

Brave New World

Background Info

Author Bio

Full Name: Aldous Huxley

Date of Birth: 1894

Place of Birth: Surrey, England

Date of Death: 1963

Brief Life Story: Aldous Huxley was born into a family of noted scientists and writers. His grandfather, a biologist, was instrumental in popularizing Darwin's theory of evolution, while his mother was related to the English poet Matthew Arnold. Huxley attended Eton and Oxford, and was skilled and knowledgeable in both literature and science. Though his hopes of a medical career were dashed when an eye disease almost blinded him, he soon built a career as a writer. He wrote prolifically throughout the 1920's, and published numerous essays, sketches, caricatures, and four novels. Huxley published *Brave New World*, his most successful novel, in 1932. As war loomed in Europe, Huxley, a pacifist, moved to California. His attempt to write screenplays failed, but he developed an interest in hallucinogenic drugs that led to a book about his drug experiences, *The Doors of Perception*. In 1963, the same year he died, Huxley published his last book, *Island*, which depicted a utopia in contrast to his dystopia of *Brave New World*.

Key Facts

Full Title: *Brave New World*

Genre: Dystopian novel

Setting: London and New Mexico, as they exist under the rule of an imagined future one-world government called the World State.

Climax: The debate between Mustapha Mond and John

Protagonist: Bernard and John

Antagonist: The World State; Mustapha Mond

Point of View: Third person omniscient

Historical and Literary Context

Where Written: England

When Published: 1932

Literary Period: Modernism

Related Literary Works: In 1516, Sir Thomas More published a book called *Utopia*. Its title meant, in Greek, either "good place" or "no place," and the book described an ideal society that More used in order to criticize his own society. Utopia was not the first book to imagine a perfect society, Plato's *Republic*, for example, does the same thing. But Utopia did give the genre a name, and numerous writers over the years wrote their own Utopian novels. In addition, a number of writers wrote Dystopian novels, in which they imagined the worst possible society, and used it to criticize their current world. *Brave New World* is a dystopian novel, which extrapolated

from the rise of technology, science, and totalitarianism in the 1930s to imagine a future totalitarian state in which humanity had been robbed of all free choice and were forced into happiness through the manipulation of genetics and psychology. In its focus on the evils of totalitarianism and the use of technology to support these evils, *Brave New World* most closely resembles George Orwell's *1984*.

Related Historical Events: When Huxley wrote *Brave New World* in the early 1930s, the world had recently undergone a terrible world war, totalitarian states had sprung up in the Soviet Union and Fascist parties were gaining power in Europe, and another war seemed to be on the horizon. In addition, huge strides had been made in both science and the application of science through technology, and the world had industrialized. Huxley took all these developments and spun them into the World State of *Brave New World*, a totalitarian dystopia that uses technology to, basically, trick its citizens into loving their slavery.

Extra Credit

The Doors of Rock and Roll. As you might expect, Huxley's book about his experiences with hallucinogenic drugs, the *Doors of Experience*, was a cult classic among certain groups of people. One of those groups was actually a rock and roll band looking for a name. Well, after Jim Morrison and his friends read Huxley's book, they had one: The Doors.

Plot Summary

The **Director** of the Central London Hatcheries leads a group of boys on a tour of the facilities, where babies are produced and grown in bottles (birth is non-existent in the World State). The Director shows how the five castes of World State society are created, from Alphas and Betas, who lead the society, down to the physically and intellectually inferior Deltas, Gammas, and Epsilons, who do menial labor. The Director also shows how each individual is conditioned both before and after "birth" to conform to the moral rules of the World State, and to enjoy his or her predetermined job. Each caste is conditioned differently, but all castes are conditioned to seek instant gratification, to be sexually promiscuous, to engage in economic consumption, and to use the drug *soma* to escape from all unpleasant experiences.

The boys and the director get a special treat when **Mustapha Mond**, one of the ten World Controllers, shows up. He lectures the boys on the World State's creation and its success in creating happiness and stability by eliminating from society all intense emotions, desires, and relationships. Meanwhile, **Lenina Crowne**, a nurse at the Hatchery, is criticized by her friend **Fanny** for only dating **Henry Foster**. Lenina decides to also date **Bernard Marx**, even though he is a bit small and strange for an alpha. Bernard is strange: he is outraged as he listens to Henry Foster and another man have a perfectly normal discussion about "having" Lenina. In the elevator, Lenina

accepts Bernard's invitation to accompany him to the Savage Reservation. Bernard then visits his friend **Helmholtz Watson**. The two criticize the World State. Bernard is dissatisfied because he is self-conscious about being small, while Helmholtz is so perfect at everything that he always feels bored.

The Director signs the permit to allow Bernard to visit the Savage Reservation, and as he does so reminisces about his own vacation to the Reservation twenty years earlier: there was a storm and the woman he was with disappeared. Embarrassed to have told Bernard such information, the Director threatens to reassign Bernard to Iceland. Bernard thinks the Director is bluffing, but just before entering the Reservation finds out from Helmholtz that the Director is serious. In the Reservation, Bernard and Lenina meet a young **Shakespeare**-quoting savage named **John**, and his mother, **Linda**. Bernard realizes that Linda is the woman who got separated from the Director, and that John is their son. John is overwhelmed by Lenina's beauty. Bernard and Lenina bring John and Linda back to London. The scandal of having fathered a child forces the Director to resign.

John, "the Savage," is a hit in London society. But John is troubled by the World State, especially because Linda has drugged herself into a happy stupor with *soma*. As John's friend and guide, Bernard becomes popular—but when John refuses to appear at one of Bernard's parties, the guests turn on Bernard, to whom they were being polite only in order to meet the Savage.

Lenina, meanwhile, can't figure out if John likes her or not. When John tells her he loves her, she offers herself to him. He finds the promiscuity of World State society disgusting and curses at her. While she hides in the bathroom, John gets a phone call that his mother is dying.

At the hospital, Linda thinks her son is her former Indian lover, **Popé**. This makes John angry, as does the presence in the room of a bunch of Gamma children being conditioned not to fear death. Linda dies. John blames *soma* for Linda's death, and interferes with the distribution of *soma* rations to some Deltas. The Deltas riot just as Helmholtz and Bernard, who had heard what John was doing, arrive. John, Helmholtz, and Bernard are taken to see Mustapha Mond.

Mond and John debate World State society. John says it makes life worthless by destroying truth. Mond says that stability and happiness are more important than truth. Mond tells Helmholtz and Bernard that they'll be sent to an island—islands are where all the interesting people who don't like conforming to World State society live—but refuses to let John accompany them. John moves into an abandoned lighthouse, where he purifies himself through self-flagellation. One of his whipping sessions is captured on film, and hundreds of sightseers show up to beg him to whip himself again. One of them is Lenina. John whips her, and himself. The intensity of emotion inspires the crowd, including John, to have an orgy. Horrified at what he's done, John hangs himself.

Characters

Bernard Marx — An Alpha male who by some chance is physically much smaller than Alphas are supposed to be. Bernard's small stature has given him an inferiority complex. As a result, he feels like an outsider to World State society for that reason is more self-conscious and more of an individual than other citizens of the World State. This outsider status and individuality allows Bernard both to recognize and criticize the flaws of the World State. But his inferiority complex also makes him defensive, resentful, jealous, cowardly, and quick to boast.

