



Demolishing Humanity through Pleasure and Pain: Reading Huxley's *Brave New World* and Orwell's *1984* Side by Side

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Abstract

*Oligarchical collectivism that supports totalitarianism silences freedom of speech, privacy, assembly, etc. both personal and communal through horrific pain or plentiful pleasure. Authors write literary works to remind readers of this situation through novels, poems, plays, political essays, and or satire. In today's life, it seems these two ways of totalitarianism are being practiced in life singly or combined in different parts of the world. This can be seen in a number of countries where the government does this both in disguise and addressed to a certain group of members of society such as in Nigeria and in real terms such as in Nicaragua. This is also done in total for a country such as Ukraine by Russia. Two of those great anti-utopia literary works are novels that raise the issue of restrained freedom of life in Huxley's *Brave New World* and Orwell's *1984*. These two anti-utopian novels raise the issue of the freedom of life that is confined but in different ways. Using Marxist psychoanalytic criticism, this paper discusses this issue seen in both novels by the two authors. The focus is on how both authors show totalitarianism being practiced both personally, and in the society found in these novels – how they are treated to follow rules that confine personal and societal freedom in totalitarianism.*

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Introduction

Science and technology are advancing quickly, but their applications are not always what they were designed for. Additionally, this can be done by organizations or even a state for frequently contested interests in addition to being done by people. As we can see, in the modern world, organizations and even entire nations use science and technology to control the actions of their employees or citizens. Some nations even use them to further their own national interests abroad. This could have been accomplished indirectly through the internet, without the workers or the populace realizing it, or bluntly and directly. While science and technology are developing swiftly, not all of their uses are as intended.

In addition to being done by individuals, this can also be done for frequently contested interests by organizations or even a state. As we can see, in the modern world, businesses, governments, and even entire peoples use science and technology to regulate the behavior of their workers and citizens. Even some countries employ them to promote their own national interests abroad. This may have been done plainly and directly, or more covertly and covertly via the internet, without the workers or the general public understanding it.

The novels *Brave New World* (BNW) by Aldous Huxley and 1984 by George Orwell are explored in this article in relation to the aforementioned concept. The ideas are the same in both works, despite the fact that they were written by two different authors from two different historical periods and geographical areas. This study's objectives are to (1) look into how totalitarianism is maintained in BNW and (2) discuss how it is maintained in 1984, specifically how individuals and groups are forced to follow rules that keep them in a totalitarian society.

Readers should be on the lookout for any potential threats to mankind that have been either explicitly or implicitly forewarned by authors and historians throughout human history. It is anticipated that this succinct essay will help readers to pay attention to the

“voices” of literature and history. The general objective of this article, then, is to look into how totalitarianism is depicted in both *Brave New World* and in 1984.

There have been several utopian/dystopian novels written before Huxley's and Orwell's, which are discussed in this article. There have been many others, but these are the ones that most explicitly present the idea of utopia/dystopia, particularly those that deal with control, oppression, and the loss of rights, as well as the treatment of the human being under an egregiously cruel totalitarian regime.

Actually, the first dystopian novel is *We*, written by Zamyatin in 1922, and believed to have inspired Huxley to write his masterpiece *Brave New World*. This book was not permitted to be published in Russia until 1988. The protagonist of Bradbury's dystopian novel *Fahrenheit 451* is Guy Montag, and it explores the dystopian world in which reading certain books is prohibited, books must be destroyed, and what can be watched even in public places is monitored. In this censored and oppressive totalitarian state, society is unable to think or express itself freely.

Atwood also published a dystopian book in 1985 called *The Handmaid's Tale*, in which a radical religious political movement was born. The Sons of Jacob organization has seized the American government and installed a brutal theocracy known as The Republic of Gilead. This republic's citizens are not free, which makes them even more hazardous for women in especially because all of their rights have been taken away from them.

