

Social Stability and Conditioning Disciplinary Characters in Dystopian Fiction. A Study of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*.

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Abstract:

Studies in dystopian fiction reveal the focus of authors on social stability as an escape from the lived reality, that is replete with ideologies and conflicting groups that seek domination through the illusion of social stability. The governments thus strive to dominate their citizens, rendering them disciplinary and supportive to the ruling system regardless of the needs of people. This paper attempts to shed light on the different conditioning aspects that aid in maintaining disciplinary characters as a tool to achieve social stability. It utilizes Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* as an example for its dystopian features including the lack of individual freedom, fake happiness and the biological violations of the human nature.

Keywords: social stability, conditioning, disciplinary characters, BNW: *Brave New World*.

1. Introduction

Brave New World is a fictional novel that reflects life in a totalitarian society. The novel is futuristic in which people are conditioned to live a happy peaceful life without suffering any of the old world's conditions. Wars, famine, diseases and all human conflicts are absent in this world. The government is totalitarian in which 'everyone belongs to everyone else', and the value of people is measured according to their utility in society. In order to maintain a stable life and avoid all the mistakes that occurred in the past, which in turn resulted in human destruction, a group of changes were set for a simpler and less risky life. Each person is biologically conditioned to serve a certain role in society. People are divided into several groups that are equally similar in their abilities, shapes and uniforms. People are no more born naturally, instead, they are created in groups through the Bokanovsky process, in order to keep the level of population low and to guarantee the exact number of workers in each group. As

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humans have made many mistakes in the past, all traces of the past were erased by the government. People are not aware of their past as it is pictured as shameful and replete with mistakes. Accordingly, they are taught to focus on one's responsibilities and remain entertained. Happiness is guaranteed for everyone through some medicine called 'soma'. Taking half a gramme of soma releases a beautiful feeling of joy and relaxation, and a kind of satisfaction that induces indifference to anything that disturbs a person's peaceful and stable life. Mustapha Mond is the ruling figure in the novel, who is aware of people's past and all the necessities for a stable and secure future. Ford replaces God, while some concepts like literature, religion and motherhood are a myth or a mistake committed in the past. *Brave New World* thus serves as a good example to study the conditioning of disciplinary characters as a tool for social stability.

1. Is *Brave New World* Utopian or Dystopian?

The debate whether *Brave New World* is utopian or dystopian leads back to the interrelated definitions of utopia and dystopia. For Lyman Sargent, besides the impact of H.G. Wells that did not only affect the structure of the genre, but the features that make a society distinguishable as either utopian or dystopian, the increasing number of books produced in the 20th C added to the impossibility of classifying such genres based on their features. In addition, the political tension in that period made the generalization of a one definition and/or the distinction between utopia and dystopia extremely difficult: "the upheavals of two world wars, the Great Depression, the Cold War, and the war in Vietnam produced major shifts throughout the period, making generalization doubly difficult" (275).

Utopia, as the perfect world or the creation of the perfect conditions for a society has become possible with a vision to the future and the intended changes in the present. For Sargent, "utopia embodies more than an image of what the good life would be and becomes a claim about what it could and should be: Utopia is then not just a dream to be enjoyed, but a vision to be pursued" (Themes in Utopian Fiction 14). The dream to pursue a vision is as important as making it envisioned in reality. For Shelby Ostergaard, thanks to the highly developed technologies, the creation of a perfect world has become possible, "for the first time, a vision of a world without difficult, toiling, physical labor seemed not only possible, but likely" (2). Eliminating all the difficulties that faced people to reach a perfect life, could aid in moving forwards to create a utopia that lasts and evolves as long as technologies keep developing.

What Lyman Sargent considers as a dream or a blueprint for a perfect world that authors crave hard to make their readers see, is in fact but an illusion to feel what does not exist. Sargent sees that utopian works turned to be dystopian only in the contemporary life due to the political changes that occurred in the world in the beginning of the 20th century. He claims that Thomas More's coinage of the word utopia that

means the perfect place turned to be no place. Due to the post world wars era and the cold war, the image of utopia could signify but a bad place for those who seek to survive the results of the Soviet ideologies (Authority and Utopia 2). He enforces this argument that it was due to power shift to the center “Most utopias appearing in the twentieth century have been dystopias, and most of them have focused on excessive centralization of power as the primary cause of the troubles of society” (565). The rapid change in power, hegemony, and domination created a vague meaning of utopia turning it into a dystopian world, heavily concerned with the social changes and the reformulations that accompany it. Furthermore, the 20th C did not mark only dystopian works, instead, more enthusiastic works were produced. Particularly, he argues that these works can be related to depression in the first place. The strong urge to claim for a highly exaggerated dystopia around depression, diverged to create a wide range of utopias in an increasing number of publications every year.

Despite the fact that depression can create a set of more gloomy, complicated societies, visualising the lived reality chaos and loss, authors never ceased to create a bright image of a good and stable society. This process, for Martin Gustavo eliminates most of the human features resulting in the depiction of tragic consequences for humanity “The dystopian novel itself demonstrates the push and pull between utopian and dystopian perspectives. To a significant extent, each of these novels makes us ponder how an originally utopian promise was abused, betrayed, or, ironically, fulfilled so as to create tragic consequences for humanity” (181). Limiting people’s free will and suppressing their tendency to have a normal life results in a work of dystopia as ‘to live in tandem with chaos and suffering is not ideal’.