Helmholtz Watson — Helmholtz is the opposite of **Bernard**: he is the perfect embodiment of an Alpha male. But just as Bernard's imperfections make him an individual, Helmholtz's perfection makes him individual. Everything in life comes so easily to Helmholtz—from women, to physical prowess, to professional achievement—that he comes to believe there is more to life. In looking for ways to challenge himself, he realizes the limitations that the World State imposes on its citizens. Unlike Bernard, who often seems to be compensating for his insecurities, Helmholtz is generous, kind, and fun-loving.

John (the Savage) — Because of an accident, John is born to a woman from the World State, **Linda**, who gets stranded in a Savage Reservation. He spends the first twenty years of his life on the Reservation, and though the Reservation natives treat him as an outsider he still picks up their religious and moral values (which are much more similar to our own values today than to those of the World State), and develops a love of **Shakespeare**. John is eager to see the World State since his mother talks about it as a paradise, but once there he thinks the World State culture is immoral, infantilizing, and degrading to humanity.

Lenina Crowne — A beautiful Beta woman. She is slightly unconventional in that she has a tendency to date only one man at a time, but otherwise she never challenges her conditioning. During the novel she dates **Henry Foster** and **Bernard Marx**, but ultimately becomes obsessed with **John** because he does not immediately sleep with her.

Mustapha Mond — One of the ten World Controllers of the World State. Mond was once a physicist who loved truth and science so much that he carried out some secret experiments. He was then given the choice of becoming either a World Controller or going to an island where he could continue his experiments. Mond chose to become a World Controller, and while he has read Shakespeare and loves truth, throughout the novel he holds up happiness and stability as more important than, and mutually exclusive of, love or truth.

Linda — A Beta-minus woman, who is separated from the **Director** in storm during a visit to the Reservation. Though she had taken all the proper precautions, she was pregnant with **John** when separated from the Director, and was so embarrassed at giving birth that she didn't try to leave the Reservation. Her World State belief in promiscuous sex and drug-taking make her and John outcasts in the Reservation. Once she returns to the World State she drugs herself into a permanent *soma*-stupor until she dies.

The Director (Thomas) — A pedantic, charmless, pretentious, and thoroughly conventional Alpha male who runs the Central London Hatchery. He takes exception to **Bernard's** unconventional behavior, but Bernard discovers and reveals that the Director abandoned **Linda** in the Reservation and unknowingly fathered a child: **John**.

Fanny Crowne — **Lenina's** friend and coworker at the Hatchery. Fanny is even more conventional than Lenina, and essentially speaks, acts, and thinks exactly as she was conditioned to.

Henry Foster — One of **Lenina's** lovers. He is a supremely conventional Alpha male, and an employee at the Hatchery.

Benito Hoover — An affable though rather hairy former lover of **Lenina's**.

The Arch-Community-Songster — The World State version of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Popé — One of **Linda's** lovers in the Reservation. He brings her drugs and gives **John** a book of **Shakespeare**.

Themes

In LitCharts, each theme gets its own corresponding color, which you can use to track where the themes occur in the work. There are two ways to track themes:

- Refer to the color-coded bars next to each plot point throughout the *Summary and Analysis* sections.
- Use the *ThemeTracker* section to get a quick overview of where the themes appear throughout the entire work.

Dystopia and Totalitarianism

Brave New World is one of the two best known dystopian novels written in the twentieth century. The other is George Orwell's *1984*. Both novels envision future totalitarian societies in which individual liberty has been usurped by an all-powerful state. But the two novels show two very different methods by which the state has amassed its power. *1984* presents the rather more conventional vision of a totalitarian state, in which the government maintains power through surveillance, information control, and torture. *Brave New World*, in contrast, argues that the most powerful totalitarian state would be one that doesn't overwhelm and frighten its citizens, but instead manages to convince its citizens to *love* their slavery.

Technology and Control

Science and technology are two different things. Science is the pursuit of truth and fact in the various sciences, from biology to physics. Technology refers to the tools and applications developed from science. Science is knowledge. Technology is what you can do with that knowledge.

Brave New World raises the terrifying prospect that advances in the sciences of biology and psychology could be transformed by a totalitarian government into technologies that will change the way that human beings think and act. Once this happens, the novel suggests, the totalitarian government will cease to allow the pursuit of any actual science and the truth that science reveals will be restricted and controlled, even as the technologies that allow for control will be constantly improved and perfected.

The Cost of Happiness

If you gave someone the choice between getting what they wanted and not getting what they wanted, they'd choose getting what they wanted every time. This satisfaction of desire, the person would believe, would make them happy. In order to maintain its stability, the World State in *Brave New World* ensures that all its citizens get exactly what they want all the time. In other words, the World State is designed to make people happy. This universal "happiness" is achieved in three ways: 1) The state uses biological science and psychological conditioning to make sure that each citizen is not only suited to its job and role but actually prefers that role to anything else, and therefore doesn't want anything he or she can't have; 2) Through the promotion of promiscuous sex as virtuous and the elimination of families or any long-term relationship of any sort, the government ensures that no one will ever face intense and unreciprocated emotional or sexual desire; 3) Whatever sadness slips through the cracks can be brushed away by using *soma*, a drug with no side-effects that gives the user a pleasant high and makes all worries dissolve away. All three methods are successful: in the World State, almost everybody really does seem to be happy all of the time.

But through **Bernard**, **Helmholtz**, the **Savage**, and even **Mustapha Mond**, *Brave New World* poses the question: at what cost does this happiness come? What gets lost when every one of an individual's desires is immediately met? The novel's answer is that the satisfaction of every desire creates a superficial and infantile happiness that creates stability by eliminating deep thought, new ideas, and strong passions. Without ideas or passions, mankind loses the possibility of the more significant fulfillments provided by the pursuit of truth in art and science, or the pursuit of love and understanding with another person. *Brave New World* argues that happiness and stability are fool's gold, making adults into infants who do not care about truth or progress.

Industrialism and Consumption

Brave New World criticizes the industrial economic systems of the era in which it was written by imagining those systems pushed to their logical extremes. The industrial revolution that began in the second half of the 19th century and sped up through the 20th allowed for the production of massive quantities of new goods. But there's no value in producing new goods that no one wants, so the willingness of the masses to consume these new goods was crucial to economic growth and prosperity. It became an economic imperative, then, that people always want new things, because if people were satisfied with what they had they wouldn't consume enough to keep the wheels of industrial society churning along. Some people would argue that almost all of advertising is an effort to make you, the consumer, consume things you don't really need.

The World State in *Brave New World* has made consumption one of its centerpieces. All World State citizens are conditioned to consume. Hypnotic teachings condition them to throw out worn clothes instead of mending them, to prefer complicated sports with lots of mechanical parts to simple games, and to refrain from any activity like thinking or reading that doesn't involve the payment of money for goods. It is as if the citizens of the World State exist to serve their economy, rather than the other way around.