Fatubun (2022) authored an article regarding Huxley's *Brave New World* in relation to Harari's *Homo Deus: a Brief History of Tomorrow*, which explores how science is used to create and control human life; in a separate article titled *The Contemporary Significance of Orwell's Animal Farm in Indonesia's Contemporary Political Situation*, Fatubun (2022) discussed how the satirical novel depicts a situation that is similar to the current political climate in Indonesia by analyzing the behavior of the characters. Pavle

(2021) analyzes Orwell's viewpoint on the theoretical concepts of socialism through a comparison also of *Animal Farm* and *1984*. After giving a brief overview of Orwell's political development from the second to the fourth decades of the 20th century, he analyzes the books and demonstrates that Orwell was still committed to the principles of democratic socialism in both of them, that his anti-socialism was unjustified, and that both *Animal Farm* and *1984* contained critiques of capitalism and Western imperialism.

In comparison to theories on aging and life narratives advanced by philosophers and bioethicists, Maren's (2019) article investigates how *Brave New World* depicts a society without elderly people. Maren paints a dystopian picture of a totalitarian society in the dystopian novel where art, truth, and meaning are sacrificed to pleasure and distraction and where the ruled are trained not to question the values of their rulers. She also argues that the extermination of old age has significant political, moral, and emotional costs.

Jennifer et al (2017, see also Todd, 2019) states that, using the analogy in *Brave New World*, some digital divide theories and frameworks need to be disproved since they are heavily linked to first-world countries and ignore the different access to technology that those who live in poverty have. By taking a closer look at the current situation, the authors appeal to educators, administrators, and researchers to consider the impact that the widespread adoption of technologies has had on younger generations as well as the contribution that the digital has made to knowledge creation and future visions more critically and consequentially.

Huxley's interdiscursive utopia is explored in Maxim (2021), with a particular emphasis on but not limited to his *Brave New World*. Huxley's work reveals a sizable preservation of social prejudice and hierarchical thinking when read against the backdrop of pertinent critique and contextualized in 1920s and 1930s debates over the changing significance of science and the scientist in Britain. This situation seriously undermines the interdiscursivity of his utopia

and calls into question literature's claim to provide a complete picture of social reality. In the same novel, Diken (2011, see also Albloly and Nour, 2019) explores the dystopian novel's ongoing relevance in a modern, post-political setting where a passive nihilist definition of "happiness" is elevated to the status of a political and ethical ideal and where "freedom" is taken for granted. Significantly, rereading the novel compels one to consider modern, "democratic" forms of tyranny as well, despite Huxley's original target being Stalinism. In light of three key concepts—biopolitics, nihilism, and network society—Diken urges us to reconsider the tenets of the brave new world.

In his discussion of how modern political leaders influence their followers' ideas and behavior, Zimbardo (2019) uses Jim Jones, the founder of the Peoples Temple, as an example. Eight of Jones's selections from Orwell's list of state control strategies will be discussed, followed by revelations of how he put them into devilish daily practice to completely control devoted followers—resulting in their mass suicide/murder at Jonestown, Guyana, 40 years ago.

Another similar discussion is Donald J. Trump's status as Orwell's Big Brother in the flesh as questioned by Rodden (2020). He looks at how the Trump administration has, in an extraordinary sense, become a hotbed of Newspeak, a place where both his supporters and detractors constantly use catchphrases from *1984*. Al-Subaihi and Ismail (2020) focus on Winston as a character to study the issue of social-psychological alienation in Orwell's *1984* and primarily on Seeman's interpretation of alienation, which clarifies the phrase "powerlessness." Winston made a strong case for "alienation." The four factors that cause Winston to feel alienated are tyranny, terror, the Party's hold on power, and information. Discussing the novel in connection with real-world governments, Diglin (2014) believes that they have used new media technology in ways that make them akin to Orwell's fictitious "Big Brother," and that this is why the usage of new media culture is linked to *1984*. The author discusses the sociopolitical climate at the time the book was written, offers contemporary examples of how government

entities have utilized new media technologies as surveillance weapons, and concludes by asserting that new media technologies are causing language and knowledge to disappear.

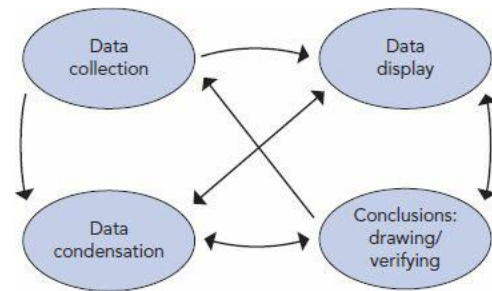
Of all the articles reviewed above, they did discuss these two works by bringing up various issues, but no one made clear that these two works have the same goal of criticizing governments that use totalitarianism and small elites of oligarchs to organize and simultaneously suppress society in two different ways. The distinction between the two is that Huxley's work used hedonism while Orwell's used violence. Nobody made this comparison.

