

Setting: The World State, 632 AF

the **time** and **place** the story occurs

- The World State is the government that controls everything in this future world.
- It is called the “World State” because there are no individual countries anymore; the whole world is just one country controlled by one central government.
- The year the novel takes place is 2540 AD.
 - In the novel, this is referred to as 632 years AF (“After Ford”), meaning 632 years after production of the first Model T car.

“Community, Identity, Stability”

- This is the World State's motto.
- **Community** is the first word because the good of the community is more important than anything else.
- **Identity** is important because you are allowed to be an individual within the community guidelines.
- **Stability** is what makes you happy in this Brave New World. Everything is stable (predictable and peaceful) so the people do not have to worry about anything.



Characters: The D.H.C.

- **Job Title:** The Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning (also called the D.H.C.)
- **Caste:** Alpha
- In first few chapters, the D.H.C. takes students on a tour of the Hatchery and Conditioning Center.
 - This is also how the *reader* gets introduced to the society and learns how people are “born” and raised in it. The reader is basically on the tour, too.

Why is Henry Ford so important?

- In this future world, babies are produced, conditioned, and educated in an “assembly-line” way.
 - This assembly line method of creating and teaching humans determines every human being’s destiny.
 - Every child is a “test tube baby”. Sperm and egg are joined in a laboratory setting, and then the fetuses are grown in bottles (chemistry glass).
 - Women do not become pregnant and give birth.
 - In fact, the idea of a “mother” or “parents” is actually *disgusting* to the people in this world!

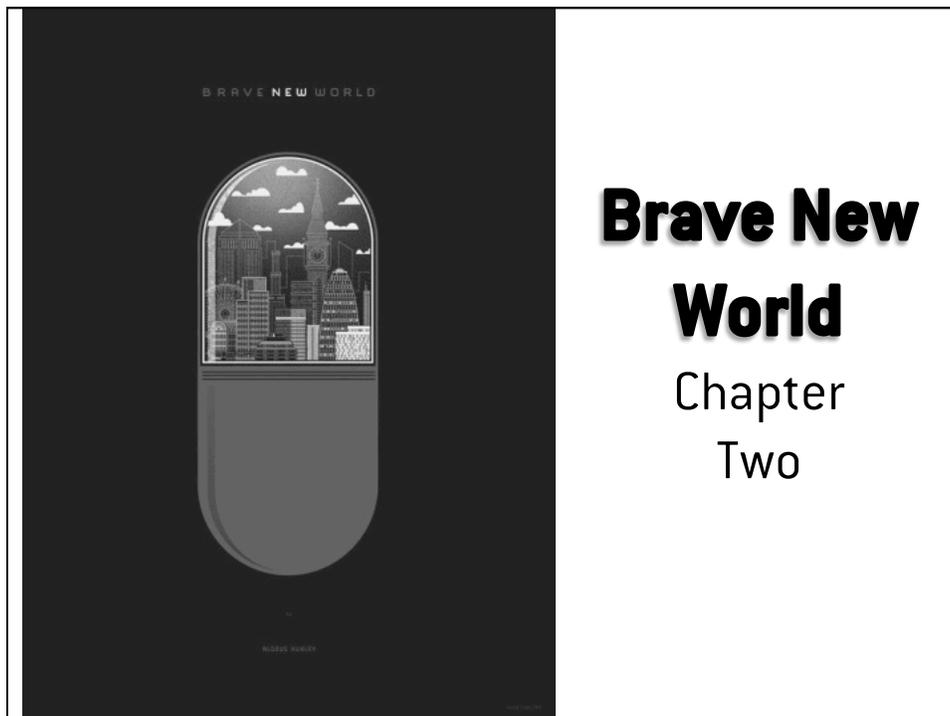
It’s Disturbing on Purpose

“Reading Brave New World elicits the same disturbing feelings in the reader which the society [the book] depicts has vanquished.”

- The author created a futuristic world where the **characters** can avoid feeling pain or unpleasant feelings due to advances in science and technology.
 - The interesting thing about this situation is that the world that the author created is very likely to create reactions of disgust or unpleasantness for the **reader**!
 - The characters can avoid unpleasantness, but the reader probably can’t.

Why so much control?

