NINETEENTH & TWENTEITH CENTURIES NOVEL

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A BRAVE NEW WORLD

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BOOK DISCRIPTION

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A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE MOST SIGNIFICANT LITERARY MOVEMENTS:

‘‘Literary Movements’’ is really a misnomer, for often the texts described under this heading were considered neither literary nor part of a discernible movement when they were written. Labels are often attached to certain writers or texts by critics and literary historians for efficiency’s sake and with the benefit of hindsight, often decades, sometimes centuries, after a text has been written. Part of identifying a movement is arguing for what features define the writing associated with it, and then locating those features in specific texts. This necessarily means that the description of movements is not objective, but colored by a critic or literary historian’s own particular agendas, whether or not he or she is aware of such agendas. That said, there still needs to be some kind of organizing principle for studying texts, or else there would be no basis for discussion, no way of developing knowledge about them, of understanding how a poem or a novel or a play fits into its time or what it shares in common with other texts. Academia organizes itself, for better and worse, in disciplines, and the discipline of literature organizes itself in periods, which themselves are associated with movements. This kind of packaging enables closer scrutiny of the object studied, which paradoxically results in a more comprehensive understanding of the material. By organizing texts and writers in terms of literary movements, this series aims to provide readers with a foot in the door, a way to think about well-known texts and tools with which to think about them. It’s important to remember, however, that it is just one way, not the only way, to study literature.

Some literary movements did begin with a clear intention, organized activities, and a set of principles—surrealism, for example. Other movements, such as twentieth-century Expressionism, elements of which are evident in art and theater of the nineteenth century, are more nebulous, harder to pin down in terms of features or history. Movements are not static, but dynamic, evolving from the fray of competing interests and historical developments. Ultimately, it is the shape of the movement itself that is important to grasp, and the context of how, when, and why a particular literature came into being.

1-Renaissance Literature: c. 1450

It could be argued that no other literary period in history is as rich—or paradoxical—as the Renaissance. Many historians locate the Renaissance from the mid-fifteenth until the early seventeenth century. There are, however, a few writers from other time periods whom historians and critics commonly associate with the Renaissance. The European Renaissance produced some of history's greatest writers and works of literature, yet many historians and critics disagree about when it actually took place. Contemporary Renaissance fairs and many movies set in Renaissance times are often set in England. In reality, however, the Renaissance started in Italy, then spread slowly east to other European countries, most notably France, Spain, and finally, England.

The Renaissance (from the French word for ''rebirth'') refers to the emergence and new interest in classical Greek and Roman texts and culture that took place between the Middle Ages and the modern period. With the advent of the printing press in 1440, the development of vernacular languages, and the weakening influence of the Catholic Church on daily life, among other historic events, Renaissance writers and scholars had new avenues for expressing their views. Many Renaissance works survive into the twenty-first century as some of the most celebrated in history.

REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS:

Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593)
Sir Thomas More (1478–1535)
William Shakespeare (1564–1616)

2- Neoclassicism: c. 1660

In England, Neoclassicism flourished roughly between 1660, when the Stuarts returned to the throne, and the 1798 publication of Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads, with its theoretical preface and collection of poems that came to be seen as heralding the beginning of the Romantic Age. Regarding English literature, the Neoclassical Age is typically divided into three periods: the Restoration Age (1660–1700), the Augustan Age (1700–1750), and the Age of Johnson (1750– 1798). Neoclassical writers modeled their works on classical texts and followed various esthetic values first established in Ancient Greece and Rome. Seventeenth-century and eighteenth century Neoclassicism was, in a sense, a resurgence of classical taste and

sensibility, but it was not identical to Classicism. In part as a reaction to the bold egocentrism of the Renaissance that saw man as larger than life and boundless in potential, the neoclassicists directed their attention to a smaller scaled concept of man as an individual within a larger social context, seeing human nature as dualistic, flawed, and needing to be curbed by reason and decorum. In style, neoclassicists continued the Renaissance value of balanced antithesis, symmetry, restraint, and order. Additionally, they sought to achieve a sense of refinement, good taste, and correctness. Their clothes were complicated and detailed, and their gardens were ornately manicured and geometrically designed. They resurrected the classical values of unity and proportion and saw their art as a way to entertain and inform, a depiction of humans as social creatures, as part of polite society. Their manner was elitist, erudite, and sophisticated. The brooding social unrest that culminated in the revolutions in the American colonies and in France toppled this artificial refinement, and in the wake of those wars emerged portraits of the single common worker or wanderer sketched against the vast natural landscape, a character that came to be one of the chosen subjects of the Romantics in the nineteenth century. In the Restoration Age, in poetry, the classical forms of the heroic couplet and the ode became popular. With the opening of the theaters appeared plays written in couplets and others in prose that fell in the category of the comedy of manners. Major works include Milton's Paradise Lost (although it spans both baroque and restoration in its style and subject) and Paul Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. But Dryden's works, lesser by comparison to those by Milton and Bunyan, more anticipated the Augustan Age to follow. In this second period flourished the poetry of Alexander Pope, with his exquisite mastery of the couplet in Essay on Man (1734); many of Pope's lines became famous sayings that are familiar in modern times such as this one from Essay on Criticism (1711): ''Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.'' Also in the Augustan Age the rise of journalism and its way of evolving into and shaping fiction writing is visible in the work of Daniel Defoe, who began as a pamphleteer and ended by securing his place in the canon of great novelists with such famous works as Robinson Crusoe (1719) and Moll Flanders (1722), which are fictions appearing to be autobiographical. The Age of Johnson was dominated by Samuel Johnson and the consummate work of his is The Dictionary of the English Language (1745–1755). In drama, the comedy of manners continued to be popular, but in poetry, there was a rise of the ballad and sentimental poetry as written by Thomas Gray, William Cowper, Robert Burns, and George Crabbe, which in some ways anticipates the style and sentiment of the romantics to follow. Additionally, there appeared the novel of sensibility, particularly the work of Horace Walpole and Ann Radcliffe, which in their sensationalism and emotionality anticipate the Gothic novel of the nineteenth century.

REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS:

Daniel Defoe (c. 1660–1731)
John Dryden (1631–1700)
Alexander Pope (1688–1744)
Jonathan Swift

3- Romanticism: c. 1789

Romanticism as a literary movement lasted from 1798, with the publication of Lyrical Ballads to some time between the passage of the first Reform Bill of 1832 and the death of Wordsworth in 1850. With political revolution on the Continent and the industrial revolution underway, the period witnessed the breakdown of rigid ideas about the structure and purpose of society and the known world. During this period, emphasis shifted to the importance of the individual's experience in the world and one's subjective interpretation of that experience, rather than interpretations handed down by the church or tradition.

Romantic literature is characterized by several features. It emphasized the dream, or inner, world of the individual and visionary, fantastic, or drug-induced imagery. There was a growing suspicion of the established church and a turn toward pantheism (the belief that God is a part of the created world rather than separate from it). Romantic literature emphasized the individual self and the value of the individual's experience. The concept of ''the sublime'' (a thrilling emotional experience that combines awe, magnificence, and horror) was introduced. Feeling and emotion were viewed as superior to logic and analysis.

For the romantics, poetry was believed to be the highest form of literature, and novels were regarded as a lower form, often as sensationalistic and titillating, even by those most addicted to reading them. Most novels of the time were written by women and were therefore widely regarded as a threat to serious, intellectual culture. Despite this, some of the most famous British novelists wrote during this period, including Jane Austen, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, and Sir Walter Scott. In addition, this period saw the flowering of some of the greatest poets in the English language: the first generation of William Blake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and William Wordsworth, followed by Byron, Shelley, and Keats.

REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS:

Jane Austen (1775–1817)
William Blake (1757–1827)
John Keats (1795–1821)
William Wordsworth (1770–1850)

4- Realism: **c. 1860**

The realist movement in literature first developed in France in the mid-nineteenth century, soon spreading to England, Russia, and the United States. Realist literature is best represented by the novel, including many works widely regarded to be among the greatest novels ever written. Realist writers sought to narrate their novels from an objective, unbiased perspective that simply and clearly represented the factual elements of the story. They became masters at psychological characterization, detailed descriptions of everyday life, and dialogue that captures the idioms of natural speech. The realists endeavored to accurately represent contemporary culture and people from all walks of life. Thus, realist writers often addressed themes of socioeconomic conflict by contrasting the living conditions of the poor with those of the upper classes in urban as well as rural societies.

In France, the major realist writers included Honore´ de Balzac, Gustave Flaubert, E´ mile Zola, and Guy de Maupassant, among others. In Russia, the major realist writers were Ivan Turgenev, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Leo Tolstoy. In England, the foremost realist authors were Charles Dickens, George Eliot, and Anthony Trollope. In the United States, William Dean Howells was the foremost realist writer. Naturalism, an offshoot of Realism, was a literary movement that placed even greater emphasis on the accurate representation of details from contemporary life. In the United States, regionalism and local color fiction in particular were American offshoots of Realism. Realism also exerted a profound influence on drama and theatrical productions, altering practices of set design, costuming, acting style, and dialogue.

REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS:

Charles Dickens (1812–1870)
Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821–1881)
George Eliot (1819–1880)
Henry James (1843–1916)
Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910)

5- Modernism: c. 1900

‘‘On or about December 1910 human nature changed.’’ The great modernist writer Virginia Woolf wrote this in her essay ‘‘Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown’’ in 1924. ‘‘All human relations shifted,’’ Woolf continued, ‘‘and when human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics, and literature.’’ This intentionally provocative statement was hyperbolic in its pinpointing of a date, but almost anyone who looks at the evolution of Western culture must note a distinct change in thought, behavior, and cultural production beginning sometime in the late nineteenth century and coming to fruition sometime around the Second World War. This change, whether in art, technology, philosophy or human behavior, is generally called modernism.

Modernism like Romanticism, designates the broad literary and cultural movement that spanned all of the arts and even spilled into politics and philosophy. Like Romanticism, Modernism was highly varied in its manifestations between the arts and even within each art. The dates when Modernism flourished are in dispute, but few scholars identify its genesis as being before 1860 and World War II is generally considered to mark an end of the movement’s height. Modernist art initially began in Europe’s capitals, primarily London, Milan, Berlin, St. Petersburg, and especially Paris; it spread to the cities of the United States and South America after World War I; by the 1940s, Modernism had thoroughly taken over the American and European academy, where it was challenged by nascent Postmodernism in the 1960s.

Modernism’s roots are in the rapidly changing technology of the late nineteenth century and in the theories of such late nineteenth-century thinkers as Freud, Marx, Darwin, and Nietzsche. Modernism influenced painting first (Impressionism and Cubism are forms of Modernism), but in the decade before World War I such writers as Ezra Pound, Filippo Marinetti, James Joyce, and Guillaume Apollinaire translated the advances of the visual arts into literature. Such characteristically modernist techniques as stream-of-consciousness narration and allusiveness, by the late 1930s, spilled into popular writing and became standard.

The movement’s concerns were with the accelerating pace of society toward destruction and meaninglessness. In the late 1800s many of society’s certainties were undermined. Marx demonstrated that social class was created, not inherent; Freud reduced human individuality to an instinctive sex drive; Darwin provided fossil evidence that the Earth was much older than the estimate based on scripture; and Nietzsche argued

that even the most deeply held ethical principles were simply constructions. Modernist writers attempted to come to terms with where humanity stood after its cornerstones had been pulverized. The modernists sifted through the shards of the past looking for what was valuable and what could inspire construction of a new society.

REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS:

T. S. Eliot (1888–1965)
William Faulkner (1897–1962)
James Joyce (1882–1941)
Virginia Woolf (1882–1941)

6- Postmodernism: **c. 1950**

Postmodernism is the name given to the period of literary criticism that developed toward the end of the twentieth century. Just as the name implies, it is the period that comes after the modern period. But these are not easily separated into discrete units with specific dates as centuries or presidential terms are limited. Postmodernism came about as a reaction to the established modernist era, which itself was a reaction to the stablished tenets of the nineteenth century and before.

What sets Postmodernism apart from its predecessor is the reaction of its practitioners to the rational, scientific, and historical aspects of the modern age. For postmodernists this took the guise of being self-conscious, experimental, and ironic. The postmodernist is concerned with imprecision and unreliability of language and with epistemology, the study of what knowledge is.

An exact date for the establishment of Postmodernism is elusive, but it may be said to have begun in the post-World War II era, roughly the 1950s. It took full flight in the 1960s in the face of global social and political unrest. In 1968 it reached an early zenith with the intense student protests in the United States and France, the war for independence in Algeria, and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The beginning of space exploration with the launch of Sputnik in 1957, culminating in the 1969 landing of men on the moon, marks a significant shift in the area of science and technology.

At the same time, Jacques Derrida presented his first paper, Of Grammatology (1967), outlining the principles of deconstruction. The early novels of Kurt Vonnegut Jr. and Alain Robbe- Grillet were published; Ishmael Reed was writing his poetry. The Marxist critics, Fredric Jameson and Terry Eagleton, who saw a

major shift in the social and economic world as a part of the postmodern paradigm, were beginning their creative careers. As time progressed, more and more individuals added their voices to this list: Julia Kristeva, Susan Sontag, and, in popular culture, Madonna. (In her openly sexual music and music videos she broke down the limits of sexuality and femininity. Still, while some believe that her career is a setback for feminist movement, others believe that she opened the doors to a wider acceptance of female and human sexuality.)

In a speech at Independence Hall in Philadelphia on July 4, 1994, Vaclav Havel, then president of the Czech Republic, said:

> The distinguishing features of such transitional periods are a mixing and blending of cultures and a plurality or parallelism of intellectual and spiritual worlds. These are periods when all consistent value systems collapse, when cultures distant in time and space are discovered or rediscovered. They are periods when there is a tendency to quote, to imitate, and to amplify, rather than to state with authority or integrate. New meaning is gradually born from the encounter, or the intersection, of many different elements.
> This state of mind or of the human world is called postmodernism. For me, a symbol of that state is a Bedouin mounted on a camel and clad in traditional robes under which he is wearing jeans, with a transistor radio in his hands and an ad for Coca-Cola on the camel's back.

This speech outlines the essence of Postmodernism in all its forms: the mixing, the disintegration, and the instability of identities.

REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS:

Donald Barthelme (1931–1989)
Michel Foucault (1926–1984)
Kurt Vonnegut Jr. (1922–2007)

JANE EYRE

BY

Charlotte Brontë

Personal Background

At age twenty, Charlotte Brontë sent a sample of her poetry to England's Poet Laureate, Robert Southey. His comments urged her to abandon all literary pursuits: "Literature cannot be the business of a woman's life, and it ought not to be. The more she is engaged in her proper duties, the less leisure will she have for it, even as an accomplishment and a recreation." His response indicates the political difficulties women faced as they tried to enter the literary arena in Victorian England; domestic responsibilities were expected to require all their energy, leaving no time for creative pursuits. Despite a lack of support from the outside world, Charlotte Brontë found sufficient internal motivation and enthusiasm from her sisters to become a successful writer and balance her familial and creative needs.

Born at Thornton, Yorkshire on April 21, 1816, Charlotte was the third child of Patrick Brontë and Maria Branwell. In 1820, her father received a curate post in Haworth, a remote town on the Yorkshire moors, where Charlotte spent most of her life. In 1821, Mrs. Brontë died from what was thought to be cancer. Charlotte and her four sisters, Maria, Elizabeth, Emily and Anne, and their brother, Branwell, were raised primarily by their unpleasant, maiden aunt, Elizabeth Branwell, who provided them with little supervision. Not only were the children free to roam the moors, but their father allowed them to read whatever interested them: Shakespeare, The Arabian Nights, *Pilgrim's* Progress, and the poems of Byron were some of their favorites. When a school for the daughters of poor clergymen opened at Cowan Bridge in 1824, Mr. Brontë decided to send his oldest four daughters there to receive a formal education. Most biographers argue that Charlotte's description of Lowood School in Jane Eyre accurately reflects the dismal conditions at this school. Charlotte's two oldest sisters, Maria and Elizabeth, died in 1824 of tuberculosis they contracted due to the poor management of the school. Following this tragedy, Patrick Brontë withdrew Charlotte and Emily from Cowan Bridge.

Grieving over their sisters' deaths and searching for a way to alleviate their loneliness, the remaining four siblings began writing a series of stories, The Glass-Town, stimulated by a set of toy soldiers their father had given them. In these early writings, the children collaboratively created a complete imaginary world, a fictional West African empire they called Angria. Charlotte explained their interest in writing this way: "We were wholly dependent on ourselves and each other, on books and study, for the enjoyments and occupations of life. The highest stimulus, as well as the liveliest pleasure we had known from childhood upwards, lay in attempts at literary composition." Through her early twenties, Charlotte routinely revised and expanded pieces of the Angria story, developing several key characters and settings. While this

writing helped Charlotte improve her literary style, the Angria adventures are fantastical, melodramatic, and repetitive, contrasting with Charlotte's more realistic adult fiction.

After her father had a dangerous lung disorder, he decided once again that his daughters should receive an education so they would be assured of an income if he died. In 1831, Charlotte entered the Misses Wooler's school at Roe Head. Shy and solitary, Charlotte was not happy at school, but she still managed to win several academic awards and to make two lifelong friends: Mary Taylor and Ellen Nussey. Although she was offered a teaching job at Roe Head, Charlotte declined the position, choosing to return to Haworth instead. Perhaps bored with the solitary life at Haworth and looking for an active occupation in the world, Charlotte returned to Roe Head in 1835 as a governess. For her, governessing was akin to "slavery," because she felt temperamentally unsuited for it, and finally, following a near mental breakdown in 1838, she was forced to resign her position. Unfortunately, governessing was the only real employment opportunity middle-class women had in Victorian England. Because the family needed the money, Charlotte suffered through two more unhappy governess positions, feeling like an unappreciated servant in wealthy families' homes; she didn't enjoy living in other people's houses because it caused "estrangement from one's real character."