Methodology

Marxist criticism is (Morner and Rausch, 1991; Selden, 1989, Holstein, 1987) a literary analysis method that assesses a literary work as a product of a specific historical period's ideology.

When Marxist critics analyze a literary work, according to Barry, (1995, p.156) they do the following: 1. They make a division between the 'overt' (manifest or surface) and the 'covert' (latent or hidden) hidden content of a literary work (much as psychoanalytic critics do) and then relate the covert subject matter of the literary work to the basic Marxist themes such as class struggle; 2. they relate the context of a work to the socio-class status of the author; they explain the nature of a whole literary genre in terms of the social period which 'produced' it; they relate the literary work to the assumptions of the time in which it is 'consumed'; is a 'politicisation of literary form', that is, the claims that literary forms are themselves determined by political circumstance. Bearing in mind the Marxist procedures above, the process followed to come to the results, and finally, the conclusion through the analysis is what Miles and Huberman (1994; Miles, et al, 2014) called the interactive model. Starting from the reading of

the literary works to find the Marxist-Stalinist issues until the conclusion, this circular process was followed.



Results and Discussion

Brief summaries that highlight the major themes in each book reveal that the central theme of Huxley's book is a man losing his fight to maintain his freedom and sanity in a dystopian world of test-tube children and think-alikes, while the central theme of Orwell's book is a man losing his fight to maintain his freedom and sanity in a dystopian police state. After a few quick sketches of certain well-known individuals mentioned in the novels, the main problems in the books are covered.

Famous Figures Alluded

Given that both novels advance the same philosophical viewpoint, both books make references to well-known proponents of that viewpoint. A number of important ones are described below.

Lenina Crowne in *Brave New World* alludes to Vladimir Lenin, the founder of the world's first proletariat revolution and the Communist Party's Marxist-Leninist offshoot. Lenina Crowne is a brainwashed member of the new world who adheres to the socialist dictatorship and goes by the name Lenina, which is a tribute to Vladimir Lenin. Lenin introduced and supported a socialist dictatorship in Russia that shared many of the same ideals and inspirations. Under this rule, no one was allowed to think or believe anything other than what Lenin wanted them to as stated in (<https://sites.google.com/site/annasanchezal>

lusion) by Sanchez. She is also explained in (<https://www.coursehero.com/>) as Vladimir Lenin, who led the Russian Revolution of 1917, is the inspiration for Lenina's first name. This demonstrates Huxley's sense of humor because Ms. Crowne is a total conformist who would never rebel against the World State. Her last name is most likely a nod to John Crowne, a romantic playwright from the British Isles who lived in the 17th century. Given that she gleefully adopts the World State's perspective on many enduring connections, Lenina matches this description.

Benito Hoover is a reference to Benito Mussolini, the founder of fascism in Italy. The chewing gum fan has the name of Benito Mussolini, also known as Il Duce, the Italian Premier of the Fascist Party from 1922 to 1943. Herbert Hoover, the American President from 1929 to 1933, is the last name Huxley gave his character. And Bernard Marx is in reference to Karl Marx the philosopher both of them have new ideas and their own opinions on things, everyone in the World state is named after some socialist philosopher but like a philosopher, Bernard sees the world differently and questions it. Bernard like Marx had ideas that are different from mainstream society which makes him an outsider (<https://www.coursehero.com/>).

Emmanuel Goldstein found in Orwell's *1984* and Leon Trotsky is explained in (<https://www.liquisearch.com/>). The similarities between Leon Trotsky's and Emmanuel Goldstein's biographies, physical characteristics, writing style, and political philosophy were noted by a number of modern commentators not long after the publication of the novel.

Big Brother and Joseph Stalin (<https://www.bing.com/>), it is safe to argue that the two are very comparable after reading the novel and researching Stalin's leadership over Soviet Russia. There are many similarities between Big Brother and Oceania and Stalinism and the USSR. The capacity to alter reality and rewrite history was also abused by both governments.

