

Representation of power and ethics

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



Composers undermine institutions of power to show the unethical values of government with strict systematic control while also conveying how this influences the behaviors of society through creating a lack of individualism. Aldous Huxley's novel ' Brave New World' conveys a dystopic satire of governments who limit personal autonomy. Jack Finney's short story ' The Body Snatcher's' depicts a sci-fi alien invasion and the threat of communist infiltration in American society. Both composers manipulate their textual form in order to undermine systems of power as well as highlighting to the reader how strict control limits personal autonomy.

Composers undermine social institutions of power in an effort to critique the unethical nature of the government. Authoritarian control in dictatorship societies were beginning to emerge in WW1 and influences Huxley's novel ' Brave New World'. Huxley critiques a dictator government that confines individuals and makes them conform to strict rules to show the reader that it limits independent thought. Huxley critiques Mond's authoritarian control in his argument with the Savage when he states that " our civilization has chosen machinery and medicine and happiness" where irony is created in the link between mass consumption and artificial happiness as well as the fact that the people did not have a choice, they were pre-determined. The use of irony highlights to the audience Huxley's critique of Mond's authoritarian control and his propaganda used to justify it. Mond also argues that " you can't make flivvers without steel and you can't have tragedies without social instability", which emphasizes to the audience the irony that Mond's argument acknowledges the beauty of tragedy, yet condemns social instability. Huxley critiques Mond's endorsement of a social system that is

flawed, undermining authoritarian control within society. This emphasizes the inhuman and unethical control of government, and positions the reader to reject these organisations. Jack Finney's 'The Body Snatchers' similarly critiques institutions of power within his text to reveal the unethical nature of government. Finney uses the concept of monotony, allusive to industrialization and the 'workers utopia' of the USSR to critique a government that uses capitalist desires as a distraction to cold war fear. Finney critiques a government and their encouragement of consumerist culture that is used to avoid the dear of ideological communist infiltration instilled into the working class. Miles Bennel comments on the advertising of "banana, laundry soap, Niblets... pots, pans, electric mixers", the accumulation emphasizes to the audience the link being created between domesticity and a calm falsity for the working underclass, used as a distraction to cold war fear, and echoes in the plot of the "normal" appearance of the "body snatching aliens". Finney critiques consumerist culture, undermining the authoritarian institutions of power which reject the fears of its people. This highlights to the reader the unethical nature of governments that do not consider the voices of its people and promote a culture that devalues them. Both composers reveal the unethical nature of authoritarian societies through satirizing the social systems within their texts.

Composers explore how a loss of individualism as a result of conformity and unity, changes the behavior of individuals within their society as there is a loss of personal autonomy. Huxley's 'Brave New World' is influenced by utilitarian political propaganda in Russia to create a 'unified' and equal

state. Huxley rejects collectivism and instead is connected to the values of Humanism that values individualism and their personal liberties are viewed as paramount. Huxley describes the building of the Hatchery where “overalls are white, their hands gloved in a pale corpse-coloured rubber” with the color imagery painting a clear image in the readers mind of dehumanization and a sterile environment, while the emphasis on the unnatural links to the idea of death, and creates a technological dystopia. The Hatchery’s light is described as “hungrily” seeking “some draped lay figure, some pallid shape of academic goose flesh” where the chremamorphic attributions dehumanizes the workers and begins the motif, later continues with the workers described as “chickens”, “cows” and “rams”. Huxley encourages the reader to reject such organisations of society like that of the Bolshevik revolutions utilitarian regime in ‘workers utopia’ encouraging the audience that the humanized and patronizing control of society should be rejected, and accept their personal liberties. Similarly, Finney’s novel ‘Body Snatchers’ also conveys how society has been conditioned and has resulted in a loss of individualism. Finney’s writing during a time of extreme criticism for the communist movement and fear of ideological infiltrations informs his sci-fi depiction of a communist takeover and the loss of thought individualism associated with the system of government. Finney’s sci-fi plot of an alien invasion, directly links to the fear of communist takeover in an American society. Finney reiterates this critique of government through his description of the alien pods that mimic the body of humans as “bland and unmarked, ready to receive their final impressions.” The emphasis on the dehumanized and unnatural process

encourages the audience to reject systems of government that control individuals, forcing them to conform and limiting their personal autonomy. Finney limits independent thought to show how control leads to a lack of individuality. Both composers effectively critique the systems of government of their time that imposes strict authoritarian control to convey how they reshape the behaviours of individuals and create a society that lacks individual thought.

Aldous Huxley and Jack Finney both expose the unethical nature of governments in control of the lives of others and how this causes them to lose their individual thought. Through their texts they convey the importance of individualism and the dull and unethical society that it is a result of the world without personal liberties and freedom.