In an attempt to create a job that would allow her to maintain her independence, Charlotte formed the idea of starting her own school at Haworth. To increase her teaching qualifications before beginning this venture, she enrolled as a student, at the age of twenty-six, at the Pensionnat Heger in Brussels so she could increase her fluency in French and learn German. Charlotte loved the freedom and adventure of living in a new culture, and formed an intense, though one-sided, passion for the married headmaster at the school: Monsieur Heger. After two years in Brussels, suffering perhaps from her love for Heger, Charlotte returned to England. The plan to open her own school was a failure, as she was unable to attract a single student.

Instead, Charlotte began putting all of her energy into her writing. After discovering Emily's poems, Charlotte decided that she, Anne, and Emily should try to publish a collection of poems at their own expense. In 1846, they accomplished this goal, using the masculine pseudonyms of Currer, Acton, and Ellis Bell because of the double standards against women authors. Although their book, Poems, was not a financial success, the women continued their literary endeavors. Excited to be writing full-time, they each began a novel. Anne's Agnes Grey and Emily's Wuthering Heights both found publishers, but Charlotte's somewhat autobiographical account of her experiences in Brussels, The Professor, was rejected by several publishers. Again, refusing to become discouraged, Charlotte began writing Jane Eyre in 1846, while on a trip to Manchester with her father where he was

undergoing cataract surgery. While he convalesced, Charlotte wrote. The firm of Smith, Elder, and Company agreed to publish the resulting novel, and the first edition of Jane Eyre was released on October 16, 1847. The novel was an instant success, launching Charlotte into literary fame. It also netted her an impressive 500 pounds, twenty-five times her salary as a governess.

But the pleasures of literary success were soon overshadowed by family tragedy. In 1848, after Anne and Charlotte had revealed the true identity of the "Bells" to their publishers, their brother Branwell died. Never living up to his family's high expectations for him, Branwell died an opium-addicted, debauched, alcoholic failure. Emily and Anne died soon after. Although Charlotte completed her second novel, Shirley in 1849, her sadness at the loss of her remaining siblings left her emotionally shattered. She became a respected member of the literary community only when her sisters, her most enthusiastic supporters, were no longer able to share her victory. Visiting London following the publication of this book, Charlotte became acquainted with several important writers, including William Thackeray and Elizabeth Gaskell, who was to write Charlotte's biography following her death.

In 1852, the Reverend Arthur B. Nicholls, Mr. Brontë's curate at Haworth beginning in 1845, proposed marriage to Charlotte. Earlier in her life, Charlotte had rejected several marriage proposals because she was hoping to discover true love, but loneliness following the death of her last three siblings may have led her to accept Nicholls' proposal. Saying she had "esteem" but not love for Nicholls, Charlotte's relationship with her husband was certainly not the overwhelming passion of Jane and Rochester. Her father's jealous opposition to the marriage led Charlotte initially to reject Nicholls, who left Haworth in 1853, the year Villette was published. By 1854, Reverend Brontë's opposition to the union had abated somewhat, and the ceremony was performed on June 29, 1854. After the marriage, Charlotte had little time for writing, as she was forced to perform the duties expected of a minister's wife and take care of her aging father. In 1854 Charlotte, in the early stages of pregnancy, caught pneumonia while on a long, rain-drenched walk on the moors. She died on March 31, 1855, a month before her thirty ninth birthday. The Professor, written in 1846 and 1847, was posthumously published in 1857, along with Mrs. Gaskell's Life of Charlotte Brontë.

A Brief Synopsis

Orphaned as an infant, Jane Eyre lives with at Gateshead with her aunt, Sarah Reed, as the novel opens. Jane is ten years old, an outsider in the Reed family. Her female cousins, Georgiana and Eliza, tolerate, but don't love her. Their brother, John, is more blatantly hostile to Jane, reminding her that she is a poor dependent of his mother who shouldn't even be associating with the children of a gentleman. One day he is angered to find Jane reading one of his books, so he takes the book away and throws it at her. Finding this treatment intolerable, Jane fights back. She is blamed for the conflagration and sent to the red-room, the place where her kind Uncle Reed died. In this frightening room, Jane thinks she sees her uncle's ghost and begs to be set free. Her Aunt Reed refuses, insisting Jane remain in her prison until she learns complete submissiveness. When the door to the red-room is locked once again, Jane passes out. She wakes back in her own room, with the kind physician, Mr. Lloyd, standing over her bed. He advises Aunt Reed to send Jane away to school, because she is obviously unhappy at Gateshead.

Jane is sent to Lowood School, a charity institution for orphan girls, run by Mr. Brocklehurst. A stingy and mean-hearted minister, Brocklehurst provides the girls with starvation levels of food, freezing rooms, and poorly made clothing and shoes. He justifies his poor treatment of them by saying that they need to learn humility and by comparing them to the Christian martyrs, who also endured great hardships. Despite the difficult conditions at Lowood, Jane prefers school to life with the Reeds. Here she makes two new friends: Miss Temple and Helen Burns. From Miss Temple, Jane learns proper ladylike behavior and compassion; from Helen she gains a more spiritual focus. The school's damp conditions, combined with the girls' near-starvation diet, produces a typhus epidemic, in which nearly half the students die, including Helen Burns, who dies in Jane's arms. Following this tragedy, Brocklehurst is deposed from his position as manager of Lowood, and conditions become more acceptable. Jane quickly becomes a star student, and after six years of hard work, an effective teacher. Following two years of teaching at Lowood, Jane is ready for new challenges. Miss Temple marries, and Lowood seems different without her. Jane places at advertisement for a governess position in the local newspaper. She receives only one reply, from a Mrs. Fairfax of Thornfield, near Millcote, who seeks a governess for a ten-year old girl. Jane accepts the job.

At Thornfield, a comfortable three-story country estate, Jane is warmly welcomed. She likes both her new pupil, Adèle Varens, and Mrs. Fairfax, the housekeeper at Thornfield, but is soon restless. One January afternoon, while walking to Millcote to mail a letter, Jane helps a horseman whose horse has slipped on a patch of ice and fallen. Returning to

Thornfield, Jane discovers that this man is Edward Fairfax Rochester, the owner of Thornfield and her employer. He is a darkhaired, moody man in his late thirties. Although he is often taciturn, Jane grows fond of his mysterious, passionate nature. He tells Jane about Adèle's mother, Céline, a Parisian opera-singer who was once his mistress. Adèle, he claims, is not his daughter, but he rescued the poor girl after her mother abandoned her.

Jane also discovers that Thornfield harbors a secret. From time to time, she hears strange, maniacal laughter coming from the third story. Mrs. Fairfax claims this is just Grace Poole, an eccentric servant with a drinking problem. But Jane wonders if this is true. One night, Jane smells smoke in the hallway, and realizes it is coming from Rochester's room. Jane races down to his room, discovering his curtains and bed are on fire. Unable to wake Rochester, she douses both him and his bedding with cold water. He asks her not to tell anyone about this incident and blames the arson on Grace Poole. Why doesn't he press charges on Grace, or at least evict her from the house, Jane wonders.

Following this incident, Rochester leaves suddenly for a house party at a local estate. Jane is miserable during his absence and realizes she is falling in love with him. After a weeklong absence, he returns with a party of guests, including the beautiful Blanche Ingram. Jane jealously believes Rochester is pursuing this accomplished, majestic, dark-haired beauty. An old friend of Rochester's, Richard Mason, joins the party one day. From him, Jane learns that Rochester once lived in Spanish Town, Jamaica. One night, Mason is mysteriously attacked, supposedly by the crazy Grace Poole.

Jane leaves Thornfield for a month to attend her aunt, who is on her deathbed following her son John's excessive debauchery and apparent suicide. Jane tries to create a reconciliation with her aunt, but the woman refuses all Jane's attempts at appeasement. Before dying, she gives Jane a letter from her uncle, John Eyre, who had hoped to adopt Jane and make her his heir. The letter was sent three years ago, but Aunt Reed had vindictively kept it from Jane. Sarah Reed dies, unloved by her daughters.

When Jane returns to Thornfield, the houseguests have left. Rochester tells Jane he will soon marry Blanche, so she and Adèle will need to leave Thornfield. In the middle of this charade, Jane reveals her love for him, and the two end up engaged. Jane is happy to be marrying the man she loves, but during the month before the wedding she is plagued by strange dreams of a destroyed Thornfield and a wailing infant. Two nights before the wedding, a frightening, dark-haired woman enters her room and rips her wedding veil in two. Although Jane is certain this woman didn't look like Grace Poole, Rochester assures her it must have been the bizarre servant. The morning of the wedding finally arrives. Jane and Rochester stand at the altar, taking their vows, when suddenly a

strange man announces there's an impediment to the marriage: Rochester is already married to a woman named Bertha Antoinetta Mason. Rochester rushes the wedding party back to Thornfield, where they find his insane and repulsive wife locked in a room on the third story. Grace Poole is the woman's keeper, but Bertha was responsible for the strange laughter and violence at Thornfield. Rochester tries to convince Jane to become his mistress and move with him to a pleasure villa in the south of France.

Instead, Jane sneaks away in the middle of the night, with little money and no extra clothing. With twenty shillings, the only money she has, she catches a coach that takes her to faraway Whitcross. There, she spends three days roaming the woods, looking for work and, finally, begging for food. On the third night, she follows a light that leads her across the moors to Marsh End (also called Moor House), owned by the Rivers family. Hannah, the housekeeper, wants to send her away, but St. John Rivers, the clergyman who owns the house, offers her shelter. Jane soon becomes close friends with St. John's sisters, Diana and Mary, and he offers Jane a humble job as the schoolmistress for the poor girls in his parish at Morton. Because their father lost most of his money before he died, Diana and Mary have been forced to earn a living by working as governesses.

One day, St. John learns that, unbeknownst to her, Jane has inherited 20,000 pounds from her uncle, John Eyre. Furthermore, she discovers that St. John's real name is St. John Eyre Rivers, so he, his sisters, and Jane are cousins. The Rivers were cut out of John Eyre's will because of an argument between John and their father. Thrilled to discover that she has a family, Jane insists on splitting the inheritance four ways, and then remodels Moor House for her cousins, who will no longer need to work as governesses. Not content with his life as a smalltime clergyman, St. John plans to become a missionary in India. He tries to convince Jane to accompany him, as his wife. Realizing that St. John doesn't love her but just wants to use her to accomplish his goals, Jane refuses his request, but suggests a compromise by agreeing to follow him to India as a comrade, but not as a wife. St. John tries to coerce her into the marriage, and has almost succeeded, when, one night Jane suddenly hears Rochester's disembodied voice calling out to her.

Jane leaves Moor House to search for her true love, Rochester. Arriving at Millcote, she discovers Thornfield a burned wreck, just as predicted in her dreams. From a local innkeeper, she learns that Bertha Mason burned the house down one night and that Rochester lost an eye and a hand while trying to save her and the servants. He now lives in seclusion at Ferndean.

Jane immediately drives to Ferndean. There she discovers a powerless, unhappy Rochester. Jane carries a tray to him and reveals her identity. The two lovers are joyfully reunited and soon marry. Ten years later, Jane writes this narrative. Her married life is still blissful; Adèle has grown to be a helpful companion for Jane; Diana and Mary Rivers are happily married; St. John still works as a missionary, but is nearing death; and Rochester has regained partial vision, enough to see their first-born son.

CHARACTER ANALYSES

Jane Eyre

The novel charts the growth of Jane Eyre, the first-person narrator, from her unhappy childhood with her nasty relatives, the Reeds, to her blissful marriage to Rochester at Ferndean. Reading, education, and creativity are all essential components of Jane's growth, factors that help her achieve her final success. From the novel's opening chapters to its close, Jane reads a variety of texts: Pamela, *Gulliver's Travels*, and Marmion. Stories provide Jane with an escape from her unhappy domestic situation, feeding her imagination and offering her a vast world beyond the troubles of her real life: By opening her inner ear, she hears "a tale my imagination created . . . quickened with all incident, life, fire, feeling, that I desired and had not in my actual existence." Similarly, she believes education will allow her the freedom to improve her position in society by teaching her to act like a "lady," but her success at school, in particular her drawing ability, also increases her self-confidence. Jane confesses that artistic creation offers her one of the "keenest pleasures" of her life, and Rochester is impressed with Jane's drawings because of their depth and meaning, not typical of a schoolgirl.

Although artistic and educational pursuits are essential elements of Jane's personality, she also feels a need to assert her identity through rebellion. In the opening chapters of the novel, Jane refers to herself as a "rebel slave," and throughout the story she opposes the forces that prevent her from finding happiness: Mrs. Reed's unfair accusations, Rochester's attempt to make her his mistress, and St. John's desire to transform her into a missionary wife. By falling in love with Rochester, she implicitly mutinies against the dictates of class boundaries that relegate her, as a governess, to a lower status than her "master." Besides rejecting traditional views of class, she also denigrates society's attempts to restrict women's activities. Women, she argues, need active pursuits and intellectual stimulation, just as men do. Most of Jane's rebellions target the inequities of society, but much of her personality is fairly conventional. In fact, she often seems to provide a model of proper English womanhood: frank, sincere, and lacking in personal vanity.

Jane's personality balances social awareness with spiritual power. Throughout the novel, Jane is referred to as an imp, a fairy, a relative of the "men in green." As fairy, Jane identifies herself as a special, magical creature. Connecting herself with the mythical beings in Bessie's stories, Jane is affiliated with the realms of imagination, with the

fantastic. Jane's psychic abilities aren't merely imaginary: her dreams and visions have a real impact on her life. For example, supernatural experiences, heralds of visions "from another world," foreshadow drastic changes in Jane's life, such as her move from Gateshead to Lowood, or her rediscovery of Rochester after their time apart. Thus, Jane's spirituality isn't a purely Christian one—in fact, she rejects many of the Christian characters in the novel, such as St. John Rivers, Eliza Reed, and Mr. Brocklehurst—but a mixture of Christian and pagan ideas. Like nature, Jane's God is filled with bounty, compassion, and forgiveness—qualities lacking in many of the spiritual leaders she criticizes in the novel.

Edward Fairfax Rochester

While Jane's life has been fairly sedate, long, quiet years at Lowood, Rochester's has been wild and dissipated. An example of the Byronic hero, Rochester is a passionate man, often guided by his senses rather than by his rational mind. For example, when he first met Bertha Mason, he found her dazzling, splendid, and lavish—all qualities that excited his senses and resulted in their catastrophic marriage. Similarly, he let himself be ruled by his "grande passion" for Céline Varens, despite its immorality. Rochester is not afraid to flout social conventions. This is also apparent in his relationship with Jane: Rather than maintaining proper class boundaries, Rochester makes her feel "as if he were my relation rather than my master."

Like Jane, Rochester is connected with almost psychic powers. His "wealth" of power for communicating happiness seems magical to Jane, as are his abilities to read people's unspoken thoughts from their eyes with incomprehensible acumen. As gypsy fortuneteller, he weaves a magical web around Jane with words and looks directly into her heart so that she feels an "unseen spirit" is watching and recording all of her feelings. He also peers into Blanche's heart, recognizing her for a fortune hunter. Finally, his telepathic cry to Jane when she's at Moor House shows his psychic ability. Like Jane, he taps into the magical powers of the universe in professing his love.

When he meets Jane, Rochester is planning to change his lifestyle. Giving up his wild, dissipated life on the continent, he's searching for freshness and freedom. Rochester's goal is self-transformation, a reformation to be enacted through his relationships with women. Longing for innocence and purity, he wants Jane to be the good angel in his life, creating new harmony. Despite these desires for a new life, Rochester is still caught in a web of lies and immorality: He attempts bigamy and then tries to convince Jane to be his mistress. He also tries to objectify Jane by clothing her in expensive satins and laces, leaving her feeling like a "performing ape." Although Rochester had critiqued

Blanche Ingram and Céline Varens for their materialism and superficiality, here he seems to be mimicking them. Rochester's passions and materialism need to be disciplined before he can be the proper husband for Jane. Perhaps not insignificantly, he is blinded and loses a hand when Bertha sets fire to Thornfield; symbolically, his excessive passion has finally exploded, leaving him disabled. Rochester has passed "through the valley of the shadow of death" to become the perfect mate. Having finally paid for his sins, he is now a suitably docile husband for Jane, who morally guides and corrects him at novel's end.

St. John Rivers

While Rochester is a prototype of the fiery, passionate man, St. John Rivers is his opposite: cold, hard-hearted, and repressed. His handsome appearance indicates moral and intellectual superiority—he has "a straight, classic nose; quite an Athenian mouth and chin"—and contrasts with Rochester's more rugged features. Although St. John initially appears perfect, Jane soon detects a restlessness or hardness under his seemingly placid features; he is "no longer flesh, but marble" and his heart seems made of "stone or metal." His reserve and brooding suggest a troubled nature, and his zealous Christianity offers him neither serenity nor solace. St. John's feelings about Christianity are revealed in his sermons, which have a "strictly restrained zeal" that shows his bitterness and hardness. While Rochester vents his passions, St. John represses his. The iciness of St. John's character is most pronounced in his relationship with Rosamond Oliver. Although he "flushes" and "kindles" at the sight of her, St. John would rather turn himself into "an automaton" than succumb to Rosamond's beauty or fortune. His ambition cuts St. John off from all deep human emotions. For Jane, this coldness is more terrible than Rochester's raging; she asks if readers know the "terror those cold people can put into the ice of their questions"?

Not content with his humble local ministry, St. John would like to have been a politician, a poet, or anything that could have offered him glory, fame, and power. His solution is to become a missionary, a position that will require all of these skills. The weakness of his supposed Christianity is his lack of compassion for or interest in the people he is supposedly helping. For him, missionary work isn't about joy, but a form of "warfare" against the prejudices of the natives, just as he "wars" against Jane's rejection of his marriage proposal. Instead of asking her to help him in a mission of love in India, St. John "enlists" Jane to join his band of Christian mercenaries. He wants a wife he can "influence efficiently" and "retain absolutely," rather than someone he loves. Marriage to St. John would traumatically erase Jane's identity and douse her passions for life. St. John

achieves his goal and conducts a “warrior march trample” through India, ultimately dying young following ten hard years of missionary work.

