Brave New World
Analysis Notes:
Chapters One
What is a satire?

- Satire is a genre of writing that is intended to mock or ridicule with the intent to reform. Often, satires are often misconstrued as “serious” works because people do not understand the tone.

- Huxley will intentionally make this world seem like a perfect place, a utopia, but the underlying tone will be one that is disgusted with this world.
Reminder about the Novel

- NEVER FORGET: The novel is a critique of the over-enthusiastic embrace of new scientific discoveries. Also? **It’s a satire.**

- Huxley *wants* make this world better than ours to show why WE have to want to be better than them.

- Satire is often misunderstood. People think it’s “cool”. Don’t fall for that trick: Huxley is attacking anyone who falls for this!
• **BNW Motto: Community, Identity, Stability.**
  ○ Community: ALL people matter
  ○ Identity: Your job IS your identity.
  ○ Stability: The world IS stable.

  ○ All three are required to have a world not at war. However, these three words also have a deeper implication as we progress through the novel.
• Setting of the novel takes place in London, England.

• Building we are in is the Hatcheries and Conditioning Centre.
  ◦ They produce and train the humans here.
  ◦ Controlled by: Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning (the DHC)
• Takes place in AF 632
  ◦ 632 After Ford developed the Model T and the assembly line in 1908.
    • 1908 + 632 = 2540 of our time
  ◦ Also, in this time: age does not matter. The outside aging process is halted at 20.

• The World State
  ◦ All independent governments are abolished, one controlling government: the World State.
    • The countries still exist topographically (as in, on a map), but the governments do not function/work.
    • It’s a totalitarian government.
Totalitarian Governments

- These are political systems where the state recognizes no limits to its authority and strives to regulate every aspect of public and private life wherever feasible.

- The World State mimics this political regime.
  - Nazi
  - Communist
• The caste system starts to be explained.
  ◦ Double Plus ("extra special")
  ◦ Plus (Higher status)
  ◦ Minus (Lower status)

• The DHC: Alpha Double Plus (Alpha++)
  ◦ He was born/bred for this job.
  ◦ He was trained from birth for this job.
  ◦ That ++ gives him an edge that few others in this world have.
Focuses on how to BREED a human being.

- No natural reproduction is allowed (forbidden, people see it as “disgusting” to be a parent)
- You can only create a human being through the test tube process as sanctioned by the World State.
To do this:

- Members of society “voluntarily donate” their body organs for “the good of society”. These people also receive a six-month salary bonus.
  - Male gametes
  - Female ova
Process to Make a Human in BNW

- Eggs are harvested, then inspected for any abnormality.
  - This avoids any birth defects or “unwanted” genetic traits being in society.
- Eggs put into a container, then immersed in a container holding sperm. The eggs are immersed until each egg is fertilized (or able to produce a child). If the egg cannot be fertilized, they wait until it’s more mature to become fertilized.
  - There is no waste of human life in this world.
After the eggs are fertilized, the eggs are deemed Alpha/Beta/Gamma, Delta, Epsilon.

- Alpha’s and Beta’s are “bottled” to grow into a human. They are left alone.

- Gamma’s, Delta’s, Epsilon’s are taken to the Bokanovsky Process.
  - This is a scientific discovery in this novel alone. It contains the ability to clone people.
The pre-natal conditioning/predestination is what determines each caste.
Bokanovsky Process: Makes 96 identical twin eggs where only 1 egg was before.
  - When twins occur naturally, the egg divides. These scientists divide the egg 96 times.

Hypothetically, in a batch of 10,000 individual fertilized eggs:

There will be 200 individuals that are labeled Alpha’s and Beta’s. They are “unique”.

There will be 9,800 Gamma’s, Delta’s and Epsilon’s. After the Bokanovsky Process, there will now be 940,800 identical twins.
Alpha’s and Beta’s are not cloned.

- You have to ask yourself why the World State would choose to not clone the best and the brightest of society.

- What makes them so special?
  - Organs.
  - They are untarnished by the cloning process and by other genetic tampering. They need “clean” genetic codes.
After the embryo’s are bottled…

- Podsnap’s Technique is applied.
  - This is another “fake” scientific ability.
  - This ripens fertilized eggs to mature faster.

Hypothetically, with the Bokanovsky Process applied… we can get: 1,650,000 clones all within two years of age of one another.

In our world, typically we can make ONE period in 9 months.

According to the laws of business: *this is progress.*
Predestination

- Concept originated in our world. Used heavily in Puritan times (1600ish); the idea is that all events that happen in life are willed by God.
  - It’s driven out of Calvinist beliefs.

- This idea is inverted (or in other words, reversed) in BNW
Predestination

- BNW authorities (“Social Predestinators”) determine what jobs the society will need when you are socially capable, and then they alter your genetic structure to make you fit for that job.