- The World State government decided that things that are considered normal in our society (mothers, fathers, home, etc.) were a danger to world peace because they get in the way of government control.
 - The leaders thought that if people were controlled and directed ***completely*** from birth, they would have no reason to rebel, start wars, etc.
 - **Would you sacrifice your freedom if it meant that there would be no more war, terrorism, violence, hate, etc.?** Something must have happened to this society that was so terrible that it made them willing to do that (or maybe they didn't have a choice...).



The Caste System

- **Caste** – In a caste system, society is divided up into different groups. The groups are called castes. Each caste is responsible for doing certain jobs. People are born into a caste and can't ever switch into another one. They are stuck in that caste until they die.
- In the World State, people are created and conditioned to belong to a particular caste.
- The castes are named after letters of the Greek alphabet: Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, and Epsilon.



The Caste System: Conditioning

- This society uses **conditioning** to make babies of certain castes not like or want things that the government thinks members of their caste do not need.
- Why do this?
 “And that,” put in the Director *sententiously**, “that is the secret of happiness and virtue - liking what you’ve got to do. All conditioning aims at that: making people **like** their unescapable social destiny.”

sententiously = expressing a strong opinion
 [The D.H.C. believes very strongly that this system of conditioning is the right thing to do to make people happy].

The Caste System: Conditioning

- Examples of conditioning used in the World State...
 - **Heat Conditioning:** Fetuses who are destined to live and work in hot climates are exposed to heat to get them used to tropical weather.
 - **Classical Conditioning (Association):** Babies from a caste that doesn't need to read are taught to associate books with fear by giving them electric shocks and playing scary noises when they crawl toward books.
 - In the book, this is called "Neo [New]-Pavlovian Conditioning" because it is like the Pavlov's Dog experiment.

The Caste System: Hypnopaedia

- **hypnopaedia** = brainwashing sleeping people with a repeated message

"Alpha children wear grey. They work much harder than we do, because they're so frightfully clever. I'm really awfully glad I'm a Beta, because I don't work so hard. And then we are much better than the Gammas and Deltas. Gammas are stupid. They all wear green, and Delta children wear khaki. Oh no, I don't want to play with Delta children. And Epsilons are still worse. They're too stupid to be able to be able to read or write. Besides they wear black, which is such a beastly color. I'm so glad I'm a Beta."

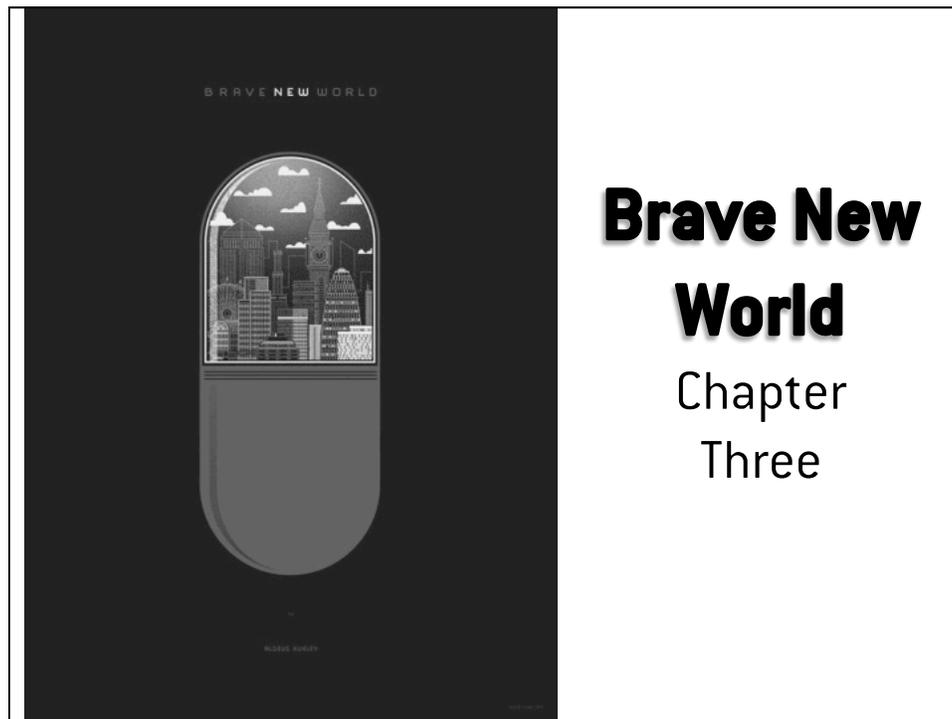
The Caste System: Hypnopaedia

- **hypnopaedia** = brainwashing sleeping people with a repeated message
- Why do this?