In Brave New World

A Controlled Society: A Threat to Freedom and Human Civilization

In *Brave New World*, people are treated as lab-created things that the rulers, a select elite group known as the Alphas, can manipulate as they see fit. Human values, in particular universal religious and cultural values, are nonexistent in society. There are no homes for children generated in labs, and art and science are only used for specific purposes. Totalitarianism, like that found in communist and theocratic nations, is what governs this civilization. Look at what is taking place in Iran today. Concern for what Huxley sees as a danger to civilization.

He mentioned issues that are detrimental to humanity, such as mind control, selective breeding of humans in labs, and the potential for the igniting of genetic engineering in the presence of biogenetic engineering. These issues prevent people from thinking freely enough to come up with innovative solutions that are beneficial to humanity. Because humans created them in a laboratory, all of their potentialities were "killed," and as a result, human potential cannot be realized or developed. Additionally, because human values are not permitted to derive from sources like art, religion, history, etc., potential in humans cannot be preserved or developed. The confinement of consciousness is the most concerning aspect since pleasure, such as sex, is always available and drug (soma) is used to cure every pain, discomfort, stress, etc. so society loses consciousness of its humanity.

The Demise of the Diverse Human Capacities

This is a system that stifles the many creative impulses, novel ideas, and dazzling creations that the human mind is capable of. It is still possible to see the human ingenuity that has given rise to so many inventions, innovations, and creative works. Look at the great architecture of the world like the Egyptian pyramids, the Great Wall of China, the great cathedrals and monasteries, particularly in Europe, the Borobudur temple, the Angkor

Wat Temple, the Forbidden City, the Vatican, etc, and not mention great modern architectures all over the world. Listen to the great music and songs from Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Handel, Vivaldi, Schubert, Verdi, etc. Dance great dances like Salsa, Reggaeton, Tango, Flamenco, Viennese Waltz, Indian classical dance, and Balinese dances. Study the great minds of Aristotle, Nietzsche, Confucius, Kierkegaard, Aquinas, Sartre, Lao Tzu, Avicenna, St. Augustine, etc., and ascertain the originality of their ideas. Because individuals simply copy and obey what is already in place, all of the byproducts of the varied human minds as well as the diverse human brains themselves become dysfunctional in this society.

Oligarchic government and Collectivism

An oligarchy, a form of governance in which the authority is concentrated in a small number of people or in a dominant class, the Alphas, is responsible for carrying out collectivism. Collectivism must be imposed through hedonism, in which the society is ruined, in order for the oligarchic regime to operate effectively. Lust for material possessions and sexual gratification are always available when pleasure and happiness are considered the highest goals in life. Members of the society become unconscious of their genuine humanity as a result of this oligarchic control through hedonism and may even become utilized as automatons. Only John the Savage, as he informs Mustapha Mond, the Controller, does not enjoy this hedonistic, without families, without religion, and without arts civilization: "... I like the inconveniences." "... I don't want comfort. I want God, I want poetry, I want real danger, I want freedom, I want goodness. I want sin." (pp. 267-268).

The Engineered Perpetual Working Classes

Evolutionism says that space and time have no beginning and no end, everything evolves, and there is no purpose in life; it is no good or bad. Humans are animals that they can be created in laboratories and human evolution can be accelerated through engineering science and technology as seen in the laboratories in this work. The oligarchy,

the Alphas, is to engineer and create more working classes like the Betas, the Gammas, the Deltas, and the Epsilons with more complete and sophisticated algorithms to serve them. Since all the lower classes were created in labs with certain specific algorithms, they will be confined to their positions for good. In this case, there is no justice in this society in terms of human status. In a modern free world, everybody is free to work to achieve what he or she aspired to and change his or her status from a poor village peasant boy or girl to a dignified general, a smart scientist, a rich businessman or businesswoman or a famous artist.

The threat in a society consisting of confined classes like this is that if the Alphas take control, ancient myths about gods and goddesses' wars might come to life once more. The fighting would mimic the Trojan War from Greek and Roman mythology or Bharatayuddha from Indian legend. As a result, myths won't just be made up by poets or novelists; rather, they will be things that have always existed in reality.

