

Fundamentals of Existence and Societies by Brave New World

To what extent the system and the society in The World State in *Brave New World* is more optimal in the survival of the human species, compared to today's Democratic and Natural World, according to *The Theory of Evolution*?

EXTENDED ESSAY

ENGLISH B: Category 3

Word Count: 4002

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Introduction

Brave New World is written by Aldous Huxley, whose grandfather “(Thomas Henry Huxley) was a prominent biologist and an early advocate of Darwin’s theory of evolution” (Lohnes). In the novel, the influence of The Theory of Evolution can be observed in how Huxley has created the story of a new world, a new society. This new world is, as Margaret Atwood states, “either a perfect-world utopia or its nasty opposite, a dystopia, depending on your point of view” (Atwood ix). Factors like health, order, and stability in “Brave New World” could lead someone to call it a utopia. However, to achieve such a level of stability, The World State (TWS) sacrifices concepts such as art, words, and emotions, which could lead another to call it a dystopia. To some people, diversity in emotions might have more meaning than order and stability; for others, eternal happiness and health might be their only desire.

There are many perspectives to “Brave New World”. While reading, it is hard not to route for a side on the debate of social values between John and Mustapha Mond. John the Savage represents characteristics from “The Old World” and grows up in Savage Reservation, where the setting and atmosphere are similar to the world when the novel is written. Mond, the Controller, is the leader of TWS, whose goal is to maintain stability and happiness. Different perspectives on the novel come from our individuality, unlike the people in TWS, and that is why it is inevitable to have a biased opinion on “Brave New World”.

This essay will approach The Worlds State’s system and society from a cause and effect point of view to eliminate biases. Using the Theory of Evolution to compare and contrast, thus to conclude whether the system in TWS is more optimal for an organism’s purpose in life, to exist and survive, than in today’s world. The essay will discuss concepts such as reproduction, consumption, happiness, adaptation, and sex that create the basis of TWS and examine if the hierarchic society in TWS is in favor of the human species more than the democratic and religious systems in today’s world. Finally, by concluding if the system of that in TWS in “Brave New World” is more optimal in the survival of the human species compared to today’s world, according to The Theory of Evolution.

Organisms Priority

Reproduction

TWS introduces a new way of reproducing. Reproduction is done in Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Center. Many humans are made with a few eggs and spermatozoa; *Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons*. Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons undergo a process called Bokanovsky's Process, in other words, process of cloning. This process is to produce many humans. Each egg undergoing this process will divide, and as the Director states, "Making ninety-six human beings grow where only one grew before." and ends the sentence with "Progress." (Huxley 4)

Although cloning is an odd concept today, we have been reproducing by cloning for many years. Only up until the last 1.5 billion years, of 3.7 billion years of life, we have been reproducing with today's familiar methods. Before, we were bacteria, single-celled organisms that reproduce by cloning ("The First", Pelczar and Pelczar, "Early Life"). In the end, cloning is not an unfamiliar concept after all. According to this information, does the Director make a true statement by calling this technology "progress"?

According to The Theory of Evolution, the primary goal of an organism is to survive, and a high reproduction rate is key when continuing the existence of a species (National Geographic). However, is populating the world in high numbers and making ninety-six identical humans from one egg and spermatozoa is in our favor, or is it better to stick to the natural way of reproducing in today's world? Today, humans are also populating at high rates. However, in this case, it is not in our favor because as much as the organism's goal is to populate, doing so in overpopulating numbers can lead to surpassing the carrying capacity of the world. In the case of TWS, the population is controllable. Producing humans in desired numbers and the ability to produce identical copies of them allow for controllable and more sustainable growth of the society.

Consumption and Metabolism

Today, with overpopulation, many of the earth's resources are depleting at alarming rates because we consume; it is in our nature to consume. This problem arises from the unequal distribution of resources between rich and poor. In democracy, money has become the single power so the poor suffer while the rich thrive (Greco).