A Marxist Approach to *Jane Eyre*

Based on the ideas of Karl Marx, this theoretical approach asks us to consider how a literary work reflects the socioeconomic conditions of the time in which it was written. What does the text tell us about contemporary social classes and how does it reflect classism? Jane Eyre depicts the strict, hierarchical class system in England that required everyone to maintain carefully circumscribed class positions. Primarily through the character of Jane, it also accents the cracks in this system, the places where class differences were melding in Victorian England. For example, the novel questions the role of the governess: Should she be considered upper class, based on her superior education, or lower class, because of her servant-status within the family? What happens when relationships develop between people of different classes, such as Rochester and Jane?

Jane's ambiguous class status becomes evident from the novel's opening chapter. A poor orphan living with relatives, Jane feels alienated from the rest of the Reed family. John Reed tells Jane she has "no business to take our books; you are a dependent . . . you ought to beg, and not to live here with gentleman's children like us." In this quote, John claims the rights of the gentleman, implying that Jane's family was from a lower class, and, therefore, she has no right to associate on equal footing with her wealthy cousins. Jane's lack of money leaves her dependent upon the Reeds for sustenance. She appears to exist in a no-man's land between the upper- and servant classes. By calling her cousin John a "murderer," "slave-driver," and "Roman emperor," Jane emphasizes her recognition of the corruption inherent in the ruling classes. As she's dragged away to the red-room following her fight with John Reed, Jane resists her captors like a "rebel slave," emphasizing the oppression she suffers because of her class status. When Miss Abbot admonishes Jane for striking John Reed, Jane's "young master," Jane immediately questions her terminology. Is John really her "master"; is she his servant? Emphasizing the corruption, even despotism of the upper classes, Jane's narrative makes her audience aware that the middle classes were becoming the repositories of both moral and intellectual superiority.

Jane's experiences at Thornfield reinforce this message. When Jane first arrives, she is happy to learn that Mrs. Fairfax is a housekeeper, and not Jane's employer, because this means they're both dependents and can, therefore, interact as equals. Mrs. Fairfax discusses the difference between herself, as an upper-servant, and the other servants in the house; for example, she says Leah and John are "only servants, and one can't converse with them on terms of equality; one must keep them at due distance for fear of losing one's authority." As a governess, Jane is in the same category as Mrs. Fairfax: neither a

member of the family nor a member of the serving classes. The ambiguity of the governess is especially pronounced, as we see with the example of Diana and Mary Rivers: the well educated daughters of upper-class parents who've fallen on hard financial times, the Rivers are better educated than their employers, though treated with as little respect as the family cook. Victorian society brutally maintained the boundaries between governesses and the upper-class families, practically prohibiting marriages between the two groups and attempting to desexualize governesses, who were often accused of bringing a dangerous sexuality into the family. Blanche, for example, calls governesses "incubi," and Lady Ingram believes that liaisons should never be allowed between governesses and tutors, because such relationships would introduce a moral infection into the household.

The relationship between Jane and Rochester also emphasizes class issues. In a conversation preceding their betrothal, Rochester treats Jane like a good servant: Because she's been a "dependent" who has done "her duty," he, as her employer, wants to offer her assistance in finding a new job. Jane confirms her secondary status by referring to Rochester as "master," and believing "wealth, caste, custom," separate her from him. She fears he will treat her like an "automaton" because she is "poor, obscure, plain and little," mistakenly believing the lower classes to be heartless and soulless. Claiming the aristocratic privilege of creating his own rules, Rochester redefines Jane's class status, by defining her as his "equal" and "likeness."

Before she can become Rochester's wife, Jane must prove her acceptability based on class. Does she have an upper-class sensibility, despite her inferior position at Thornfield? For example, when Bessie sees Jane at Lowood, she is impressed because Jane has become "quite a lady"; in fact, her accomplishments surpass that of her cousins, yet they are still considered her social superiors based solely on wealth. The conversation emphasizes the ambiguities of Jane's family's class status and of the class system in general: Should a lady be judged based on academic accomplishments, money, or family name? The novel critiques the behavior of most of the upper-class characters Jane meets: Blanche Ingram is haughty and superficial, John Reed is debauched, and Eliza Reed is inhumanely cold. Rochester is a primary example of upper-class debauchery, with his series of mistresses and his attempt to make Jane a member of the harem. In her final view of Thornfield, after Bertha has burned it down, Jane emphasizes the stark contrast between her comforting, flowering, breathtaking dream of Thornfield, and the reality of its trodden and wasted grounds. The discrepancy emphasizes that the world's vision of the upper classes doesn't always capture the hidden passions that boil under the veneer of genteel tranquility.

One of Jane's tasks in the novel is to revitalize the upper classes, which have become mired in debauchery and haughtiness. Just as Rochester sought Jane for her freshness and purity, the novel suggests that the upper classes in general need the pure moral values and stringent work ethic of the middle classes. At novel's end, Rochester recognizes the error in his lifestyle, and his excessive passions have been quenched; he is reborn as a proper, mild-mannered husband, happily dependent on his wife's moral and intellectual guidance.

FEMINISM IN JANE EYRE'S STRUGGLING FOR SELF-REALIZATION

A. Pursuit for Equality and Independence

Jane lost her parents when she was young, and thanks to her uncle Jane could live a good life, but unfortunately her uncle died after a few years. Her aunt, Mrs. Sarah Reed, regarded Jane as a jinx and her three children (John, Eliza and Georgiana) neglect and abuse Jane. They dislike Jane's plain looks and quiet yet passionate character. These only relatives of Jane Eyre do not show any sympathy or care to this pitiful little girl, instead they always criticize and bully her. Cold and disparaging, Aunt Reed always treats Jane Eyre as an encumbrance inferior to a maid and takes her as a doll to show her hypocritical generosity. Eventually one day, little Jane had an argument with her cousin and was beaten. After being locked in a room for a night, Jane was ill and at that time, her early feminism came out. In the face of Mrs. Reed, Jane refuses to be treated as an inferior being and finally speaks out against discriminations to her with sharp and cold exposure. When Mrs. Reed reproaches Jane for telling a lie out of all reason, Jane defends herself perversely: "I'm not deceitful. If I were, I should say I loved you, but I declare, I don't love you. I dislike you the worst of anybody in the world except John Reed, and this book about the liar, you may give to your girl, Georgiana, for it is she who tells lies, and not I" (Bronte, 2002, p.63).

In other people's opinion, Jane should be great thankful to her aunt rather than being rude. When Jane is about to leave Gateshead to the charity school, Mrs. Reed thinks she can make Jane frightened by her status and decides to give a hypocritical and sanctimonious talk to guide Jane to express gratitude in front of Mr. Lloyd, the apothecary. But Jane refuses to be this rich lady's doll, being treated as unemotional and shameless. She retorts back straightly and powerfully:

"How dare I, Mrs. Reed? How dare I? Because it is the truth. You think I had no feelings, and that I can do without one bit of love or kindness, but I can't live so, and you have no pity. I shall remember how you push me back-roughly and violently pushed me back into the red room, and locked me up there-to my dying day. Though I was in pain, though I cried out, have mercy! Have mercy, Aunt Reed!" (Bronte, 2002, p.64)

Jane's rebellion against Mrs. Reed and John represents her feminist consciousness in getting esteem from other people as a decent and respectable person.

Then little Jane was sent to Lowood boarding school where she learnt a lot and became much stronger and independence .During Jane Eyre's staying in the orphanage of Lowood, which is a benevolent institution in name, but a hell in fact, her understanding of esteem becomes deeper. She is aware of a fact that, even in the face of powerful and authoritative people like the chief inspector of this charity school, Brocklehurst, as long as her esteem and dignity hurt ruthlessly, she will never submit but rebel against it decidedly.

B. Pursuit for Esteem

The whole time spending in Thornfield is the most splendid part of the whole book. Meeting with Rochester and fell in love with him reflected the feminism in Jane and her new thoughts. Jane loves Rochester with all her heart and Rochester's status and wealth make him so high above for Jane to approach, yet she never feels herself inferior to Rochester though she is a humble family teacher. She believes they are fair and should respect each other. In fact, it is her uprightness, loftiness and sincerity that touch Rochester. Rochester feels from the bottom of his heart that Jane is the spiritual partner he always longs for. When the heroine is moved by his whole-heartedness, they fall in love deeply. But at the time of their wedding, she finds the fact that Rochester has had a legal wife. Jane feels heartbreaking on this news, and it makes her trapped in a dilemma whether to stay or to leave. She says to Rochester:

"I care for myself. The more solitary, the more friendless, the more unsustained I am, the more I will respect myself. I will keep the law given by God, sanctioned by man. I will hold to the principles received by men when I was sane, and not mad as I am now, laws and principles are not for the times when there is no temptation, they are for such moments as this when body and soul rise in mutiny against their rigor, stringent are they, inviolate they shall be." (Bronte, 2002, p.343)

Although she had a deep affection for Rochester, she could not stand any compromise in her marriage. She is the whole one and cannot be laughed or argued by others in this aspect. She wouldn't give up her independence and self-respect. So she chose to leave her beloved one and wanted to make a new life.

As the end is known to all, Jane returns to Ferndean Manor and marries Rochester. Mr. Rochester then loses sight of both eyes and disabled. But in this circumstance, Jane Eyre comes back to Mr. Rochester caring for nothing but this man. She says: "I find you lonely, I will be your companion, to read to you, to walk with you, to sit with you, to wait on you, to be eyes and hands to you. Cease to look so melancholy, my dear master; you shall not be left desolate, so long as I live" (Bronte, 2002, p.310).

Jane Eyre does not think that she is making a sacrifice. She says: “I love the people I love is that to make a sacrifice? If so, then certainly I delight in sacrifice” (Bronte, 2002, p.451). In most people’s eyes, nobody would like to marry a man who loses his sight and most of his wealth. But as to Jane, she is different. In her mind, pure love is the meeting of hearts and minds of two people.

Jane Eyre is unique in Victorian period. As a feminist woman, she represents the insurgent women eager for esteem. Without esteem from other people, women like Jane can not get the real emancipation.

C. Pursuit for True Love

In all Jane Eyre’s life, the pursuit of true love is an important representation of her struggle for self-realization. Love in Jane Eyre’s understanding is pure, divine and it cannot be measured by status, power or property and so on. Having experienced a helpless childhood and a miserable adolescence, she expects more than a consolable true love. She suffers a lot in her pursuit of true love. Meanwhile, she obtains it through her long and hard pursuit.

During this period, Jane covered her name and wanted to make a new living. Being a teacher in a small village, she made friends with John and his sisters. Though John is a handsome guy and he proposed to Jane, she cannot accept him, this is the reflection of her iron determination in pursuing true love . In a word, she does not want an affectionless love. A decent and handsome man as John is, Jane Eyre cannot accept him because his love would be “one of duty, not of passion” (Terry, 1987, p.29). She knows clearly that humiliated marriage is not true love. He makes an offer of marriage to Jane only because he thinks that Jane Eyre is a good choice for a missionary’s wife. He finds Jane Eyre docile, firm and tenacious. Because he just needs this kind of assistant. Jane says if she joins St. John, she is abandoning half herself and if she goes to India, she is going to premature death. Jane Eyre insists that true love should be based on equality, mutual understanding and respect. So she refuses John’s proposal.

Jane is in great unconformity with the social environment at that time. She dares to fight against the conventional marriage ideas, which well reflects all feminists’ voice and wish for a true love. Maybe Jane’s choices are considered something shocking, but it really gives a blow to the Victorian society.

A BRAVE NEW WORLD

BY
ALDOUS HUXLEY

LIFE AND BACKGROUND OF THE AUTHOR:

Early Years

Aldous Huxley was born July 26, 1894, in the village of Godalming, Surrey, England. The third son of Leonard Huxley, a writer, editor, and teacher, and Julia Arnold, also a teacher, the young Aldous grew up in a family of well-connected, well-known writers, scientists, and educators.

At Aldous' birth, the Huxley family and their relatives already commanded literary and philosophical attention in Victorian England. Huxley's grandfather, biologist T. H. Huxley, gained recognition in the nineteenth century as the writer who introduced Charles Darwin's theory of evolution to a wide public and coined the word "agnostic." The elder Huxley's writing contributed to the growing debate on science and religion, a theme that would capture the imagination of his grandson, Aldous.

Huxley's mother was a niece of poet and essayist Matthew Arnold, who expressed the moral struggles of the modern age and the retreat of a religion-based culture. Matthew's father, Thomas Arnold, head of Rugby School, had presided with earnest devotion over the theory and practice of education in his time. Thus Aldous grew up in an atmosphere in which thought on science, religion, and education informed and even dominated family life.

Living up to the expectations of "Grandpater," as T. H. Huxley was known in his family, constituted a full-time, exhausting job for the children—Aldous included. Academic and professional brilliance was expected as a matter of course, with no excuses allowed. A family tendency toward depression compounded by this pressure may have contributed to the suicide of Trevenan, Aldous' elder brother. At sixteen, the sudden onset of keratitis punctate, an eye disease, left Aldous nearly blind and almost ruined his own chances for success. Fortunately, surgery corrected some of his vision, but Huxley would suffer from complications in vision for the rest of his life.

Education

Like all the sons of his family, Huxley attended Eton, a prestigious preparatory school, and Balliol College, Oxford. His education, then, represented a privileged road to power for wealthy and well-born British men who sometimes displayed real brilliance. Huxley was among thebest of them, certainly. Poor sight caused by the eye disease prevented his pursuit of his first career choice, medicine, but he threw himself into study of literature, reading with the help of a magnifying glass. In 1915, Huxley took a First (highest honors) in English Literature.
A less formal, but nonetheless important part of Huxley's education was his regular attendance at Lady Ottoline Morrell's get-togethers, which provided many literary, artistic, and political reformers and experimenters the chance to meet and talk. Here Huxley met novelist Virginia Woolf, economist John Maynard Keynes, and critics Bertrand Russell and Clive Bell—some of the most important writers and thinkers of the time. Huxley's early exposure to the ideas of such a diverse and progressive group deeply influenced his world-view and his writing.

Jobs

After taking his degree at Oxford, Huxley returned to Eton to teach. Among his pupils was Eric Blair, who would later write such classics as 1984 and Animal Farm under the pseudonym "George Orwell."
From 1919 to 1921, Huxley worked as an editor on the London journal Athenaeum, one of the best-known publications of the time. Huxley also contributed to Vanity Fair and Vogue before devoting himself entirely to his own fiction and essay writing in 1924.

Literary Writing

Huxley's first published work was a collection of his poetry, The Burning Wheel (1916), written when he was still in his early twenties. French novelist Marcel Proust praised Huxley's early efforts, and Huxley seemed destined for life as a poet. But with the publication of his first two novels, Crome Yellow (1921) and Antic Hay (1923), Huxley emerged as a particularly witty chronicler of modern life among the educated and pretentious.

Huxley further solidified his reputation as a satirist with the novel Point Counter Point (1928), a scathing study of the breakdown of commonly held social values. Huxley followed up with another satire, which would prove to be his most popular work—Brave New World (1932).

Like his previous novels, Brave New World is a "novel of ideas," in which the themes the author wishes to explore take center stage, determining the action as well as the characterization. Brave New World continued in Huxley's familiar irreverent fictional style, showing readers the absurdity of strongly held but little examined beliefs.

The work also marked a change in Huxley himself. The setting of Brave New World—a future London rather than the familiar country houses and town houses of his previous fiction—seems to have broken Huxley out of some habits of mind. In Brave New World, Huxley takes the problem of evil much more seriously than in the past. The satirist had begun to evolve into the social philosopher.

After the publication of Brave New World, Huxley left England, living with his wife, Maria, first in New Mexico—the site of the Savage Reservation in Brave New World—and later in California, where surgery restored much of his vision.

In his new home, Huxley became involved in the study and practice of mysticism. His new philosophical outlook informed his novel Eyeless in Gaza (1936), which promoted pacifism on the eve of World War II. After Many a Summer Dies the Swan (1939) makes the case for the emptiness of materialism. Gradually, Huxley moved toward mystical writings, far from the tone of his early satire. The Perennial Philosophy (1945) and The Doors of Perception (1954) represent Huxley's non-fictional expression of his interests, including even experimentation with psychedelic drugs.

In Los Angeles, Huxley wrote screenplays for film versions of fictional classics such as Jane Eyre, Pride and Prejudice, and Alice in Wonderland. He also continued writing fiction, notably Ape and Essence (1948), a futuristic fiction set in Los Angeles after a nuclear war. With Grey Eminence (1941) and The Devils of Loudon (1952), Huxley looked backward to historical events to examine what he believed to be the hypocrisy of organized religion. In addition to his fiction and screenplays,

the planning and writing of biographies, essays, and other works of non-fiction occupied him constantly during these years. Huxley's last novel, Island (1962), returns to the theme of the future he once explored so memorably in Brave New World. The later novel, in which Huxley tried to create a positive vision of the future, failed to come up to readers' expectations. Brave New World Revisited, a series of essays addressing the themes of his early novel, represents a more successful rethinking of future (and present) social challenges.

Huxley died of cancer in California on November 22, 1963. Although his novels—especially Brave New World—still enjoyed great popularity, Huxley's death received little notice in the media at the time. The nation's shock over the assassination of President John F. Kennedy overshadowed news of the writer's death.

Honors and Awards

Huxley won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for Fiction from the University of Edinburgh in 1939 for his novel After Many a Summer Dies the Swan. In 1959, he received the Award of Merit and Gold Medal from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters and accepted an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from the University of California. The year before his death, he received the Companion of Literature from the British Royal Society of Literature.

Introduction

Huxley wrote Brave New World "between the wars"—after the upheaval of the First World War and before World War II. British society was officially at peace, but the social effects of the Great War, as it was then called, were becoming apparent. Huxley and his contemporaries wrote about changes in national feeling, questioning of long-held social and moral assumptions, and the move toward more equality among the classes and between the sexes.

Historical Background

The Russian Revolution and challenges to the British Empire abroad raised the possibility of change on a world scale. At home, the expansion of transportation and communication—the cars, telephones, and radios made affordable through mass production—also brought revolutionary changes to daily life. With the new technology, distances grew suddenly shorter and true privacy rarer. While people in industrialized societies welcomed these advances, they also worried about losing a familiar way of life, and perhaps even themselves, in the process. The nightmare vision of the fast-paced but meaningless routine of Brave New World reflects this widespread concern about the world of the 1920s and 1930s.