Contemporary life conditions may delude people in general and authors in particular to try to create a perfect world, which in turn can be worse than the real one. What seemed to make a perfect world possible is the technologies of the modern world. As utopia means ‘no place’, authors argue that it doesn’t exist, but a ‘bad place’ does exist as a dystopia, which indicates the flaws humans have when they try to create a perfect place. In addition, no social or political system is void of weaknesses and differences that lead people to rebel and seek change. The world with its agonizing differences and changes will inevitably result in fighting groups either over power and domination or over the basic needs for a normal life. Dystopia, on the other hand is defined as “a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as considerably worse than the society in which that reader lived” (qtd in Dillam 8). It indicates not only the shared experience of the authors within the same age, but the shared experience of all dystopias around the world. The systems that govern people using ideologies and political and social domination, should take the same path to hegemony over societies. It is noticed that the dystopias created prior the 20th c and those after it are still echoes nowadays in the 21st c in many societies that suffer the domination of certain political groups. These shared features such as ‘oppressive

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governments, stringent laws, collectivist ideologies, and worship of the state', turn it to what Gottlieb described it as "a dictatorship of a hell on earth, the worst of all possible worlds" (3).

The deviation from the features that make any work dystopian, would not result in any utopian creation, but in another dystopian work with modern conditions and more developed tools to dominate the human mind and body. The case of *Brave New World*, the study subject of this paper makes it a novel without any features of a directly oppressed society. Martin Franzen sees that:

What is considered ethically sound in Huxley's world is that which prevents chaos in the form of rebellion and suffering. The dilemma here is that chaos and suffering must be considered to be one of the natural aspects of human life. Generally, these would be considered dystopian features, but *Brave New World* presents the idea that a society that is actively suppressing humanity's tendency to live in tandem with chaos and suffering is not ideal (8).

The lack of chaos, the tandem of rebellion make a society not utopia but a dystopia that suppresses some natural needs because chaos and the possibility to rebel and create change are the result of the natural process of survival, and any alteration in this system would absolutely result in a dystopian work.

In light of power and control, Gottlieb argues that the representatives of a society decide whether a work can be utopian or dystopian. He states that "In the modern scenario salvation is represented as a just society governed by worthy representatives chosen by an enlightened people; damnation, by an unjust society, a degraded mob ruled by a powercrazed elite" (3). Kaleta explains that "The former describes a utopia, an earthly or heavenly paradise. The latter describes a dystopia, a dictatorship of hell on earth" (9). This demonstrates that utopia depicts the flaws to be avoided in any society in a way that includes comfort and stability, while dystopia puts the society in its worst conditions. It occurs through eliminating these flaws from reality and replacing them with their opposite, as dystopia is focusing on what if we take things to the extreme especially totalitarianism and the highly oppressive governments.

The comparison between utopia and dystopia was conducted based on the salvation or damnation of people in any society. The perfect world of salvation or the doomed world of damnation may both exist as an escape from the flaws of the past and the oppression of individual freedom. Accordingly, *Brave New World* can be considered as a non-existent world that serves as a warning against the exaggerated conditioning, that although can result in a stable society through having disciplined characters, it can neglect their individualism and social and biological freedom making it a dystopian work.

2. Conditioning Characters in *Brave New World*

The process of conditioning requires a total control over characters' freedom. It is based not on letting people choose their job or rank in a society according to their abilities, it is rather a reversed process in which they create people according to the needs of the society. It is claimed by Mustapha Mond, the controller of the society that "everyone is conditioned to believe in something. People believe in God because they have been conditioned to believe in God" (Huxley 159). Every character is conditioned to suit in this community or what Franzen called it "designing and conditioning them to suit their predestination"(13). Thus, the determined state of each character is not based on their choices but rather on their role in society, in other words, the role assigned to them by the system that governs this society. The dream to create a perfect system that fulfills stability is destined to neglect people's freedom. For Sargent, it is always based on achieving a dream through neglecting some group's dreams or freedom (Authority and Utopia 18). The characters who make the majority of the society, lose the pursuit of their dreams of freedom and equality in favor of the controllers' dream despite their knowledge of the true meaning of stability.

The call for a one united way of governing the society requires a total uniformity of believes and behaviours. Dystopian societies with totalitarian governments exchange people's differences, freedoms and emotions with the stability of the community or the so called identical wants: "Utopian men are uniform creatures with identical wants and reactions and deprived of emotions and passions, for these would be the expressions of individuality. This uniformity is reflected in every aspect of utopian life, from the clothes to the time-table, from moral behavior to intellectual interests" (Sargent, Authority and Utopia 10). With uniformity achieved, the government gets total control over the citizens' behaviours. People need permissions to 'get up, move, wash', so that decision making belongs to the government. As people are not aware of what best serves their needs and future destination, they are attached to the government and its totalitarian decisions (Dillman 11). Huxley explained that physical imprisonment is no more recurrent in the dystopian settings. Instead, people are more of psychological captives to the government's needs though people seem free to think and decide what best suits their situations (Brower 29). The government's purpose is based on keeping the society standing and humanity in safety of people's bad decisions. They thus need 'sane, obedient men, stable in contentment' (Huxley, 28) and that was used as an example to keep the wheels of progress moving forward, steady toward the service of the society. This process starts at an early age as they put books and flowers and let the babies approach them. The babies get loud noises and explosions that deprive them from approaching the books and flowers. They train their behaviours so that they hate books and flowers at an early age. (14). Children are prepared to hate anything that is colorful, thus anything that indicates differences of choices or freedom of decision.