In TWS, individuals in any biological hierarchy will have a job and receive essential nutrients, resources, and entertainment to survive without any suffering. A downfall of this system might be seen as workers being destined to a job. As this may arise issues arguing free-will of the worker, it enables a happy work-life for the workers. In Conditioning Center, every hieratic level is conditioned to enjoy their job and acknowledge that "Every one works for every one else" (Huxley 64). In the end, everyone is happy with their job and provided with the essentials to continue living and serving society.

The pronounced difference between TWS and today's world is that in TWS, even if an individual is at the bottom of the food chain, he or she will have a job and receive their worth. However, this does not mean that the society in TWS doesn't consume unnecessarily. Given the standard life satisfaction of workers, this new world forces people to consume. In Elementary Class Consciousness lessons, individuals are put through hypnopedia cycles that embed the idea of re-purchasing rather than repairing; in other words, "ending is better than mending." (Huxley 42). Huxley presents this feature in the novel to showcase the real-world problem of consumerism (Oglesby). In TWS, rather than money, vacations are the most noticeable, and a fair reward for all workers of any hierarchy. Vacations are conducted with *soma* and the workers are rewarded with the best vacation.

Soma

Drugs, Tobacco, and alcohols are the roots of vacation and cash flow for governments. Their purpose is for relaxation and entertainment. However, they are also the spark to conflicts and deaths. TWS has reduced the harm of these components and present as a drug called *soma*. *Soma* puts the consumer thru a perfect dream, a vacation, with no side effects that could affect the workers' productivity. *Soma* also decreases the consumption of

resources in the real world. When combined with the Sound Organ, they reduce the burden on governing; as Yuval Harari reflects to *soma* in his book *Sapiens* “happiness is the supreme value and psychiatric drugs replace the police and the ballot as the foundation of politics” (Harari, *Sapiens* 330).

Happiness

What is the secret to happiness? In “Brave New World”, the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning states, “the secret of happiness and virtue—liking what you’ve got to do.” (Huxley 12). With the awareness of how TWS attaches purpose of living with jobs and as the Director states, “All conditioning aims at that: making people like their unescapable social destiny” it can be concluded that people in TWS are happy because they are biologically conditioned to be happy (Huxley 12). The Director can be backed up by Harari’s statement in *Sapiens* “Since our biochemistry limits the volume and duration of these sensations, the only way to make people experience a high level of happiness over an extended period of time is to manipulate their biochemical system.” (Harari, *Sapiens* 330). In the end, happiness doesn’t come from any possessions and wealth but by altering the biochemical system.

This rationalist argument may contradict the general views of today’s society while answering the question: Does money buy happiness? With regards to both Harari and the Director, the answer is, no. and if the world today is observed, it can be seen that countries with high GDP also have high suicide rates while countries in poverty can have much lower suicide rates.¹ Both conditioning the individual to be happy with what they do in life and supplementing it with *soma*, TWS creates a happy society. According to Mond, a happy society also means stability, which is why happiness is a concept that is highly regarded in the way of ruling in TWS.

¹ The GDP of Lithuania, a country in Europe, is 55.89 billion USD in 2020. Suicide rates in Lithuania, %26.1. The GDP of São Tomé and Príncipe, a country in Central Africa, is 472.9 million USD in 2020. Suicide rates in São Tomé and Príncipe %1.5. (“Suicide Rate”, World Bank)

Adaptation

Why stop cloning? Why get in the trouble of diversifying when you are a bacteria cloning to reproduce with a sustainable population system? Jean Baptiste Lamarck, a French zoologist-philosopher, states that “species adapt to changes in the environment”, and Charles Darwin concludes adaptation as “the rise of different species through evolution” (Steffoff 35). In the end, the ones who adapt to the environment tend to survive, which is called natural selection. Huxley pushes the idea of adaptation to its limits by altering it.