- Your interests, your abilities/skill sets, and what you want most are not taken into account. What is taken into account is the rest of the world. You do what’s right for everyone else – not yourself.
Additional Vocabulary

- Decanted = to be born, to be given life
- Freemartin = a sterile female (incapable of reproduction of any kind).
  - 70% of the female population are freemartins
  - This is designed to control the population (possibly suggesting the World State does not trust the people they breed)
  - 30% of the female population is kept the same to ensure a large enough population to harvest eggs and organs
The process to make a human being...

- It’s a three tiered factory/process.
  - This is designed to mimic the three trimester’s a woman goes through during pregnancy.

- It’s an assembly line. They make PEOPLE the way we make cars.
1st Level/1st Trimester: Creating and Starting Life

1. Create and Clone People.

2. Babies are “tubed” into a bottle.
   
   Alpha’s & Beta’s are bottled for 9 months. All others undergo Podsnap’s.

3. Social Predestination Room

2nd Level/2nd Trimester: Development and Bonding

4. Embryo Store

5. Blood surrogates given to stimulate a mother/child relationship with machinery.

6. Gender is identified during this stage. (Male, female, freemartins.)

3rd Level/3rd Trimester: Final Stages of Production/Birth

7. Oxygen Shortage to lower castes. This causes physical and intellectual deformities. This is to align with one’s predestined job.

8. Disease prevention. Immune to all illness, including cancer.

9. Decanting Room (Birthing Room)
Pre-Natal Conditioning

- Includes:
  - Oxygen shortage
  - Sterilization
  - Cold/Heat conditioning

In this world: they *breed* you for a job that you will *invariably* love. You have no choice in what you will become as it is solely dictated by what the society needs.

Huxley’s commentary is pretty simple: you can have a world not at odds with itself, but you have to strip away the options of humanity.

They design your body to work, and your mind to want to work. You have no say in this matter regarding your own life.
After thoughts of Chapter 1

- The World State holds technology up to be a form of religion
- There will be warped religious references throughout the novel as commentary by Huxley.
  - Example: the Social Predestinators are like Calvinist religious leaders. They determine ones’ job the way Calvinist leaders determined if individuals were to transcend to heaven or to hell.
• Huxley is commentating about religion:
  ◦ The use of religion in our world (despite any background you may or may not have) is about finding unity and harmony. It’s about innocence and purity.
  
  ◦ In *BNW*, it is far from innocent. Technology is the pillar of stability for the World State totalitarian control.
    
    • Think of the DHC: He claims that “social stability” is the highest of social goals – to be stable is what we should all want to be.
    
    • Instead of “stable”, consider the word “innocent”.
The DHC believes that...

- Using predestination and rigorous conditioning, individuals accept their given roles in society without question. *How could they? They don’t know any other type of life.*
The caste structure is created and maintained using specific tools to allow the most powerful members of the World State (the ruling Alpha caste) to **solidify** and **justify** unequal distribution of power and status.

**Meaning:** You are what they make you, and you do this without question to allow others more power.

- Upper class/Alpha’s make the most money and therefore decide all the rules. Lower class/Epsilon’s make the least money and have the least political power, and therefore follow the rules of others.
Social Conditioning

- “Inescapable Social Destiny” – by creating and conditioning individuals for a specific role in society, stability in ensured.

- “Progress” never happens. You are programmed to perform a certain task or function, you never learn something new and you believe that doing so is “beneath” you.
Huxley’s Commentary

• Think back to the Community, Identity, Stability.
  ◦ Stability is ensured because *no one* can or will challenge the rules. They do not know there is another way of life.

• Satirical intent: Huxley says that stability is admired, but stability can be used for the wrong means for the wrong ends.
THEME of Chapter 1

- The production of humans in the Hatchery versus the production of consumer goods on an assembly line.
  - Everything is maximized for business potential. It’s about efficiency and profit.
  - **Supply and Demand:** the Predestinators will determine how many caste members will be needed, and then the Hatchery produces those numbers.
Assembly Line/Hatchery

• The key function of the assembly line for success is that every part is **identical** and **interchangeable**.

  ◦ The steering column of a 1908 Model T fits onto the steering column of any current Ford model.

  ◦ In BNW, people are bred to be clones. They are **identical** and **interchangeable**. I could kill one and replace it with another without any real loss.
Gamma’s, Delta’s, Epsilon’s

- Subjected to more anonymity
  - Alpha’s and Beta’s are “decanted” without artificial intervention. But the other castes are subject to a variety of interventions to lower their function ability.
  
  - Meaning: To be an Alpha or Beta allows you to retain some level of individuality and creativity. This is denied to lower castes.
2nd THEME of Chapter 1

- BNW citizens are still human, however some humans are allowed to be *more human* than others.

  - This is not a choice though. You are made into what they want and need.
COMMUNITY, IDENTITY, STABILITY: All are incomparably linked. Stability is the biggest feature though. The world is stable without war or financial crisis due to the identities of the community. Without a upper and lower class, there is no stability.
Chapter 2…. The next chapter will focus on the additional scientific discoveries and will further explain how the caste system does provide some form of stability.
Reading Quiz:

- Good luck! 😊