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[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



Celeste Mohan March 21, 2013 Period 2 Aldous Huxley intrigued his readers of *Brave New World* by presenting a drug-abusing, sex-driven, technology-based “ utopian” society whose citizens had been mass-produced on an assembly line. This futuristic world, controlled by an elite few, began to crumble as some of its citizens started to think for themselves, thus threatening the social structure. Huxley’s description of an artificial, mechanical world parallels today’s society as America’s people head towards psychological dependence on technology and pharmaceuticals, whilst suppressing their individuality. There is an increasing psychological dependence on technology, leading people to be hooked on it earlier in life. Being exposed to technology at an early age allows children become conditioned to a technological dependent environment. This creates a permanent presence on those who are generously participating in the new technological age. Even children in *Brave New World* were conditioned to accept their roles in life since “ birth”. In a study conducted by the University of Michigan Health System, it was found that “ children ages 2 through 5 spend 32 hours a week in front of a television and/or playing video games. ” (Boyse) The most critical learning ages in a person’s life are ages 1 through 5 so, what are we exposing future generations to? Parents should be limiting the amount of time their children spend with electronics. The American family, also functioning as a support system, is deteriorating as well. Recall that a family unit ceased to exist in the society of *Brave New World* and that words such as “ mother” were taboo. People would rather spend time watching television, or playing video games than having a conversation with the people they live with. The University of Michigan also discovered that

more time spent in front of the television means less time with family (Boyse). For a family relationship to function properly there must be communication. The typical family is busy with work and school schedules, leaving dinner as their only interaction time left for the day. Now, even this time is threatened more than ever as 51% of households have their television on during dinner time (Boyse). Children aren't the only ones addicted to technology, but parents are too! As heads of the household, they set the example for their children. Fiona Macrae, a journalist for the DailyMail, interviewed Dr. Aric Sigman, Bachelor of Science (Honours) degree in Psychology, and a Master of Science degree in The Neurophysiological Basis of Behaviour stated that " With parents caught up with iPads, laptops and other electronics, they leave the parenting up to the television — this is known as " passive parenting" which is now being considered a form of neglect. " (Macrae) Unfortunately, this is the effect the advance of technology has on today's American society. Member of the U. S. House of Representatives, Mark Kennedy, once said, " All of the biggest technological inventions created by man - The computer — says little about his intelligence but speaks volumes about his laziness. " Children are natural observers and fast learners. Keeping this in mind, how do the media influence our children? Children learn to accept common stereotypes through the technology they are exposed to. They copy what they see and hear and no one bothers to correct them. If parents were more involved in what their kids were watching, they could correct the misconceptions their children come across. Three Weeks in a Helicopter — the feely that Lenina and John experienced showcased an over-powering black man with a

submissive white woman, and no one seemed to have a problem with it. Gender biased roles and attitudes are expressed throughout commercials and games, making an impression on children. This creates a cycle for generations to come. Secondary to psychological dependence on technology, America has become a slave to pleasure as it allows us to escape from the failing economy, and other problems of the real world if only for a moment. Pleasure undoes the capacity to think just as soma and the feelies aided Lenina, Bernard and the rest of the World State. The media is everywhere, creating a presence in the lives of children and adults. Drug portrayal on television, video games and subtly through music has an effect on those who are exposed to it. A poll conducted as part of ABC News multi-part series on drugs revealed that " 40% of teens said that programs make drugs seem okay. " (Pozniak) Songs like " Because I Got High" send mixed messages to teens as it talks about the singers good intentions before getting high instead. Americans have handed over their potentially intellectual minds and literature in return for drugs and thought-hindering sitcoms. Huxley's fear that no one would want to read a book is confirmed in today's society as book sales plummet and sanctuaries of literature that were once prominent, go out of business. According to an article by Publishers Weekly, statistics showed that Print books are going out of business and dropping in sales in competition to e-books and other forms of entertainment (Milliot). People are buying books online due to impatience, not only addiction to technology. Political commentator and author, Dennis Prager, once said, " As you get older and wiser you realize that when people are given anything without having to earn it... they become ungrateful and lazy. They also become less

happy. " People in this world get what they want and want it in the quickest way possible. If it's there's one thing about pleasure, it's that it's short-lived, yet humans indulge in such quick, meaningless acts. Getting high doesn't improve anything in a human, yet about 10 million people in the US are casual drug users — what's the purpose? Drugs only last hours, at most. People in America's society should be confronting their problems of this world and coping with them head on instead of escaping them with every chance they get. As seen in Brave New World, social control and individuality could not coexist. The World State would rather have everyone be clueless about the world than have Helmholtz and Bernard think for themselves and be creative beings. Social control gets in the way of allowing individuals to develop freely; therefore they conform to the pressures of " society" and its expectations. In general, certain rights are given up for a society to function such as freedom of speech. For example, the World State had to sacrifice the individuality of its citizens for everyone to be " happy" and in control. There is such a thing as " limited" freedom of speech — which defeats the purpose. The government can't have all of society know too much about what's going on with the world or there would be no control. Government and societal presence is eminent in today's world and can be highly influential when it comes to the choices individuals make. Santa Clara University in California agrees that American individual's lives are shaped by society through the media as they appeal to their need to fit in even though we don't want to be like everyone else (Claire). In today's world, the two societal traits seem to be in conflict as American's struggle for individuality but are discouraged by the government. Society is intrigued by the media and what they think is