The period also brought a new questioning of traditional morality, especially regarding sex. Dress, language, and especially fiction expressed a greater openness for both women and men in their sexual lives. Some hailed this change as the beginning of true individual freedom, while others condemned it as the end of civilization itself. Huxley, with typical wit, uses the issue for irony, creating an image of the young Lenina being scolded for her lack of promiscuity. Sexual rules may change, Huxley tells his readers, but the power of convention remains the same. Although set in the future, then, Huxley's Brave New World is truly a novel of its time. At a period of great change, Huxley creates a world in which all the present worrying trends have produced terrible consequences.

Movement toward socialism in the 1920s, for example, becomes, in Huxley's future, the totalitarian World State. Questioning of religious beliefs and the growth of materialism, likewise, transforms into a religion of consumerism with Henry Ford as its god. And if

Model T's roll off the assembly line in the present, in a stream of identical cars, then in the future, human beings will be mass-produced, too.

Huxley's future vision, by turns witty and disturbing, imagines the end of a familiar, traditional life and the triumph of all that is new and strange in the modern world.

Utopian Fiction

In constructing an imaginary world, Huxley contributes to a long tradition—the utopian fiction. "Utopia," from the Greek words for "no place" and "good place," first came into English in Sir Thomas More's work Utopia (1516), a fictional account of a far away nation whose characteristics invite comparison with More's England. More used his fictional Utopia to point out the problems present in his own society. Since then, writers have created utopias to challenge readers to think about the underlying assumptions of their own culture. *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), by Jonathan Swift, seems at first to be a book of outlandish travel stories. Yet throughout the narratives, Swift employs his fictional worlds ironically to make serious arguments about the injustices of his own Britain. In utopian fiction, imagination becomes a way to explore alternatives in political, social, and religious life.

In Huxley's time, the most popular writer of utopian fiction was H.G. Wells, author of The Time Machine (1895), The War of the Worlds (1898), A Modern Utopia (1905), and many other novels. Wells held an optimistic view of the future, with an internationalist perspective, and so his utopias reflected the end of national divisions and the growth of a truly humane civilization, as he saw it. When Huxley read Wells' Men Like Gods, he was inspired to make fun of its optimism with his characteristically ironic wit. What began as a parody turned into a novel of its own—Brave New World.

The brave new world of Huxley's novel is not a "good place," and so it is not, in the strictest terms, a utopia. Huxley himself called his world a "negative utopia," the opposite of the traditional utopia. Readers have also used the word "dystopia," meaning "bad place," to describe Huxley's fictional world and others like it.
Huxley's dark view of the future opened a new door in fiction and seemed to revive interest in the old traditional utopian form by giving

it a modern edge. George Orwell's Animal Farm (1946) and 1984 (1949) build on the energy and meaning of their predecessor, Brave New World. In Fahrenheit 451 (1950), science fiction writer Ray Bradbury proposes a future society without history or literature, a dystopia of which Huxley's World Controller Mustapha Mond himself would probably approve.

In the 1960s, Anthony Burgess imagined his own futuristic London in A Clockwork Orange, rehearsing the themes of control and the loss of self introduced by Huxley. And Huxley's disturbing views of science and technology have even echoed in Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's* Rainbow (1973), where the anti-hero, wandering the streets of London during the V-2 raids of World War II, discovers his own dark history of social (and sexual) conditioning.

The Structure of the Novel

As a writer, Huxley refused to be kept to simple, chronological structure in his fiction. He characteristically experiments with structure, surprising his reader by juxtaposing two different conversations or point of view. In Point Counter Point (1928), Huxley even attempted to break out of traditional narrative structure altogether—to make fiction imitate the flow of musical counterpoint.

In Brave New World, Huxley's plan to create a futuristic world and then to introduce John the Savage as an outsider demanded another kind of unconventional structure. To achieve his effect, Huxley divides the novel roughly into thirds. The first part of the novel establishes the dystopia—the London of the future—with enough detail and background to encourage the reader to accept the world as a given. The second part plunges the reader into a thoroughly different world—the Savage Reservation—to experience the shock of the London characters who are traveling there as tourists. The central part also introduces the real main character, John, in the only world he has known since birth. The third part unfolds the events of John's life in London and his challenge of the dystopia.

Huxley's structuring of Brave New World defies the conventions of both mainstream and utopian fiction. In most traditional utopian novels, the utopia itself stands more or less alone as a setting, with no

distracting side-trips to other places. The only contrast to the utopia, then, is the reader's own culture and society. But in introducing the Savage Reservation, Huxley introduces another fictional world—a rival and contrast to his dystopia within the novel itself.

According to convention, the inclusion of the Savage Reservation should blur the clarity of the world of London. But Huxley manages to bring his dystopia into even sharper focus with the trip to the Savage Reservation. Both worlds emerge as believable and horrifying, each in its own way.

By holding the introduction of his main character until the middle of the novel, Huxley also flouts narrative convention. In this, Huxley uses the reader's expectations about structure to produce a particular effect. Since convention dictates that the main character appear very early in the novel, readers frequently become convinced that Bernard Marx will be at the center of the plot and theme. Just when Bernard proves himself cowardly and weak, despite his rebelliousness, Huxley offers John, the real main character.

Compared to Bernard, John appears truly heroic, at least initially, and, as a "savage," introduces a new perspective that Huxley uses upon the return to London. In bringing John into a dystopia already familiar to the reader, Huxley can play the reader's knowledge against the character's innocence. And the effect of this irony—Huxley's strong point—intensifies the climax and conclusion of Brave New World.

A Brief Synopsis

Brave New World opens in London, nearly six hundred years in the future ("After Ford"). Human life has been almost entirely industrialized—controlled by a few people at the top of a World State. The first scene, offering a tour of a lab where human beings are created and conditioned according to the society's strict caste system, establishes the antiseptic tone and the theme of dehumanized life. The natural processes of birth, aging, and death represent horrors in this world.

Bernard Marx, an Alpha-Plus (or high-caste) psychologist, emerges as the single discontented person in a world where material comfort

and physical pleasure—provided by the drug soma and recreational sex—are the only concerns. Scorned by women, Bernard nevertheless manages to engage the attention of Lenina Crowne, a "pneumatic" beauty who agrees to spend a vacation week with him at the remote Savage Reservation in New Mexico, a place far from the controlled, technological world of London.

Before Bernard leaves, his superior, the D.H.C., spontaneously reveals that long ago he, too, visited the Savage Reservation, and he confesses in sorrow that he lost the woman who accompanied him there. Embarrassed by the disclosure of his socially unacceptable emotion, the D.H.C. turns on Bernard, threatening him with banishment for his own social sins—not engaging enthusiastically enough in sex and soma.

In the Savage Reservation with Lenina, Bernard meets a woman from London who gave birth to a son about 20 years before. Seeing his opportunity to gain power over the D.H.C.—the father of the child—Bernard brings Linda and John back to London and presents them publicly to the D.H.C., who is about to banish Bernard.

Shocked and humiliated by the proof of his horrifying connection with natural birth, the D.H.C. flees in terror. Once a social outcast, Bernard now enjoys great success, because of his association with the new celebrity—John, called "the Savage."

Reared on the traditional ways of the Reservation and an old volume of the poetry of Shakespeare, John finds London strange, confusing, and finally repellent. His quotation of Miranda's line from The Tempest—"O brave new world / That has such people in it"—at first expresses his awe of the "Other Place" his mother told him of as a child. But the quotation becomes ironic as John becomes more and more disgusted by the recreational sex, soma, and identical human beings of London. Lenina's attempted seduction provokes John's anger and violence, and, later, the death of Linda further arouses his fury. At last, John's attempt to keep a crowd of Deltas from their ration of soma results in a riot and his arrest, along with Bernard and Helmholtz Watson, an "emotional engineer" who wishes to be a poet.

The three face the judgment of World Controller Mustapha Mond, who acknowledges the flaws of this brave new world, but pronounces

the loss of freedom and individuality a small price to pay for stability. Mond banishes Bernard and Helmholtz to the Falkland Islands and rules that John must stay in London.
When his two friends leave for their exile, John determines to make a retreat for himself in a remote, secluded lighthouse outside the city. There he tries to purify himself of civilization with ritual whippings and vomiting.

Drawn by the spectacle of his wild penances, reporters and crowds press in on John, who becomes a public curiosity—a kind of human animal in a zoo. When Lenina appears in the crowd, John furiously attacks her with the whip. John's frenzy inflames the crowd, and, in accordance with their social training, the violence turns into a sexual orgy, with John drawn in more or less unwillingly.

The next day, when John awakes from the effects of the soma, he realizes in horror what he has done. The novel closes on an image of John's body, hanging lifeless from a wooden beam in his lighthouse retreat.

Chapter 1

Summary

The novel opens in the distant future at the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre. This institution plays an essential role in the artificial rep[illegible] and social conditioning of the world's population.

As the chapter be[illegible] Director of the Centre (the D.H.C.) conducts a group of new students, as well as the reader, on a tour of the facility and its operations—a biological version of the assembly line, with test-tube births as the product. They begin at the Fertilizing Room, move on to the Bottling Room, the Social Predestination Room, and the Decanting Room. Along the way, the D.H.C. explains the basic operation of the plant—Bokanovsky's Process—in which one fertilized egg produces from 8 to 96 "buds" that will grow into identical human beings.

The conditioning that goes along with this process aims to make the people accept and even like their "inescapable social destiny." That destiny occurs within a Caste System (or social hierarchy) ranging from the handsome and intelligent Alpha Pluses down to the working drone Epsilons.

The chapter also introduces two workers at the Centre: Henry Foster, who will figure as a minor character in the story; and "pneumatic" Lenina Crowne, a major character who will affect the destiny of the novel's protagonist.

Commentary

In the reader's first glimpse of the dystopia, Huxley drives home the significance of his futuristic world with the motto "Community. Identity. Stability." All the technology, planning, and conditioning of this World State exist solely to support and maintain these ends.

The Fordian world does not seem so menacing and sinister as Orwell's *1984*, but the reader can see even in the first chapter that the cheeriness masks a dark reality. Personal identity—perhaps even humanity itself—is strangled by the demands of community and stability.

On the tour, the D.H.C. briskly explains the technology of fertilization—the most intimate human activity—as the carefully calculated, sterile procedure to produce identical people. In a brilliant adaptation of Ford's assembly line, the Central London Hatchery turns out (nearly) interchangeable human beings, who, like the D.H.C. and Henry Foster, can complement one another effortlessly, even to the point of completing each other's sentences.

Stability requires both the elimination of differences (except with regard to caste) and the end of dissatisfaction. The eugenics lab answers the identity challenge; conditioning manages satisfaction. The D.H.C. announces piously that virtue and goodness spring from the work of the social predestinators, whose job is "making people like their inescapable social destiny." With this statement, Huxley introduces a major theme—the role of choice and even pain in becoming a full human being. The D.H.C.'s dogma will meet a challenge with John, the "uncivilized" character (introduced in Chapter 7).

Huxley employs several narrative techniques to introduce his dystopia in the first chapter. The tour for new students affords a realistic opportunity for Huxley to explain the theories and practices of stability while immersing the reader in the physical world of the dystopia. A brief reference to the Hatchery itself—a "squat" building of "only thirty-four stories"—also gives a sense of the surrounding landscape, a city, by implication, of lofty heights. And, to further orient the reader, Huxley fixes a date—A.F. 632—the number as well as the "A.F." emphasizing the difference between the reader's world and the futuristic world of the novel.

Note especially Huxley's comparison of technology with nature and his point of making technology more alive than nature itself. In the first chapter, Huxley describes the sunlight as cold and dead, except when it hits the tubes of the microscopes, which turn it a buttery, sun-like yellow. In this world, artificiality itself is a kind of power, competing with and augmenting the forces of nature.

Note, too, the inclusion of early twentieth-century prejudices in the dystopia; for example, in the racially charged (and unscientific) comparisons of human ovaries and in the all-male student group. Such details remind the reader that any futuristic fiction reveals as much about a writer's response to the present as hopes or fears for the future.

Glossary

(Here and in the following chapters, difficult words and phrases, as well as allusions and historical references, are explained.)

Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, Epsilon the names of the castes of the dystopia. They are the first five letters of the Greek alphabet, used most commonly in British schools and universities as grades, equivalent to A, B, C, D, and F.

Bokanovsky's Process Huxley's phrase. A method for producing many identical eggs from a single egg. It is the basis for producing identical human beings.

Podsnap's Technique Huxley's phrase. A method for speeding up the ripening of mature eggs. The process makes possible the production of many identical human beings at roughly the same time.

decanting pouring from one container into another. Here, Huxley's term for birth.

freemartin an imperfectly developed female calf, usually sterile. Here, Huxley's term for a sterile woman. Most of the women of the dystopia are freemartins.

surrogate a substitute.

lupus any of various diseases with skin lesions.

demijohn a large bottle of glass or earthenware, with a narrow neck and a wicker casing.

A.F. Huxley's term, following all the dates in the modern era ("After Ford").

Henry Ford (1863–1947) U.S. automobile manufacturer credited with developing interchangeable parts and the assembly-line process. Here, the god-like figure of the dystopia.

lift British word for elevator.

corpus luteum a mass of yellow tissue formed in the ovary by a ruptured graafian follicle that has discharged its ovum; if the ovum is fertilized, this tissue secretes the hormone progesterone, needed to maintain pregnancy.

thyroxin the active hormone of the thyroid gland.

Chapter 2

Summary

The D.H.C. continues his tour of the Centre in the Infant Nursery. Here he lectures the new students on the importance of social conditioning as "*moral* education."

The D.H.C. oversees a demonstration of "Neo-Pavlovian Conditioning." Nurses expose a group of babies to books and flowers and then add a violent explosion, alarm bells, shrieking sirens, and finally an electric shock. This experience, notes the D.H.C., will "unalterably" condition the reflexes of the babies so that they will develop an "instinctive hatred" of books and nature.

According to the D.H.C., such social conditioning ultimately maximizes economic consumption among the population. To illustrate his point, he explains how a dislike of nature can be transformed into a love of country sports—and that involves the consumption of a nearly endless variety of manufactured consumer goods.

The D.H.C. also recounts an anecdote about little Reuben Rabinovitch to discuss "sleep-teaching or hypnopaedia"—the "greatest moralizing and socializing force of all time." By way of an example, the D.H.C. and students look in on a sleep-teaching session on Elementary Class Consciousness.

Commentary

In this chapter, Huxley continues his presentation of dystopian social stability with a close look at the theory and practice of early conditioning. In the explanation of hypnopaedia and infantile conditioning, Huxley makes clear that the elimination of choice increases economic and social stability but diminishes the potential for human growth.

The price of stability emerges most memorably in the scene in which Delta children—predestined for rote factory work—receive their conditioning to dislike the books and flowers. The image of happy babies crawling toward colorful books and beautiful blooms is filled with conventional sentimentality, but Huxley's reversal with the alarms and electric shock sharpens the reader's response. The reality of the conditioning represents its own legitimate argument against the theory of social, political, and economic stability. Note again Huxley's use of natural imagery as the complement to technology, when the sun beams warmly on the flowers, almost as if offering aid in the conditioning.

Less violent, but nonetheless powerful, hypnopaedia emerges as the source of underlying assumptions and prejudices in the dystopia. The lesson in class consciousness gives each child a social identity but cuts off the possibility of forming friendships outside of caste or even forming opinions of one's own. Throughout the novel, characters spout the sentiments of their hynopaedic training almost unconsciously and behave according to the precepts of the sleep-teaching. Even those—like Bernard Marx—who are conscious of the techniques of hypnopaedia cannot fully escape its power. Again, the dystopian practice supports social stability but destroys personal identity and independence.

The power of words—and responses to particular words—form an important theme in *Brave New World*. Hypnopaedia, Huxley makes clear, uses words at the vulnerable time during sleep to produce unquestioning loyalty or aversion in people. The World State, in effect, whispers into the ear of each of its sleeping young citizens to ensure compliance with the social order. Banned words—especially "mother"—produce a strong response of revulsion and shame, the effect of the carefully taught aversion to human reproduction.

Huxley draws the reader's attention to this fact in a comic turn that forms a memorable part of the students' discussion with the D.H.C. Shocked by the D.H.C.'s frank use of the words "mother" and "father," the students blush and then grin, while Huxley expresses their reactions by substituting the offending words with "crash." As the chapter emphasizes, then, the state's use of language plays an important role in shaping people's consciousness and manipulating their energies toward particular social and economic goals.

Note the change in symbols from the pre-Fordian world. The D.H.C. makes the sign of the T (as opposed to the cross), which the students repeat, in reverence to Henry Ford's Model T automobile, the product of the assembly line. The practiced piety recalls an earlier age, but the meaning of the gesture has changed. The World State has appropriated the Christian symbol and turned it into the Fordian T—significantly by cutting off the top of the cross. Even the symbols of the dystopia make clear the diminishing possibilities for humanity.

Glossary

Neo-Pavlovian Conditioning Huxley's term for the dystopian form of infant training. The term derives from the classical conditioning system named for the Russian physiologist Ivan Petrovich Pavlov (1849–1931).

viscose a substance used in making rayon thread and fabric.

Model T the first car produced on Henry Ford's assembly line.

hypnopaedia sleep-teaching.

asafoetida a bad-smelling gum resin. It was formerly used to treat some illnesses, or, in folk medicine, to repel disease.

viviparous bearing or bringing forth living young, as most mammals and some other animals do.

George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950) British dramatist and critic. Here, one of Huxley's most famous contemporaries, whom he sarcastically singles out for particular mention as an accepted genius of the dystopia.

Chapter 3

Summary

In this chapter, the D.H.C.'s tour moves outside into the garden, where the students watch very young children engaged in sexual games. The D.H.C. tells the students—to their shock—that such erotic play seemed abnormal in the time before Ford.

This chapter also introduces Mustapha Mond—Resident Controller for Western Europe and one of the Ten World Controllers. Mond figures in the novel as a kind of enlightened dictator ("his Fordship"), who understands this brave new world, as well as the old world before Ford.

