

التقنية والعلم وتجريد المجتمع من إنسانيته في رواية ألدوس هكسلي عالم جديد شجاع

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Science, Technology, and the Dehumanization of Society in Aldous Huxley's Brave New World

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المخلص

تبحث الدراسة في الصراع الجدلي بين التقدم العلمي وصون الكرامة الإنسانية في رواية ألدوس هكسلي عالم جديد شجاع (1932). وتذهب الدراسة إلى أنّ الرواية تتنبأ بمستقبل ديستوبي (مظلم) حيث تصبح العلوم والتكنولوجيا – حين تقع في قبضة الأنظمة السياسية والاقتصادية – أدوات للهيمنة ونزع الإنسانية أكثر مما هي أدوات للتحرر. وترى الدراسة أن هكسلي يوجه نقدًا لعبادة التقدم الأعمى، إذ يكشف كيف أن التكنولوجيا الإنجابية، والبرمجة النفسية، والعلاج الدوائي تؤدي إلى خلق عالم يُمحى فيه الفرد، والإبداع، والعلاقات الحقيقية. وبالاعتماد على رؤية نظرية لهربرت ماركوزه، وجاك إيلول، وميشيل فوكو، يكشف التحليل أن عالم هكسلي ليس نبوءة قديمة تجاوزت الزمن، بل هو نقد دائم للاستبداد التكنوقراطي. كما تضع الدراسة خيال هكسلي في سياق النقاشات الواقعية حول التكنولوجيا الحيوية، والذكاء الاصطناعي، ورأسمالية المراقبة، لتبين أن الرواية تضيء المخاطر المستمرة لخضوع الكرامة الإنسانية لمقتضيات الكفاءة والسيطرة.

Abstract

The study investigates the dialectical conflict between scientific advancement and human integrity in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932). The study purports that the novel forecloses a dystopian future in which science and technology, in the possession of politicized and economic systems, act less as liberators than dehumanizers. The study maintains that Huxley is critical of progress fetishism, unveiling how reproductive technology, psycho-conditioning, and pharmacotherapy create a world in which individuality, creativity, and real relationships are systematically purged. Relying on theoretical insights from Herbert Marcuse, Jacques Ellul, and Michel Foucault, the analysis reveals that Huxley's world is not antiquated prophecy but an enduring critique of technocratic despotism. The study also situates Huxley's imagination in the context of real discourses upon biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and surveillance capitalism, suggesting that the novel illuminates the ongoing risks of subjecting human dignity to the imperatives of efficiency and domination.

Introduction

Science and technology in the modern imagination typically embody the promise of advancement, economy, and human liberation. But for centuries, literature has been counter-discourse, posing the question of whether such promise conceals darker realities. One of the longest-running critiques of such promise is Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), wherein scientific and technological progress stop benefiting humanity and instead redefine and diminish it. The novel outlines a future world wherein genetic engineering, behavioral conditioning, and pharmacological tranquilization of citizens erase individuality, intimacy, and critical examination. Huxley fictionalizes a society wherein the triumph of science is matched by the erosion of humanity.

The immediate concern of this study is to what extent Huxley represents science and technology as dehumanizing forces. While the novel has routinely been read as a critique of industrial advancement, for this study, its underlying significance is that it documents the ideological transmutation of science from a tool of knowledge to a tool of social regulation. Dehumanization in Huxley is systemic rather than incidental: it takes place merely because science and technology become disconnected from ethical, cultural, and spiritual interests. In this sense, the novel can be described as prefiguring later criticisms by thinkers and social theorists such as Herbert Marcuse, in *One-Dimensional Man* (1964), that technological reason has the potential to inscribe individuals



into structures of domination, or Jacques Ellul, in *The Technological Society* (1964), that technological progress assumes the form of an autonomous and uncontrollable force.

