

Brave new world and bokanovsky's process

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The conflict between individuality and communal identity forms a central theme of Huxley's *Brave New World*. From the opening page of the novel, it is clear that Huxley's satirical utopia is supported by an over-riding sense of civic authority and communal identity. The World State celebrates its law and ethical paradigms by way of sloganism and its herald: "" in a shield, the World State's motto, COMMUNITY, IDENTITY, STABILITY"; the three words in rapid succession suggest that the religious trinity of Father-Son-Holy-Ghost have been replaced by communal identification.

The words seem to lead into one-another, blurring their meanings together and suggesting a cause and effect: that " community" allows for " identity" and " stability"; community in the World State, in fact, is identity and stability, (Huxley). As the novel's first extended scene gets underway, the reader begins to enter the utopian world and realizes that individuality, as recognized by contemporary real-world readers, is placed at a very low priority in the World State. The mass-production of cars and other factory-built products has been applied to human beings.

Students attend a medical lecture on the " Bokanovsky's Process" which generates mass-human production: One egg, one embryo, one adult-normality. But a bokanovskified egg will bud, will proliferate, will divide. From eight to ninety-six buds, and every bud will grow into a perfectly formed embryo, and every embryo into a full-sized adult. Making ninety-six human beings grow where only one grew before. Progress. (Huxley) From the very beginning of life in the World State, individuality is sacrificed in the name of community and in the name of progress.

Huxley's satirical inversion of the associations most commonly associated with human infants: those of possibility and uniqueness and joy and subsumed beneath his Ford-factory-utopian abstraction of babies born in labs on conveyer belts. With this single image and scene, Huxley sets up the central dichotomy of Brave New World, the conflict between individual liberty and self-actualization and communal of State-controlled power and State mandated " happiness.

" Because Huxley's intention is to critique the " inhumanity" of man, his vision of the complete eradication of individuality, by necessity, must begin at birth. The coldly biological and assembly-line imagery establishes the depth and breadth of the conflict between individuality and community identification with urgency and immediacy. To further extend the comprehensiveness of the conflict, Huxley must demonstrate the loss of individual sexual impulse and reproductive rights right along with his vision of the State run assembly-line incubators.

To completely subsume individuality, it is necessary to demystify eroticism and sexual acts: sex is permitted freely in the World State although the kind of sex which is depicted is cold and unfeeling and not at all what one would associate with human sexual impulse and romantic relationships as we now know them. Because human sexuality begins with self-image, Huxley's depiction of Lenina's grooming and dressing routine plays a key role in showing how individuality is eradicated by the State sponsored eroticism and fashion: " Lenina got out of the bath, toweled herself dry, took hold of a long flexible tube plugged into the wall[...

] A blast of warmed air dusted her with the finest talcum powder. Eight different scents and eau-de-Cologne were laid on in little taps over the wash-basin. " Because Lenina is later revealed to harbor serious radical thoughts regarding sexuality and love, the preceding scene of her bath and dressing serves to show how her inborn beauty and natural sexuality have been obscured beneath synthetic-ism and communal homogeny, (Huxley).

Lenina's desired state of sexuality is in stark conflict with the professed sexual morals of the World State where past ideas about love, sex, and romance are vilified and seen as limitations to true human expression: " Family, monogamy, romance. Everywhere exclusiveness, a narrow channelling of impulse and energy"; in the new, progressive society, " every one belongs to every one else," and there is no such thing as individual love or romance or monogamy.

This inversion of sexual permissiveness -- like Huxley's conflation of assembly-lines and nurseries -- is an ironic technique which is meant to signal the perils of the breakdown of individuality and spontaneous : chemistry" between people. Huxley is saying, in effect, that if human individuality is sacrificed in the name of progress, then true progress will also have been sacrificed altogether. By demonstrating the grotesque nature of State sponsored Eros and State sponsored births, Huxley attacks the core-experiences of humanity and sets his satirical sights on clarifying through horror, the grave importance of individuation in society.

In response to the axiom that " everyone belongs to everyone" and thus has no personal will whatsoever, the young students in the lecture merely accept this axiom as truth: " The students nodded, emphatically agreeing with a <https://assignbuster.com/brave-new-world-bokanovskys-process/>

statement which upwards of sixty-two thousand repetitions in the dark had made them accept, not merely as true, but as axiomatic, self-evident, utterly indisputable," and with his observation, Huxley makes it clear that the stifling of individuality leads to a stifling of the mind, the imagination, and the will to discover truth as opposed to convenient but possibly corrupt or false explanations, (Huxley)

If both and reproduction play a very large role in the fundamental elements of Huxley's satirical examination of the conflict between individuality and community in Brave New World, the issue of death -- and more specifically of grieving -- play an equally important role in presenting a Utopian nightmare where the basic attributes and experiences of humanity have been paved over by homogenized experience and unemotional interpersonal relationships. A good example of this sub-theme in the novel is the scene between the Savage and the nurse in the hospital when the Savage's mother lies dying.

Normal grieving is looked at as a deep weakness in the social order of the World State: " Startled by the expression of distress on his pale face, she suddenly broke off. " Why, whatever is the matter? " she asked. She was not accustomed to this kind of thing in visitors. (Not that there were many visitors anyhow: or any reason why there should be many visitors.) " You're not feeling ill, are you? " He shook his head. " She's my mother," he said in a scarcely audible voice. The nurse glanced at him with startled, horrified eyes; then quickly looked away. (Huxley).

Huxley's novel is satirical in essence, but it is horrifying in experience and the strength of its visceral message about the urgency of preserving
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individuality is in many ways made acutely powerful by Huxley's satirical inversion of primary modes of human experience including: birth, love, sex, friendship, self-image, and even death. By demonstrating the horror of utopia through the loss of personal individuality, Huxley adroitly satirizes many of the conventions and technologies which have steadily risen as a threat in society to the sanctity of the individual.