popular at the moment and then they begin to think that they themselves like it too. They're influenced by the popular media and what the government says, believing everything that we're told. This is known as the Agenda Setting Theory; the theory that the mass-news media have a large influence on audiences by their choice of what stories they choose to broadcast to the public. No one bothers to question what they're told and get curious about it — and we're not even conditioned to do that. If society continues down this path, they'll be just as clueless as the citizens in Brave New World. For example, society tells the individual that they want more, like the AT&T commercial with the small children yelling for bigger and better things — yet they don't know what that thing actually is. Capitol One's "more cash" commercials display a scenario of a man trying to get a baby to want more cash. Brave New World's society felt that they were entitled to everything and everyone and this idea was encouraged by the government. Our society is attracted to greed and the thought that we need to have everything, and that we have the right to everything, and the media only exacerbates this problem. Although the world is advancing in technology in ways that can be beneficial, there's a downside to everything; "Technological progress has merely provided us with more efficient means for going backwards." Aldous Huxley's thought in the presented quote seems to be one-sided but should be looked at as forewarning to what society can become if it allows technology, greed and pleasure to overtake it. Huxley's prediction of an artificial world doomed by pleasure describes American society as they are obsessively involved with technology and pleasures of the mind and body. It's going to take a joint effort from the world for society

to change. Parents need to be more involved with their children's lives, but also needs to set the example for them. Humans need to begin using their complex brains to their maximum potential instead of wasting time on trivial sitcoms and brain-damaging substances. Everything in America's world is advancing; therefore the lives of their people should too. Works Cited

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Celeste Mohan March 15, 2013 AP Lang. Comp/Period 2 Final Outline I. Aldous Huxley intrigued his readers of *Brave New World* by presenting a drug-abusing, sex-driven "utopian" society whose citizens had been mass-produced on an assembly line. a. This futuristic world, controlled by an elite few, began to crumble as some of its citizens started thinking for themselves — thus threatening the social structure. b. Huxley's description of an artificial, mechanical world parallel's today's society as America's people head towards psychological dependence on technology and pharmaceuticals, whilst suppressing individuality. II. Due to increasing psychological dependence on technology, people are being hooked on it earlier in life. This early exposure to the media

and electronics alters the way children perceive the people in their society. The most critical ages for learning are 0-5 years, so during this time, what are we exposing future generations to? The American family, also functioning as a support system seems to be deteriorating as well. People would rather spend time watching TV and playing video games than having conversations with the people they live with. a. Being exposed at an early age allows for conditioning to take place — creating a permanent presence on those who are generously participating in the new technological age. i. Children ages 2-5 spend 32 hours a week in front of the TV and video games. [2] ii. Time spent watching TV replaces physical activity and leads to children being couch potatoes all their life. [2] b. For a family to function properly there must be communication. The typical family is busy with work and school schedules, leaving dinner as their only true interaction time. But now more than ever this time is being threatened with technological prominence. i. 51% of households said that TV was almost always during dinner time. [2] ii. The more time spent watching TV, the less the child is interacting with family. [2] c. As we've seen in our own lives, children are natural observers and fast learners. Keeping this in mind, how does the media influence on children? They copy what they see and hear and no one bothers to correct them. This creates a cycle for generations to come. i. Children learn to accept common stereotypes through the technology they are exposed to. [2] ii. Gender-biased roles and attitudes are expressed throughout commercials and video games, making an impression on children. [2] III. America has become a slave to pleasure as it distracts us from the problems of the real world. Pleasure undoes our capacity to think just as soma and the feelies

aided Lenina, Bernard and the rest of the World State. Americans have handed over their potentially intellectual minds and literature in return for drugs and thought hindering sitcoms. If it's one thing that is known about pleasure, it's that it's short-lived, yet humans continue to indulge in such quick, meaningless acts. a. As we know, the media has a big presence in children's, as well as adults, lives. Drug portrayal on television, video games and subtly through music has an effect on the people exposed to it. i. 40% of teens said that programs make drugs seem okay. [8] ii. Songs like " Because I Got High" send mixed messages to its listeners when the artist mentions his good intentions before getting high instead. [8] b. Huxley's fear that no one would want to read a book is confirmed in today's society as book sales plummet and sanctuaries of literature that were once prominent, go out of business. i. Print books go out of business and drop in sales in competition to e-books and other forms of media and entertainment. [11] ii. People are resisting buying books due to impatience — they have tablets so they buy things cheaper online. [12] 1. They're giving in to technology not only because it's addicting, but because it's easier and cheaper — they just want the quickest way to get what they want. IV. As seen in Brave New World, social control and individuality could no coexist. There was only room for one societal trait and social control won. In today's world the two seem to be in conflict as American's struggle for individuality but are discouraged by the government. a. Social control gets in the way of allowing individuals to develop freely; therefore they conform to the pressures of " society" and its expectations. Government and societal presence is eminent in today's world and can be highly influential to persuade us to act a certain way. i. Certain

rights are given up for a society to act a certain way. [14] ii. Our lives are shaped by the government and society through the media as they appeal to our need for social acceptance — whether we want to admit it or not. [15] iii. We're intrigued by the media and what they think is popular, making us think that we ourselves like it. [16] V. Analyzing both Orwell and Huxley's relevance and accuracy in reference to today's world can be challenging considering their books 1984 and Brave New World didn't prophesy the same thing. Aldous Huxley's prediction of an artificial world doomed by pleasure seems to describe American society today as they are occupied technology and obsessed with pleasure. [-> 0] - <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2147871/children-addicted-television-face-lifetime-hooked-box-say-doctors-warn-generation-risks-brain-damage.html> [-> 1] - <http://publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/bookselling/article/55832-rate-of-print-ddecline-flatted-in-2012.html>