Individuality

All of World State society can be described as an effort to eliminate the individual from society. That doesn't mean the elimination of all people; it means the conditioning of those people so that they don't really think of themselves as individuals. What makes a person an individual? Having a sense of oneself as being separate, distinct, unique. This sense includes both the joy of one's own talents and thoughts, and the sorrows of loneliness and isolation. These experiences of individuality are what are referred to as "the Human condition," and everything in the World State is designed to avoid anyone ever feeling individual in any way, either through sadness or joy. But these safeguards aren't enough for all the citizens of the World State, and they become aware of their individuality.

Symbols

Symbols are shown in **red** text whenever they appear in the *Plot Summary* and *Summary and Analysis* sections of this LitChart.


Ford

The World State doesn't really have a religion, but it does have a symbolic and revered father figure: Henry T. Ford. Ford is the perfect "god" for World State society because in developing his Ford Motor Company, he invented mass production by means of the assembly line and the specialization of workers, each of whom has one single and specific job. The World State takes Ford's ideas about mass production and the assembly line and applies them to biology—to people. The entire World State is an assembly line, pumping out people conditioned to fit into a single specialized caste and job.

Shakespeare

In *Brave New World*, Shakespeare represents two things. First, he represents all of the art that has been rejected and destroyed by the World State in the interest of maintaining stability. Second, the powerful emotion, passion, love, and beauty on display in Shakespeare's plays stand for all of the noble aspects of humanity that have been sacrificed by the World State in its effort to make sure all of its citizens are always happy.

Summary and Analysis

The color-coded bars in *Summary and Analysis* make it easy to track the themes through the work. Each color corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section. For instance, a bar of  indicates that all five themes apply to that part of the summary.

Chapter 1

In the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre, the **Director of Hatcheries** leads students on a tour of the facilities. They pass beneath the motto of the World State: Community, Identity, Stability and into the Fertilizing Room.

The opening immediately establishes that the novel's setting is in the future or some alternate reality. Note that "freedom" isn't in the World State motto.



Here, surgically removed female ovaries produce ova for artificial insemination. Depending on whether the resulting embryo is destined to become a higher caste Alpha or Beta, or a lower caste Gamma, Delta, or Epsilon, it receives different treatment. Alphas and Betas are allowed to develop naturally. Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons, are put through the Bokanovsky Process, which causes an egg to divide into as many as ninety-six identical twins.

The purpose of the Hatchery part of the Hatchery and Conditioning Center is made clear: it manufactures human beings! And it doesn't just manufacture them, it predetermines what they'll be like according to pre-selected criteria, destroying the entire idea of personal freedom or self-determination.



The Bokanovsky Process is mass production applied to biology, and a major instrument of World State stability. Combined with Podsnap's Technique, which hastens the maturation of eggs in an ovary, the Bokanovsky Process allows the average ovary to produce around 11,000 brothers and sisters.

The mass production of humans, creating over 10,000 "twins" from the same ovary, destroys the possibility of any sense of individuality.



The **Director** calls over **Henry Foster**, who happily tells the students the record for offspring produced by a single ovary in this factory is 16,012. Foster leads the group into the Bottling Room, where the embryos are put into bottles with blood-surrogate—an artificial womb.

Foster's pride at the creation of so many clones indicates he either doesn't know or doesn't care about the principles of humanity that the mass production of humans destroys.



In this "womb," Gamma, Deltas, and Epsilons are given alcohol treatment and limited oxygen to stunt physical and mental development. Fetuses of all castes are conditioned to prefer certain climates or environments so that they will like their pre-determined jobs, and 70% of female fetuses are sterilized.

Virtually everything that a future man or woman is predetermined to do by the World State government they have been likewise pre-conditioned to enjoy.



The group comes upon a nurse named **Lenina Crowne** as she inoculates future tropical workers against disease. **Foster** tells Lenina to meet him on the roof at ten after five on the roof. The **Director** finds this charming. Foster wants to show the students more, but the Director says they must be quick and head to the Nurseries.

Apparently, sexual promiscuity is an open and approved feature of World State society (this would have been much more shocking in 1930s America than it is today).



Chapter 2

The **Director** brings the group to the Infant Nurseries: Neo-Pavlovian Conditioning Rooms. The students watch as loud noises and electric shocks are used to condition a Bokanovsky Group of Deltas to hate flowers and books. The director explains that Deltas are conditioned to hate nature but love complicated outside sports, so they'll consume (pay for) transportation and sporting goods.

Any pre-determination that the World State can't accomplish through biology is done through psychology. Citizens are conditioned to do things that help industrial society, not themselves. The message is clear: individuals are not important. The World State is.



Next the **Director** explains the origins of hypnopaedia (sleep-teaching). A Polish boy, Rueben, went to sleep one night while the radio was broadcasting in English. He woke up the next morning able to recite exactly what had been playing on the radio, even though he didn't understand it.

The story of the discovery of hypnopaedia is a story of a scientific discovery.



This "god" of hypnopaedia occurred just twenty-three years after the first sale of one of "Our Ford's" Model-T cars. The **Director** makes the sign of a T across his chest when he says "Our Ford."

Ford is the "god" of World State society because he invented the production line that emphasized speed and specialization over the individual worker.



While it was discovered that hypnopaedia had no use in intellectual education because it provided only rote memorization, it was perfect for moral training. The **Director** leads the students into a dormitory of napping Betas. From speakers under every pillow the same voice whispers an Elementary Class Consciousness lesson. The voice says how good it is to be a Beta. Alphas have to work too hard, and the lower three castes are stupid and wear ugly colors. The message repeats, over and over, day after day, until the Betas believe it instinctively.

The government used the scientific discovery of hypnopaedia to produce a technology that helps them condition their citizens to enjoy the life that has been predetermined for them. The success of these methods is evident in the fact that everyone on the tour is proud of these accomplishments. World State citizens think that their slavery is paradise.



Chapter 3

Outside, in the Hatcheries garden, hundreds of naked boys and girls play. The **Director** remarks to the tour that children used to play simple games with just a stick and a ball instead of complicated games that ensured consumption.

The games of innocent children have been controlled to produce consumption...



The **Director** points out a "charming" seven year old boy and eight year old girl playing a rudimentary sex game. Another boy refuses to play a sex game and is taken by a nurse to visit a psychologist. The Director mentions the distant past, when it was considered immoral to play sex games.

...and to develop the kind of promiscuous sexual relationships that we think are inappropriate but that help keep the World State stable and productive.



Suddenly a man interrupts the **Director** to say that the effects of such policies against promiscuity were terrible. The director exclaims in shock and awe that this man is his **fordship, Mustapha Mond**, one of the ten World Controllers.

Mond's comment promises an answer to how the World State developed, and indicates that World State citizens think their slavery is rational and good.



At this moment, the work shift ends at the Center. Workers head to the changing rooms. **Lenina** talks to her friend **Fanny**, who chastises her for exclusively dating **Henry Foster** for so long. Lenina decides to accept an offer to go on vacation with **Bernard Marx**, though she agrees with Fanny that Bernard is odd.

The shift to the workers gives an example of conditioning in action. Fanny just spouts the words she was conditioned to think, and Lenina accepts them as morally true.