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They see that the characters should not act on their own. Men should not do things on their own and they make them avoid anything unpleasant even if it serves their intellectual progress, emotions or self satisfaction: "it would upset the whole social order if men started doing things on their own" (161). This is apparent in the novel where boys start learning everything madly at an early age. The author insists that the boys write madly all that the director says without asking questions and taking all that is dictated to them blindly.

Bernard, the only character who wanted to be free sees himself as enslaved by this conditioning system and seeks to be free and different (61). He had the feeling of one's self determination. Bernard tells Lenina that he wants to be himself and she refuses the idea. Lenina thinks that everybody should be part of that social body 'everybody works for everybody else', then she said 'it's horrible...and how can you talk like that about not wanting to be part of the social body' (60). In the ceremony, although Bernard could not feel Ford, he acted the same as everyone. They felt and shouted the coming and presence of Ford in their celebration as they danced. Although he did not feel or hear anything about the assumed God Ford, Bernard did the same and continued acting with the rest of people.

Sanders states that people in such societies are interchangeable as their emotions, actions and behaviours are easily altered through conditioning "persons are interchangeable, relating to each other through socially-defined roles; actions are governed by procedure, and thus do not characterize the actor; emotion is repressed in favour of reason; the individual is subordinated to the system" (14). Mustapha Mond, the governor and the controller of this community kept repeating the sentence 'ending is better than mending' (Huxley 33). That is, it is easier to end a thing and replace it than to try to repair it. Humans in here are too easy to create and condition rather than try to treat or teach them again for it is human nature that once they start doubting they never stop until they reach a satisfactory result, which does not serve stability and the many secrets in this community. Mustapha himself was conditioned and chosen to be responsible in the government. Mustapha said he had good science and they thought of sending him to an island but he was given the choice to either be sent to Iceland or to be in the controllership and forget about science. He explained that happiness of others, which means trying to create a group of people who are conditioned to be happy unquestionably, is harder than accepting the truth. This shows how difficult it is to condition people to feel something that does not exist in their lives and let them deal with it and teach it to others and by the end preserve it as something not to be changed or interrogated.

2.1 Repetitions

In order to preserve disciplinary characters and to maintain control, a set of behavioral conditioning repetitions were used. The process of repetitions is behavioural and can be used directly to erase one's personality and thinking and thus aiding in the process of totalizing the system and controlling people. Drills are used to erase and root a new idealization of a concept or behaviour like 'everyone belongs to everyone else'. The science of repetition was described by Huxley: "it isn't only art that's incompatible with happiness ; it's also science. Science is dangerous ; we have to keep it most carefully chained and muzzled" (153). Yet, he clarified that it is not the science used presently, because it is more like a cookery book. By science, he meant the science that was used in the past and accordingly resulted in the current world and the existence of ideological conditioning that made people the way they are in the new world.

Repetitions were used to teach people the everyday routine of living in a stable society. A basic lesson for instance requires "a hundred and twenty times three times a week for thirty months. After which they go on to a more advanced lesson" (18). This amount of repetition creates a group of people who act like machines, well prepared to accept any information unquestionably. For instance, repeating that everyone was happy, watching the switchback 'disappearance of a person into gas' and thinking that 'he was happy and everyone is happy is a good sign of accepting such violences for the sake of being, as they were convinced, happy. Thus, that is all the repetitions they hear every night: 'Yes, everybody's happy now' echoed Lenina. They had heard the words repeated a hundred and fifty times every night for twelve years" (50)

Lenina, who is considered a strong believer in the system and a sign of its success, is always repeating "a gramme is better than a damn", which means a gramme of soma keeps all bad feelings away. It is a sentence that was taught and repeated to them at an early age. Thus, every character is behaved on a certain idea until it becomes their mind and thus be easily controlled. The director exemplified it with the power of drops of water "though water, it is true, can wear holes in the hardest granite...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" (19). This way, everyone is kept disciplinary under control and thus never forget their duties. Thanks to the long repetitions and soma, the acceptance of orders, ideas was made 'almost as automatic and inevitable as blinking'.

2.2 Biological Conditioning

One of the main disciplinary conditioning factors used in *Brave New World*, is the biological conditioning. The use of a biological system goes along with the mental behaviour that accompanies repetitions and the consumption of soma. The changes that alter a human's physical shape or reduces their numbers or abilities in any way, can be the most affective type of conditioning. Only through eugenics, the government could create groups of identical people in their shapes, mental state and abilities. It is believed that Eugenics could be used as a direct tool to facilitate controlling people as Huxley

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described it “a fool proof system of eugenics, designed to standardize the human product and so to facilitate the task of the manager” (15). The manager’s task in the process of maintaining disciplinary people and stability, is not only based on control and behaviour, it is rather a treatment of people as considerable products stripped of all their humane features. This process that was described by Hillegas as an unethical behaviour meant to keep total domination over the people of any society which signifies a feature in all dystopian novels and a good resemblance in all their systems (37).

Improving the ‘human stock’ comes as a priority in maintaining stability and control over population. The scientific planning of any society aids in selecting the best version of humans, if not developing or creating them. Having a limited number of population serves better in controlling people’s behaviours and thus maintaining their disciplinary attitude, and keeping stability away from all the mistakes of the past. It is also meant to ‘stabilize population’ through controlling their precise number. Changing the natural process of reaching maturity gives the government the upper hand to choose the appropriate number of people who should live in any society (Huxley 4).