In 1984

Confined Individual, Controlled Society

The Party's capability to keep the public ignorant of history, current affairs, and Party policies determines its ability to keep them ignorant of reality. Without the necessary information, people are unable to make important decisions in their lives. The novel 1984 serves as an example of the negative consequences of people ceding control of their thoughts, feelings, and actions to an outside power that subtly manipulates society through media programming and an effective police network.

Because the Party suppresses all human emotions—aside from rage and terror—in order to retain control over society, there is no meaningful interpersonal engagement or intimacy. Genuine feelings like pity, love, friendship, and generosity, which distinguish people as unique individuals and set them apart from those who share the same

sentiments, are the greatest dangers to authority, much like in *Brave New World*. Social conventions and behaviors that have been imposed replace individuality, such as dressing in uniform, following Party schedules, and adhering to Newspeak rules that restrict individuals from harboring alternative viewpoints.

Significance of the Past

According to Orwell, the present will be governed by power rather than by truth if we don't have a grasp of history and a memory of past events and emotions. It is possible to effectively leave no standards for the present or opportunities for the future by altering the past. The Party manipulates its followers into rejecting the idea of a history while simultaneously "creating" one by inventing historical occurrences to support its accomplishments. Evidence that contradicts the ruler's objectives is destroyed, whether it is present in publications like books, movies, newspapers, or even the thoughts of individual people. The Party's logic has problems, but only those with memories can dispute its authority by pointing them out. Who controls the past controls the future, therefore, for this purpose, the ruler programs it. Who controls the present controls the past, and for this purpose, the ruler rewrites it. Winston's efforts to rewrite history books are a great danger for the Party. Winston is similar in thought and character to John the Savage in *Brave New World*.

Newspeak and Its Role

The official language is Newspeak, George Orwell's most original and well-known creation. By eliminating phrases that might be used to further independent or politically unacceptable views, Newspeak supports the ruler's beliefs. As younger generations adopt Newspeak, Oldspeak disappears. Newspeak's main objective is to prevent people from expressing unpopular viewpoints or unique ideas by giving people fewer and more tightly defined terms to pick from.

Before expressing notions, much less nuanced and complex ones, a new language often takes time to fully grow. The ruler's

objective is to prohibit the use of a language like Newspeak at this time. When it comes to law and order, society most likely just discusses usual, everyday behaviors. Because of Newspeak, society, particularly the younger generation, eventually, lose connection to the past.

Perpetual Violence

As a result of ongoing hostilities, Oceania instills a hate of the Party's adversaries in its people and uses force to oppress any who disagree with its policies. The fundamental goal of the system is to divert public attention from any private sentiments that aren't under Party control (or approval). When people are compelled to live in a perpetual state of anxiety brought on by repeated threats of destruction through war, they are willing to give over their right to make decisions to a seemingly confident, all-powerful authority. In this way, the authority maintains its uncontrolled power. According to Goldstein's book, conflict makes it possible for society to continue consuming the products it has produced, which leads to steady employment for the general public. Because war uses excess material resources that could be utilized to make the population too comfortable and ultimately too knowledgeable, the authority profits. The major members of powers do not want the conflict to end in order to maintain shortages, thriving economies, and their authority as dictators.

Conclusion

Since they both criticize comparable philosophical tenets from Marxist-Stalinist practices, both authors include allusions to proponents of the same intellectual grounds in their literary works. Both works are full of Marxist-Stalinist issues: the absolute and repressive dictatorship, the ruthless elimination of rivals in the top leadership, the extensive use of the secret police and terror; and the extreme disregard for human rights and the rule of law.

Both works of literature criticize totalitarianism, which confines people in

society through rigorous monitoring. They also serve to warn readers of the dangers that human society faces as human values deteriorate. Both authors address strong authority and authoritarianism, but Huxley achieves so through pleasure and Orwell through agony.

The Alphas in *Brave New World* and the Party in 1984 are two instances of small elite oligarchies that dominate life with zeal which may still be found today in certain governments. They also debate individuality, which is strictly prohibited. They also criticize historical data manipulation because it increases the chance that those in positions of authority will invent the "Truth" by removing historical facts. This reminds people of the use of algorithms today. The authors also warn about the harm that excessive pleasure and misery can do to unique human creativity and invention. Both too much pleasure and too much pain are detrimental to both the human body and spirit in the individual and society at large.

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