The argument constructed here is that *Brave New World* is neither exactly a fable about the misuse of science nor exactly some piece of science fiction, but is rather an extended rumination upon those constitutive conditions by virtue of which science itself is dehumanizing. The novel makes the case for scientific rationality towards ends of stability, efficiency, and foreknowledge, having as its corollary the erasure of precisely those things, liberty, imagination, memory, and moral responsibility, by virtue of which humanity has dignity. The novel thus requires re-examination of science and technology's connection to humanism, double-barreled itself, philosophical and fiction at once.

At the same time, this research provides its contribution to this learned debate through comparing side by side those arguments here with Huxley's criticism of biotechnology, computer intelligence, and information tracking. The world today makes spectacular out of what was frightening yesterday to embody an objectification of fiction itself, control over procreation, commerce with carnality, homogenizing humankind, and being constructed out of science fiction to critical realities. By marking those parallels, the research enters science-discourse with respect to its limit to ethics and its capacity to assist humankind to flourish and wither away.

This work argues that at least to maintain *Brave New World* to be a critical novel since it challenges the new paradox of contemporary culture: those tools purposed to improve humankind can, under some situations, end up being used to assault humanity's life itself. By positioning science and technology as dehumanizing instruments, the work challenges scholars of literature and ostensibly liberal societies to re-examine progress's price when situated alongside death's and freedom's loss.

Theoretical Framework

Every dehumanization narrative in *Brave New World* requires a clear conceptual framework. Dehumanization at its broadest account points to a citation to procedures by which subjects are deprived of their individuality, agency, and moral value and are often reduced to being only objects of manipulation or instruments of larger schemes. Philosophers, sociologists, and cultural critics have always contended that adoption by modernity of science and technology, while capable of unrivaled ends and benefits, is at the same time sown with seeds of reduction to humanity. The novel by Huxley embodies this dialectic and

stages how rationality by technology, when set above all else by ethics, reduces human beings to homogenous standardized units of a wider technocratic ordering.

Dehumanization as Social Process

Dehumanization is neither a matter of the elimination of individuality but a systematized reconfiguration of man as a passive subject. Erich Fromm, in *Escape from Freedom* (1941), hat contemporary societies often opt to favor conformity and stability at the cost of freedom's angst. Likewise, Huxley's *World State* systematizes such conforming by eliminating kin groups, cultural heritage, and moral responsibility and replacing them with artificially engineered stability. Human beings are manufactured to "fit" a system and thus cease to be autonomous moral agents.

Technology as Autonomous Force

Jacques Ellul's narrative in *The Technological Society* (1964) is informative for clarifying the vision of Huxley. Ellul argued that technology advances by its internal logic and often irrespective of ethics and social considerations. Once technology is possible, it is necessarily employed irrespective of later consequences. Huxley illustrates this maxim by his narrative about genetic engineering and mind conditioning, by which each is employed not because it is useful to humankind, but because it offers a surety of efficiency and control. *The World State* accordingly illustrates Ellul's argument that "technique evolves in itself, for itself" (Ellul 14), with a corresponding erosion of human values.

One-Dimensionality and Ideology

Herbert Marcuse, in *One-Dimensional Man* (1964), raised the possibility that technological rationality reduces humans to "one-dimensional" subjects whose critical faculties are incorporated into domination regimes. In *Brave New World*, this rationality has its form when stability and predictability are valued over freedom and truth, and when consumption is supreme. Citizens are trained to conform and to distrust neither, demonstrating Marcuse's point that technological societies create consent through satisfaction and diversion and not through coercion. The ubiquitousness of soma, the drug that abolishes discomfort, briefly illuminates Marcuse's hypothesis that pleasure itself can become a control mechanism.

Power, Discipline, and Bio-Politics

Michel Foucault's thoughts regarding discipline, power, and biopolitics are similarly embedded in Huxley's novel. In *Discipline and Punish* (1975), Foucault traced how current institutions police behavior through monitoring, normalization, and bodily control. Huxley's society pushes to its limit: conditioning starting at birth makes citizens internalize their





caste norms to a degree that actual punishment is needless. In *The History of Sexuality* (1976), Foucault extended his thoughts regarding biopolitics, whereby power exercises itself through the regulation of life itself, birth, procreation, health, and sexuality. The World State illustrates such control by abolishing natural procreation and replacing it with state-controlled genetic engineering, and hence subjecting the biological to the political.