As the chapter dissolves into a verbal montage, Mond lectures on history—and its suppression—beginning appropriately with Henry Ford's adage: "History is bunk!" Mond recalls a world ravaged by anthrax bombs and poison gases in the Nine Years' War, followed by the great Economic Collapse, and finally the "choice between World Control and destruction." As Mond notes, *soma*, the ubiquitous drug of choice in this brave new world, brought an end to worry, while "stability" proved to be the keystone to social control—the "primal and ultimate need."

The montage becomes more surrealistic as the chapter draws to a close, jumbling mottoes of the World State with snatches of dialogue. For example, it fuses Ford and Freud (in psychological matters), listens in on Lenina chatting with her friend Fanny, and introduces Bernard Marx, who will emerge in subsequent chapters as a major character.

Commentary

In this chapter, Huxley introduces the historical forces that led to the creation of the dystopia. The analysis, delivered by World Controller Mustapha Mond, seems to contradict Ford's own statement, quoted by Mond, "History is bunk." With the appearance of the unconventional, powerful Mond, Huxley offers a deeper, grittier vision of the dystopia than the sanitized explanations of Henry Foster and the D.H.C.

Mond, the only character who knows both the pre-Fordian and Fordian worlds, lectures with passion and detail on the self-destruction of the previous order (the world of the reader) and the building of the World State, the only alternative to chaos. In a series of gory and terrifying images—some, like the booted leg, inspired by the violence of the First World War—Huxley paints the agonized death of the familiar world of democracy and individual freedom. From these ashes, the survivors brought forth what they believed to be the only truly successful framework for living developed in the modern age—Ford's assembly line, with its concept of interchangeable parts, making possible almost limitless production and consumption.

In Fordian times, Mond's lecture makes clear, consumption and the enjoyment of consumption is the primary human activity. The "viviparous" life—the ordinary family—no longer exists, banished by the World State in favor of Conditioning Centres, where decanted children grow up in an environment designed to ensure their loyalty to the social order and (much the same thing) train them to consume appropriately. Here, Mond reminds the students, all their needs are met, all obstacles to happiness removed.

Again, in this chapter, Huxley brings forward the theme of choice and pain as essential parts of human life. If all obstacles are removed, as Mond says, if no one feels passion or pain, what kind of human life is possible? At this point in the novel, Mond presents the life of uninterrupted happiness as the ideal. Later (in Chapters 16–17), Huxley reveals another, more complicated side to the World Controller, when Mond debates on the subject of civilization and its price.

Even now, Huxley dramatizes the emptiness of a life controlled by the consumption of goods and recreational sex. In a surrealistic series of jump-cuts from Mond to the people leaving work, Huxley underlines the purposelessness of the "progress" evident in the dystopia. Violent passion is avoided, but people still need a chemical "Violent Passion Surrogate" once a month. Most women are sterile or practice contraception, yet they must submit to a chemically induced fake pregnancy to maintain their physical and psychological health. Human nature has not changed, obviously; the World State has simply redefined it and compensated for the difference with chemicals.

The most important chemical of all is *soma*, the drug sponsored by the state to reduce or eliminate feelings of unhappiness. Non-toxic, with no after-effects, *soma* is the perfect drug for dulling the senses against

any perception of the emptiness of life. *Soma* is, therefore, a powerful, essential tool for social control in the dystopia because it prevents the dissatisfaction and rage that might result in revolution.

Bernard spurns *soma* in disgust, preferring, he explains, to feel his own emotional state, however miserable. In refusing *soma*—the conventional means of remaining perpetually happy—Bernard believes himself to be a rebellious, authentic human being. As the novel progresses, however, Bernard's desire to feel emotion freely will seem less heroic and more adolescent.

Glossary

surreptitious secret, stealthy.

auto-eroticism masturbation.

Our Freud Huxley's phrase. A pious reference to Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), Austrian physician and neurologist: father of psychoanalysis.

flivver a small, cheap automobile, especially an old one. Here, used respectfully to refer to Ford's Model T.

anthrax an infectious disease of wild and domesticated animals, especially cattle and sheep, which is caused by a bacillus and can be transmitted to people.

ectogenesis the growth process of embryonic tissue placed in an artificial environment, as a test tube. Here, the conventional process of birth.

soma an intoxicating plant juice referred to in Indian religious writings. Here, Huxley's term for a powerful calming and hallucinogenic drug without any serious side effects.

boskage a natural growth of trees or shrubs.

pneumatic inflated. Here, Huxley's word describing a woman with a full, shapely figure.

Malthusian drill Huxley's phrase for practicing contraception. From the word "Malthusian," referring to the theory developed by English economist Thomas Malthus (1766–1834), that the world population tends to increase faster than the food supply with inevitable disastrous results unless natural restrictions, such as war, famine, and disease, reduce the population or the increase is checked by moral restraint.

Chapter 4

Summary

This chapter opens on an elevator where Lenina sees Bernard. She wants to talk with him about their planned trip to New Mexico, but he seems hesitant. In fact, Bernard wants to express his feelings to her, but when he tries, Lenina fails to notice. She's late for a date with Henry Foster.

As Lenina and Henry take off in their helicopter for the date, their trip offers a panoramic view of London and its suburbs. It unfolds as a miniature version of this futuristic world—from Charing-T Tower to Hounslow Feely Studios to the Obstacle Golf Course.

The second half of the chapter returns to Bernard, who feels inadequate. Although an Alpha Plus, Bernard worries over his short stature (due, apparently, to a mistake during his decanting as a test-tube embryo). Because of this, he feels like a social "outsider": "I am I, and wish I wasn't."

Bernard flies to Propaganda House to meet his friend, Helmholtz Watson, who writes state propaganda as an Emotional Engineer. Despite his overpowering stature and success with women, Watson, too, feels "all alone," because he has "too much ability." As a result, he senses a kinship with Bernard—the knowledge they share that they are "individuals."

Commentary

Here Huxley offers a contrast of two important and very different characters: Bernard, the Alpha-Plus psychologist; and Lenina, the Gamma technician.

As an Alpha Plus, at the top of society's strict caste system, Bernard should be enjoying every benefit of his society especially reserved for the elite—including relative freedom. The other Alphas—the D.H.C. and Henry Foster, for example—move through the futuristic world with confidence and gusto. Even the unconventional Mustapha Mond seems happy, in his own way. Bernard, however, lives in a state of

misery, anxious and angry; short for his caste, he faces ridicule from women, insubordination from inferiors, and exclusion from the cheery intimacy of social life among his equals.

Bernard at once longs for and scorns the joys of his world. Infatuated with Lenina, he dreams of a vacation alone with her but flinches when she mentions it in public. Sexually obsessed, Bernard lingers over Lenina's beauty but is repulsed by the conventional (for this world) attitude she exhibits.

Bernard may be a misfit, but he shows little of the true rebel's conviction and seriousness of purpose. When Bernard seeks the company of Helmholtz Watson, another Alpha who is dissatisfied with life, Huxley offers a new view on his character by contrast. Although popular and socially successful in the ways Bernard is not, Helmholtz nevertheless longs for some meaning in his life and work. Helmholtz's discontent, Huxley stresses, is on a higher plane than Bernard's. In contrast to Helmholtz, Bernard seems merely childish and whiny. In later chapters, Huxley sharpens this distinction between these two unhappy Alphas and constructs a common resolution for them both.

Lenina, on the other hand, appears comfortable in the dystopia. Despite her daring experiment with her long-standing relationship with Henry Foster, she is conventional by the standards of her world—cheery, unthinking, and infantile. In her talk with Bernard, she displays all the unembarrassed enthusiasm for sex that hypnopaedia and social life have taught her since childhood. Still, her choice of Bernard seems somehow rebellious, revealing an underlying, yet not fully recognized, dissatisfaction.

One brief, but significant scene occurs on the roof with the Epsilon elevator operator. In earlier chapters, the Alphas who control the predestination of fetuses and the conditioning of infants maintain that the members of every caste are happy, in their own ways. The sudden yearning expressed by the lowly Epsilon in his longing cry—"Roof! . . . Oh, roof!"— reveals for an instant that conditioning cannot completely remove the human need for air, space, and beauty. There is a similar scene in Fritz Lang's futuristic film *Metropolis* (1927), in which a woman and children from the underground world suddenly glimpse the richness and beauty of the upper world through opened elevator doors. In both works, the scenes dramatize the unspoken injustice of the social hierarchy by bringing the lowest and the highest face to face, creating the conflict that convention seeks to avoid.

Glossary

parathyroid any of usually four small, oval glands on or near the thyroid gland; they secret a hormone important in the control of the calcium-phosphorus balance of the body.

Charing-T Tower Huxley's re-creation of a London train station, Charing Cross Station.

simian of or like an ape or monkey. Here, used to describe the Epsilon elevator operator.

Chapter 5

Summary

This chapter opens with Lenina and Henry taking off in their helicopter when the Obstacle Golf Course closes. They pass over Burnham Beeches—a satirical allusion to Shakespeare—and then the Slough Crematorium. As they discuss death and "phosphorus recovery"—"we can go on being socially useful even after we're dead"—Lenina reveals her class prejudices, especially against Epsilons.

They fly to Westminster Abbey Cabaret, where they dance the evening away to the Malthusian Blues. Despite the *soma* they consume, Lenina remembers her contraception in preparation for a night of pneumatic sex.

The second half of the chapter follows Bernard as he flies past the chiming Big Henry—the Fordian version of Big Ben—to the Fordson Community Singery. There he participates—without really believing—in a kind of religious service that includes such rituals as the sign of the T, blessed *soma*, and solidarity hymns. Under the influence of the sacramental *soma*, the ceremony dissolves into an "orgy-porgy" of sex.

But while the others find the "calm ecstasy of achieved consummation," Bernard feels only more isolated in his "separateness"—"much more alone, indeed, more hopelessly himself than he had ever been in his life before."

Commentary

In this chapter, Huxley introduces the dystopian combination of religion and sex, featuring a date in a cathedral/cabaret juxtaposed with a spiritual ritual that ends in an orgy.

Henry and Lenina's dinner and dancing evening emphasizes the artificiality of their world. The night is clear and starry, but they are unaware of the stars at all because of the overpowering electric sky-signs that light up London. In this point, Huxley's response to his own era—artificial light already dominating the city night—strongly influences his ideas about the futuristic world.

Inside Westminster Abbey Cabaret—the new use for the historical, venerable site where English kings and queens were once crowned—the domed ceiling offers another sky altogether: a tropical sunset. Perception is also modified by the *soma* served at dinner so that everyone and everything seems delightful. Even the music is synthetic—a proudly advertised feature of the cabaret. Emotions, music, scenery—all the elements of romance come already engineered by the state.

The evening ends, as conventionally it should, with recreational, non-productive sex. Huxley closes the chapter before describing Henry and Lenina's love-making, but leaves the reader to infer that it will be just as artificial and manipulated as the rest of the evening.

Bernard's "orgy-porgy" Solidarity Service—the biweekly pseudo-religious meeting—parallels in many ways Lenina's date with Henry. Music and *soma* play important parts in the evening, enhancing mood and eliminating any inhibitions. On their date, Lenina and Henry's *soma* serves as a kind of after-dinner brandy, while it becomes, in the Solidarity Service, a surrogate for the bread and wine of the Christian Eucharist. In the service, *soma* and sex represent union with a Greater Being and with each other.

Note especially the cries of the participants when they hear the "feet of the Greater Being" as he approaches. Huxley draws on the tradition of the revival meeting here, and he also underscores the similarity between religious ecstasy and sexual excitement—a point completed when the service turns to orgy.

"Orgy-porgy"—the conventional close of the Solidarity Service—uses group sex as a method of breaking down the perceived differences between people and so increasing social stability. What might once have been the spontaneous expression of sexual feeling—even an act of rebellion—becomes here merely another mandatory state activity.

Just as in Westminster Abbey Cabaret, the music at the Solidarity Service sets the pace, initiates feeling, and manipulates actions. Again, Huxley lets the artificial atmosphere descend to control the characters in the rituals of the dystopia.

Note, too, Lenina and Henry's lip service to the worth of every individual. The belief (hypnopaedia at work) allows upper-caste members of the society to disregard the truth about the deliberately arrested development of the Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons that serve them. Epsilons do not mind being Epsilons, Henry and Lenina tell each other, because

they know nothing else. Huxley has already offered a brief view of the longing in lower-caste people, with the Epsilon elevator operator in Chapter 4.

Glossary

Westminster Abbey Gothic church (originally a Benedictine abbey) where English monarchs are crowned; it is also a burial place for English monarchs, famous statesmen and writers, etc. Here, the site of the Westminster Abbey cabaret, or nightclub.

orgy-porgy Huxley's term for a ritual sexual orgy, from the children's nursery rhyme, "Georgy-Porgy."

detumescence a decrease in swelling.

diminuendo a decrease in volume.

plagently loudly and with resonance.

Chapter 6

Summary

As this chapter opens, Lenina worries about Bernard's eccentric desire for privacy and his tendency to question basic social assumptions. She thinks him "odd."

In a flashback to their first date, Lenina and Bernard quarrel when he hovers their helicopter over the English Channel so that they can observe the power of Nature. Bernard wants an adult—and emotional—relationship with Lenina, not just the mindless sex that consummates their first date.

In the middle section of the chapter, Bernard submits his travel to the D.H.C., who remembers his own holiday many years earlier to the Savage Reservation. The D.H.C. tells Bernard about the young woman he took on his trip and how she disappeared mysteriously during their stay on the Reservation.

Embarrassed by his emotional reverie, the D.H.C. shifts attention by expressing his disappointment in Bernard's odd behavior outside work and threatens to exile him to Iceland. But this threat has a tonic effect on Bernard, who later boasts about it to his friend Helmholtz, who likes Bernard but hates his boasting and self-pity.

In the third section, Bernard and Lenina fly to Sante Fe, where they meet with the Warden of the Reservation. As the Warden leers at Lenina and describes the Reservation—there's no escape, and human birth remains a reality—Bernard suddenly remembers that he left the eau de cologne tap running at home.

When Bernard calls Helmholtz about the tap, Watson gives him some bad news: the D.H.C. intends to exile Bernard to Iceland. Appalled by the news, Bernard's "theoretical courage" evaporates, and Lenina persuades him to take *soma* to calm himself before they fly off to the Savage Reservation.

Commentary

In Chapter 6, Huxley reveals Bernard's pained recognition of the consequences of his anti-social feelings and actions. The chapter

further clarifies Bernard's very shallow attempts to be an individual and makes clear that he lacks the moral courage to suffer for freedom.

Up to now, Bernard has expressed his longing to feel something—anything—strongly. Since passion is dangerous to social stability, the very thought of feeling intensely constitutes blasphemy, as the shocked Lenina points out. All the conventions of this society—*soma* consumption, regular recreational sex—are designed to prevent strong feelings like rage and prolonged sexual desire from building up in emotional power. So far, Bernard has experimented with passion by avoiding *soma* and nursing his anger, but in this chapter, he learns about actual, unavoidable strong feelings—first at a distance, then very personally.

The D.H.C.'s shared memories of losing the young woman he was traveling with in the New Mexico reservation represent a dangerous disclosure. In spontaneously confessing his anxiety and remorse over the woman's disappearance, the D.H.C. comes perilously close to admitting that he loved her—a shocking social sin. The D.H.C.'s memory, still powerful enough to give him dreams, is Bernard's first close contact with an authentic emotional experience. But Bernard responds with a characteristically adolescent reaction; instead of responding sympathetically, he cringes and leers, at once fascinated and repulsed by the possibility of a superior's vulnerability.

The chapter also features Bernard's first personal experience of intense feelings, following his discovery that the D.H.C. intends to transfer him to a remote sub-station in Iceland for his lack of conventional "infantile decorum." Suddenly thrown into a genuine crisis, the kind of trial he has been longing for in preference to the soothing *soma*-induced tranquility of everyday life, Bernard panics, his courage gone without a trace. Like any other citizen of the dystopia, he swallows *soma* against the harsh realities facing him and, in that gesture, proves his supposed rebellion to be a shallow, cowardly farce.

Note that in introducing the Savage Reservation, Huxley employs the Warden as a kind of guide, like Henry Foster and the D.H.C. in the first two chapters. Like Bernard and Lenina, the reader becomes a tourist, about to enter yet another part of Huxley's fictional world.

Glossary

brachycephalic having a relatively short or broad head.

Chapter 7

Summary

With their Indian guide, Bernard and Lenina enter the Savage Reservation. Lenina finds everything here "queer."

Lenina soon discovers that she has forgotten her *soma*, so she must experience the Indian village of Malpais as an unmedicated reality. In quick succession, she and Bernard witness old age in the figure of an ancient Indian, Indian mothers nursing their babies, and a hedonistic ritual dance that fuses Christian and Indian religion. This wild dance ends with a coyote-masked shaman whipping a young man until he collapses—a blood sacrifice to bring the rain and make the corn grow.

After this bloody spectacle, Bernard and Lenina meet a straw-haired, blue-eyed young man dressed—incongruously, it seems—as an Indian. Strangely, too, the young man speaks like a character from Shakespeare and tells them that his mother—Linda—comes from the "Other Place." When he also mentions that his father was named "Tomakin," Bernard connects this young man with the D.H.C.'s visit to the Reservation.

The young savage introduces them to Linda—a "very stout blonde squaw," who tells Lenina and Bernard her strange story of being abducted by the Indians. She has spent much of her life on the Reservation, she explains, where she gave birth to her son, John, the young savage.

Commentary

In this chapter, Huxley opens another part of his dystopian world—the Savage Reservation—contrasting it implicitly and explicitly with the world of London, where the rest of the novel is set.

In one sense, Malpais represents the opposite of the rest of the dystopia, an "uncivilized" place against which the reader—as well as tourists Bernard and Lenina—can gauge the imagined progress of the "civilized" world. Here, on the Savage Reservation, age changes people unchecked by chemicals and hormones; women give birth and breast-feed their babies; and the natural process of decay produces sights and

smells that appall the sensitive Lenina. In fact, "Civilization is Sterilization" underscores most of Lenina's experience in the Reservation. Fordian London is so clean that birth and old age have been swept away entirely, like germ-producing bacteria. But in Malpais, the pains of birth and death exist and endure unconquered—still the essential facts of human life.