In the men's changing room, **Bernard** listens as **Henry** and another man talk about "having" **Lenina**. Though this way of talking is normal for World State society, it angers Bernard.

Bernard is the first example of an individual in the World State. He disagrees with World State "morality."



Meanwhile, **Mond** explains how the World State eliminates strong emotions by eliminating families and promoting promiscuous sex. He describes how the World State arose from the destruction of the Nine Year's War—people wanted stability more than anything else. Religion, historical study, art, solitary thinking, and families were abolished or discouraged through conditioning. The drug *soma* was developed to make everyone happy whenever they wanted to be. The first sale of a Model-T **Ford** was chosen as the beginning of the new era.

The World State began when the citizens of the world, exhausted by war, chose self-imposed slavery and security over freedom and instability. In other words, the World State arose from a conscious choice to give up all the great things about humanity in order to also eliminate the terrible things.



Chapter 4

Lenina gets into an elevator to go to the roof. She spots **Bernard** standing behind her former lover **Benito Hoover**. She accepts Bernard's invitation to go to the Savage Reservation, but Bernard asks if they can talk about it in private. Lenina finds this request odd.

Bernard wants privacy because he's an individual. Lenina doesn't understand his request because she's been conditioned to not be an individual.



The Epsilon elevator operator joyfully says, "Roof!" and opens the door. **Lenina** runs off for her date with **Henry Foster**.

The operator and Lenina are just living out their conditioning.



Benito Hoover comes up to **Bernard** and remarks how pretty and "pneumatic" **Lenina** is. He offers the gloomy Bernard some *soma*. Bernard walks off in a huff. Benito wonders if it's true that alcohol was accidentally put into Bernard's blood-surrogate.

Benito is also just living according to his conditioning. Bernard isn't, and in a society where everyone is the same, Bernard's differences stand out.



Bernard is ashamed of his behavior. Because of his small size he feels like an outsider, which makes him act like an outsider, which makes him more of an outsider.

Bernard's feeling of inferiority to other Alphas because of his small size makes him aware of himself, makes him an individual.



Bernard flies off to see his friend **Helmholtz Watson**. Helmholtz is the perfect Alpha-plus. He's stellar at his job, desired by women, and always welcome everywhere. But he's too perfect. Everything comes so easily to him that he finds himself wanting more.

Helmholtz is an individual for the opposite reason from Bernard: Helmholtz is superior, and so he is bored. The lack of challenge and boredom make him aware of himself.



Helmholtz and **Bernard** discuss the dilemma of their individuality (though Bernard doesn't mention his jealousy of Helmholtz's success with women). Helmholtz says that though he's good at writing propaganda, he has the feeling that he could write something more piercing, more powerful. Bernard motions for silence. He thinks someone is listening at the door. No one is. Helmholtz wishes Bernard had a little more self-respect.

Bernard's individuality was forced upon him by his small size, while Helmholtz came to his through his own initiative and desire. In a sense, Bernard is an individual because of his loneliness and sadness, while Helmholtz is an individual because he senses his own self-worth.



Chapter 5

On their date, after Obstacle Golf, **Lenina** and **Henry** fly past the Crematorium and discuss how nice it is that the elements in dead human bodies are recycled. At Henry's building, they eat in the dining hall and have *soma* with their coffee. Then they go dancing and take more *soma*. They go up to Henry's room. Lenina goes through her Malthusian Drill (contraception precautions) before they "have" each other.

Lenina and Henry's date is an example of conditioning at work. They consume goods, they don't fear death, soma keeps them happy, and they make sure not to have any children and thereby avoid any emotional entanglements or responsibilities.



Bernard goes to his Solidarity Service. He's late and sits in the first empty chair he sees. Only later does he realize he's sat next to Morgana Rothschild, who has a unibrow. Bernard wishes he were sitting next to Fifi and Joanna, who are much better looking.

Like most individuals, Bernard is always stuck in his mind. In contrast, all of the other people at the Solidarity Service barely think of themselves at all. In other words, they're happy.



The leader of the group starts the meeting by making the sign of the T. Everyone has *soma* and begins to chant solidarity chants designed to melt the twelve separate identities in the room into a single being. The chants do their work. The people call out in ecstasy to the coming "Great Being." Only **Bernard** hears nothing. He fakes his excitement. Loudspeakers start to chant "orgy-porgy," and an orgy starts.

The Solidarity Service is designed to further eliminate the individual in everyone. It turns a group of individuals into a kind of mob, and at the same time ensures that no one goes without sexual satisfaction for too long.



Later, the members of **Bernard's** solidarity group talk about how great the session was, how it had made them all "more than merely themselves." Only Bernard feels left out and self-conscious. He can't stop thinking about Morgana's unibrow.

But for Bernard, already an individual, the experience of watching others lose their meager individuality only makes him feel more alone.



Chapter 6

Lenina thinks about how strange **Bernard** is. For instance, he prefers talking in private to playing Electro-magnetic golf! She remembers one night when they went to watch a women's wrestling match in Amsterdam. Bernard was gloomy, but refused to take any *soma*, saying he wanted to be himself. Flying back from Amsterdam he shut off the music, hovered over the wild ocean, and wished he were free of his conditioning. Lenina, shocked, repeated the hypnopædic saying, "Everyone is happy nowadays" and begged him to take some *soma*.

Here are further examples of Bernard's individuality versus Lenina's full-strength conditioning. In fact, Lenina uses her conditioning and hypnopædic sayings to protect herself from even really thinking about what Bernard is saying. Lenina is conditioned to avoid thinking.



In the end they went back to **Bernard's** and slept together. But he said he wished they hadn't done it on their first date, and added that the World State was full of intellectual adults and emotional children who want instant gratification. **Lenina** couldn't understand why Bernard would think this was bad.

As an individual, Bernard hates his slavery. As a conditioned World State citizen, Lenina loves her slavery.



A few days later, **Bernard** asks the **Director** to sign the permit needed to visit the Savage Reservation. The Director remembers his own vacation on the reservation nearly twenty years earlier. During his trip, a storm separated him from his female companion, who disappeared. The Director realizes he's just let slip a terrible secret to Bernard. To hide his embarrassment, he chastises Bernard's recent non-infantile behavior, and says that if it continues Bernard will be reassigned to Iceland. With grim pleasure, Bernard thinks that now he's truly an outsider, standing up against society.

The Director is a bit of a hypocrite, spouting the conditioned morality of the World State on one hand, while threatening to punish Bernard in order to hide his own deviations from that morality. Bernard, meanwhile, enjoys his persecution because it is a sign of his individuality.



Bernard and **Lenina** travel to the Reservation, which is surrounded by an electric fence so no one can escape. Just before they enter, Bernard calls **Helmholtz**, and learns to his horror and astonishment that the **Director** actually is planning to transfer him to Iceland. Now Bernard realizes he only enjoyed facing the Director's threat because he didn't think it would be carried out. Lenina convinces him to take *soma*. His worries fade away.

Bernard comes to a terrible realization about his own cowardice. It's the sort of realization that most World State members never have to face because they seldom think critically about anything and if they do, they just take soma to escape it. Bernard, who is always thinking, takes the soma.



