

Department of English and Foreign Languages

Faculty of Engineering and Technology
SRM Institute of Science and Technology
SRM Nagar, Kattankulathur - 603 203
Chengalpattu

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Submitted by

TEAM Shadows of Control

Submitted to

Dr. POONAM

Assistant Professor

Department of English and Foreign Languages SRM Institute of Science and
Technology

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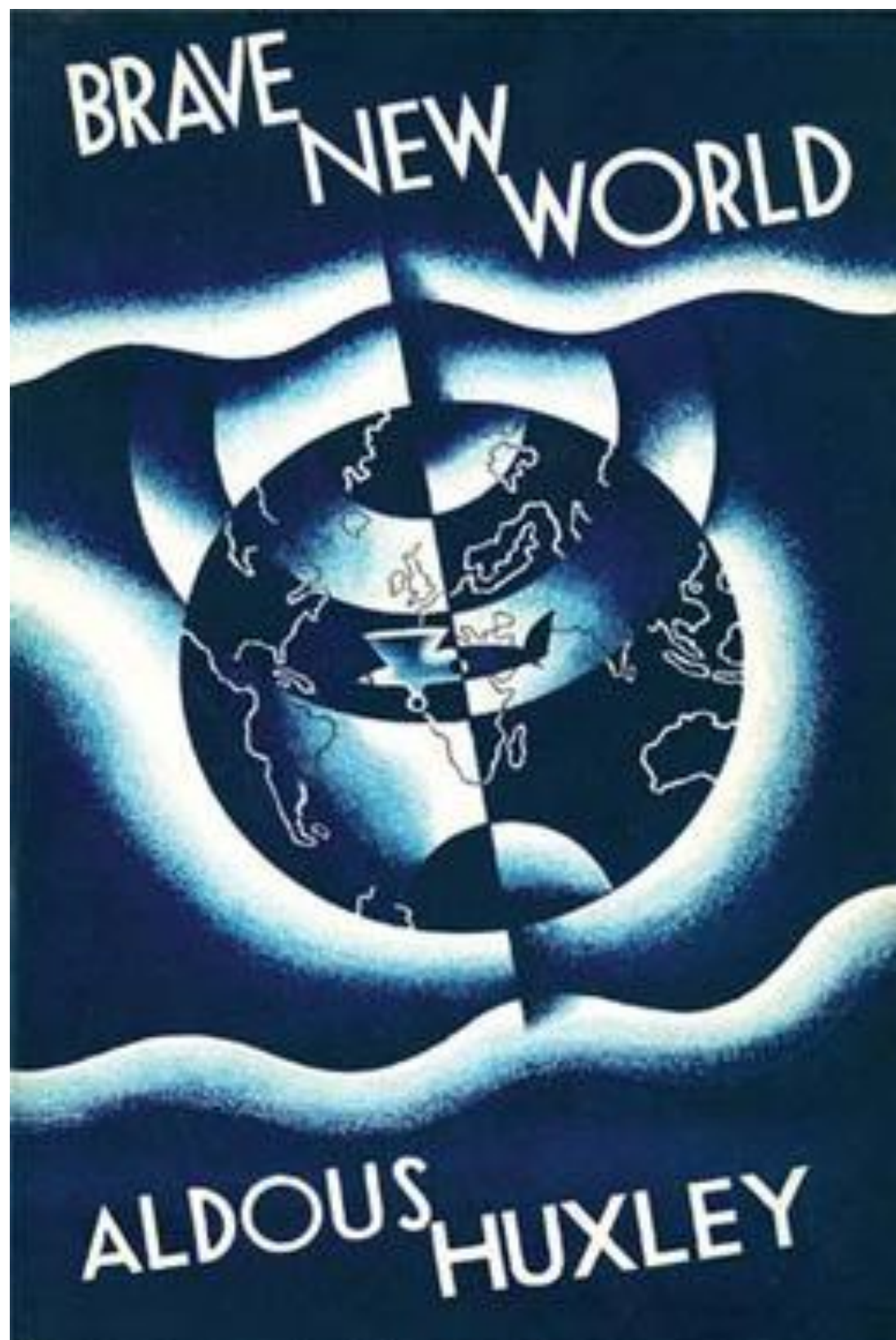
Tittle – Brave New World

Group Members

S. No	Reg No	Name	Subtopic
1	RA2411030010275	M . Mohammad Zunied	Brave new world & Sustainable development goals/Introductions
2	RA2411030010222	S Inbasekaran	Technological Advancement and Genetic Engineering
3	RA2411030010240	P Subash	Hypnopedia/Innovation
4	RA2411030010231	M Viveka Vardhan	SDG-4/Subversion of True Education
5	RA2411030010227	S Sameer	Soma distribution , education
6	RA2411030010251	G Pavan Sarvan	Innovation / Sustainable development lessons

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Introduction:

Brave New World by Aldous Huxley is a dystopian novel published in 1932. It envisions a futuristic society where people are engineered and conditioned for stability and happiness. The World State eliminates pain, suffering, and individuality through genetic manipulation, social hierarchy, and psychological conditioning. Citizens are classified into castes, from the intelligent Alphas to the menial Epsilons. Soma, a government-sanctioned drug, ensures constant pleasure and suppresses dissent. Natural birth, love, and family are obsolete, replaced by artificial reproduction and state-controlled relationships. Bernard Marx, an outsider, questions the system and brings John, a "Savage," to civilization. John's struggle with the World State's values leads to tragic consequences. The novel critiques consumerism, technology, and loss of individuality. It remains a powerful warning about sacrificing freedom for superficial happiness.