Lenina faces these facts most dramatically in her meeting with Linda, who seems her mirror-double, the woman she might have been under different circumstances. (Note, for example, the similarity between the names "Lenina" and "Linda.") Linda's unspeakable fate—to become a mother and to grow old—is nothing less than a horror, an obscenity, really, to a Fordian mind. As an object of blasphemy and revulsion, Linda represents enormous power, one that Bernard will use in a later chapter to regain his position, just as he will use Linda's son, John, to improve his social standing.

The reader should note Huxley's careful description of the flagellation ritual, a religious ceremony to ensure a good food crop. Lenina finds the incessant drumming very familiar—just like a lower-caste community sing—and her recognition draws attention to the underlying similarities between civilized and uncivilized worlds. In both worlds, music can suspend inhibition and drive people to unity and to action (recall, for example, Bernard's Solidarity Service). Whether dressed in rough wool or shiny viscose, Huxley reveals, people are still people, open and vulnerable to powerful suggestion. Communities of all sorts—whether in Malpais or in London—use similar methods to enforce conformity and so promote social stability.

Note especially the introduction of John, the outsider born on the reservation who emerges as a contrast to Bernard in rebellious thought. Huxley dramatizes the conflict that will develop between John and the expectations of the "Other Place" in his first exchange with Lenina, a bizarre trading of Shakespearean verse and hypnopaedic suggestion. From this chapter onward, John and his struggle become the focus of the novel.

Glossary

treble high-pitched or shrill.

Octoroon a person who has one black great-grandparent.

Good-morrow old-fashioned greeting, used in Shakespeare's time, to mean "good day."

mescal a colorless alcoholic liquor of Mexico made from pulque or other fermented agave juice.

peyote a small, spineless cactus of northern Mexico and the southwestern United States, with rounded stems whose buttonlike tops are chewed, specifically in religious ceremonies by Mexican Indians, for their hallucinogenic effects.

Chapter 8

Summary

In this chapter, John recounts his life on the Reservation to Bernard. Bernard senses how strange and exotic such a life is, as compared to his own experiences. Indeed, he feels as if he and John "were living on different planets, in different centuries."

John's earliest memories involve his mother's relationships with Indian men—especially Popé, who also introduces Linda to the powerful hallucinogenic drug mescal (which she finds similar to soma). John also remembers how the Indian women beat Linda, because she felt no sexual restraints with their men.

As John grows, Linda teaches him to read. Popé finds an old volume of Shakespeare, and the young boy studies it. In fact, John's reading in Shakespeare inspires him to try to kill Popé, who is in bed with Linda. As an adolescent, John is not allowed to undergo the initiation ritual into adult Indian society like the other boys. Instead, John goes out alone into the wilderness where he contrives his own physical trials to enter adulthood. His self-torture gives him a vision of "Time and Death and God."

As John finishes his story, he and Bernard realize that they share the same feelings of being "terribly alone." Suddenly inspired, Bernard invites John—and Linda, too—to return with him to London. In response, John quotes Shakespeare: "O brave new world . . ."

Commentary

In this chapter, Huxley explores the character of John, the child born unexpectedly in the Savage Reservation. A genetic Fordian raised in Malpais, John represents the potential combination of civilization and tradition, but his life has been lonely and heartbreaking. John is the true individual Bernard sometimes longs to be, and, as Huxley makes clear here, being truly individual means living in pain. Because of his European appearance and his mother's sexual activity, John suffers rejection and humiliation at the hands of the elders of Malpais as

well as his peers. Banned from initiation into manhood, John has nowhere to turn for help in his growth. An old volume of Shakespeare's plays becomes his guide to life. In the world of poetry and imagination, John's spirit expands, gaining a unique although eccentric strength and vitality.

Implicitly, Huxley compares the memorable, poetic phrases of Shakespeare's poetry with hypnopaedia's catchy lines. John absorbs Shakespeare's poetry in a dream-like state, not entirely understanding the words but receiving the message through repetition, just as the young sleepers of the dystopia accept hypnopaedic wisdom. In both cases, the words form perception, shape behavior, and even inspire direct action. Reading and meditating on Hamlet's rage at his mother's sexual relations, for example, impels John to express his passion in a violent attack on Popé—a failed attempt that nonetheless marks the beginning of John's independent, adult life.

The chapter includes the first appearance of the quotation from *The Tempest* that gives Huxley's novel its title: "O brave new world / That has such people in it." The difference between John's awe of the wonderful "Other Place" and the reader's own knowledge of the dystopia produces powerful dramatic irony at a crucial point. The irony of the phrase not only hints at the disappointment that awaits John but draws the novel together for the reader as well, giving a coherent focus to Huxley's satire. In later chapters, John himself will repeat this phrase, as a means of expressing his changing reactions to the world of London—the reality behind the fairy-tale "Other Place" his mother once described to him.

Note especially in this chapter John's own experience of conditioning, different in kind but not in essence from the conditioning of infants and children in London. John associates the reality of sex, for instance, with the absence of his mother, fear, humiliation, and intense physical pain. This conditioning (accidental, but powerful) occurs early in his life, first when Popé pushes him out of the bedroom, then when the women violently whip Linda and him, and finally when the boys mock him for his mother's sexual freedom. As a result, John displays a strong, persistent aversion to sex, despite his longing for Lenina. Again, Huxley makes the point that all people—civilized or uncivilized—are vulnerable to powerful suggestion.

Chapter 9

Summary

While Lenina takes a *soma*-holiday, Bernard makes the necessary arrangements to bring John and Linda back to London. He flies to Sante Fe where he telephones Mustapha Mond for permission and then meets with the Warden.

During Bernard's trip, John breaks into the Rest House, thinking that Bernard and Lenina have left for London without him. Inside, John discovers Lenina's suitcase and looks through her clothes—including her zippicamiknicks.

When John finds Lenina fast asleep, he thinks of Shakespeare's Juliet. He reaches out to touch her—perhaps even to unzip her zippypajamas with a single pull—but stops himself, thinking: "Detestable thought!"

John retreats when he hears the humming of Bernard's returning helicopter.

Commentary

In this very short chapter, Huxley presents two of his principal characters—Bernard and John—in unexpected, exciting situations of power. The quick view of each character affords the reader an opportunity to compare the men in similar circumstances. Predictably, Bernard proves himself to be a shameless opportunist, while John reveals the complex, mixed feelings of his idealism.

Looking forward to revenging himself on the D.H.C. by bringing Linda and their son back to London, Bernard positively beams with triumph, making his arrangements with masterly briskness and efficiency. His patronizing tone and his expectations of deference contrast sharply with his usual hesitancy. Here Huxley hints that Bernard—with power already gone to his head—will become an unbearable phony, destined ultimately for a great fall.

John's visit to the sleeping, *soma*-tized Lenina contrasts with Bernard's scene in tone. The mood here is a child-like wonder as John

explores Lenina's clothes and cosmetics and is ecstatically bathed in her scent. John's approach to the bed where Lenina lies continues the mood of wonder and enchantment. Speaking in Shakespeare's poetry, looking upon her with awe and longing, John seems a character in a fairy tale—a figure in an ideal landscape.

John's hesitancy to pull at Lenina's zipper seems chivalrous in this context, an expression of respect and poetic delicacy. Still, the scene recalls John's early conditioning against sex and the possibility that John is not merely restrained but repressed in sexual matters. With John's sudden suppression of sexual curiosity, Huxley deliberately breaks the romantic mood, introducing the jarring, comic image of his character shaking his head "with the gesture of a dog shaking its ears as it emerges from the water." John is not an ideal knight, Huxley points out, but a young man raised as an outsider in the harsh conditions of Malpais and haphazardly educated by the example of his displaced mother, the legends of the elders, and the poetry of Shakespeare. Nothing in Malpais or London will ever be simple to such a complex, conflicted character.

Glossary

agaves plants of the agave family, such as the century plant.

zippicamiknicks Huxley's word for one-piece underwear for women.

Chapter 10

Summary

Back at the Bloomsbury Centre, the D.H.C. waits with Henry Foster to humiliate Bernard. He plans to publicly confront Bernard in the Fertilizing Room, with its many high-caste workers.

When Bernard arrives, the D.H.C. announces in front of everyone his intention to transfer Bernard to a "Sub-Centre of the lowest order." The D.H.C. explains that Bernard has "grossly betrayed the trust imposed in him"—and that his unorthodox attitudes and behavior threaten Society.

Bernard responds by bringing in Linda, whose appearance—sagging and discolored with age—horrifies and astonishes the crowd. She immediately recognizes the D.H.C. as her "Tomikin" and tells him that he caused her to have a baby—to be a mother. An "appalling hush" fills the room at the mere mention of this "smutty" word.

When John enters and calls the D.H.C. "my father," laughter breaks out among the crowd. Completely humiliated, the D.H.C. rushes from the room.

Commentary

This short chapter features the reversal of fortune that sets into motion the events that dominate the rest of the novel.

The D.H.C.'s plan to chastise Bernard publicly before banishing him for his unorthodox behavior is, the Director maintains, a necessity for social stability, but the D.H.C.'s pious protectiveness of the social order masks his real reason for punishing Bernard—concern about Bernard's revealing his unconventional feelings for Linda. In making an example of Bernard for his behavior, then, the D.H.C. is being hypocritical.

Bernard's dramatic introduction of the middle-aged Linda and her son—the horrifying proof of the D.H.C.'s social sins—represents a brilliant counter-attack, a public humiliation that undercuts the D.H.C.'s

moral authority to punish Bernard. The vision of the pompous and hypocritical D.H.C. suddenly shocked into silent terror and revulsion makes the victory a satisfying one for the reader, despite Bernard's characteristic falseness and vindictiveness. In later chapters, Bernard will reap the reward of this masterful surprise, not only avoiding punishment but improving his social status.

The return home does not come up to either Linda's or John's high expectations, however. Linda's appearance—aging, bloated, coarse from hard living without chemical enhancement—seems to be the ultimate punishment for becoming a mother, and the assembled workers shrink from her in horror. John's heartfelt declaration, on his knees before the D.H.C.—"My father!"—incites only uncontrollable laughter among the workers. The scene makes clear that Linda will never be accepted back into the society of Fordian London, but that John may be welcomed as an exotic curiosity. Young and handsome, he conforms to Fordian expectations, while offering the possibility of surprise and sexual interest as well.

Note how Huxley returns the action to London with a few descriptive references to familiar surroundings—the Social Predestination Room, the Nurseries, and at last the Fertilizing Room, where the scene takes place. The descriptions remind the reader of the essential difference between Malpais and London—natural birth versus the bottling and decanting of fetuses—and prepares for the revelation of Linda and her son, the actual, physical reality that the Fertilizing Room is designed to replace.

Glossary

voluptuous sexually attractive because of a full, shapely figure.

undulation a swaying motion. Here, describing Linda's sexually provocative entrance into the Fertilizing Room.

scatological having to do with excrement or excretion.

obliquity a turning aside from moral conduct or sound thinking.

Chapter 11

Summary

As the chapter opens, the D.H.C. has resigned because of the scandal, and Linda has slipped into a permanent *soma*-holiday. She is taking ever higher dosages that will eventually lead to her death.

Bernard suddenly finds himself popular because all upper-caste London wants to see John the Savage. Bernard boasts to Helmholtz about his sexual conquests and lectures Mustapha Mond in a report—offending both of them.

John, meanwhile, experiences a growing disillusionment with this "Brave New World" (as he quotes Shakespeare). He vomits during a tour of a Fordian factory and discovers on his visit to Eton that the library there contains no Shakespeare. He also goes on a date with Lenina to a feely—which he compares unfavorably to *Othello*.

At the end of the date, John disappoints Lenina, dropping her off at her apartment without staying for sex. He feels unworthy of her, while she is confused and frustrated.

Commentary

In this chapter, Huxley features John's discovery of the activities that come closest to imagination and poetry in the world of Fordian London—taking *soma* and going to the feelies.

Huxley has introduced the effects of *soma* very early in the novel, and so the reader is not surprised to find Linda on a more or less perpetual *soma* holiday now that the drug is available to her once more. *Soma*, however, is new to John, and his worry about the drug shortening his mother's life gives Huxley the opportunity to expand on *soma* once again. In explaining what he regards as *soma*'s benefits, Dr. Shaw uses the word "eternity"—a concept John recognizes from Shakespeare's poetry. The moment represents a rare connection for the displaced character.

The chapter also offers a detailed description of the feelies, the popular entertainment that combines the senses of smell and touch in a

movie format. Bernard, the reader recalls, disdained the feelies as beneath his intellectual dignity. Huxley's presentation of John's experience, however, makes clear the strengths and weaknesses of the form, which Mustapha Mond describes in Chapter 16 as "practically nothing but pure sensation."

As the chapter reveals, the feelies exist simply to soothe and titillate the senses, while leaving the mind (or, rather, one's conditioning) untouched. The story is pornographic, but conservative, containing nothing at all to introduce doubts into a viewer's sense of social order.

The reader should note the racially charged assumptions underlying Huxley's satire of the feelies, the plot revolving around a black man's abduction and rape of a white woman. Again, the satire tells the reader as much about Huxley's present world as it does the futuristic, fictional world. The technology is different, but the prejudice remains. Note also John's later comparison of the feely he sees with *Othello*, whose tragic hero, John recalls, is also a black man.

The erotic power of the feelies shocks John deeply, because his own unintentional conditioning and poetic education mark off sex as a dangerous, filthy territory. In contrast, Lenina responds enthusiastically to the stimulation and is hurt and confused by John's refusal to end their evening together with sex. The experience drives John back to Shakespeare—the world he understands—and further isolates him from the civilized people of London.

Compared with John—now called "the Savage"—Bernard appears shallow in his supposed individuality and his protests. Reaping the social rewards of his association with a celebrity, Bernard pushes for power and attention. At last popular with women because of his connection to John, Bernard forgets his earlier objections to recreational sex and throws himself into promiscuity with real enthusiasm. He flaunts his unconventional views in public for the mere sensation of risk-taking and even dares to lecture Mustapha Mond in his reports on John. The disapproving comments of his superiors forewarn of Bernard's ultimate fall from social grace.

Bernard's heady experience of power and popularity contrasts sharply with John's growing disillusionment. Note especially John's repetition of the "brave new world" quotation, now deeply ironic, as he views a factory filled with Bokanovsky groups and vomits in disgust.

Glossary

Ariel a character from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Shakespeare describes him as a "airy spirit," with magical powers.

prognathous having jaws that project beyond the upper face.

Penitentes members of a penitential religious sect who whip themselves to express remorse for sin and in hope of forgiveness. Here, the spiritual men of John's Malpais home.

Etonians students of Eton College, the most prestigious of British preparatory schools.

vitrified changed into glass by heat.

Arch-Community-Songster of Canterbury Huxley's term describing the dystopia's equivalent for the Archbishop of Canterbury, primate of the Church of England.

Capriccio a musical composition in various forms, usually lively and whimsical in spirit. Here, the term is used in describing the scent organ.

arpeggios the playing of notes of a chord in quick succession instead of simultaneously. Here, again, the musical term is used to describe the scent organ.

Chapter 12

Summary

Disgusted with the brave new world, John refuses to attend a party for the Arch Community Singster of Canterbury. This embarrasses Bernard and destroys his newly won popularity.

Meeting with John and Bernard, Helmholtz reads an anti-social poem he has composed. This reading inspires John to read Shakespeare aloud. Helmholtz's initial delight at the poetic language turns to laughter and ridicule when Shakespeare's ideas about love and sex clash with Helmholtz's own social conditioning.

Commentary

John's preference for Shakespeare over the feelies leads to an explicit discussion of the power of words to create and express emotion—and to upset the social equilibrium. The chapter also dramatizes John's rejection of Bernard for the more philosophical Helmholtz.

In defying Bernard's demands for him to appear at a very important social gathering, John uses two techniques of resistance—retreat and the Zuni language—both expressing his indifference to and independence from the powerful people of the London world. Faced with demand to behave as a conventional celebrity to ensure Bernard's continued social success, John returns to his Malpais identity, speaking Zuni and seeking comfort in the poetry of Shakespeare. Bernard's helplessness and John's angry disillusion will grow in the coming chapters—creating the climax and bringing about the events of the conclusion.

The main idea of the chapter comes into focus, however, with Helmholtz's surprising composition of a real poem, as opposed to the slogans and catchy phrases he usually creates as a writer of hypnopaedia and feely scenarios. The theme of the poem—solitude—reveals dangerous anti-social leanings (promptly reported to the authorities) and opens the possibility of a poetic response from John—a reading from Shakespeare.

Helmholtz's delight and fascination hint that the "emotional engineer" may be able to respond to and even compose the real poetry he feels compelled to try. Huxley holds the exciting possibility before the reader—then suddenly whisks it away with Helmholtz's loud guffaw at the verses from *Romeo and Juliet*.

Helmholtz's ability to enjoy Shakespeare goes only so far. After that point, Helmholtz's conditioning takes over, preventing him from sharing the imaginative vision offered by the poetry. The failure to connect with real poetry—and with John—brings the chapter to a sad conclusion: the image of a potentially free, potentially poetic individual suddenly reined in by the conditioned narrowness of mind and heart.

Note here Mustapha Mond's regretful censorship of a work he finds interesting, but socially dangerous. Mond's mixed feelings about the responsibility of his authority are revealed further in Chapters 16 and 17.

Note, too, Lenina's growing melancholy as John continues to avoid her. Unfamiliar with real emotion, Lenina can only compare her authentic unhappiness with the chemically induced feelings of a Violent Passion Surrogate. Unconsciously, Lenina's natural emotions lead her into the behavior associated with romantic love in the present world, as when she gazes at the moon.

Huxley also draws a dramatic contrast between John's restraint and the Arch-Community Songster's guiltless enthusiasm for sex with Lenina. Unlike John, the Arch-Community Songster pulls vigorously at Lenina's zipper, ironically topped with the Fordian T, symbol of all that is holy and conventional in the dystopia.

Glossary

Lambeth Palace the official residence in London of the Archbishop of Canterbury since 1197. Here, the home of the Arch-Community-Songster of Canterbury.

St. Helena a small island in the South Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of Africa. It was Napoleon's prison after his defeat by the British. Here, one of the many islands where Mustapha Mond sends people who challenge the World State.