Chapter 7

Lenina is shocked by the poverty and lack of modern convenience in the Reservation. The pueblo in the Reservation is dirty, with dogs prowling through rubbish-filled streets, and there are old people everywhere. The World State keeps people looking young and fit until they die.

The World State eliminates the outward effects of aging so no one ever feels the loss of their looks. Loss leads to sadness, which creates a sense of isolation and lessens productivity.



At an Indian dance, **Lenina** at first likes the drums, but is appalled when a young man comes out and is ritually whipped until he collapses.

The dance includes extremes of pain and feeling that Lenina can't comprehend.



After the dance, **Bernard** and Lenina meet a young man who's dressed like an Indian, but has blond hair and blue eyes. He says in peculiar (**Shakespearean**) English that he wishes he were the one who had been whipped. Lenina asks him a question, and the man stops short. He has never seen a white woman before. He thinks she's beautiful.

The young man wants to feel powerful emotion (and does when he sees Lenina). Shakespeare, with his plays that capture all the range of human experience and passion, is a perfect symbol for such a wish.



Under **Bernard's** questioning, the man reveals that his mother was from the Other Place outside the reservation, but got separated from the man who was his father. Bernard realizes with great excitement that the **Director** is the man's father.

Bernard sees a chance for revenge, a very "human" desire that would be foreign to most members of the World State



The man brings Bernard and Lenina to his mother's house. Her name is **Linda**. She's overweight, looks horribly old, and stinks of alcohol. But she's overjoyed to see people from the World State. She corroborates the story her son, **John**, told.

Though in our culture a mother is a symbol of purity, selflessness, and beauty, in World State society the idea of a mother is dirty. This difference shows the power of conditioning.



Chapter 8

Outside **Linda's** house, **Bernard** and **John** talk. John recalls events in his life in a series of flashbacks: An Indian named **Popé** gives his mother a drug called mescal and then they sleep together... Indian women whip Linda for sleeping with their men. Linda can't understand what they mean when they say the men are their men... His mother tells him stories of the glorious Other Place outside the reservation... Men continue to visit Linda. Indian boys call John names and throw rocks at him... Linda teaches him to read, using a manual from her work in the Hatcheries... Popé brings him a book: the Complete Works of **Shakespeare**. Inspired by Hamlet, he tries to stab Pope. Popé laughs off what is just a scratch... A girl John loved from afar marries an Indian brave... John is forced to stay out of a ceremony to induct boys into adulthood.

The series of flashbacks that John remembers (it's unclear if he recounts all of them to Bernard) shows John in various states of isolation, yearning, sadness, or other extreme emotions. This personal history is what formed John as an individual. The entire World State is designed to ensure its citizens never have such a personal history: instead of loss or sadness that they might remember, World State citizens always get exactly what they want. So their life is always the same, always pleasant, and no strong memory will interfere with their conditioning.



John tells **Bernard** he has always been terribly alone. Bernard says he has, too. John tells Bernard about putting himself through trials such as fasting or standing with arms outstretched for hours on end.

As a fellow misfit in his own society, Bernard can sympathize with John's experience...



Bernard promises to take **John** back to the World State if he can get permission. Realizing that **Linda** will discredit the **Director**, Bernard agrees to take her too.

...though Bernard is also selfishly using John for his own ends. Another of those bad traits of individuals.



John asks if **Bernard** is married to **Lenina**. Bernard bursts out laughing. John is overjoyed, and quotes a line from **Shakespeare's** *The Tempest*: "O brave new world, that has such people in it."

The contrast of Bernard's view that marriage is ridiculous with John's obvious desire to marry Lenina shows that Bernard, too, is affected by conditioning.



Chapter 9

Lenina, exhausted, takes six *soma* tablets to knock herself out for eighteen hours.

Like most World Staters, Lenina prefers oblivion to experience.



Bernard flies to Santa Fe and contacts **Mustapha Mond**, who agrees that there would be "scientific interest" in bringing **John** and **Linda** back to the World State.

Bernard puts in motion his plan of revenge.



Meanwhile, **John** goes to see **Bernard** and **Lenina**. There's no answer, and he's terrified they've left without him. He peeks through a window, sees Lenina's suitcase, and breaks in. He opens the suitcase and smells and kisses the things inside. Then he notices Lenina asleep on the bed. Her beauty inspires him to quote *Romeo and Juliet*. He wants to touch her, to unzip her clothing, but dares not. Suddenly he hears the humming of a helicopter and rushes from the room in time to meet Bernard at the landing pad.

John, moved by passion and Shakespeare, falls further in love with Lenina, and is tormented on one side by his sexual desire and on the other by his guilt over that desire and his love of honor. All of this angst John feels is what the World State was built to eliminate. This sets up the main conflict of Brave New World: will John give up or hold dear his pain and angst?



Chapter 10

In the Hatchery, the **Director** discusses with **Henry Foster** his plan to make a public example of **Bernard** and send him to Iceland. Bernard enters the Fertilizing Room, where the Director had told him to appear. The Director publicly scolds Bernard. But Bernard says he has a response: he calls **Linda** and **John** into the room. Linda rushes to the Director and hugs and kisses him while saying he got her pregnant. John falls at the Director's feet and calls him father. The humiliated Director rushes away.

Bernard's revenge is complete. The Director is humiliated because he did not conform to his conditioning and World State morality in a far more obvious way than Bernard. John, meanwhile, is overwhelmed with emotion to meet a father who looks upon him as a stain on his reputation.



Chapter 11

The **Director** resigns. Meanwhile, all upper-caste London is wild to see **John**, whom they call the Savage. Because **Linda** is old, ugly, and a mother, no one wants to see her. Linda doesn't care, though, and happily drugs herself into a stupor with *soma*.

World State culture is shallow, seeing John as nothing more than a curiosity. Linda, after so much sadness and unpleasantness in the Reservation, wants only to cease to exist.



Bernard's connection to the **Savage** makes him popular and important. He takes full advantage, sleeping with many women. He also thinks **Helmholtz** is jealous, when really Helmholtz is dismayed because behind Bernard's back, the people being friendly to him continue to dislike him. Bernard even goes so far as to write a report to **Mustapha Mond** about the Savage in which he says that he agrees with the Savage's belief that infantility is too easy. Mond decides not to teach Bernard a lesson ... yet.

When he ceases to feel inferior, Bernard begins to enjoy the World State and indulge in the culture of easy sex he used to despise. In other words, his sudden popularity gives him a big head. Also note the first indication of John's feelings about the "brave new world" he's entered.



The **Savage** tours various World State facilities. Bokanovsk twins terrify him. At Eton, he sees schoolchildren laugh at a film showing religious rituals, and learns that World State children are conditioned to accept death.

John's tour of the World State begins to convince him he's entered a nightmare, not a paradise.



One night **Bernard** asks **Lenina** to take the **Savage** to the Feelies (movies where all the senses are involved).

Fanny Crowne is impressed—Lenina has been courted recently by very important people, including the **Arch-Community-Songster** of Canterbury. **Lenina** responds that all these people want to know what it's like to make love to the Savage, and she doesn't know. The Savage confuses her. Sometimes he seems to like her, other times he doesn't.