Humanism Versus Technocracy

At its root, Huxley's critique is based upon a tension between technocratic imperatives and humanist values. Humanism rejoices in dignity, freedom, moral responsibility, and individual distinctiveness. Technocracy rejoices in efficiency, orderliness, and control, and tends to see individuals as interchangeable units. Dehumanization in *Brave New World* precisely assumes this form: humanists' vision of manhood is replaced by technocrats' vision of functional standardization. As Ellul describes it, "man is reduced to a technical animal" (Ellul 134), a vocabulary equally at home among citizens born by Huxley.

This theoretical framework provides us with this conceptual prism for the following analysis. By framing Huxley's dystopia with dehumanization arguments, techno-rationality arguments, and biopolitics arguments, the study illustrates how *Brave New World* can't merely be envisioned as science fiction but as an enduring meditation upon those conditions under which science and technology can undermine those pillars upon which human dignity depends.

Science: A Tool of Control

Science is neither truth-seeking nor humanity's flourishing in *Brave New World*; it is only the final social control mechanism. Scientific authority is supreme in *Brave New World*, but its legitimacy is founded upon neither discovery nor enlightenment. Instead, science is submitted to political authority to secure the perpetuity of a strictly defined social hierarchy. Manipulating environment, psychology, and biology is how science is employed to predict everyone's life and extinguish the unpredictability intrinsic to genuine freedom.

Genetic Engineering and the Predetermination of Identity

The most powerful analogy to science as control is Aldous Huxley's *Bokanovsky Process*, a theoretical process for producing dozens of genetically similar human beings out of a single egg. This process describes what Michel Foucault later theorized as biopolitics, political institutions controlling the life and procreation systematized. In Huxley's novel, natural birth is abolished and replaced with a factory system by which people are bioengineered to carry out predetermined social roles.

The Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, and Epsilon castes are not a result of merit nor individual promotion, but controlled biological engineering. By fixing identity at the moment of conception, the state abolishes individual autonomy to choose oneself. As Erich Fromm says, the danger of this type of social engineering is the replacement of human spontaneity with "automaton conformity" (Fromm 172).

Conditioning and Production of Consent

As well as biology, the World State entrenches control through the conditioning of the mind. Structures such as hypnopaedia, or sleep-teaching, instill state-sanctioned values in children before critical faculties are acquired. Rather than cultivating independence of mind, education is turned into a process of programming to condition citizens to accept their functions with a minimum of resistance. As Herbert Marcuse observed, advanced industrial societies engender conformity less by coercion and more by virtue of "the preconditioning of needs" (One-Dimensional Man 11). Huxley illustrates this process decades in advance: people are conditioned to desire precisely that which is offered by the system and to conflate personal will with social necessity.

The Myth of Scientific Neutrality

An essential implication of Huxley's account is shattering the myth of science as neutral or value-free. Science advancement in *Brave New World* is identical to political convenience. Every innovation, biological, chemical, or psychological, cultivated and implemented, is neither to enlarge knowledge nor to augment scientific discovery but to ensure social orderliness. The autonomy and self-rationalization of technological advancement, Jacques Ellul argued, are its certain demise; autonomy is ironically repressed, instead, in Huxley's utopia: science is intentionally arrested in areas potentially destructive to social control, such as physics and literature. The myth of scientific objectivity conceals the reality that knowledge is shaped and bounded by ideological imperatives.

Science as Determinism and the End of Freedom

The deterministic reasoning of World State, therefore, eliminates one of humankind's most essential components: freedom to choose. Predefining biological destiny and conditioning psychic desire through its system, it abolishes unpredictability present as part of humanity's condition. This is comparable to Hannah Arendt's maxim whereby if man is reduced to being an object of technical manipulation, political space, being freedom, and action are eliminated (The Human Condition 151). Science through Huxley's novel is exactly the mode by which man is transformed to "living machines," controllable and predictable yet fundamentally severed from genuine agency.