In TWS, people are adapted through genetic engineering and conditioning for skills and traits their job would require. For example, as Mr. Foster explains, "A special mechanism kept their containers in constant rotation. "To improve their sense of balance." (Huxley 13) TWS has control over their adaptations; rather than waiting decades for a gene to mutate, individuals are conditioned and modified. This method allows for a faster and more precise adaptation, which in nature would mean they have the upper hand compared to humans in today's world. At this period of time, humans are still in the process of natural evolution and adaptation. As much as we want to believe we have become the most optimal of ourselves, we are still adapting to the environment.

Sex

In nature, the search for a mate leads to conflicts between the same species, and these conflicts allow for the more muscular male to pass on stronger genes, and potentially, the offspring would have an increased chance of survival in the wild. (Bilde) Similarly, within humans, attractiveness and intelligence seem to be determining factors for parents. However, these factors no longer apply to people in TWS. The idea of a mother or a father is taboo, and being with someone for over a month seems wrong.

In the end, there is no need because reproduction is done in Hatchery Centers, and females wear Malthusian belts in place of contraception. It's in the Controllers' interest to eliminate emotions and feelings someone might have towards another while taking down potential conflicts between males or females for the desire to "own" someone. Sex is no longer a taboo subject in this society; the world controllers have normalized it starting from

Conditioning Centers, and it's normal for an "underage" boy or girl to have relationships or adults to have relationships with no emotions attached. These efforts all add up to eliminate distractions and obstacles in work while fulfilling the natural need. In the novel, dissemination of sex can implicate more intimacy between individuals in the society, similar to how our past ancestor's Bonobos is said to have sex between new members in their packs to break tension. (Waal)

Forming a Pack

There is a reason humans have become the superior species of all. This specialty was not our intelligence, not the ability to use tools, and certainly not our strength. Although these abilities or skills have helped us to come where we are today, the one ability of humans that separates us from all other animals is, as Harari states “ability to cooperate flexibly in very large numbers” (Harari, *How Sapiens*)

Cooperation in The World State

TWS introduces a new way of cooperation. Individuals in every hierarchic level are genetically modified and conditioned with the awareness that "Everyone works for everyone." allowing them to work in harmony. They also unite in the name of Solidary Service, a ritual that takes the place of religion, and in this ritual, individuals praise their "Ford" while becoming one with him "For I am you and you are I." (Huxley 71). Everyone unites as one under the name of "Ford." TWS 's society; becomes "one" through conditioning and rituals, and it can be compared to the humans' biological system, where every cell functions to form one being. To further understand the cooperative system in TWS and compare it with today's world, this section will analyze Harari's Island Theory and Controllers' Cyprus Experiment.” (Harari, *How Sapiens*) (Huxley 196)

The Island Theory

Harari introduces a theoretical experiment at the USI conference to put a chimpanzee and a human on an island. In his theory, the chimpanzee would be the best fit for surviving on the island compared to a human. Then he introduces another scenario where 1000 chimpanzees and 1000 humans are placed on an Island. In this case, he concludes that 1000 humans would outcompete the 1000 chimpanzees because of our ability to cooperate in large groups flexibly better than chimpanzees.

Cyprus Experiment

When John the Savage confronts Mond on why they don't make everyone an *Alpha* (the most intellectual, free-minded, social, and capable in the biological hierarchy), the Controller gives the *Cyprus Experiment* as an answer.

In this experiment, 22000 *Alphas* are placed on an island cleared from any possible competitor species. They were provided with all tools for survival, and the dependent variable was their ability to cooperate thus to survive. The results were poor; regulations were not followed, and *Alphas* with jobs of that a lower-level were seeking higher positions, while *Alphas* at higher places were defending their positions. In the end, their dissonance ended with a civil war, with 1900 dead, the remaining *Alphas* sought the governing of the Controllers.

My Island Theory, based on Harari and Mond

If the humans outcompete chimpanzees thanks to their enhanced cooperation and if the *Cyprus Experiment* by the World Controllers failed because of the battle between class positions and disobedience of laws, then which team: 1000 chimpanzees (Team Chimps), 1000 humans of our time (Team Humans) and a total of 1000 humans from "Brave New World" consisting of *Alphas*, *Betas*, *Deltas*, and *Epsilons* (Team BNW) would survive on the same island?