Chapter 13

Summary

Frustrated by John's shyness, Lenina determines to take the sexual lead with "the Savage." When John addresses her with the formality of Malpais tradition and Shakespearean poetry, the confused Lenina simply undresses and approaches him directly. Horrified by Lenina's sexual freedom, John pushes her away, threatening to kill the "impudent strumpet." Lenina retreats in fear.

The chapter ends with a phone call for John with the news that his mother is dying.

Commentary

In this chapter, Lenina determines to approach John for sex directly, rather than continuing to wait for him to take her. In her attempted seduction, Lenina uncovers a disturbingly violent side to John.

So far in London, John has appeared quaint, innocent, and—with the exception of his refusal to join Bernard's party—agreeable. Lenina, who is eager for sex with "the Savage" experiences frustration but interprets John's indifference as simple shyness, which she can overcome by taking a firm hand with him. The possibility that John's sexual restraint is the expression of his own deeply held values and beliefs never occurs to her.

Lenina's frustration recalls the incident in Chapter 3 when a student remembers having to wait a month before a young woman would have sex with him. The emotional intensity was "horrible," just like Lenina's longing, but the passion ended with sexual relief. In taking the sensible Fanny's advice to force the issue with John—and thus get her anti-social feelings over with—Lenina expects the same relief. Conditioned to think of sex as recreational and relationships as fluid and changing, Lenina does not recognize that her curiosity, attraction, and regard for John is, in fact, a serious infatuation that may become love.

The resulting seduction scene is a farce, with neither Lenina nor John knowing what the other is really thinking or feeling. Lenina's plan is straightforward—a direct invitation, undressing, a few lines of a love song, and sex will most certainly follow. But John's view of romance takes a more complex form. Both the traditions of Malpais and the poetry of Shakespeare demand a period of trials, an enforced labor, that will earn the lover the right to marry his beloved.

But trials, labor, and marriage have no meaning in the dystopia. In continuing her sexual approach, Lenina unknowingly steps outside the boundaries that John's education have set down for a worthy women. In John's eyes, if Lenina is not a prize to be won through suffering, then she must be a whore—a "strumpet" to be scorned.

John's early experience has taught him to associate sex with violence, and his conditioning suddenly takes over as his romantic vision of Lenina disappears. As he shakes her violently, slaps and threatens to kill her, he mutters Shakespeare's most passionate verses about unfaithful women, the "drums and music" of the fierce poetry goading him on in his fury. Again, Huxley underlines the relationship of music with the disappearance of inhibition and the expression of strong emotion. John's outburst here looks forward to his later violent passions after leaving London—especially the "atonement" that ends in his death.

Glossary

strumpet prostitute.

fitchew a polecat or weasel. John's quotation of Shakespeare refers to the popular tradition of the fitchew's enthusiasm for mating.

civet a yellowish, fatty substance with a musklike scent, secreted by a gland near the genitals of the civet cat and used in making some perfumes. Here, John quotes Shakespeare's sarcastic use of the term to mean a sweet scent. Pure civet is foul-smelling.

usurp to take or assume by force or without right.

Chapter 14

Summary

In this chapter, John goes to the Park Lane Hospital for the Dying to be with Linda at her death. Music, scents, telescreens, and an unending supply of *soma* fill the ward, while Delta children romp among the beds, learning to view death as pleasant and useful rather than something to be feared.

The children annoy John, making it impossible for him to speak with his dying mother. When Linda wakes from a soma dream and mistakes her son for Popé, John's misery turns to fury. At the moment of death, Linda's terrified eyes seem a reproach to her son. John leaves the hospital angry and distraught.

Commentary

The chapter offers a detailed description of the conventional manner of dying in the dystopia, while dramatizing John's very different expectations at the deathbed of his mother, Linda.

In the early chapters, Henry Foster, the D.H.C., and Mustapha Mond present the facts of death in the dystopia as well as the social theories behind the practices. Everyone remains young-looking through chemical treatments, until at sixty death comes in the form of "galloping senility," a rapid deterioration of mental and then physical powers. Death is characteristically antiseptic, cheery, and meaningless, underscoring the social belief that the end of any one individual matters very little. The ward in which Linda lies dying in a *soma* trance, then, is strictly conventional by dystopian standards.

But John brings a different consciousness to Linda's death, formed by life and death in Malpais, and Shakespeare's emotional death scenes. Bothered by cheery nurses and curious Delta children, John tries to summon up his childhood memories of his mother, so as to rekindle his love for her and to experience the meaning of his loss. Although the setting distracts John and the children infuriate him, he still has hope of forging a union with his mother that will live beyond her death.

With Linda's whisper, "Popé," however, John realizes that they are still apart, separated by soma and sexual dreaming. To the end, Linda remains the well-conditioned Fordian rather than John's mother. Indeed, her last words are not "my son," or "I love you," but the broken-off hypnopaedic suggestion for recreational sex: "Every one belongs to every . . ."

Note Linda's last look, described in Huxley's phrase as "charged with terror"—the sudden realization of her mortality. To John, the look seems to reproach him; in fact, he believes that he has killed her. John's guilt about his mother's death will re-emerge in later chapters, finally driving him to violence and isolation—an end that Huxley hints at in the conclusion of this chapter, when John pushes away a curious child roughly enough to force him to the floor.

Glossary

caffeine solution Huxley's phrase for a tea-like drink in the brave new world.

Chapter 15

Summary

In the hospital vestibule, John sees Deltas lining up for their *soma* ration. "O brave new world" rings hollowly in his head.

Suddenly inspired, John calls to the Deltas to give up the drug. When they fail to respond, John seizes the *soma* and throws it out the window, causing a riot among the Deltas.

Bernard and Helmholtz arrive to save John, and they become involved in the riot themselves. When the police come, they arrest John as well as Bernard and Helmholtz.

Commentary

This short, but eventful chapter highlights the change in John's perception of the dystopia that will bring about the action propelling the novel toward its conclusion.

Twice earlier, John has quoted the line from Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, in which Miranda, in awe, contemplates people from the outside world she has never before seen: "O brave new world / That has such people in it!" The first quotation, in Chapter 5, following John's meeting with Bernard and Lenina in Malpais, is straightforward and joyous. The second quotation, in Chapter 8, occurs when John sees several identical Bokanovsky groups working in a factory. Here, John delivers the line ironically, as an expression of his physical disgust at inhuman sameness.

In this chapter, John sees Delta adults lining up for their *soma* ration, and their identical features again appall him. Once more he repeats the quotation, but now the words seems to command him to change the dystopian world into the beautiful ideal he once believed it to be.

In John's sudden inspiration to action, Huxley validates the World State's belief that uncensored literature (the lines from *The Tempest)* and intense emotion—John's sorrow at his mother's death and his disgust at the Delta children in the ward and the Delta adults lined up

for *soma*—can result in social unrest. John's surprising call to the Deltas to turn away from *soma* strikes—at least potentially—at the heart of social stability. The Deltas unsurprising fury when John throws the *soma* out the window actually causes a riot, the simplest and most direct form of social instability. Only a *soma* vapor and soothing (anti-revolutionary) words applied immediately can stop the unrest.

Note again, when faced with the confused resistance of the dystopian mind—Lenina's puzzlement at his wooing, the Deltas' resentment at his cries for freedom—John begins with poetry, moves to name-calling, and finally resorts to violence. Frustration and anger boil within John whenever he encounters anyone who does not understand his values and vocabulary.

In this, John is far from a villain, but he is not really a hero, either. Malpais and Shakespeare have sown the seeds of violent fury in him, as well as beauty and tradition. Despite his intentions, John in not the idealistic revolutionary he thinks himself in this chapter.

Note also Helmholtz's enthusiastic participation in the riot, contrasted with Bernard's hesitancy and his attempt to avoid arrest. This contrast—commitment versus cowardice—continues into Chapter 16, when the three men face the judgment of World Controller Mustapha Mond.

Glossary

dolychocephalic having a relatively long head.

bursar a treasurer, as of a college or similar institution. Here, Huxley's term for the person who holds and distributes *soma* at the Park Lane Hospital.

carapace the horny, protective covering over all or part of the back of certain animals, as the upper shell of a turtle, armadillo, crab, etc.

Chapter 16

Summary

In this chapter, John, Bernard, and Helmholtz submit to the judgment of Mustapha Mond. After they discuss the reasons for social control, Mond banishes Bernard and Helmholtz to the Falkland Islands for their role in the riot. Bernard panics, but Helmholtz accepts the new life, far from the pressures of conformity.

Commentary

In this chapter—the aftermath of the *soma* riot—Mustapha Mond discusses the importance of happiness and stability, even at the cost of truth and freedom. In a sense, this is the conversation both John and Helmholtz have been waiting for—the explanation of everything dissatisfying about the supposedly ideal social system.

As a World Controller who makes—and, accordingly, can break—the laws, Mond reveals his own anti-social tendencies. Mond came to an acceptance of dystopian values, he confesses, after a radical youth, during which he experimented with forbidden science. Choosing a position of responsibility in preference to banishment—a decision he regrets at times—Mond explains that he consciously took on the duty of making others happy through social engineering. As someone who controls the dystopian world while remaining aware of its flaws, then, Mond is the perfect character to answer the objections of Helmholtz and John.

In debating with Helmholtz and John, Mond concedes the validity of their literary loyalties. Comparing the feelies and Shakespeare, Mond unhesitatingly comes down on the side of Shakespeare. But he objects to the poetry on social grounds; Shakespeare's tragedies require a dangerous instability, now an outdated concept. Stability, rather than truth or beauty, represents the true human value in this age.

In an extraordinary lecture, Mond defends the society's repressive control over its people—even the development of deliberately brain-damaged fetuses—in the name of human happiness. John's proposal that the predestinators could, at least, make everyone an Alpha meets

with an immediate rejection by Mond. The best society, he explains, "is modeled on the iceberg—eight-ninths below the water line, one-ninth above."

Mond's declaration that in his society everyone is happy—even (and, he argues, especially) Epsilons—recalls the image of the Epsilon elevator-operator, sighing in joy at his brief glimpse of the roof before being sent back down into the darkness again. Mond's satisfaction with his own view of the dystopia is apparent, but Huxley leaves the matter of freedom and justice open to the reader.

Note the different ways in which each of the three characters responds to Mond. John seems interested to find someone in the brave new world who can understand (if not share) his values and is even familiar with Shakespeare. John debates Mond directly and intelligently, without lapsing into name-calling or violence as he has with Lenina and later with the Deltas.

For his part, Helmholtz forges a bond of understanding with the World Controller. Both men respect each other, clearly, and Mond even envies Helmholtz his interesting future in banishment, outside the confines of conformity.

In contrast, this chapter reveals Bernard at his lowest point, with all his former daring and rebelliousness evaporated. Silent and anxious throughout the discussion, he panics and breaks down when he hears the sentence of banishment. In Chapter 17, however, Bernard will return, humbled but in better spirits, ready to face his punishment.

Glossary

chary careful or cautious; not given freely.

platitude a commonplace or trite remark.

paroxysm a sudden attack or spasm.

abjection a state of misery and degradation.

scullion a servant doing the rough dirty work in a kitchen. Here, Mustapha Mond uses the word humorously to describe his lowly position early in his career.

Falkland Islands a small group of islands in the South Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of South America. Here, the place of Bernard's and Helmholtz's banishment.

Chapter 17

Summary

In this chapter, Mond and John discuss the brave new world—especially the absence of God. As their discussion unfolds, John expresses his disgust at the casual ease of living in a society where science and conditioning abolish all frustrations. Mond counters that John is claiming "the right" to be unhappy, and John agrees.

John's formal acceptance of all the horrors of sickness, poverty, and fear—capped by Mond's terse "You're welcome"—ends the chapter.

Commentary

In this chapter, Mond continues his discussion of the practical philosophy of the world he controls. With Bernard and Helmholtz gone, Mond and John concentrate on the issues that distinguish the traditional world—John's Malpais as well as the reader's world—from the dystopia, especially a belief in God.

Mond and John's experiences of religion oddly complement one another. Mond knows about God and religion from the forbidden books he has read—the Bible, the medieval *Imitation of Christ*, and the relatively modern works of Cardinal Newman and William James. John, in contrast, has actually lived a religious life in Malpais, surrounded by the rituals of worship and purifying himself in fasting and suffering.

Mond's argument against religion in his world is materialistic—the main point being that the culture of comfort has made God obsolete. According to Mond's view, people turn to religion only when age and discomfort impel them to look beyond the physical world. But if age and discomfort are banished, the physical, material world never loses its pleasure. Thus, Mond argues, God is irrelevant in the brave new world. In contrast, John's argument stems from a belief in self-denial and suffering as a means to the good—by which he means virtuous—life. Where Mond sees comfort as the pinnacle of human experience, John sees it as a barrier to growth and spirituality. A life of constant amusement and pleasure, he argues, is "degrading."

In his response, Mond accepts the virtues of Christianity—kindness, patience, long-suffering—as reasonable and even socially valuable, but points out that *soma* can do as well as years of painful self-denial in producing virtuous behavior. In a memorable phrase, Mond describes *soma* as "Christianity without tears."

John, of course, rejects this view immediately, because, according to his definition, a worthwhile human life requires suffering and danger, from which will spring nobility and heroism. The discomfort and the pain, John maintains, are an essential part of freedom, beauty, and religion.

This disclosure brings the discussion—and the novel itself—to its climax. Huxley poses a choice between freedom and comfort. John, the Savage, has made his case for freedom, and Mond for the stability and comfort of the brave new world. The two world-views are obviously incompatible in their own minds, although Huxley leaves open an option for the reader to find a middle way.

Now Mond and John face each other squarely, and the choice emerges clearly. Control means comfort at the loss of freedom. But freedom means the possibility of disease, starvation, and misery. Faced with the choice, John chooses freedom, replying to Mond's list of horrors, after a long silence: "I claim them all."

The obvious misery of freedom's possibilities, John's hesitancy, and Mond's indifference—a noncommittal "You're welcome"—combine to dampen this climactic stand by John. The choice of freedom as it is defined by Mond is not a real victory, and John is still not a true hero.

Both Mond and John show themselves incomplete in this chapter, their different world-views shallow and unimaginative. The conclusion to the discussion will drive John into isolation, but Huxley also means to inspire the reader to explore the assumptions of each character and to think beyond the frame of the novel toward the world itself—and the combinations of freedom and control that might enhance rather than limit life.

Glossary

Cardinal Newman (1801–90) John Henry Newman, English theologian and writer.

neurasthenia a former category of mental disorder, including such symptoms as irritability, fatigue, weakness, anxiety, and localized pains without apparent physical cause, thought to result from weakness or exhaustion of the nervous system. Here, Mustapha Mond's description of normal emotional tension.

Chapter 18

Summary

As Bernard, now calm and resigned, prepares to leave with Helmholtz for the Falklands, John makes plans to retreat to a place of his own, far from the society he has rejected.

In a lighthouse outside London, John undergoes purification for "eating civilization." Fasting, whipping himself, and vomiting, John strives to exorcise the guilt he feels for Linda's death and his horror of sexual contact with Lenina.

Reporters, film crews, and then crowds intrude on his privacy. When Lenina herself approaches him, lovesick and heartbroken, John attacks her with a whip. A riot breaks out and turns into a sexual orgy.

John awakens the next day, groggy from *soma*, and realizes what has happened. Filled with despair and self-loathing, he kills himself.

Commentary

The concluding chapter of the novel brings John the Savage into direct physical conflict with the brave new world he has decided to leave. The sudden violence, shocking as it is, has been prepared for ever since the visit to Malpais and, in some ways, echoes the flagellation ritual Lenina and Bernard witness on the Savage Reservation.

Left on his own, John reveals the true form of his religious feeling—self-destructive rituals of purification by vomiting and whipping himself. Tortured by the memory of his mother's death, he will not let himself enjoy even the simplest pleasures of his austere life—making a bow, for instance.

The intensity of his self-punishment, the lack of a positive focus for his spiritual feelings, make clear that John's life is not influenced by the hermits of Christianity but by the demons of his own guilt. If the dystopia is the horrifying spectacle of a life with nothing but self-serving comfort, John's lighthouse retreat emerges as the equally horrifying vision of a life with nothing but self-induced pain. As different as they are, both worlds represent emptiness and purposelessness.

In contrast, note Bernard's sudden maturity as he prepares to leave for the Falklands with his fellow-exile, Helmholtz. Their genuine regard for one another and the relative freedom of the island community they are joining give promise of a life much more humane than the one they leave behind.

Outside society, yet still assaulted by the media, just as the suitor of the Maiden of Matsaki is tormented by stinging insects, John suffers a harsher punishment than his friends. In his guilt and isolation, any sexual memories of Lenina immediately incite him to whipping—a penance that draws leering crowds to view him as they would an animal in the zoo.

As a result, John's refuge becomes his cage—his habits of purification a mere trick for the tourists. Free from the trappings of the civilization he hates, John is nevertheless still imprisoned within himself, in his uncontrollable feelings of longing and repulsion. In striving to live a truly human life, John becomes, in the eyes of the crowd, less than human.

Note that John's sexual feelings are still linked to violence, the result of his unintentional conditioning in Malpais. Guilt over his sexual longing for Lenina arouses deep anger that habitually erupts in the ritual flagellation. The original meaning of the whipping—to turn the mind away from thoughts of sexual pleasure—is lost in rage and lust as he imagines whipping Lenina, a disturbing images that looks forward to the end of the chapter.

The "orgy of atonement" represents the sudden, explosive combination of the two worlds of the novel. Overcome by religious and sexual frenzy—a parallel Huxley has already drawn in the Solidarity Service of Chapter 5—John's furious attack on Lenina becomes, in the crowd's conditioned response, "orgy-porgy." Without willing it, John merges into the brave new world he has been trying to escape, yielding to the sexual desire he has so long fought against.

John's suicide represents self-loathing, his disgust at becoming sexually indiscriminate, in the way Linda and Lenina were conditioned to behave. His death puts an end to the possibility of living independently outside the dystopia—except on the socially sanctioned island outposts—or changing it from within.

As he explains in his Foreword to *Brave New World*, Huxley later regretted his decision not to give John a third choice—a middle way between the Savage Reservation and the world of London. *Brave New World Revisited* goes some way in imagining that middle way for the readers of the novel. In this original ending, however, hope for a humane society is lost with the death of its eloquent—if flawed—defender.