By positioning science as a tool of control, Huxley challenges one of the foundational myths of modernity: scientific progress is necessarily emancipatory. Instead, it is compelled to believe by the novel that science, when coupled with demands for order and stability, is dehumanizing: it limits a minimum range for possibility and confines individuals within a system wherein identity, thought, and desire are defined by preexisting definitions. Thus, *Brave New World* illuminates for us the strongest form of domination as being less likely to stem from direct coercion and yet being a scientific system whereby freedom is rendered unnecessary and inconceivable.

Technology and the Manipulation of Consciousness

As biological engineering supports the alignment of bodies, technical interferences in *Brave New World* secure the alignment of minds themselves. The vision is one whereby discomfort, doubt, or critical examination can't occur since consciousness itself is managed through pharmacological and technological means. Mind control is subtle: fear and coercion are replaced through pleasure, distraction, and systematized elimination of discomfort. The technology is therefore not only shaping extrinsic terms of life but also goes inside the interiority itself of being.

Soma and Suffering's Chemical Erasure

The most ubiquitous vehicle for psychic manipulation in the novel is soma, a medication freely dispensed to all citizens. Promoted as providing "all the benefits of Christianity and alcohol; none of their ills" (Huxley 54), soma captures the technological utopian imagination of doing away with pain at no cost. In its actual practice, however, it is used to repress any opportunity for existential questioning. By numbing discomfort and unease, soma keeps people from being able to see to deeper contradictions of their existence. Herbert Marcuse predicted such mechanics when he argued that advanced societies manufacture happy consciousness through utilitarian gratification and hidden unfreedom (One-Dimensional Man 84). In Huxley's novel, soma is neither release from pain nor release to ecstasy but a vehicle for keeping citizens tranquilized, complacent, and immune to revolt.

Entertainment and the Cult of Distraction

Besides pharmacology, control is carried out by the World State by means of technological entertainment, represented by its renowned "feelies," sensory motion pictures to assault vision and hearing, and touch as well. These spectacles represent simulacra as conceived by Jean Baudrillard, by which representation stops indicating reality and takes its place instead (Simulacra and Simulation 11). In Huxley's utopia, entertainment neither generates nor provides significance but replaces it

and overwhelms consciousness with stimulus to allow neither space nor chance to think critically. The citizens are distracted by immobility; thinking about reality is halted by a torrent of synthetic experience.

The Politics of Happiness

Manipulation of the conscience is justified by a happiness ideology in the novel. The state has apparently eliminated the problem of man's suffering and grants citizens permanent stability and enjoyable consumption. This is, however, superficial happiness, engineered to make sure there is never any genuine emotion evoked. As argued by Foucault, present power regimes do not operate by repression but by producing certain kinds of subjectivity (*The History of Sexuality* 94). In *Brave New World*, the producers associate happiness with comfort and consumption. The implication is a citizenry who are neither capable of imagining nor perceiving beyond their modes of being.

The Loss of Tragedy and the Muzzling of Depth

The strongest marker of a controlled mind is the omission of tragedy, art, and abiding emotion. These characters find that something essential is missing: "I feel as though I were meant for something better... but I can never make people feel what I feel" (Huxley 160). The omission of literature, religion, and philosophy indicates that a culture immersed in techno-pleasure is equally a culture lacking the profound modes of humanness. The cost of controlled happiness is the silencing of meaning.

Prefiguring present anxieties regarding digital distraction, consumer culture, and commodification of experience is the vision of technological manipulation by Aldous Huxley. By describing how pleasure can itself be a mode of control, the novel rends asunder the fallacy that happiness is synonymous with freedom. Manipulation of the mind renders dehumanization less like oppression and more like a comfort; it is therefore less apparent and yet far more destructive. In this way, *Brave New World* warns us ahead of time that technology's greatest threat is neither violence nor war but its capacity to cause people to love their servitude.