John's confusion about how to deal with women, his simultaneous desire and guilt, means that Lenina also and for the first time has to deal with unfulfilled desire and sexual confusion.



They go to the feelie, which is about a woman kidnapped in a helicopter by a man who was deconditioned in an accident. It contains a lot of gratuitous sex. The **Savage** is appalled. **Lenina** doesn't understand why. Lenina tries to invite the Savage to her apartment, but he says good night in a strangled way. Later, the Savage reads **Shakespeare's** *Othello* to calm himself down. Lenina, upset he didn't want to sleep with her, takes *soma*.

John and Lenina have grown up believing in totally different things. Lenina believes in promiscuity and getting what you want, while John believes in honor and virtue and respect. When they're upset, John turns to the truth and beauty of art, while Lenina turns to the oblivion of soma.



Chapter 12

At a party **Bernard** throws so people can meet the Savage, **John** refuses to leave his room. When it's clear that the Savage won't show, the guests get angry at Bernard, to whom they were being polite only because they wanted to meet the Savage. The **Arch-Community-Songster**, an important guest, warns Bernard to "mend his ways."

Bernard discovers that he can never truly be a part of the conformity of the World State culture. He's stuck with his individuality.



Lenina leaves with the **Songster**. She thinks the **Savage** refused to come out because he doesn't like her.

Lenina's unfulfilled desires make her question herself.



Meanwhile, elsewhere, **Mustapha Mond** decides an ingenious paper on biology is too ingenious and won't let it be published.

Even as John's presence disrupts society, Mond continues to control and regulate it.



After the failure of his party, **Bernard** goes back to being his old self: nervous, alone, melancholy. The **Savage** and **Helmholtz** accept his apologies (Bernard is a little jealous that they can be so forgiving). Meanwhile, Helmholtz is also in a bit of trouble. He recently read a poem he wrote about being alone to some of his students, who reported him. He seems excited about it.

For their opposite reasons, Helmholtz and Bernard continue to conflict with World State Society: Bernard because he's forced to, Helmholtz because he keeps pushing against the rules of conformity.



Helmholtz and the **Savage** like each other immensely, and Helmholtz is mesmerized by **Shakespeare's** *Romeo and Juliet*, however, makes Helmholtz laugh. The entire plot strikes him as ridiculous. But then he realizes that what he needs are exactly these "ridiculous, mad situations" to make his own writing more powerful.

Helmholtz sees that the powerful emotions eliminated by constant happiness are the source of mankind's greatest accomplishments.



Chapter 13

Henry Foster thinks **Lenina** is acting strangely and advises her to get a V.P.S. treatment (Violent Passion Surrogate). Lenina thinks to herself that she already is too passionate—for **John**. She wants him, and only him. **Fanny** is disgusted that Lenina wants only one man, and says that if Lenina wants him she should go take him.

Lenina becomes obsessed with the thing she can't have: John. She finds her passion unpleasant. Fanny can only see the dilemma in World State terms: if you want something, take it. Make yourself happy.



The doorbell rings at the **Savage's** rooms. It's **Lenina**. Stunned, he lets her in. She observes he doesn't seem happy to see her. He says he wanted to show himself worthy of her, by doing something noble. She sees no point in that.

In the World State where everyone is conditioned to be happy and always get what they want, the ideas of virtue and nobility have no meaning.



The **Savage** says he loves her. **Lenina** is overjoyed. But when he mentions marriage, she doesn't understand and starts kissing him.

The ideas of love and commitment have similarly been sacrificed to happiness.



As the **Savage** mentally steels himself against giving into lust, **Lenina** begins taking off her clothes. He is horrified. When she's naked but for her hat and shoes, he screams at her to get out of his sight or he'll kill her. She runs, terrified, and locks herself in the bathroom. Suddenly the phone rings. John answers it, exclaims "Oh my god!" and runs out.

At this point of Brave New World now refers to John almost exclusively as "the Savage." This is an ironic move, since it's now clear that John is his self-control and mature emotions, while the citizens of the World State are conditioned not to.



Chapter 14

John rushes into the Park Lane Hospital for the Dying, where **Linda** is staying. The nurse matter-of-factly says there's no hope of recovery. When John says Linda is his mother, the nurse blushes.

The Nurse is conditioned to speak about death as if it's nothing, but the word "mother" she can't handle.



Linda is so drugged on *soma* she barely notices **John**. As John weeps, the nurse leads a group of Bokanovsky twins into the room. They stare at Linda and make nasty comments about her ugliness. John, furious, pushes them away. The Nurse warns him not to interrupt the children's death-conditioning.

In World State society, the needs of the community outweigh the rights or cares of the individual.



John returns to **Linda**, who thinks he's **Popé**. It's too much for John: he shakes his mother, who stops breathing, and dies. John blames himself, falls to his knees and begins to sob. To stop this display of sadness from harming the children's conditioning, the Nurse gives all the kids chocolate éclairs.

Only stability is sacred in World State society. Conditioning makes World State citizens avoid intense emotions and connections at all costs.



John sobs, "God, god, god..." Five twins ask what he's saying, and ask if **Linda** is dead. John pushes them out of the way and leaves the room.

The "God" to whom John calls doesn't exist in the World State. The Bokanovsky twins don't recognize the word "God."



Chapter 15

Just as **John** comes into the hallway, the shift changes. The hall fills with hundreds of Delta twins who line up when an Alpha calls out that it is *soma* distribution time. John is suddenly overwhelmed with anger, and thinks that *soma* caused **Linda's** death. He shouts that *soma* is poison, and tells the Deltas to throw it away. Just the idea terrifies and angers the Deltas.

John is threatening the very bedrock of World State society. Soma is what ensures happiness, and therefore gives the State its power over its people. John is trying to save the Deltas from a slavery they love.



Bernard and **Helmholtz** get a phone call telling them what the **Savage** is doing. They hurry to the hospital. They arrive just as the Savage starts dropping *soma* out the window, causing the Deltas to riot. **Helmholtz** shouts "Men at last!" and runs to help the Savage. The two fight off the Deltas and throw more *soma* out the window.

Helmholtz's cry "Men at last!" shows his realization that by conditioning his emotions and guaranteeing his happiness, his culture has made an infant. Now he stands up for what he believes, takes responsibility for himself, and acts like an adult.



When the police arrive, they spray *soma* vapor into the air to quiet the Deltas. The police take **Helmholtz** and the **Savage** into custody. **Bernard** tries to slip away, but the police take him too.

That soma is sprayed into the air to quiet mobs further illustrates the drug's primary purpose of keeping the masses happy and society stable.



Chapter 16

Helmholtz, **John**, and **Bernard** are brought to **Mustapha Mond's** study. Helmholtz is cheerful. Bernard is nervous and despairing. When Mustapha Mond enters, he shakes hands with all three men, and asks John if he likes civilization. John says no. In response, Mond quotes a line from Shakespeare. When John asks if he's read Shakespeare, he says he's one of the few men in the World State who have. He explains that Shakespeare is forbidden because they want people to consume new things, not old things. Anyway, he says, no one in the World State would understand Shakespeare. Tragedies demand social instability. And the World State has stability. John says the World State seems horrible to him. Mond cheerfully admits that actual happiness looks "squalid in comparison to the over-compensations for misery."

