

Soma in brave new world

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Essay In the perfect society, man does not need to resort to drugs to keep society in balance. But in Aldous Huxley's Brave New World, society is based on keeping everyone happy, and if for some reason someone becomes unhappy then there is always soma, the " perfect" drug. The entire society is based upon conditioned responses and predestination, where the individual does what is expected and does it well. The soma helps to keep the society moving, always working to keep production moving, just like Ford's assembly line. Although the Controllers' societies do function—people know what they need to do, people are happy, people have soma, and people can have pleasure whenever they like—and things get done, those same things could be done in a different way. The introduction of the Savage shows a different side of the story; the Savage, never conditioned and born to an actual mother, has different ideas about society—especially soma. The Savage is not happy with the life that the " civilized" people live. To him it seems like a big illusion. The people are conditioned to not have emotions, but humans cannot really be humans without emotions. Even though the Savage had several chances to " have" Lenina any time he wanted, he didn't want to. He wanted passion, he wanted somebody to love, and most importantly he wanted his feelings to be real, visceral—not artificially imposed. The " perfect" drugs that can be developed in the future will not do mankind any favors, because while a " soma" may keep people happy, it renders humans vapid machines devoid of emotion. And it has always been emotion that was the driving force behind human action: love for science, love for others, hate for crime, hate for disease, and even greed have guided people. Huxley's soma represents a halt in progress, a standstill for humanity; an era where all the

authentic joy and wonder and malice and envy of life are all suppressed by chemicals as synthetic as the feelings they produce. Soma is the ultimate oppression: the oppression of the human