The Deconstruction of Family, Memory, and History

Dehumanization is achieved for dehumanized peoples not only through the manipulation of mind and body but through the removal of cultural, familial, and historical continuity from an individual and a society through deliberate dismantling. Huxley portrays a world in which human relations are conditioned to further the state, and historical and mnemonic consciousness are eliminated to foreclose critical consideration and shaping of individual identity. By eroding these initial supports, the novel



illustrates how scientific and technological intervention can transfer from the material to the orders of symbolic existence among humans.

The Abolition of the Family

One of the surprising elements of Huxley's dystopia is its abolishing of the family. Motherhood, fatherhood, and natural parenting are rendered obscene and are substituted with state-managed reproductions and communal childcare. The maxim of the World State, "Everyone belongs to everyone else," enshrines the erasure of personal attachment and intimate feeling (Huxley 32). By abolishing familial connection, the state is assured that individuals will channel their fidelity to whatever system and not to loved ones. Erich Fromm's analysis of human relationships points to the same tendency: true love is recognition of individuality and weakness, and these two are inseparable in a society whose aim is forethought and control (Fromm 198). Huxley shows the consequences of substituting biological and affective bonds with engineered stability: citizens are tied to one another with only superficial gratification and never with actual care and sympathy.

Suppression of Memory

Both collective and individual memory are strictly repressed within the World State. Individuals are conditioned to forget and to take as natural and inevitable whatever is present at any given moment. Historical conscience, by virtue of which humans are capable of understanding change, cause and effect, and moral responsibility, is actively denied. As Foucault argues, power asserts its dominance through sovereignty over knowledge and memory (Discipline and Punish 27). By controlling access to things remembered and determining valuable, the state controls its subjects' experience of reality and makes rebellion and critical examination virtually impossible. The narrative by Huxley foresees contemporary arguments over politics and memory, and intimates through its depiction, human beings are open to manipulation and ideological capture when detached from history.

Cultural Amnesia and the Forgetting of Individuality

The removal of memory is extended to culture, as art, literature, and religion are eliminated or reduced. Symbols of culture, potentially stimulating thought or emotion, are discovered to be disruptive and hence avoided in public life. Helmholtz Watson's recognition of this deprivation, his hunger to transmit valuable ideas, becomes the human cost of cultural removal (Huxley 161). The novel thus shows dehumanization to entail something beyond bodily or psychic manipulation; it involves systematized elimination of symbols by means

of which humans are capable of reflecting, critiquing, and defining themselves.

History as a Threat to Stability

Huxley characterizes historical consciousness as inherently destabilizing. By eliminating knowledge of the past, the state renders it impossible to envision other arrangements to things as they presently are. History, memory, and personal narrative are portrayed as threats because they foster autonomy, moral imagination, and imagination. This is akin to Marcuse's position that technological societies make thoughtless by narrowly defining the scope of consciousness (One-Dimensional Man 76). The state's power to repress historical consciousness is a key dehumanizing technology in Huxley's imagination; it renders people functionally optimal but morally and emotionally superficial.

By dismantling family, memory, and history, Huxley illustrates dehumanization operating at some levels of life. By erasing those frameworks that keep identity and a sense of belonging and ethical sensibility intact, the World State produces subjects who are biologically, psychologically, and culturally compliant. Systematic repression of historic sensibility and relationalness at a human level reinforces the central argument of the novel: scientific and technological supremacy, when severed from ethics and humanist imperatives, risks transforming human beings into not only compliant but essentially diminished beings.

Dehumanization Through Standardization

In Brave New World, conformity is guaranteed by the World State by means of biology and consciousness and by social and occupational normalization. The rigid caste system, ranging from Alphas to Epsilons, assures that all stick to a set assigned task with no desire or independence for the individual (Huxley 23). Education and work are aimed at conditioning citizens to accept their tasks with unyielding obedience and show how system design can suppress original imagination and critical thought.