Chapters 16 and 17 of Brave New World are debates between John and Mond as to the merits of stability and happiness versus instability and personal freedom. What's interesting is that Mond doesn't deny the losses that are a necessary part of gaining stability. He freely admits that beautiful works of art like Shakespeare and even basic understanding of profound human emotions are entirely eliminated in a stable state. Nonetheless, it's clear that Mond, at least, thinks that the gain of happiness and stability outweigh the losses.



When **John** objects to the Bokanovsky Twins and caste system, **Mond** tells of an experiment in which the World State filled the island of Cyprus only with Alphas. Nobody wanted to do the menial work, and pretty soon the island descended into civil war. Mond says that conditioning and the caste system make people happy with what they do. They don't even want leisure—leisure only increases the chance to think and results in misery and increased *soma* consumption.

Mond's argument is that he's giving people what they want. They want happiness. They enjoy soma. If they have free time, they just use more soma. While John believes that the World State citizens have been conditioned to love their slavery, Mond is arguing that if you love your slavery, then it isn't slavery.



Mond admits that both art and science have been sacrificed to the cause of stability. He reveals his own past as a physicist who started experimenting too deeply in science. As a result, Mond says he was almost faced with the same fate that awaits them: being sent to an island.

Mond's history as a physicist means he fully understands the truth and beauty that are sacrificed to stability and happiness.



Bernard falls to his knees and begs not to be sent to an island. **Mond** summons men to take Bernard to a different room and calm him with *soma*.

There's really no other way to put it: Bernard is an annoying wimp.



Mond reveals that islands are actually places where all the people who are too individual to be satisfied with life in the World State live. **Helmholtz** wonders why Mond didn't go to an island. Mond says he chose to become a Controller and promote happiness over science—happiness, he says, has produced the most stable society in human history.

Mond believes stability is more important than truth or beauty. John believes the opposite.



Mond asks **Helmholtz** what sort of island he'd like to live on. Helmholtz decides on an island with bad weather—he thinks it will help him write. Helmholtz leaves to check on **Bernard**.

Helmholtz chooses a place where he'll have to be inside, to face himself. He chooses a place that will force him to be an individual.



Chapter 17

The **Savage**, alone with **Mond**, asks if anything else beyond art and science has to be sacrificed to happiness. Religion, Mond answers, and shows the Savage old forbidden books about God, including the Bible. Mond reads from a passage written by Cardinal Newman, which argues that men move toward religion as they age, because the distractions of youth fall away.

Cardinal Newman was an important catholic cardinal in the 19th century. But his ideas about men turning to God in old age have been made obsolete by the World State, which eliminates old age by ensuring that the "distractions of youth" don't ever fall away.



Mond says that God is not compatible with machines, medicine, and universal happiness, to which the **Savage** responds that it's natural to believe in God. Mond disagrees. He says people were once conditioned to believe in God.

Mond describes all religion as "conditioning," no different from the World State's conditioning of its citizens.



The **Savage** argues that the infantile citizens of the World State have been degraded from a more noble human state, and that belief in God gives a reason for self-denial, chastity, and courage. **Mond** counters that none of these attributes are necessary or beneficial in an industrialized civilization.

Mond believes the community and economy as more important than any human traits, even nobility and virtue. This outlook is his justification for totalitarianism.



The **Savage** asks isn't there a value to living dangerously? **Mond** says yes, it's biologically important. That's why they've made V.P.S. mandatory for all citizens every month. V.P.S gives all the value of real rage and sorrow, without the inconvenience. When the Savage says that he likes the inconvenience, Mond replies that the citizens of the World State don't. Finally, Mond asks if the Savage is claiming the right to be unhappy, to grow old and ugly. The Savage says yes.

Mond and John disagree about the relationship between individual and society. Mond believes society is preeminent, and that the individual can be molded and shaped to best serve society. It is the concept of mass production applied to all human society. John believes the individual is preeminent and has inalienable rights that society must not try to dominate.



Chapter 18

Helmholtz and **Bernard** return. **Mond** is gone. They hear the **Savage** retching in the bathroom. He tells them that civilization and his own wickedness defiled him so he drank some warm water and mustard to make himself throw up, and thereby purify himself. Bernard and Helmholtz are shocked. Still, they say goodbye: they're heading to the island the next morning. Bernard apologizes for his behavior. The Savage says he asked if he could go with them, but Mond refused. Mond wanted to continue the "experiment."

John's use of physical self-purifying techniques is an effort to instill in himself the discipline to not succumb to the temptations of promiscuous World State culture. He's making a noble stand as an individual.



Some days later, the **Savage** settles away from any city, in an abandoned lighthouse. He brings a few supplies, determined to grow a garden and become self-sufficient. When he catches himself being happy, which he considers offensive to the memory of his unkindness to his mother, he whips himself.

For a man determined to make a stand against a totalitarian government that forces it's citizens to be happy, unhappiness is the only freedom.



Some Deltas passing on a nearby highway see him. The next day reporters show up. The **Savage** abuses them verbally and physically, and soon is left in peace. But one day the Savage has lustful thoughts for **Lenina**. He whips himself more viciously than ever, and a Feeleie photographer who had been hiding nearby catches the whole thing on video. The next day a massive number of sightseers come to watch the Savage. They beg him to whip himself again.

Lenina steps from a helicopter behind the crowd. The **Savage** rushes at her, screaming "Strumpet!" He whips her, and himself. The crowd goes into a kind of ecstasy. Someone chants "orgy-porgy." Soon everyone is chanting it.

The next morning the **Savage** wakes. He sees that the crowd has gone, but he remembers the orgy of the night before. When new sightseers arrive the next day hoping for a repeat performance, they find that the Savage has hanged himself.

John's agony, as well as his methods to keep himself from joining the happy World State culture, are just a curiosity to the World State citizens. They don't have the capacity to understand his deep and powerful emotions.



John's emotions overwhelm the crowd. World State Citizens have been trained to let off emotion in just one way: Solidarity Service orgies.



For John, sleeping with Lenina is submitting to the slavery of happiness. He's lost his battle with the world state, so he kills himself. The World State continues on, another individual sacrificed to stability.



Important Quotes

Chapter 1 Quotes

Community, Identity, Stability.

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 of Hatcheries*

Chapter 2 Quotes

Alpha children wear grey. They work much harder than we do, because they're so frightfully clever. I'm awfully glad I'm a Beta, because I don't work so hard. And then we are much better than the Gammas and Deltas. Gammas are stupid. They all wear green, and Delta children wear khaki. Oh no, I don't want to play with Delta children. And Epsilons are still worse. They're too stupid to be able to read or write. Besides they wear black, which is such a beastly colour. I'm so glad I'm a Beta. — *Hypnopædic teaching*

Till at last the child's mind is these suggestions, and the sum of the suggestions is the child's mind. And not the child's mind only. The adult's mind too—all his life long. The mind that judges and desire and decides—made up of these suggestions. But all these suggestions are our suggestions... Suggestions from the State.

Chapter 3 Quotes

You all remember, I suppose, that beautiful and inspired saying of Our Ford's: History is bunk. — *Mustapha Mond*

Ending is better than mending. The more stitches, the less riches.