Glossary

turpitude baseness, vileness, depravity. Here used to refer to John's feelings about Lenina.

CHARACTER ANALYSES

Bernard Marx

Bernard Marx receives so much attention in the early part of Brave New World that it seems as if Huxley has chosen him for the main character. Later, however, John the Savage takes the central role in the novel. In a society of perfectly flawless people, Bernard's flaw—his short stature—marks him for ridicule. The rumored cause, alcohol in his blood surrogate, links him chemically to the lower castes and undercuts his Alpha Plus status. Bernard himself is painfully aware of others' responses to his un-Alpha-like shortness, and his lack of confidence stems from anxiety about rejection.

Bernard's feelings about his difference develops into an inner resentment nurtured by his own egotism—a frame of mind that produces much emotion but little action. Although he wants to be an individual, to feel strongly and act freely, Bernard shows little creativity or courage.

Marked as an outsider, Bernard revels in pent-up anger and disgust at those who reject him. To his social equal, Helmholtz, he alternately brags and whines about his anti-social feelings of rebelliousness, yet when faced with superiors, Bernard is characteristically subservient and cowardly. Suddenly a social success, he makes the very most of his association with John to seize the power he once pretended to scorn, flaunting his unorthodoxy just for attention. In this, Bernard proves himself a hypocrite.

When compared with John and Helmholtz, Bernard remains shallow and uninteresting, despite his loneliness and obvious pain. His experience with John and his friendship with Helmholtz, however, bring him to a certain maturity by the end of the novel. Bernard goes to the Falkland Islands more of a real human being than he ever was before.

John the Savage

The only person in the brave new world born naturally of a mother, John represents a unique human being in the novel, with an identity

and a family relationship unlike any other character. Although the son of two upper-caste Londoners, he grows up in the squalor of the Savage Reservation. Disconnected, rejected, John is not truly a part of Malpais or of London. His only society is Shakespeare's imaginative world, a realm he inhabits with energy and misguided idealism.

John is the true loner, the individual Bernard imagines himself at times, and his life, accordingly, is filled with confusion and pain. John represents the most important and most complex character of *Brave New World*, a stark contrast to Bernard, the would-be rebel. Bernard's dissatisfaction with his society expresses itself most characteristically in sullen resentment and imagined heroism, but John lives out his ideals, however unwisely. In turning aside Lenina's advances, John rejects the society's values. He acts boldly in calling the Deltas to rebellion and in throwing out the soma. Finally, he faces the powerful Mustapha Mond deliberately and intelligently and sets out on his own to create a life for himself, which ends in tragedy.

If anyone, John should be the character to challenge and to bring down the Brave New World that is stifling humanity. In the end, John cannot change the society, because he is blocked within and without. Mustapha Mond makes clear the power of the World State to resist any unstablizing force. But John is also held back by his own destructive tendencies toward violence and self-loathing.

Although John despises conditioning, Huxley reveals that John has been conditioned, too. Because of the terrible conditions of his life in Malpais, John associates sex with humiliation and pain and character with suffering, and this destructive view gains further power in John's response to the poetry of Shakespeare.

John's conditioning limits his ability to act freely, making him a deeply flawed potential hero. His death is the result of his own imperfect understanding as well as the inhuman forces of the brave new world.

Lenina

"Awfully pneumatic" and proud of her sexual attractiveness, Lenina seems at first a conventional woman of a society in which comfort, pleasure, and materialism are the only values. As the novel progresses,

however, Lenina emerges as a conflicted character, more complex than she seems initially.

Although she may not acknowledge it, Lenina rebels against her conditioning for sexual promiscuity, the belief that "every one belongs to every one else." At the onset, she is continuing an unconventionally long and exclusive sexual relationship with Henry Foster. Even in returning to normal sexual behavior, she again rebels, choosing the socially misfit Bernard Marx. Without completely understanding her motivations, Lenina explores the emotional territory outside recreational sex with far more daring than Bernard, the supposed rebel.

Lenina's relationship with John brings her to an emotional, physical, but not intellectual experience of love, while her unaccustomed vulnerability makes her the victim of John's violence twice. She represents the rare potential to see beyond conditioning, but cannot live freely.

Linda

A thoroughly conventional brave new world women dropped unexpectedly in a very different society, Linda faces the challenge of understanding traditional morality. But Linda's sense of the normal moral world—drilled into her by her early conditioning—consists of equal parts recreational sex and soothing drugs. Beyond finding the rough equivalents of her own world's social occupations—peyote and mescal for soma, for instance—she never seriously engages the culture she lives in. As a result, she remains isolated, condemning her son John to a marginal existence as well.

As Linda herself points out, she has no training for the life she has had to live as a mother. Filled with shame for having a baby and longing for her home, Linda wraps herself in a blanket of mescal and peyote, remaining intoxicated and barely aware of John and his needs as a growing young man. For John, she feels an intense mixture of love and revulsion, complicated further by her obsession with Popé. The strange quality of his mother's feelings for him obviously has an effect on John himself, especially in his relationships with women.

After her long years of struggle and shame on the Savage Reservation, Linda throws herself into soma holidays, shortening her life by her

addiction. At the end, for the confused, angry woman, death comes as a release, despite her terror.

The D.H.C.

The Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning—or "Tomakin," as Linda calls him—seems at first a strictly conventional man, absolutely conservative in his outlook and demeanor. Respectful to superiors, snappish—even cruel—with anti-social inferiors like Bernard, he upholds the highest standards of brave new world morality.

Yet, paradoxically, he has had an intense experience of love and regret that has changed him inwardly forever. His sadness at losing Linda and the guilt he feels for leaving her represent truly human responses in an inhuman world. Sensibly, the D.H.C. keeps the memory of Linda to himself for all the years he climbs the career ladder. The unexpected reminder of the Savage Reservation catches him off guard, leaving him vulnerable, first to fear of exposure and then to Bernard's plan for revenge.

With the D.H.C., Huxley emphasizes the connection of fear of discovery with hypocrisy. Bernard's exposure of the D.H.C.'s relationship with Linda and John, their son, gains most of its energy and comic force from the D.H.C.'s hypocritical denunciation of anti-social behavior. In this, the character and his public humiliation recall traditional unmasking scenes in fiction involving corrupt religious or other well-respected social figures. Still, the D.H.C. shows himself very human in the longterm emotional effects of his traumatic situation. Again, Huxley hints at the possibility of true feelings despite conditioning but undercuts the hope in the end.

Mustapha Mond

The Controller, one of the ten men who run the World State, represents a combination of past and present, convention and rebellion. A man of two worlds, Mond is familiar with the history that others are forbidden to know, and so his thinking ranges both inside and outside the present social order. The maker of the rules, as he says, can break them as well, if he wishes.

Only Mond's extraordinary power keeps him safe from whispers of his dangerous knowledge and collection of unorthodox books. He is untouchable but not unreachable. With Helmholtz and John, Mond discusses the unspoken assumptions of the society they find so constricting, even confessing his own youthful experiments in challenging authority. Mond knows the nature of the malcontent—he once was one—but he is committed to keeping the society stable. He uses his power for others' happiness, he explains, not his own.

During his lectures, Mond expresses his unique views on the themes of freedom, happiness, civilization, and heroism. His dry delivery contributes much to the satiric tone of the novel. In his intellect and wit, Mond is the character who most resembles Huxley himself.

Helmholtz Watson

Helmholtz represents a sharp contrast to his close friend, Bernard. Unlike the flighty, whiny Bernard, Helmholtz shows himself to be emotionally stable even in his deep dissatisfaction. Bored with mindless recreational sex and soma-taking, he simply abstains, saving his energies for what he believes to be more valuable activity. In this, Helmholtz shows himself to be a more serious rebel than Bernard.

Helmholtz voices the inarticulate feeling of meaningless in the life of brave new world citizens. Helmholtz has something to say, he believes, but he cannot find the words within him. In his struggle to find meaning and expression for his feeling of emptiness, Helmholtz emerges as one of the most fully human and engaging characters of the novel.

Society and the Individual in Brave New World

"Every one belongs to every one else," whispers the voice in the dreams of the young in Huxley's future world—the hypnopaedic suggestion discouraging exclusivity in friendship and love. In a sense in this world, every one is every one else as well. All the fetal conditioning, hypnopaedic training, and the power of convention molds each individual into an interchangeable part in the society, valuable only for the purpose of making the whole run smoothly. In such a world, uniqueness is uselessness and uniformity is bliss, because social stability is everything.

In the first chapter, the D.H.C. proudly explains the biochemical technology that makes possible the production of virtually identical human beings and, in doing so, introduces Huxley's theme of individuality under assault. Bokanovsky's Process, which arrests normal human development while promoting the production of dozens of identical eggs, deliberately deprives human beings of their unique, individual natures and so makes overt processes for controlling them unnecessary. The uniformity of the Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons is accomplished by careful poisoning with alcohol and produces—in Huxley's word—"sub-human" people, capable of work but not of independent thought. For these lower-caste men and women, individuality is literally impossible. As a result, built on a large foundation of identical, easily manipulated people, the society thrives. Stability lives, but individuality—the desire and/or ability to be different—is dead. "When the individual feels, society reels," Lenina piously reminds Bernard, who strives without success for a genuine human emotion beyond his customary peevishness. This inability is a kind of tragic flaw in Bernard. Even love—acknowledging and cherishing another's unique identity—represents a threat to stability founded on uniformity. The dystopia's alternative—recreational sex—is deliberately designed to blur the distinctions among lovers and between emotions and urges, finding its social and ritual expression in "Orgy-Porgy."

This organized release of sexual urges undercuts passion, the intense feeling of one person for another, as the individuals subordinate even their own sexual pleasure to the supposed joy of their society's unity. At the Solidarity Service, Bernard finds the exercise degrading, just as anyone clinging to any idealism about sex would be revolted. John's sensitive

feelings about love suffer even from the representation of such an orgy at the feelies. Significantly, it is the morning after his own experience of "orgy-porgy" that John commits suicide. His most private, cherished sense of love and of self, he feels, has been violated.

In Huxley's dystopia, the drug soma also serves to keep individuals from experiencing the stressful negative affects of conflicts that the society cannot prevent. Pain and stress—grief, humiliation, disappointment—representing uniquely individual reactions to conflict still occur sometimes in the brave new world. The people of the brave new world "solve" their conflict problems by swallowing a few tablets or taking an extended soma-holiday, which removes or sufficiently masks the negative feelings and emotions that other, more creative, problem-solving techniques might have and which cuts off the possibility of action that might have socially disruptive or revolutionary results.

The society, therefore, encourages everyone to take soma as a means of social control by eliminating the affects of conflict. John's plea to the Deltas to throw away their soma, then, constitutes a cry for rebellion that goes unheeded. Soma-tized people do not know their own degradation. They are not even fully conscious that they are individuals. Both Bernard and John struggle against the society's constant efforts to undermine their individuality, but one character reveals a deeper understanding of the stakes than the other. Bernard rails loudly about the inhumanity of the system. His outrage stems from the injustices he suffers personally, but he apparently is unwilling or unable to fathom a debate or course of action against the malady because he is an Alpha Plus upon whom the process has been at least partially successful. Once Bernard receives the sexual and social attention he believes is his due, his complaints continue merely as a show of daring and bravado. He sees no reason and feels no moral or social compunction to fight for the rights of others oppressed by the social system.

John, on the other hand, truly challenges the brave new world with a view of freedom that includes everyone, even the Deltas who reject his call for rebellion. Although John, like Bernard, suffers from the oppression of the World State, John is able to frame his objections philosophically and debate the issue face to face with World Controller

Mustapha Mond because, although John is genetically an Alpha Plus, he has not undergone the conditioning necessary to conform. His objection is not only his own lack of comfort, but the degradation of slavery imposed by the society. John's acceptance of a free human life with all its danger and pain represents an idealistic stand beyond Bernard's comprehension or courage. Flawed, misguided, John nevertheless dares to claim his right to be an individual.

By the end of the novel, all the efforts to free the individual from the grip of the World State have failed, destroyed by the power of convention induced by hypnopaedia and mob psychology. Only Helmholtz and Bernard, bound for banishment in the Falkland Islands, represent the possibility of a slight hope—a limited freedom within the confines of a restrictive society.

The battle for individuality and freedom ends with defeat in Brave New World—a decision Huxley later came to regret. In Brave New World Revisited, a series of essays on topics suggested by the novel, Huxley emphasizes the necessity of resisting the power of tyranny by keeping one's mind active and free. The individual freedoms may be limited in the modern world, Huxley admits, but they must be exercised constantly or be lost.

MAIN THEMES

The Use of Technology to Control Society

Brave New World warns of the dangers of giving the state control over new and powerful technologies. One illustration of this theme is the rigid control of reproduction through technological and medical intervention, including the surgical removal of ovaries, the Bokanovsky Process, and hypnopaedic conditioning. Another is the creation of complicated entertainment machines that generate both harmless leisure and the high levels of consumption and production that are the basis of the World State's stability. Soma is a third example of the kind of medical, biological, and psychological technologies that *Brave New World* criticizes most sharply. It is important to recognize the distinction between science and technology. Whereas the State talks about progress and science, what it really means is the bettering of technology, not increased scientific exploration and experimentation. The state uses science as a means to build technology that can create a seamless, happy, superficial world through things such as the "feelies." The state censors and limits science, however, since it sees the fundamental basis behind science, the search for truth, as threatening to the State's control. The State's focus on happiness and stability means that it uses the results of scientific research, inasmuch as they contribute to technologies of control, but does not support science itself.

The Consumer Society

It is important to understand that *Brave New World* is not simply a warning about what could happen to society if things go wrong, it is also a satire of the society in which Huxley existed, and which still exists today. While the attitudes and behaviors of World State citizens at first appear bizarre, cruel, or scandalous, many clues point to the conclusion that the World State is simply an extreme—but logically developed—version of our society's economic values, in which individual happiness is defined as the ability to satisfy needs, and success as a society is equated with economic growth and prosperity.

The Incompatibility of Happiness and Truth

Brave New World is full of characters who do everything they can to avoid facing the truth about their own situations. The almost universal use of the drug soma is probably the most pervasive example of such willful self-delusion. Soma clouds the realities of the present and replaces them with happy hallucinations, and

is thus a tool for promoting social stability. But even Shakespeare can be used to avoid facing the truth, as John demonstrates by his insistence on viewing Lenina through the lens of Shakespeare's world, first as a Juliet and later as an "impudent strumpet." According to Mustapha Mond, the World State prioritizes happiness at the expense of truth by design: he believes that people are better off with happiness than with truth.

What are these two abstract entities that Mond juxtaposes? It seems clear enough from Mond's argument that happiness refers to the immediate gratification of every citizen's desire for food, sex, drugs, nice clothes, and other consumer items. It is less clear what Mond means by truth, or specifically what truths he sees the World State society as covering up. From Mond's discussion with John, it is possible to identify two main types of truth that the World State seeks to eliminate. First, as Mond's own past indicates, the World State controls and muffles all efforts by citizens to gain any sort of scientific, or empirical truth. Second, the government attempts to destroy all kinds of "human" truths, such as love, friendship, and personal connection. These two types of truth are quite different from each other: objective truth involves coming to a definitive conclusion of fact, while a "human" truth can only be explored, not defined. Yet both kinds of truth are united in the passion that an individual might feel for them. As a young man, Mustapha Mond became enraptured with the delight of making discoveries, just as John loves the language and intensity of Shakespeare. The search for truth then, also seems to involve a great deal of individual effort, of striving and fighting against odds. The very will to search for truth is an individual desire that the communal society of Brave New World, based as it is on anonymity and lack of thought, cannot allow to exist. Truth and individuality thus become entwined in the novel's thematic structure.

The Dangers of an All-Powerful State

Like George Orwell's 1984, this novel depicts a dystopia in which an all-powerful state controls the behaviors and actions of its people in order to preserve its own stability and power. But a major difference between the two is that, whereas in 1984 control is maintained by constant government surveillance, secret police, and torture, power in Brave New World is maintained through technological interventions that start before birth and last until death, and that actually change what people want. The government of 1984 maintains power through force and intimidation. The government of Brave New World retains control by making its citizens so happy and superficially fulfilled that they don't care about their personal freedom. In Brave New World the consequences of state

control are a loss of dignity, morals, values, and emotions—in short, a loss of humanity.

Individuality

By imagining a world in which individuality is forbidden, Brave New World asks us to consider what individual identity is and why it is valuable. The World State sees individuality as incompatible with happiness and social stability because it interferes with the smooth functioning of the community. The Controllers do everything they can to prevent people developing individual identities. "Bokanovsky's Process" means that most citizens of the World States are biological duplicates of one another. "Hypnopaedic" slogans and "Solidarity Services" encourage citizens to think of themselves as part of a whole rather than as separate individuals. The Controller explains that people are sent to the islands when they "have got too self-consciously individual to fit into community life." For Bernard, Helmholtz, and John, rebelling against the World State involves becoming self-conscious individuals. Bernard wants to feel "as though I were more me." Helmholtz writes his first real poem about the experience of being alone, and when the Controller asks John what he knows about God, John thinks "about solitude." In the end, John and Helmholtz choose to suffer in order to preserve their individuality. Bernard, however, never chooses individuality. He has been forced to be an individual due to his faulty conditioning. He tries to resist being sent to an island. For Bernard, individuality is a curse.

Happiness and Agency

Initially, the characters in Brave New World share the same ideas about what happiness is: freedom from emotional suffering, sickness, age, and political upheaval, together with easy access to everything they desire. However, the characters differ in their understanding of the role personal agency plays in happiness. Bernard believes he wants personal agency, in that he wants to feel "as though I were more me." Yet when the Controller offers Bernard the chance to live as an individual in Iceland, he begs to be allowed to stay in the World State—he's not ready to sacrifice personal comfort for autonomy. Helmholtz seeks to express himself through poetry, but his idea that "a lot of wind and storms" are necessary for good poetry suggests that happiness and self-expression are incompatible, and he will only achieve personal agency through suffering. John seeks personal freedom through suffering and self-denial, but his self-imposed deprivations make him miserable. He gives in to the lure of pleasure by taking part in an orgy, then kills himself.