The fear of degeneration stands as equally important. It is not only the degeneration in the productivity of people, but rather the degeneration of races, that can put ‘the white race at the mercy of colored races’. (Congdon 91). The fear of other races’ superiority stands at the top of priorities of this system. It is the so called poor features that are genetically found in some races that reduces the power and productivity of a society. Castle explained that “the biologically poorest elements in the population may increase faster than any other. The declining birth rate is not in itself serious, but the differential character of its decline is serious” (qtd in Congdon 88). This in fact is the recognition of the Bokanovsky process used in *Brave New World* that aids in creating ninety six humans from the same original egg that has the needed features for any assigned role in the society. At this level, he was explaining that a one egg, unlike before, can make many humans. As a result, they worked on developing the process to avoid the extinction of humans along with the quality of produced embryos that carry specific people with certain utilities for the community. At the same time, they keep the appropriate number, enough to keep the world stable and going. The process was used as a tool to maintain the ideology of illusional stability. When a student who was described ‘fool’ asked about the advantage of all of this, the director replied ‘Bokanovsky’s process is an instrument of social stability’ (Huxley 4). He indicates that having all people looking the same and producing as many of them is a sign of stability. The way the director explained it with great joy and enthusiasm images how he believes in such process to save humanity.

3. A Call for Social Stability

Writings such as *Brave New World* call for the required changes in any society in order to have a stable life and a lasting peaceful community. For Dillman, it is dystopia's role to serve as a warning addressed to all communities in order to reconsider what ruled humans in the past and led to endless conflicts such as the superiority of a certain group, conflicting groups for power and call for domination (19). As humans have committed many mistakes that resulted in the demise of the majority, the call for the substitution of a miserable world of wars, chaos and suffering with a world of stability was necessary. This latter requires a total reformulation of social conditions. As part of conditioning, the whole natural life was changed including having parents, giving birth, facing being old, long deep relations, reading, discussion of beauty and art. These changes that are new and unnatural to the normal human life, not only made it dystopian, but a realisation of the total change introduced to the world. The world was described in the novel as perfectly stable and satisfactory to live in:

“the world’s stable now. People are happy ; they get what they want and they never want what they can’t get. They’re well off ; they’re safe ; they’re never ill ; they’re not afraid of death ; they’re blissfully ignorant of passion and old age ; they’re plagued with no mothers or fathers ; they’ve got no wives ; or children, or lovers to feel strongly about ; they’re so conditioned that they practically can’t help behaving as they ought to behave” (Huxley, 149).

What seems to make it a perfect world such as the total safety, the ensured food, clothes, happiness, and the complete stability of a world void of any differences or conflicts, is itself what creates a world of lack of individualism and a detachment from social relations, building a family or behaving out of one’s will instead of the structured social terms for stability. Franzen claims that people are unable to decide what is best for them and thus whoever is in control gets to decide how they should live and in what way in sacrifice for stability. This in turn sets people in a conflicting confusion, whether to live as conditioned; under the control and instruction of the government or to let the instinctive nature of free will and individual freedom decide what they want instead of what suits a stable community (8).

On the other hand, from a more enthusiastic perspective, Frederick Polak sees that it is highly necessary to keep imagining and dreaming of a different world to avoid the decadence of civilization: “if Western man now stops thinking and dreaming the materials of new images of the future and attempts to shut himself up in the present, out of longing for security and for fear of the future, his civilization will come to an end. He has no choice but to dream or to die, condemning the whole of Western society to die with him” (qtd in Sargent Authority and Utopia 574). The necessity to keep dreaming is thus what encourages authors such as Huxley to create such a representative world of conflicting values. However, it is in a way or another the same dream that resulted in the creation of the so-called utopia that turns into a dystopia in most cases. The newly introduced features and more positive dream of a different world, provides the new

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technologies with enough power to suppress human feelings and differences of choices. The Bokanovsky process for instance, resulted in the creation of a great number of people in less time with certain features that are needed in any stable society, was the first means to abolish all mental and physical differences in the novel. This process eventually resulted in groups of identical characters with the same abilities that are meant to serve a one purpose; the stability and continuity of this community.

The call for stability as a means of civilisation was recurrent in the novel "stability, said the controller, stability. No civilization without social stability. No social stability without individual stability" (28). Making the individual stability as a condition for social stability, sets the risk of losing one's individualism and replace it with a utilitarian role that equally serves the society and neglects the individual needs. It is a way to set the concept of stability in people's minds and make them remember it whenever they attempt to think otherwise. Thus, a necessity to sacrifice the real for the ideal, excluding all alternatives was highlighted by Beauchamp: "there is one, and only one, right method of doing everything and consequently that all other alternatives must be rigorously excluded, by whatever methods the society has at its disposal" (qtd in Sargent 573). This in fact was written as a clear motto in the beginning of the novel "community, identity, stability". This motto equalises the power of a community with stability in sacrifice of identities. That is, by creating a one identical identity, shared by all members of the society, the community gets to preserve its stability. In other words, they guarantee the stability of the community using the one identity system ideology that prevents any differences in thinking, believing or decision making. Whereas Sanders justifies the job of dystopian fiction to be looking for the reasons behind the disappearance of personality (10). Instead of centralising the research on personality and its need in the structure of a society, dystopian fiction seeks stability, which is in turn guided by some reasons like avoiding the past, preserving the existence of freedom or the mere ideological belief in the controllers and their manner in deciding what is best for the society.

