and indicate how you would respond to them.
20. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* contains two major settings - London and the Indian Reservation. What role do these settings play in the development of the themes of the novel? Discuss how the contrasts between the two places serve to bring out the major ideas Huxley is trying to communicate.
21. In Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, the author pictures a world 600 years in the future, but in reality is presenting a critique of the society in which he lived. The novel was written in 1932, shortly after the close of the Roaring Twenties and at the height of the Great Depression. What aspects of the novel cast light on the world in which Huxley lived? Do these themes criticize our own society even more than they do the world of the author?
22. Discuss the role of genetic engineering in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. To what extent is his critique of the practice valid in a world where such techniques seem frighteningly plausible? Be sure to use specifics from the novel to support your answer.
23. Compare and contrast the roles played by behavioral conditioning in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and B.F. Skinner's *Walden Two*. Be sure to include in your discussion the benefits supposedly obtained for the individual and society, as well as the perspectives of the authors on the desirability of the practice.
24. Translated into English, the epigraph at the beginning of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* says, "Utopias appear to be much easier to realize than one formerly believed. We currently face a question that would otherwise fill us with anguish: How to avoid their becoming definitively real?" What is Huxley's answer to Berdaieff's question? Does his cautionary tale give any suggestions for avoiding the dystopia he portrays?
25. In Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, the author pictures a society where the principal values are community, identity, and stability, yet argues that the cost of achieving these goals is far too great. What is the cost of gaining these things? Do you agree that the cost is too great to pay? What is the alternative? Should society therefore give up on the possibility of achieving community, identity, and stability?
26. Discuss the role played by soma in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. Why do the rulers of the society consider the drug necessary? To what extent does the use of the drug reveal a flaw in the fabric of the society? To what extent is the role of the drug similar to that of drugs like alcohol and marijuana in today's world? In what ways is it different?
27. Francis Bacon, the originator of the scientific method, said, "Conquer nature, relieve man's estate." Discuss the extent to which this maxim finds support in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*.

28. How does Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* illustrate the truth of the cliché that one should be careful what he wishes for because he just might get it? Examine the question by looking at both individual and societal desires as they are portrayed in the novel.
29. Why do the rulers in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* believe that the family must be destroyed in order for society to be stable and for people to be happy? Evaluate the reasoning expressed by Mustapha Mond in the novel. To what extent do the tendencies pictured in the novel characterize modern American culture?
30. Discuss the relationships between the major dystopian fantasies of the twentieth century - George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* - and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*. To which of the other famous novels is Bradbury's work most similar? Why do you think so? Be specific in the similarities you cite, using both incidents and quotations from the works involved.
31. In Book V of Plato's *Republic*, Socrates promotes a radical view of marriage and child-bearing that in fact eliminates the former in any real sense and entrusts decisions about reproduction and child-rearing to the state. A somewhat similar approach is portrayed in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, but Huxley sees the arrangement as horrible. Draw on both sources to evaluate the perspectives of the authors with regard to the role of marriage and the family in a healthy society.
32. Compare and contrast the views of human sexuality found in C.S. Lewis' *That Hideous Strength* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. Despite the radical differences between the two novels, how do they present similar dystopian distortions of human sexuality?
33. Thirty-seven years after the publication of H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine*, Aldous Huxley, grandson of T.H. Huxley, wrote *Brave New World*. Compare and contrast these two science-fiction dystopian fantasies. To what extent do Wells and Huxley share the same views of society? of science? Use your knowledge of the history of the era to explain the differences you find.