

Brave New World by Aldous Huxley

[B2]

Un capolavoro della fantascienza distopica che immagina un mondo in cui il controllo sociale si esercita attraverso l'intrattenimento e la tecnologia. Un'opera profetica.

Aldous Huxley's science-fiction masterpiece imagines a futuristic dystopia, in which technological progress and state control have supplanted individuality, freedom and human connection. It is largely set in a place called World State that initially appears utopic: family structures have been abolished, babies are grown in [glass jars](#), and sexual promiscuity is moral. Everyone is happy, as any negative feelings are easy [to fix](#) using "soma", a drug that the government provides.

REPRODUCTION

The book begins at the Central London [Hatchery](#) and Conditioning Centre, where thousands of human embryos in [glass jars](#) are receiving a careful balance of chemicals until they're ready to be "decanted". The idea of being born from a human is obscene and the word 'mother' is taboo. Some embryos are predestined to become elite adults: these Alphas receive the optimum chemical mix. Meanwhile, Epsilons [are deprived](#) of oxygen to make them [semi-moronic](#) low-grade workers. Some newly fertilised eggs are also put through something called Bokanovsky's Process, which causes them to divide into numerous identical clones. "Bokanovsky's Process is one of the major instruments of social stability. Standard men and women in uniform batches. The whole of a small factory staffed with the products of a single bokanovskified egg. 'Ninety-six identical twins working ninety-six identical machines!' The voice was almost tremulous with enthusiasm. 'You really know where you are. For the first time in history.' He quoted the planetary motto 'Community, Identity, Stability.'" «Il Processo Bokanovsky è uno dei maggiori strumenti della stabilità sociale!» 'Maggiori strumenti della stabilità sociale.' Uomini e donne tipificati; a inornate uniformi. Tutto il personale di un piccolo stabilimento costituito dal prodotto di un unico uovo bokanovskificato. «Novantasei gemelli identici che lavorano a novantasei macchine identiche!» La voce era quasi vibrante d'entusiasmo. «Adesso si sa veramente dove si va. Per la prima volta nella storia.» Citò il motto planetario: «Comunità, Identità, Stabilità».

SOCIAL CONTROL

After decanting, the babies' minds are controlled using various [brainwashing](#) techniques including hypnopedia, which is [carried out](#) while they are asleep. One hypnopedia lesson for Beta children repeats [over and over](#): "Alpha children wear grey. They work much harder than we do, because they're so frightfully clever. I'm really glad I'm Beta, because I don't work so hard. And then we are much better than the Gammas and Deltas." "I bambini Alfa sono vestiti di grigio. Lavorano molto più di noi, perché sono tanto tanto intelligenti. Sono veramente contento di essere un Beta perché non sono costretto a lavorare così duro. E poi, noi siamo superiori ai Gamma e ai Delta." The only people with any real autonomy in World State are the Controllers like Mustapha Mond, who admits that because he makes the rules he can also break them. There's no god but instead a [higher](#) power called Ford.

HORROR

Unlike in George Orwell's dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the Controllers use pleasure rather than fear to keep people [compliant](#). There are machines that [pump](#) beautiful perfume and music into the air, and even give you a massage. And people go to the 'feelies': movies where they experience the physical sensations of what they are seeing on the screen. The government organises regular semi-religious twelve-person orgies. People are encouraged to take soma, which, in moderation, provides a [high](#) without negative side effects: "Now — such is progress — the old men work, the old men copulate, the old men have no time, no leisure from pleasure, not a moment to sit down and think — or if ever by some unlucky chance such a crevice of time should yawn in the solid substance of their distractions, there is always soma, delicious soma, half a gramme for a half-holiday, a gramme for a week-end, two grammes for a trip to the gorgeous East, three for a dark eternity on the moon." "«Ora —questo è il progresso— i vecchi lavorano, i vecchi hanno rapporti sessuali, i vecchi non hanno un momento, un attimo da sottrarre al piacere, non un momento per sedere e pensare; o se per qualche disgraziata evenienza un crepaccio s'apre nella solida sostanza delle loro distrazioni, c'è sempre il "soma", il delizioso "soma", mezzo grammo per un riposo di mezza giornata, un grammo per una giornata di vacanza, due grammi per un'escursione nell'fantasmagorico Oriente, tre per una oscura eternità nella luna".

SHAKESPEARE

There are, however, a few people who question the principles of this perfectly regulated Brave New World. Outside the efficient, sanitised, hedonistic World State, there still exist some traditional areas called reservations. John Savage is born on one of these and when, as an adult, he first meets Lenina, a visitor from

World State, he's amazed by her health and "pneumatic" beauty. He quotes from Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, one of numerous quotations from Shakespeare that Savage uses [throughout](#) the book: "O wonder!' he was saying; and his eyes shone, his face was brightly flushed. 'How many goodly creatures are there here! How beauteous mankind is!' The flush suddenly deepened; he was thinking of Lenina, of an angel in bottle-green viscose, lustrous with youth and skin food, plump, benevolently smiling. His voice faltered. 'O brave new world.'" "«O meraviglia!» diceva; e i suoi occhi brillavano, il suo viso era tutto illuminato. «Quante soavi creature ci sono qui! Come l'umanità è bella!» Il suo rossore s'accentuò improvvisamente, pensando a Lenina, a quell'angelo in viscosa verde-bottiglia, splendente di giovinezza e di vitalità, grassottella, sorridente con gentilezza. Gli tremò la voce. «O nuovo mondo ammirevole!»". Brave New World was written at a time when there was a great hope that technology would transform society for the better. But the novel shows that while technology brings benefits, there can also be a [high](#) cost in terms of individual freedom and creativity. The book has been read as a warning for many areas of life, from genetic engineering to mass production and popular culture. A nine-part TV series [loosely based](#) on the novel was released in 2020.

Glossary

- **Hatchery** = incubatrice
- **are deprived** = privare di
- **semi-moronic** = mezzi cretini
- **brainwashing** = lavaggio del cervello
- **throughout** = durante
- **glass jars** = vasi di vetro
- **carried out** = eseguire
- **over and over** = ancora e ancora
- **compliant** = condiscendenti
- **pump** = pompare
- **high** = botta, sballo
- **loosely based** = liberamente basata
- **to fix** = risolvere