3.1 Social Classes and Individual Differences

Mustapha Mond explained that the Bokanovsky process is required in order to have different people both physically and mentally. It all depends on the level of oxygen given to them as embryos and the biological changes necessary in creating differences in both physical and mental abilities, which is highly important in such a society. He narrates the failure of creating a group of Alphas which resulted in total chaos. He explained how they put all Alphas together in a separate island but it resulted in a civil war and thus failure. The experiment was part of the conditioning trial in which twenty-two thousand Alphas were tested to live without conditioning. Together, they refused to obey the laws or do their job and thus resulted in a revolution and the death of the

majority. It indicates that the society has to be made of different groups with different abilities to keep stability and proper productivity. (191).

People in *Brave New World* are made with no difference in terms of ranks but instead, everyone is suited for a job and all work for each other. The names alpha and beta are but a sign of a group that works in such a job and not a classification of people, because people of the same group are all twins and they receive equal rights including equal amounts of working hours and equal soma. In addition, they can meet and have relations easily. Bernard was considered different because they all think he had some surrogate in his blood. In addition, thanks to his experience in visiting the savage reservations, he acquired some set of knowledge and new behaviours that aided in resembling them.

Population in *Brave New World* is conditioned to make the distinction between characters: "Delta children wear khaki. And Epsilon children are still worse, they are too stupid. They wear black" (18). So, the colour of the clothes makes it easier for everyone to make the distinction and the belonging of the person, and thus decide whether they are strong, smart, stupid or too stupid. This classification is meant to control people in which epsilons for instance consider it totally normal to be different from the rest of the citizens as it is their role to be so: "of course they don't mind. How can they ? they don't know what it's like being anything else. We'd mind, of course. But then we've been differently conditioned, said Lenina" (49). Although she knows that they are all conditioned to be in a certain way, she is thankful that she is not like them and that she can think and live differently. Yet, this cannot make her any better than them because she is still unaware of what was taken from them; their freedom and individualism.

John, the only reasonable character who lived in both the new world and the reservation of savages, wondered continuously about the reason behind not making them all alphas. Mustapha Mond responded that he cannot make them all have some freedom, because it is a threat to controllers that may ruin everything "why don't you make everybody an Alpha Double Plus while you're about it ? Mustapha Mond laughed. Because we have no wish to have our throats cut, he answered. We believe in happiness and stability" (151). Having a social role and helping in social service keeps the idea "all men are physico-chemically equal, said Henry. Besides, even Epsilons perform indispensable services" (49). That is, despite their position and state of being too stupid, they can have a great role in the society as long as they stick to the rules and are conditioned properly to serve the government. Thus, the biological changes make people ready for their job in a society and thus happy, which lies in being satisfied with their role and accept it as an unescapable social destiny.

3.2 Past and History

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The necessity to create a new world void of all the flaws of the past works at picturing what people desire to see as an alternative to the miserable present (Sargent 16). So, neglecting the past or any history that illustrates the bad human experience has become one of the main themes in most dystopian works. For Dillman, reshaping the collective memory is highly used in hegemonic societies as a tool to dominate people's collective actions. The state of controlling or erasing memories makes the mind inactive, which is an important step in the process of control (43). Without history, people become unaware of their situation in the continuity of time and thus they cannot place themselves in the right position nor get to choose what is best for their survival.

People are taught that history is something to learn from and then avoid it as it did not serve their ancestors, nor will it serve them in the future. For Dillman, keeping a clear track of the past is highly important. He claims that: "An individual's ability to recall a specific memory grounds him in truth, which in turn functions as a defensive barrier to the regime's historical narrative. By proving such a narrative false, citizens within a dystopian state can challenge the ruling class's legitimacy" (33). However, it is dystopian government's basic role to keep its citizens weak and under control. Away from the true historical incidents, and consequently any defensive barrier, people become easily manipulated, accepting any new information about their past or present. Accordingly, they become the protectors of any truth provided to them as real and unquestionable.

With the total ignorance of the past, the characters are unable to think or question anything about their society, in addition to their ignorance of the reservations, which is part of the isolation practiced on them. This results in easier control away from any sort of rebellion, thus the characters help in maintaining the ideas provided by the system and refusing anyone who says otherwise. For instance, they consider John of the savage reservations an alien. John who is also unaware of the past, managed to create his own perception of the world from his readings to Shakespeare. He, however, could not make balance between the worlds, which led to his death. The characters are taught that 'old' means unhappy and claiming anything related to the old world is equal to being unhappy. John called for an alternative to the fake present and a return to the past beliefs: "but I don't want comfort. I want God, I want poetry, I want real danger, I want freedom, I want goodness. I want sin. In fact, said Mustapha Mond, 'you're claiming the right to be unhappy' All right then,' said the savage defiantly 'I'm claiming the right to be unhappy'" (163). This conversation was a fight between being conditioned to live a happy life and being free to try what people experienced in the past and consequently led to their demise.

