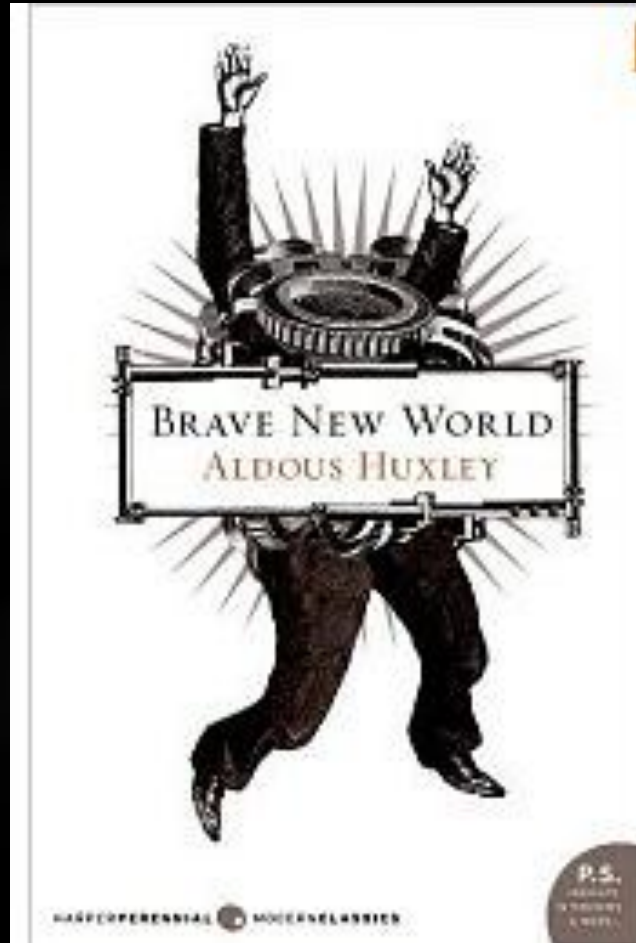


Brave New World

by Aldous Huxley

Pre-Reading Guide



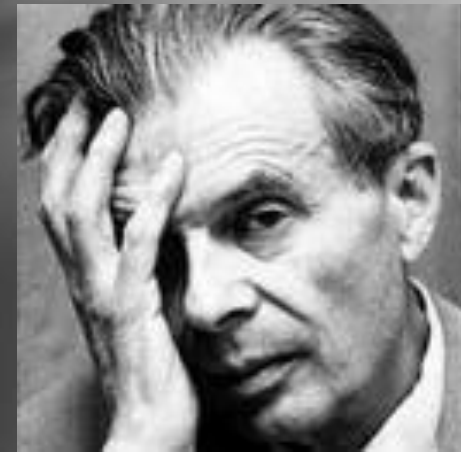
“O wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beautiful mankind is!
O brave new world
That has such people in’t!”

-- William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (V,

ii)

Aldous Huxley

- 1894-1963
- Family had many notable members, including great uncle, poet Matthew Arnold
- Plagued with vision problems throughout his life
- Attended Oxford University, became a teacher
- Published *Brave New World* in 1932
- Lived in the US in later life, died while living in L.A.
- His “novels of ideas” have sometimes been criticized as being “too intellectual”



Important People, Terms, and Concepts

- Utopia – perfect society
- Dystopia – dreadful, dysfunctional society
- Satire – writing intended to ridicule and arouse contempt – especially by using irony and exaggeration
- Caste System – social structure which divides people on the basis of inherited social status
- Ivan Pavlov
 - Russian physician & psychologist
 - “Classical conditioning” using dogs
 - RESULT: Trained dogs to salivate at the sound of a bell, even without giving food.

More People, Terms, and Concepts:

- Sigmund Freud
 - Psychiatrist
 - Psychoanalysis
 - Mental health and illness spring from a child's upbringing, not his heredity
- Soma – an anti-depressant, semi-hallucinogenic drug introduced by the World State
- Orgy Porgy – group sexual experience to unify all people (sex is not the focus, unity is)
- Solidarity Service – group of men and women who gather to take Soma and have a spiritual experience

What is the *Brave New World* ?

A dystopian tale about a possible future world where human faith in scientific progress, freedom, dignity, and individuality are all called into question.

Set in two locations in the 26th century:

London and a New Mexico Indian reservation

What is the *Brave New World* ?

Religion of the World State based on the life and philosophies of Henry Ford.

- American car manufacturer, inventor of the assembly line
- Invented the Model T car – designed to be affordable to everyone; only available in black
- Mass production & mass consumption
- Assembly line = improved efficiency
- Vertical structure = self sufficient



“Our Ford”

What is the *Brave New World* ?

Caste System:

Alphas (A)– highest, grey

Betas (B)- mulberry, bottle green

Gammas (Γ)- leaf green

Deltas (Δ)- khaki

Epsilons (E)– lowest, black

There are also plusses and minuses, so one can be an Alpha Plus or a Gamma Minus.

Differentiation achieved through oxygen deprivation



What is the *Brave New World*?

Some individuals are created using the

Bokanovsky Process

- Fertilization process used to create Deltas & Epsilons
- Divide fertilized eggs to produce identical twins
- Produces up to 96 embryos, but 72 is the average
- Primary instrument of social stability



What is the *Brave New World* ?

Government organization “conditions” the lower caste children using

Hypnopædia

“The greatest moralizing and socializing force of all time”
(28).

- Sleep teaching
- Moral education
- Class conditioning

“The child’s mind is these suggestions, and the sum of the suggestions is the child’s mind” (28-29).

What is the *Brave New World* ?

- A society where all aspects of an individual's life are determined by the state, beginning with conception and conveyor-belt reproduction.
- A government bureau, the Predestinators, decides all roles in the hierarchy.
- Children are raised and conditioned by the state bureaucracy, not brought up by natural families.
- Citizens must not fall in love, marry, or have their own children.

Are you living in a Brave New World?

Do you agree that...

- History is worthless?
- Everyone belongs to everyone else?
- Throwing something away is better than fixing it?
- No one really needs a mother?
- The elderly are worthless members of society?
- Cleanliness is next to godliness?
- You should never put off until tomorrow the fun you can have today?

Community

Identity

Stability

Brave New World

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