Till at last the child's mind is these suggestions, and the sum of the suggestions is the child's mind. And not the child's mind only. The adult's mind too - all his life long. The mind that judges and desires and decides - made up of these suggestions. But all these suggestions are our suggestions!" The Director almost shouted in his triumph. "Suggestions from the State."

Conditioning and Economic Policy

- People are conditioned to like or dislike things **not only** to make them satisfied with their predestined situation in life, **but also** to force them to want to purchase certain goods and services, which in turn keeps factories busy (\$\$\$).
 - The D.H.C. says that Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons were once conditioned to love the country so that they would use public transportation to travel there (\$), but the government changed that to making them love country *sports* so that they would not only want to travel to the country but would *also* want to purchase sports equipment (\$\$).



Characters: Mustapha Mond

- **Job Title:** Resident Controller for Western Europe
- **Caste:** Alpha
- He is one of the ten leaders (World Controllers) of the World State.
- There are rumors that he has a collection of “forbidden books” that were written before the World State was formed. (“Bibles, poetry – Ford knew what”)

Characters: Lenina Crowne

- **Job Title:** Resident Controller for Western Europe
- **Caste:** Alpha
- She is NOT related to Fanny. There are only 10,000 names in the whole world, and “families” don’t exist.

Characters: Fanny Crowne

- **Job Title:** Resident Controller for Western Europe
- **Caste:** Alpha
- She is NOT related to Lenina. There are only 10,000 names in the whole world, and “families” don’t exist.

The Feelies

- “The Feelies” are movies that stimulate more than just the eyes.
- Those watching the Feelies can actually *feel* all of the action, especially during the love scenes, so it’s very much like virtual reality.
 - During the time Brave New World was written, movies were either silent films or they were “talkies” that actually had spoken dialogue. The idea of “talkies” is where the author got the idea to have “feelies” in this futuristic society.
- Mostly, the Feelies are used to keep the characters brainwashed in the sexualized, materialistic culture.

“Everyone belongs to everyone else.”

- In the World State, monogamy (dating only one person or getting married) are seen as disgusting.
- Babies are taught that “Everyone belongs to everyone else” through hypnopaedia.
- Fanny harasses Lenina because Lenina has been seeing Henry Foster – and not anyone else – for four months.
 - “You know how strongly the D.H.C. objects to anything intense or long-drawn. Four months of Henry Foster, without having another man - why, he’d be furious if he knew! ...you ought to be a little more promiscuous.”

“Ending is better than mending.”

- In the World State, consuming goods and services is extremely important.
- Babies are taught that “Ending is better than mending” through hypnopaedia.
 - It is better to throw something out [end] and buy a replacement than to fix [mend] what you already have.

Characters: Bernard Marx

- **Job Title:** (none revealed in Chapter Three)
- **Caste:** Alpha Plus
- Bernard has invited Lenina to visit a Savage Reservation with him. (We don’t know what that is yet in Chapter Three).
- There are rumors about Bernard Marx. These rumors show the reader that Bernard is probably a little different from other people in the World State society.
 - “They say he doesn’t like Obstacle Golf. ...and then he spends most of his time by himself – alone.”

Characters: Bernard Marx

- Bernard is an expert on hypnopaedia, but he doesn't seem to agree with it the way the D.H.C. does.
"Sixty-two thousand four hundred repetitions make one truth. Idiots!"

A Society Built on Instant Gratification

- The World State is set up to provide everyone with whatever they are *conditioned* to desire as soon as they want it. (instant gratification)
 - The World State controls what people want (remember the babies and the books?) so that the leaders are able to give people *what* they want *when* they want it.
 - People are taught that they should not have to wait for anything that makes them feel good.

A Society Built on Instant Gratification

“Has any of you been compelled to live through a long time interval between the consciousness of a desire and its fulfillment?” [asked Mustapha Mond.]

“I once had to wait nearly four weeks before a girl I wanted would let me have her.” [a boy replied.]

“And you felt a strong emotion in consequence?”

“Horrible!”

“Horrible; precisely,” said the Controller. “Our ancestors were so stupid and short-sighted that when the first reformers came along and offered to deliver them from those horrible emotions, they wouldn’t have anything to do with them.”