Standardization is extended to behavior and speech, and even to entertainment. The reliability of desire, imposed by entertainment and hypnopaedia, creates a citizenry that is consistently industrious and socially compliant. Marcuse's criticism of one-dimensional cultures is apposite here: quantity and reliability are preferred to depth and diversity of human experience (One-Dimensional Man 44). The human cost of scientific and technological domination described by Huxley is not merely loss of freedom but loss of individuality itself.

By standardization, the study describes how dehumanization is intrinsic to social organization: when capacity and desire are engineered and when



roles are standardized, all conception of individual possibility is undermined. The World State is a reduction of citizens to functional units and evidence of the destructive effect systematized uniformity has upon human dignity.

Contemporary Resonance

Though *Brave New World* was first published in 1932, its denunciation of technological manipulation and dehumanization has profound application to the 21st century. The 21st-century breakthroughs in biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and surveillance technology are analogous to those imagined by Huxley. Genetic engineering techniques such as CRISPR allow never-before-seen manipulation by humanity over life and betray similar concerns about ethics to those inspired by the World State's artificially engineered caste system. Algorithmically-controlled social networking sites equally manipulate desire and attention and cause soma-like effects by creating consumptive passivity and reliance upon affect (Zuboff 56).

Huxley's criticisms equally reflect concerns with surveillance capitalism, by which personal information is commodified and behavior is subtly managed to be maximally efficient and profitable. The homogenizing of tastes, consumption habits, and political views is matched by enforced homogeneity in the World State. In addition to this, mechanization founded upon machines and decisions always abrogates individual agency by an equal measure, paralleled by Huxley's definition of man as functional units governed by system compulsions.

By putting Huxley's novel in contemporary technology, we can interpret the novel less as historic prophecy and more as a perceptive explication of global trends towards socialization. The key question is: with scientific and technological progress, how are societies to achieve human dignity, rational intellectuality, and actual connection beneath expanding system dominance? The Huxley novel accordingly arrives at once as a warning prism towards innovation's limits towards morality.

Discussion

The analysis of *Brave New World* observes how science and technology are portrayed by Huxley as neither beneficent nor neutral tools but tools of total dehumanization. Manipulation by genes, conditioning, and drug therapy has a system-wide effect to neutralize autonomy, critical intelligence, and affective attachments. Disconnecting ties of the family, historical conscience, and individuality itself, the analysis reveals how technological domination, unchecked by ethics, can transform human beings into functional units of a societal mechanism.

The Huxley novel is equally intermediate with respect to philosophical and sociological writings and anticipates Ellul's denunciation of technorationality, Marcuse's one-dimensional society, and Foucault's concept of biopolitical governance. Its timeless appeal is its ability to illuminate current dilemmas, such as governance through AI, biotechnology, and surveillance capitalism, and to chronicle how dehumanizing processes are never completely imaginary. In addition, Power's weakness is revealed by Huxley: it is at its most powerful when it exercises consent through pleasure, diversion, and normalization, and at its weakest when it is direct and repressive. In general, studies confirm the ethical requirement to align scientific and technological advancement with humanist concerns. The dystopia foreseen by Huxley is terrifying, being short-sighted to concerns by exchanging freedom and imagination and ethical responsibility for system effectiveness and societal stability.

Conclusion

Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* is an exemplary argument for science and technology as instruments of dehumanization when detached from ethical and humanist principles. Due to genetic engineering, conditioning supremacy over mentation and control of pleasure, all individuality is oppressed by the World State, critical thinking is oppressed, and the richness of history and emotions is obliterated. The criticisms are valid for contemporary arguments extended to biotechnology, AI, police states, and why those perils foretold by Huxley are yet actual.

The message of Huxley's novel is simply that scientific and technological progress can never be followed by irresponsibility and lack of ethical consideration. Depth and imagination, and freedom of man's life are not guaranteed by scientific and technological advancements; they must actively be preserved. *Brave New World* is thus still an indispensable book for understanding the human cost of irresponsible scientific and technological dominance and helping to create ethical consideration today.

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