Background:

***Brave New World* was written by Aldous Huxley in 1932, reflecting his concerns about the dangers of technology, mass consumerism, and the loss of individuality. The novel is set in a future where a global state controls society through genetic engineering, mass production, and social conditioning.**

Huxley's concerns were influenced by:

- 1. Technological Control: The rise of mass production and genetic engineering. In the novel, humans are created in hatcheries, engineered for specific roles.**
- 2. Totalitarianism: The rise of regimes like Hitler's and Stalin's, where a central authority enforces uniformity.**
- 3. Consumerism: Criticism of growing materialism, where people crave constant consumption, becoming complacent and controlled.**
- 4. Loss of Individuality: In Huxley's world, people are assigned roles, emotions are suppressed, and a drug called *soma* keeps people content.**

Huxley warned that society could lose freedom and identity if science, technology, and control replaced personal autonomy and happiness.

Analysis:

***Brave New World* critiques modern society, focusing on the loss of individuality, dangers of consumerism, and consequences of technological advancements. Key points include:**

1. Social Control and Totalitarianism

The World State controls every aspect of citizens' lives, using technology and propaganda to maintain order, similar to oppressive regimes that suppress dissent and individual freedom.

2. The Role of Technology

Technology is used to dehumanize, standardize, and control, reducing people to mere functions. Huxley warns that technology could strip away human essence, leading to a passive society.

3. The Sacrifice of Individuality

Citizens are genetically engineered and conditioned for predetermined roles. Personal desires and self-expression are discouraged, showing the consequences of valuing uniformity over individuality.

4. Consumerism and the Illusion of Happiness

The novel critiques consumer culture, where people seek pleasure without questioning its purpose. *Soma* represents instant gratification, which keeps people docile and prevents deeper fulfillment.

5. Soma: The Control of Emotions

***Soma* numbs negative emotions, ensuring contentment at the cost of authenticity. Huxley's depiction reflects concerns about distractions keeping people complacent.**

Case Studies:

1. North Korea: Totalitarianism

North Korea is a real example of a totalitarian regime that controls citizens through propaganda, surveillance, and punishment. Like the World State, it suppresses individuality and critical thought to maintain power.

2. Social Media and the Loss of Individuality

Social media influences behaviors, opinions, and desires, encouraging conformity. Algorithms push people to seek approval, diminishing personal expression and individuality, similar to conditioning in Huxley's world.

3. Consumerism in Modern Capitalism

Modern consumer culture mirrors *Brave New World*, where people are driven to consume without questioning the meaning of their actions. Fast fashion, disposable goods, and constant advertising create a society obsessed with material pleasure.

4. AI and Automation

Advancements in AI and automation reflect concerns about technological overreach. The loss of individuality, job displacement, and dependency on technology echo Huxley's vision of a controlled, predetermined society.

5. Pharmaceuticals and Emotional Control

Pharmaceuticals like antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications manage emotions, similar to the role of *soma* in Huxley's world. While they're important for mental health, widespread use can mask deeper social issues, as *soma* numbs genuine emotional expression.

These case studies show how *Brave New World's* themes remain relevant today.

Conclusion:

Brave New World remains a powerful critique of societal trends, warning against the dangers of technological control, loss of individuality, consumerism, and the manipulation of emotions. Through its portrayal of a highly controlled, conformist society, Huxley urges readers to reflect on the balance between progress and personal freedom. Real-world examples, such as totalitarian regimes, social media, and consumer culture, illustrate how these themes still resonate today. The novel serves as a cautionary tale, reminding us of the potential consequences of sacrificing individuality and autonomy for the illusion of stability and happiness.

References:

1. **Huxley, Aldous.** *Brave New World*. Harper & Brothers, 1932.
 - The original text of the novel.
2. **Huxley, Aldous.** *Brave New World Revisited*. Harper & Row, 1958.
 - Huxley's follow-up reflection on the themes of the novel.
3. **Postman, Neil.** *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. Penguin Books, 1985.
 - Explores the dangers of entertainment culture, similar to Huxley's concerns about consumerism.
4. **Buchanan, Mark.** *The Social Control of Technology: A Critical Review of Brave New World*. 2009.
 - A scholarly analysis of technology in Huxley's world.
5. **Wiener, Norbert.** *The Human Use of Human Beings*. 1950.
 - Examines technology, control, and society, themes relevant to Huxley's work.

These sources provide insight into *Brave New World* and its themes.