People in *Brave New World* have no meaning of a parent, the word that existed long in the past. The controller described a parent, as the students did not know what that was, it resulted in their confusion, as is the case in trying to explain anything that

does not exist. They also learned that life with a mother is miserable. The controller attempted to illustrate the perfection of life without a mother, family and home (23). However, it was unimaginable to them. The point was keeping people ignorant of anything as a means of conditioning that guarantees the success of planting any new information or system. He added that ‘‘beauty’s attractive. And we don’t want people to be attracted by old things. We want them to like the new ones’’ (149). This detachment from the past helps in building and conditioning new paths of thinking through the new ideologies that serve the maintenance of a stable society in order to keep the world away from miseries, a world in which people are conditioned to be away from all miseries of the old world and from any true attachment to each other or to beauty or to freedom. Besides, there is soma to heal any sort of uncontrolled bad unexpected feelings and that was the price for stability: ‘‘you’ve got to choose between happiness and what people used to call high art. We have the feelies and the scent organ instead’’ (150). The replacement of art with the feelies and virtual sex and soma, the drug that satisfies people momentarily giving them the illusion that perfection lies in what they have at present. Mustapha claims ‘‘That’s why you’re taught no history’’ (23).

By the end, Mustapha described the miseries and suffering of people in the old world. It is both telling and programming the students to disbelieve in the bad and wrong history. ‘‘History is bunk’’ said Mustapha Mond. (22). The word ‘bunk’ which is synonym to ‘garbage’ is meant to program them to hate it all together. Particularly, because the society is so neat and void of any differences or miseries, the characters would avoid any word that provides discomfort. In addition, it is what is left of a chaotic world and long years of suffering that would absolutely be avoided by a society that seeks stability and progress; a Brave New World.

3.3 The Two Opposing Civilizations

The world in the novel was broken down into two; the brave new world that is characterized by organization, civilization and stability, and the savage reservation which reflects the old world and its conditions of poverty, ignorance and suffering. Alisha Scott claims that the comparison between the two communities makes it easier to sacrifice the old natural life for civilisation and stability. However, the change from savagery to civilisation with the adoption of the new scientific advancements and without regarding individual freedom and differences creates a ‘nightmare’ for people leading to total suppression of feelings or to violence and chaos (3).

The big gap between the communities can be noticed in terms of ‘civilisation’ in which John called them ‘you’re civilised’ ...He said ‘‘you’re civilized !’’ as if the two worlds are totally different. Both groups aware of their features, savage or civilized, and are convinced with their conditions. The amount of violence that was witnessed in the reservation may explain the reason behind the differences in both communities. The ruling figures claim that there is no time to waste on the preservation. As they ‘are not worth the expense of civilising’ and as explained earlier that ending is better than

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mending (109). The ending of the savage reservation is easy, yet they cannot waste the sources and energy to destroy something that is way less worth than humans and way too far from being repaired. Each civilization chooses what fits its social stability ‘machinery, medicine and happiness’, call it the fault of civilisation. “God isn’t compatible with machinery and scientific medicine and universal happiness. You must make your choice. Our civilisation has chosen machinery and medicine and happiness” (159). It is a divergence from the nature of humans who existed in belief in God and replacing it with a more developed society. The choice of the ruling system was civilisation with all its elements that include the development of industry and machinery, medicine and its biological performance, and happiness that humans believe can be created by physical materials.

The creation of a society or a state requires having a set of rituals that guide it: “In the first place, the behavior of a country is described ritually. A ritual is a significant social act, and the utopia-writer is concerned only with the typical actions which are significant of those social elements he is stressing” (Sargent, Authority and Utopia 8). The rituals become rational as all the actions in the novel seem rational and serving the society as they were made to avoid the incidents that led to the destruction of humanity in the past. However, the rituals of whipping in the reservations were considered wrong and uncivilized, for the reason that they were unjustified by any social order or any act that preserves stability. On the other hand, Sargent claims “In the second place, rituals are apparently irrational acts which become rational when their significance is explained. In such utopias the guide explains the structure of the society and thereby the significance of the behavior being observed. Hence, the behavior of society is presented as rationally motivated” (8). Consequently, the existence of the savage reservation was highly important to make the line clear between the two different civilisations. In this community, people hold their belief in the past and still embrace it like Christianity, families, relations and the attempt to survive. Without such elements that do not exist in the new world, people would not know whether there still exists other humans in the rest of the world that are different and worth observing and studying. The pilot’s explanation to Lenina that she should not worry about them and that they are very tame and would never think of making any attempt to harm her, indicates that they have suffered enough of the attacks by the civilised people till they turned to be harmless to foreigners (69).

Many aspects exemplify the big gap between civilisations. First, the inexistence of a mother in the new world. They have lost the feeling of a family or love. Bernard could finally feel the intimacy of having a mother, which was strictly refused by Lenina: “what a wonderfully intimate relationship... and what an intensity of feeling it must generate. I often think one must have missed something in not having had a mother. Said Bernard. ‘Bernard ! How can you ?’” (74). This indicates that the feeling of being a normal human still exists in Bernard who could at least think of it. Meanwhile, it shows

the success of the system that Lenina refused the slightest idea of accepting or even thinking of it. Second, getting old is a myth in the new world. observing an old man was weird for them, as the government worked hard to keep people young and safe of any diseases. Lenina watched a couple getting married, she thought it was too much fuss about such an easy task. She claimed that in her civilised world when a man wants a woman he can simply possess her without any restrictions (91). This indicates how easy it is to have sex without any relation to the other part and without a sacred marriage that gathers people for life. It thus demonstrates the weak relations between people and the absence of any attachment to others.