In the case of Team BNW, having a pre-determined and destined hierarchy eliminates the conflicts between class levels. Having a pre-determined ruler, an *Alpha*, and workers that have no choice but to obey the rules of the *Alpha* eliminates the disobedience of the regulations. If this was the case in the *Cyprus Experiment*, the causes of imperfection and wars are eliminated, Team BNW would have survived the experiment. It can be concluded that they would have outcompeted the *Cyprus Experiment* consisting of only *Alphas*.

The *Alphas* in the *Cyprus Experiment* have behaved most similarly to humans today with their rebellious instincts, desire for power, and individual values (“Live Science”). If this is the case and given in a hypothetical scenario based on Harari, *The Controller* and systems of that in *Brave New World*, Team BNW had outcompeted with *Cyprus Experiment* consisting of *Alphas*. It can be concluded that in an Island Experiment consisting of Team Chimps, Team Humans, and Team BNW, the outcompeting team would be Team BNW with enhanced levels of cooperation than both the Team Humans and Team Chimps. However, the pre-determined hierarchy is not the only factor contributing to their enhanced cooperation. As Harari states, the tool for effective cooperation is the “Ability to invent fictional stories, fictional realities and make everybody believe in the same fictional story.” (Harari, *How Sapiens*)

Stories

Chimpanzees cannot imagine; they see and tell, unlike humans. Humans can imagine and create stories of their own, so what is the difference between our stories regarding “Brave New World” and today’s world?

As we are arguably humans in TWS and today's world, we can imagine and use language to create "fictional stories." Creating these stories that we all believe in allows us to accept the same norms, values, and laws, which allow us to work towards an accepted goal.

As with most other subjects, TWS has also created unity in stories. Their story can be foreseen as: "Oh Ford!"," Fordship", "A.F" (After Ford), having similarity with Oh God, Lordship, A.C (After Christ). TWS has only one story, "Ford." In contrast to today's world,

where there are many stories. The World Controllers have established one story, and their goal is to maintain it to keep unity and cooperation towards only one goal and one belief.

The "old" ones

In TWS, The Controller maintains the existence of only one story by prohibiting the "old" ones and restricting "language". Today's stories which in the novel is called "old", include God, religion, and philosophy. These subjects allow a community to assemble and work together even if they don't know each other. They can trust and believe in each other because they believe in the same story and work towards the goal of that story with alliance and order. Our difference to TWS is that even though we can reach high levels of cooptation within stories, there is more than one story. Diversity in stories could mean less order between all individuals because they would have their separate collaborative teams with less attachment to a central goal. Another outcome of having more than one story leads to the followers of a particular story to potentially compete with others because their stories might oppose each other.

The prominent reason why the Team BNW would be the outcompeting team in survival in My Island Theory is that they have a predetermined hierarchic system supported by one story, thus a complete unity in collaboration on a single goal. While Team Humans also having stories of their own and a decent level of cooperation compared to Team Chimps, they would still lack cooperation as a unity because they would consist of multiple groups, with less attachment to a central law. This could lead to the desire to spread their story to gain power leading to "civil" wars.

Menace to Stability and Happiness

In TWS, to maintain happiness and eliminate threats to stability, The Controller sacrifices and restricts: art, science, Shakespeare, God, and philosophy. These values and beliefs have become "old" and the new world has a new story, Lord Ford. Society is conditioned to believe in this story as Mond states "One believes things because one has been conditioned to believe them," just as he adds, "People believe in God because they have been conditioned to" (Huxley 207)

