

Brave New World Extra Credit — Due on or before December 10, 2010

Directions: You may do three (3) of these. Each could earn you up to 25 pts. Essays/Analyses must reflect critical thought and effort. Be specific. Vagueness and superficial responses will earn you a zero.

1. One page reaction essay: The values and practices of the past, retained on the reservation, create a stark contrast to Central London, yet pieces of each civilization deflect into each other's worlds. Some things never seem to change. Huxley creates new elements in his society yet leaves other ideas unchallenged (Why Ford? Why do the Zunis worship Christ and the eagle?) Using critical thinking and not value judgments, compare and contrast our world today to the world of *Brave New World*, and the world of the author's 1930s to ours. Consider issues of racial discrimination, body image, stereotypes, sexism, etc.
2. One page reaction essay: Huxley examines the idea of family. What are his thoughts? In what ways has the concept of family changed since Huxley's day? Would Huxley be surprised? Use specific examples both from the book and our society today to develop these ideas.
3. One page reaction essay: If an entire culture engages in something, does that make it right? Why? Why not? Use specific examples both from the book and our society today to develop your ideas.
4. One page reaction essay: How do you think people responded to Huxley's book in 1932 compared to how we respond to it today. Be sure to use specific examples.
5. One page reaction essay: Rent the movie, *Gattaca*. Compare and contrast it to *Brave New World*.
6. Movie analysis: Select other movies that deal with a utopian/dystopian theme. Identify each movie, identify whether the movies are utopian/dystopian, and using specifics from the handout on utopian literature, identify and explain the utopian/dystopian characteristics present in the movies.
7. Movie analysis: Rent the movie *Pleasantville*. This movie is existential. Using specific details and examples from the movie compare the movie to the definition of existentialism as outlined on the handout you received in class.
8. Novel comparison/contrast: Read one of the other novels listed on the Utopian handout you received in class [e.g. *Lord of the Flies*, *Animal Farm*, *War of the Worlds*, *Anthem*, *1984*, *Utopia*, etc.]. Compare and contrast the utopian/dystopian traits of the novel to those in *Brave New World*. Which novel do you feel best reflects utopian/dystopian messages? Explain why.
9. Essay: For those of you who have studied *Hamlet*. How does Huxley use this play in his novel? Are there parallels between the plots? (Is Mustapha Mond Claudius? Is Lenina a wearied Ophelia?)
10. Hunt and peck: Find all the references and lines in the book that allude to Shakespearean plays. 1) Write the quote/passage with page number 2) identify the play it comes from and 3) explain why or what the quote means within the context of this novel.
11. Essay: Read the author's introduction. This was written after the novel. In it Huxley describes how he would end the novel differently. Explain how he would have changed the ending. What's your opinion about these changes? Given the time since the novel was written, how do you feel the novel should end? Explain why.