

## **How do unregulated scientific experiments and technology affect people's lifestyle and wellbeing?**

### **Passage**

"The consequences of the scientists' unbridled experimentation were everywhere. New diseases had emerged, resistant to all known treatments. The environment was in ruins, polluted beyond repair. And the human population had dwindled to a few scattered enclaves, each struggling to survive in a world that was hostile to their existence.

The corporations had created a society where people were commodities, where profit was the only goal, and where the boundaries between what was human and what was not had become blurred. The enhanced were given all the privileges and opportunities, while the unmodified were treated as second-class citizens, forced to live in squalor and poverty.

The unchecked power of the corporations had created a world where people were valued only for their ability to consume, where the natural world was seen as a resource to be exploited, and where the pursuit of profit had become the only purpose of human existence. And in this world, science and technology had become the ultimate tools of control, used to shape and mold the very fabric of human society.

The scientists had played God, creating new forms of life that were not meant to exist. And in doing so, they had upset the delicate balance of nature, unleashing a chain reaction of events that had led to the end of the world as they knew it. They had promised a better world, but what they had delivered was a nightmare. They had unleashed forces that they could not control, and in doing so, they had doomed humanity to a bleak and uncertain future.

For Jimmy, this was the legacy of the unregulated experimentation that had taken place before his birth. He had grown up in a world where science and technology had been seen as the keys to a better future, but he now realized that they had been the cause of his world's downfall. In their quest for knowledge and power, the scientists had destroyed everything that was good and beautiful about the world. And now, as he looked out over the ruins of that world, he wondered if it was possible to ever truly recover from the damage that had been done" (p. 281-282)

### **Essay**

In Margaret Atwood's "Oryx and Crake", the global issue relating to unregulated science experiments and technology and how they affect people's lives is prevalent as it

shows itself in multiple quotes and chapters that Jimmy details about his story. Atwood reveals these global issues by showing how unrestricted access to the internet shaped Jimmy's adolescent brain and how eventually because of a deadly virus that made its way into a drug, the whole world ended as they knew it.

In the beginning of "Oryx and Crake", during Jimmy's backstory, we read about his and Crake's internet escapades that they did, often spending large amounts of time on inappropriate websites that we seem to witness affecting Jimmy's brain throughout the story. When Jimmy was ten, he and Crake spent a lot of time on a website called HotTots, in which they watched many explicit videos of children. Jimmy and Crake seem to take watching this material very lightly, not feeling any sort of shame, disgust, or even excitement about it, as if they've gone numb to the material. However, we see Jimmy's personality shift when he sees Oryx on the website break the sort of fourth wall, and later in his life story we see him becoming a lot more objectifying and sexual. Often, Jimmy mentioned his crushes, or looked at attractive girls, or left the city to the pleeblands in order to copulate with random girls in order to "fill the absence of love in his heart". The absence of love is left to the interpretation of the reader, while it is obvious to see that it was because of Jimmy seeing Oryx in a sexual context within the inappropriate websites he surfed as a child that has since messed up his brain. This serves as part of the global issue of unregulated technology on people's wellbeing, because the rapid development and extreme accessibility of pornographic content available to be found by youth is a recent and concerning problem that has led to a lot of youth all around the world seeing explicit material before their brains are able to process the killing and sexual acts shown in the video properly.

As the 20-40 line quote from above stated, human greed is another reason why unregulated technology affected people's lives in the book. In the quote, Jimmy recalls how corporatism and rapid technological advancements destroyed the world. "The unchecked power of the corporations had created a world where people were valued only for their ability to consume, where the natural world was seen as a resource to be exploited, and where the pursuit of profit had become the only purpose of human existence...For Jimmy, this was the legacy of the unregulated experimentation that had taken place before his birth. He had grown up in a world where science and technology had been seen as the keys to a better future, but he now realized that they had been the cause of his world's downfall. In their quest for knowledge and power, the scientists had destroyed everything that was good and beautiful about the world." (p.281-282) This quote describes the dystopia that the world fell into, where preserving the Earth, being ethical, and having safe business practices were thrown out the window in order to create "better" pieces of technology. Through this rapid expansion, there was no regulation to scientific discoveries, which would have caught the virus that made it into the pills that Oryx had sold, and therefore would not have destroyed the world. This

global issue relates to real life because in the “Oryx and Crake” universe, scientists had no regulation and prioritized growth of industry over safety, which allowed dangerous inventions and viruses to destroy the world, and none of them ever took responsibility for their actions because almost all of humanity except Jimmy died, leaving him as the only known human to watch over the Crakers that would occupy the world after all of humanity is long gone.

Margaret Atwood does a good job of building a world of dangerous technology that can easily apply to the real world as a lesson that if rampant capitalism and dangerous technology becomes the forefront of human life, we may experience a story, sort of like the fictional one of “Oryx and Crake”.