Linda, the only character who fully experienced living in both worlds, could not understand many differences in the two communities. The stranger explained that his mother Linda is from that place too, who happened to be the wife of the DHC who was lost long ago (78). She explained how she misses the civilized world, its clothes, its manners and certainly soma, that gave her a great feeling of joy and relaxation. The conditioning goes deeper to be an inseparable part of people's lives that cannot be forgotten or replaced. Not only motherhood, adaptation was difficult in which Linda was facing many difficulties to adapt among them. Without soma, other women punished her for being with their men, which was normal for her. Linda described it as "it's like living with lunatics. Everything they do is mad" (81). Besides, she hated the idea that each person belongs to a one person only and the rule that says "everybody belongs to everybody" does not exist in the savage reservations. She would also be called anti-social if she attempts to stick to the rules of the new world. As a result, the big gap between the societies lies not only in rules but also in how people treat each other and how they consider the nature of social relations.

Despite being with the savages for many years, Linda could still remember and crave her world as she could not adapt in the reservations. It signifies how strong the system of manipulation in the new world functions (81). Linda seemed more attached to the civilisation and the comfort the new world brought than that of the reservation where people tend to be more natural and suffer more to get to continue living, in opposition to the new world that preserves and protects people's lives in total comfort and ease. The success of conditioning is witnessed in the level of detachment from the rest of the world and their isolation from any sign of science or development.

3.4 Illusional Happiness

Replacing the truth and beauty with fake happiness is a feature of dystopian fiction. Mustapha Mond explained that right after the long war that resulted in the creation of the brave new world, everything related to man became controlled and that was the price for happiness. In order to compensate the lack of freedom, characters were alluded with the feeling of fake happiness. Happiness was attached to doing one's work: 'to do work intelligently thus become good happy members of this society' (1). Being a good and a happy citizen is attached to the way the person does his job in a society. The

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true meaning of happiness was made clear, to belong to everyone; to do their job, enjoy sexual life and take soma in every occasion. Meanwhile the search for beauty, freedom and truth failed in maintaining humanity. The so called universal happiness, explained the controller, is what keeps the society going in the right direction for progress and stability (155).

John on the other hand could not believe in fake happiness that uses people instead of serving them: "well, I'd rather be unhappy than have the sort of false, lying happiness you were having here" (120). John discovered the danger of soma with the loss of his mother. Soma for John was a dangerous poison that separates humans from reality and kills them by the end. Although it keeps people away from any stresses, it allows them to be away from trying, feeling and learning, which are the focus points the government. He asked 'do you like to be slaves ? 'Do you like to be slaves ? babies ?' (144). By calling them babies, he meant that they are still juvenile in their thoughts and totally controlled by the government. In addition, they are unable to see things around them in their reality and unable to decide what to do next.

Soma could heal any sort of uncontrolled unexpected feelings, which was the price for stability (150). Soma, 'christianity without tears' could solve all their troubles in case of divergence from stability: "if ever, by some unlucky chance, anything unpleasant should somehow happen, why, there's always soma to give you a holiday from the facts. And there's always soma to calm your anger, to reconcile you to your enemies, to make you patient and long-suffering" (162). Civilisation and all its advantages and the changes that have been introduced to the world are equal to soma, which serves as an escape from the real world. As a result, Soma is useful to keep people away from any bad sentiments, and thus away from any bad feelings that may harm stability. Whenever a character has a bad feeling, or the need for a rest, they take soma. Although it serves no damage, it keeps people neglecting the present and continuously under control.

3.5 Social Relations

The relation between John and Lenina could illustrate the meaning of building relations in *Brave New World*. For John, a relation was defined as love and intimacy. Meanwhile for Lenina, it was due to the conditioning that 'everyone belongs to everyone else'. Brower explains that "Since he was desired by many, and seen as a commodity, Lenina takes an interest in John. However, the interest does not have the same meaning. Lenina craves John as she would crave a soma-induced vacation. She is expected to desire him only sexually through the societal conditioning that "everybody belongs to everyone else" (28). Lenina could not understand his admiration, as for her, every relation ; if we can call it so, should be built on the need for some sex or pleasure. Other than that, everyone belongs to everyone and no one has the right to take a one

person as their own or be with them for a long time. Although he tried to explain that people get married and live together forever, it was weird and unacceptable for her (129). It is easy to move from one person to another, that is people should not get attached to each other or feel ‘strongly’ to avoid any confusing feelings that will lead by the end to instability. Brower explains that John looks for the meaningful relation that he could not find in both societies “He fights for meaningful intimacy and worthiness, in a way divergent from the ritualized but ultimately false bonds of the Reservation” (27). However, in the new world of civilisation and the highly used technologies, it was clarified that feelings were not important. Lenina justified her situation that feelings lead to chaos in a society “when the individual feels, the community reels” that is, the community will move unsteadily (62).

As the government is afraid that people can grow long lasting emotions, they seek their people to belong superficially and without any feelings (92). As anyone can have anyone, they have lost the meaning of being alone and considered themselves to never be isolated from society. Bernard and John are both different in their societies. Bernard, not believing in soma and the new world, while John was treated differently because he was white and his mother belonged to the new world. This indicates the differences of people and refusal to accept change. Bernard discovered that he had no true friends, the thing that is nonexistent in this society.