Chapter 5 Quotes

Ford, we are twelve; oh make us one,
Like drops within the Social River;
Oh, make us now together run
As swiftly as thy shining Flivver.
Come, Greater Being, Social Friend,
Annihilating Twelve-in-One!
We long to die, for when we end,
Our larger life has but begun.
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.

Orgy-porgy, Ford and fun,
Kiss the girls and make them One.

Boys at One with girls at peace;
Orgy-porgy gives release."

— *Solidarity Service Song*

Chapter 6 Quotes

A gramme in time saves nine. — *Lenina, quoting a hypnopædic teaching*

One cubic centimetre cures ten gloomy sentiments. — *Lenina, quoting a hypnopædic teaching*

A gramme is better than a damn. — *Lenina, quoting a hypnopædic teaching*

Chapter 8 Quotes

"O brave new world," he repeated. "O brave new world that has such people in it. Let's start at once." — *John*

Chapter 10 Quotes

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 offence is so heinous as unorthodoxy of behavior. Murder kills only the individual—and, after all, what is an individual? — *Director of Hatcheries*

Chapter 12 Quotes

Why was [Shakespeare] such a marvellous propaganda technician? Because he had so many insane, excruciating things to get excited about. You've got to be hurt and upset; otherwise you can't think of the really good, penetrating X-rayish phrases. — *Helmholtz*

Chapter 13 Quotes

Put your arms around me...Hug me till you drug me, honey... Kiss me till I'm in a coma. Hug me honey, snugly... — *Lenina, quoting a hypnopædic teaching*

Chapter 15 Quotes

"Free, free!" the Savage shouted, and with one hand continued to throw the soma into the area while, with the other, he punched the indistinguishable faces of his assailants. "Free!" And suddenly there was Helmholtz at his side—"Good old Helmholtz!"—also punching—"Men at last!"—and in the interval also throwing the poison out by handfuls through the open window. "Yes, men! men!" and there was no more poison left. He picked up the cash-box and showed them its black emptiness. "You're free!"

Howling, the Deltas charged with a redoubled fury.

Chapter 16 Quotes

The world's stable now. People are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can't get... And if anything should go wrong, there's soma. — *Mustapha Mond*

You've got to choose between happiness and what people used to call high art. — *Mustapha Mond*

Actual happiness always looks pretty squalid in comparison with the over-compensations for misery. And, of course, stability isn't nearly so spectacular as instability. And being contented has none of the glamour of a good fight against misfortune, none of the picturesqueness of a struggle with temptation, or a fatal overthrow by passion or doubt. Happiness is never grand. — *Mustapha Mond*

Chapter 17 Quotes

There's always soma to calm your anger, to reconcile you to your enemies, to make you patient and long-suffering. 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*

"In fact", said Mustapha Mond, 'you're claiming the right to be unhappy.'

'All right then,' said the Savage defiantly, 'I'm claiming the right to be unhappy.'

ThemeTracker™

The LitCharts ThemeTracker is a mini-version of the entire LitChart. The ThemeTracker provides a quick timeline-style rundown of all the important plot points and allows you to track the themes throughout the work at a glance.

Themes	Chapter	
	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Director of Hatcheries leads students on a tour of the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre. He explains how the embryos are mass produced into the five different castes. The tour runs into Henry Foster and Lenina Crowne. Foster reminds Lenina to meet him after work. The Director finds this charming.
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Director explains the history and purpose of hypnopædia, and shows how infants are conditioned to love their station in life..
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tour watches young boys and girls play complicated games that ensure consumption and also play rudimentary sex games. Mustapha Mond interrupts the Director, and tells the tour that, in the interest of maintaining stability and happiness, the World State eliminates strong emotions by eliminating families, promoting promiscuous sex, and the drug <i>soma</i>.. The work day ends. Fanny chastises Lenina for only dating Henry Foster. Lenina decides to accept Bernard's invitation to go on vacation with him..
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lenina tells Bernard that she will go with him to the Reservation, then heads off on her date with Henry Foster. Bernard visits Helmholtz and they discuss their dissatisfactions with the World State. Helmholtz voices his desire to write something more powerful than mere propaganda.
	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lenina and Henry enjoy their date. Bernard goes to his Solidarity Service. He feels left out and self-conscious both during and after the meeting and orgy.
	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lenina thinks about how oddly Bernard acted during their first date: refusing to take soma, regretting having sex so quickly, and wishing he had not been conditioned. The Director accidentally tells Bernard about getting separated from his companion during his own trip to the Reservation, then threatens to send Bernard to Iceland in order to keep him quiet.
	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lenina and Bernard enter the Reservation. Lenina is appalled by the poverty, dirtiness, and all of the old people. Bernard and Lenina meet John. John is entranced by Lenina. Bernard speaks with John, and realizes that John is the Director's son.
	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> John tells Bernard his life story, about how he has always felt alone. Bernard promises to take John and Linda back to the World State with him. John asks if Bernard and Lenina are married. Bernard bursts out laughing. John says, "O brave new world, that has such people in it."
	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bernard gets permission from Mustapha Mond to bring "the Savage" to London. John sees Lenina sleeping and is enraptured. He quotes <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> and almost touches her, but is too fearful.
	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upon Bernard's return to London, the Director publicly rebukes him. Bernard turns the tables by using John and Linda to disgrace the Director.
	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Director resigns. London goes wild for "the Savage." Linda drugs herself into a stupor with <i>soma</i>. Bernard becomes popular, and gets arrogant. Lenina takes John to a feelie, but is frustrated and confused when John doesn't sleep with her.
	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> John refuses to appear at a party Bernard has thrown. The guests are rude to Bernard, to whom they were only being polite out of a desire to meet the Savage. Lenina thinks that John refused to appear because he didn't want to see her. Helmholtz and John become friends and talk about Shakespeare. Helmholtz realizes that he needs "ridiculous, mad situations" to make his writing more powerful.
	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lenina obsesses about John and tries to seduce him. John is horrified by her lustful forwardness. John learns that Linda is dying.
	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As Linda lies dying in the hospital next to John, the nurses bring in a group of Bokanovsky twins for death-conditioning. Linda dies. John, sobbing, pushes the Bokanovsky twins out of the way as he leaves the room.
	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> John interferes with soma dispersal to some Deltas, causing a riot. Helmholtz helps him, shouting "Men at last!" Bernard tries to slip away. The authorities take John, Helmholtz, and Bernard into custody to go see Mustapha Mond.
	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> John and Mond debate about World State society, and the value of happiness and stability versus passion, science, art, and individuality. Mond says Helmholtz and Bernard will be sent to an island.
	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> John and Mond continue debating about stability and happiness versus religion, courage, honor, and nobility. John claims the right to be unhappy.
	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mond doesn't allow John to go to an island. John makes a home for himself in an abandoned lighthouse some distance from London and whips himself regularly for his impure thoughts. One day, sightseers, including Lenina, come to watch John whip himself. An orgy ensues. John hangs himself.

Theme Key

- Dystopia and Totalitarianism
- Technology and Control
- The Cost of Happiness
- Industrialism and Consumption
- Individuality