The story of God is no longer relevant, as Mond states about God, "he manifests himself in different ways to different men. In pre-modern times he manifested himself as the being described in this book." (Huxley 206). The books at hand are The Holy Bible and The Imitation of Christ. Mond concludes the current "presence" of God by stating that in TWS, "he manifests himself as an absence; as though he weren't there at all." (Huxley 206) God is instead represented as an ideological figure expressed by The Controllers book written by the philosopher Maine de Biras as "the fear of death and of what comes after death that makes men turn to religion as they advance in years" (Huxley 205), explaining that the individual would need God and hope when their time of death has come close or the individual feels alone or to fulfill their search of purpose. In TWS, there is no fear of death, nobody is ever alone, and everyone has a purpose, so there is no understanding and need of God. With no evidence of its past existence to the citizens, introducing this ideology would corrupt their order and beliefs. Mond also states that "God isn't compatible with machinery and scientific medicine and universal happiness" (Huxley 207). In the end, he locks away any old records of old stories that can pose a threat to society's order.

One of the major themes in "Brave New World" is the conflict between science and nature. In TWS, words and science have been suppressed to a certain level. Even though TWS is possible thanks to science and its value is well appreciated, it is not in the Controllers favor for science to develop and introduce new technologies. Even Controller himself was a physicist and was to be punished, but he gave up physics to serve happiness by becoming a controller (Huxley 198). New technology is unfavored because, as Mond explains, "It isn't only art that's incompatible with happiness; it's also science" (Huxley 198) Similarly, arts and words are restricted because TWS acknowledges the fact that they are magic. Magic, as John states, "explained and gave orders." (Huxley 115) This "uncontrollable" magic could tell new stories and explanations, and for that reason words are monitored. Art such as Shakespeare brings more emotions to life, which is a threat to pure happiness. In the end; science, art, words, and emotions are all threats to the stability and the pure happiness of the society in TWS. This system is indefinite on whether it's a loss or a win for human nature, but the stability that comes with it is a win in the theory of evolution.

Conclusion

Utopia is either a happy world with minimal imperfection or a non-existing world. The antonym of Utopia is Dystopia, where inhibitors' free will and thoughts are restricted to an extent where they don't realize it's a bad place. "Brave New World" is neither a utopia nor a dystopia. "Brave New World" is a dystopia to people in today's world because we value individuality and want to believe we are unique, yet Main de Brian argues, "Independence was not made for man that it is an unnatural state." (Huxley 204) On the other hand, people in TWS would approach today's world as a dystopia just as they approached the Savage Reservoirs with a scare, disgust, and pity. "Brave New World" falls under neither category; it is Neutropenia where there is good and bad, just as there are good and bad in every aspect of life. It is a matter of perspective and individual values. It's a question of truth versus happiness or emotions versus health. Given that we can never know if we are in utopia or dystopia, "Brave New World" stands as a tool for comparison because, with only a reference to a different world, we can conclude what state we are in today's world.

With no regard to what context this new world might fall under, TWS can undoubtedly be an example of optimal survival standards for humans according to the Theory of Evolution. As much as the evolution theory is not a prominent theme in the book, the historical context and the fact that his grandfather was close with Charles Darwin can drive the idea of how The Theory of Evolution had influenced Huxley (Desmond). In the novel, Huxley challenges critical concepts such as reproduction, consumption, adaptation, sex, cooperation, and stories. With "Brave New World", Huxley has created the optimal collaborative society for survival and stability, with technological and biological advancements such as; control over their adaptations, reproduction, and by conditioning the society. Followed by creating a predetermined hierarchy that has one story; using technology, biology, soma, sound organs, and by sacrificing; god, art, words, Shakespeare, philosophy, and diversity in religion. Those who argue, like John, that it is better to seek the old ones are the people who end up suffering. In the end, TWS is the most optimal system for human survival, compared to today's world, according to the theory of evolution. But at what cost? If the nature of man is altered and there are no emotions to feel, what good comes from living?

This novel is both guidance and a warning to today's societies. Huxley's has created a new society in Brave New World. A society that leads to arguments regarding today's utopia or dystopia context and made today's society realize the value of culture and emotions while emphasizing the possible threats of the capitalist ideology and technological advancements on society.

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