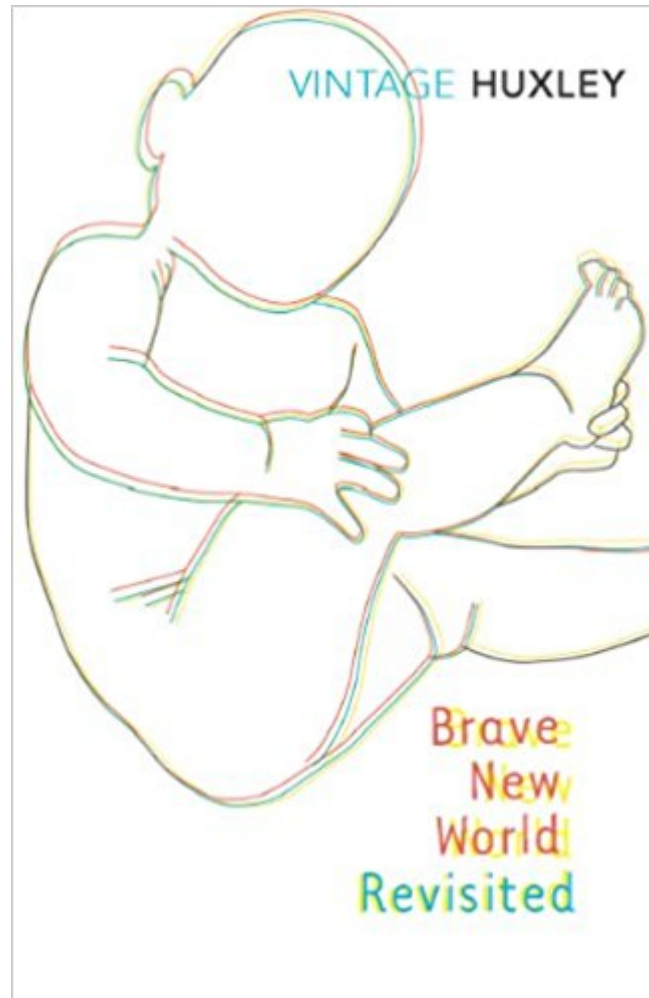




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# Brave New World Revisited



## Synopsis

In his 1932 classic dystopian novel, *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley depicted a future society in thrall to science and regulated by sophisticated methods of social control. Nearly thirty years later in *Brave New World Revisited*, Huxley checked the progress of his prophecies against reality and argued that many of his fictional fantasies had grown uncomfortably close to the truth. *Brave New World Revisited* includes Huxley's views on overpopulation, propaganda, advertising and government control, and is an urgent and powerful appeal for the defence of individualism still alarmingly relevant today.

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## Customer Reviews

Aldous Huxley'sÂ's *Brave New World* was published in 1932, a fact that is truly astonishing if you pick this novel up blindly. Set in a dystopian London, this book that I'd gladly describe as cinematic, follows future citizens through their nightmarish brave new world, with little to no resemblance to our own. While Huxley's novel wasn't specifically written for me and

my literary tastes, I am continuously amazed by this book. Keeping the time that it was written in mind makes for a truly captivating reading experience as Huxley has managed to weave a story that's timeless and interesting and terrifying all at once. The protagonist of Brave New World is Bernard Marx, an outsider in this seemingly perfect world where everyone has their place. Although he was born an Alpha Plus, the highest tier in this New World's society, he's never felt that he fit in. He feels that he's always had to fight for respect, whereas with any other Alpha, it's automatically given. Despite this fact, he doesn't particularly identify with the lower level Epsilon or any other caste, for that matter. Nor does he really fight against these social constraints. Bernard's main companion is Lenina Crowe, a nurse in the Nursery where all the lives in this world come from. Unlike Bernard, Lenina is only too happy to accept things the way they are. The main idea of Huxley's world seems to be to erase emotion and sentiment in its entirety. There's no place for love or monogamy, for hate or passion, for any type of longstanding commitment or relationship, including family. This society thrives on logical thinking, therefore all evidence of history and deities have been erased. The closest thing to a belief system or god they have is Ford Company founder, Henry Ford, known for his innovation, vision of the future, and ability to get things done. Huxley's choice of Ford as a messianic figure goes to show that the most important value of this world is production. So why has Brave New World withstood the test of time? Why hasn't it faded into obscurity like so many other dystopian novels just in the last ten years? I think there are two main reasons. The first, and the one that astounds me most about this book, is its timelessness. If I didn't know any better, I'd say this book was written and published yesterday. The language Huxley used is still incredibly modern and easy to read. That along with the ideas he fearlessly writes about, such as promiscuity and recreational drug use, aren't something you'd expect from a book written in the early 20th century. Secondly, there is the premise of the book. The idea of all of humanity being a godless, loveless people, is a challenging thought to say the least. On the other hand, it has restored my faith in our race. Surely, we'd never let this happen. And our steadfast faith is for the better, right? My conscience wants to say yes, but logic says we'd be better off without the sentiment. The fact that it got me thinking about these things is why this book is still relevant. It challenges everything we know and hold dear about humanity and the way we are. All of that leaves the question; is Brave New World a good book? For arguments sake, I'm going to say yes. It wasn't really my cup of tea, it's not the best science fiction book ever written, and at times the science side of things is complicated and tends to drag on. However Huxley made his