For Scott, social interaction was encouraged as a divergence from observing their lives or discovering the ideologies of the system:

“Interestingly, however, to prevent people from inward withdrawal and, perhaps, to keep them from reflecting on how hollow their lives are, being alone is taboo. Superficial yet constant social interaction is highly encouraged and being too unique or desiring alone time is entirely unacceptable. This keeps the society conditioned to work together to produce and consume in an endless loop, and ensures that no one strays too far from the mold by offering constant means of superficial pleasure and enjoyment” (4).

It accordingly resulted in keeping people in a community to keep them away from thinking of God, emotions or beauty. Each character was busy choosing their next partner, doing their job or taking soma as a relaxation tool (160).

John, the only character who was not conditioned, guided the reader to become aware the dystopian world. As John did not fall under conditioning, he could not notice any stability in the new world society and that it was an illusion as long as people are under control. Stability for John is to let people decide their partners and means of happiness and to avoid soma consumption. John could not belong to any of the two worlds because due to his alienation from the reservation; as they consider him looking different and from a different mother. Instead, he belongs to the world of Shakespeare

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where Man's global emotions control their decisions, where individual freedom to feel both joy and pain are accepted, where freedom is rightful to everyone.

John could not be biologically conditioned because he was born in the reservations. Nor could they make him embrace the ideas of the civilized world, because for him it was both confusing and abnormal. He refused the exaggeration of the new world in not letting people decide and choose what fits them. Moreover, refused people's inability to access their past. John and Mustapha Mond's conversation revealed a lot about *Brave New World*. It was abnormal that John the savage could have a conversation with the controller of the civilised world. The advantage given to both characters lies in being able to see and experience both worlds through the knowledge of reading and feeling. When John asked Mustapha 'why not letting people know about God. God doesn't change' Mustapha replied 'but men do'. That was the reason behind conditioning people and keeping them under control for men do not know what better fits them and keeps them alive going on in the rapidly changing world. So men are kept away from self destruction by creating this new world in which they do their jobs and preserve stable lives. Consequently, he was a representative of a society :

‘John should not be seen as a symbol of the perfect human, neither should his disregard for the futuristic civilisation be seen as the only rational response to its progression. He is but an outcast both from the society in which he was born and from the society to which he is brought. Instead one can consider John to be representing the probable reactions of all citizens of past civilisations if they were to be brought hundreds of years in to the future’ (Franzen 13).

John unable to compare this new civilisation to his own world, but to the writings he read. Going to the civilized world and discovering it does not reflect the writings. He was set amongst three worlds making him the only one who has experienced them all.

John, proud to read, while the other children could not, provided John with an advantage making him better than people of both worlds. He could reach enough maturity when it comes to feelings and relations, and a better adaptation when it comes to technology and development. Accordingly, John could not fully understand the nature of social relations in *Brave New World*. In his community, they feel ‘strongly’. Whereas in the civilised world, to love or feel something strongly is a sign of instability that makes people wander between isolation and the power of that feeling. Although he suffered isolation, the initial episode marking his savage emotions occurs when he loses the battle for his mother's affection to Pope. He suffers from the feeling of isolation; he suffers from his lack of childhood, and he desires to be nurtured and cared for. With a lack of affection, John turns to aggression. With no medium through which to express his emotions, and no one to help him understand his feelings, he desires to instead eliminate the problem (28). For this reason, he was unable to create bonds with people of both societies. Brower explained that this is what made him human: ‘Surprisingly,

however, it is these ‘savage’ reactions of aggression that make John most human, the most relatable, and the most able to expose the flaws of these utopias through the complement of his extreme emotions to extreme situations” (29). That this savagery is what made him human and different which can relate to the reader’s normal feelings and a clear understanding of considering *Brave New World* a perfect example to study social stability and conditioning disciplinary characters in dystopian fiction.

Conclusion

This paper attempted to study the different conditioning aspects that the governments use to make their populations disciplinary and under their control. Social stability and the fear of falling into a chaotic world could work as convincing reasons to control people and keep them disciplinary. This paper started with the definition of both utopian and dystopia for many critics and scholars have conflicting ideas whether to consider works such *Brave New World* as utopian or dystopian. This world, although it seems perfect for its complete stability and control of people’s emotions, jobs and lives, it deprives them from their individual/social freedom, their right to choose their jobs and the right to read and discover their past and history.

The conditioning in *Brave New World* is mainly seen in their behavioral changes. As the government works hard to control people’s behaviors through limiting their chances to love nature, colors and books by electrically shocking them at an early. They use a set of different repetitions of the ideas that the government works to plant in people. In addition, people are created through the Bokanovsky process that judges and controls their numbers according to the needs of the society. The progressive development of technology was then used to limit the number of populations in addition to their features and behaviors. Accordingly, people are divided not into social classes, but into similar groups that share the same level of intelligence and the same set of behaviors.

The characters in *Brave New World* are not allowed to read or to think. Their disability to read and their total ignorance of the past keeps them isolated from their past and knowledge of the world. The past for them is an unnecessary experience that has to be used in order to preserve humanity, yet it is not something to be remembered or studied. Freedom is a mistake given to people in the past that resulted in their total chaos and thus their demise. Meanwhile, happiness is essential to every character. It can only be reached through the use of ‘soma’, a sort of medicine that induces total relaxation. As soma was used to control people’s happiness, it resulted in the death of Linda by the end of the novel, revealing the failure of the whole system.

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By the end, people learn from the experience of John, who happened to be the only character who experienced living in both the savage reservation and the civilized world. Despite the fact that John ended living alone and committing suicide, the author succeeded in depicting the failure of a so called perfect world to control people's freedom and happiness.

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