point here, which I think was to leave us with questions. What if this was the way things were? Cold, godless, ignorant and adolescent in many ways. This novel is so exceptionally well written that it held my interest despite the fact that it's not something I'd choose to read outside of an academic setting. One of my favorite quotes was during Bernard's introduction, which summed up Bernard's character as well as any of us who have ever felt like an outsider. "Those who feel despised do well to look despising." In conclusion, I think I can easily say that Aldous Huxley was a visionary. He envisioned and created a world not entirely unlike our own, and fearlessly wrote about things that could make literary critics today shudder. *Brave New World* is an adventure, despite its lack of action, and a poignant look at what exactly makes humans, human.

I read Aldous Huxley's "*Brave New World*" in high school some 30 years ago. I have re-read it and this book is a pleasantly surprising revision of that book as well as a sort of documentary of Mr. Huxley's own views on his book "*Brave New World*." It puts the original book into a more modern perspective. It was a great additional read. Remember though it was written in 1958 so the modernism sometimes relates to the 21st century but not always. But it does relate to that era.

Like everyone I read this many years ago and approached it with a ho-hum attitude. It is amazing. The whole thing is a prescient short novel about what was the future when it was written and is now rapidly becoming the present. I had suggested it for a book club--- groans all round--- but afterwards all agreed this was one of the best discussions we had ever had, and Huxley had an amazing understanding of human nature. It is very funny in places, but it is also a thoughtful examination of what it is to be human in a time of change and plenty. The Savage, whom I had dismissed before as ridiculous, is now a poignant reminder of what we may lose in our relentless march forward. This book triumphantly stands the test of time.

I read this book as part of my course requirements for English composition 2. It was scary for me back then when I first read it. Even now as I read it---as Huxley's allusions to modern medical science was terrifyingly a dangerous possibility---it seems a greater threat to me than another world war or nuclear holocaust! After reading "*Amusing Ourselves to Death*" by Neil Postman, it's a glaring truth that with the mental pacification and moral apathy being promoted by television today, Huxley's dystopian future is drawing closer to being fulfilled! Lord help us!

This book is a fantastical read. A little didactic in the first few pages as Huxley introduces the machinations of his world to us (of which you will find many striking similarities--or developing ones--to our world), but as we get to know the characters, the storyline will wrap you up and carry you far from this primitive world to a brave new one where difference means loneliness and "God is in the safe and Ford is on the shelves."

It is interesting to note that this was written over half a century ago. Huxley critiques his own great work, *Brave new World*, from the perspective of the technologies and advancements made some 20 or so years later than his original classic. His analysis of psychological methodologies, comparing Orwell's work and critiquing neurological studies from the late 30's through to the 1950's, including the use of subliminal messaging is certainly thought provoking. I wonder what he would have made of modern technology? The apparent reduction in attention span of the media-obsessed population juxtaposed by the the underlying free access of uncensored information that the internet revolution has allowed would have made for an intriguing analysis. This is certainly a good read, at the very least from a historical perspective.

I would say a "modern classic," but this book was published in what, 1939 or so? Surprisingly prescient, darkly funny, futuristic yet still bound in the past (the leaders and important thinkers are all males). Technology didn't quite turn out as planned, but people never really change -- and that's the sad and scary part. Great read, better yet on audiobook.

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