# Dystopian Elements In The Novel Brave New World And The Movie Blade Runner: Comparative Essay

Set in a futuristic time period, where technological advancements make it possible to control entire populations, the world controllers of both the novel and movie take full advantage of their power. The societal ranking systems in both the novel and movie create a never ending strive for superiority over others. By comparing Aldous Huxley's novel Brave New World to Ridley Scott's movie Blade Runner, the similar themes and dystopian elements embedded within both of works of art establish a sense of anarchy between the characters and the controllers. The governmental use of propaganda in the new worlds cause the characters to begin to fear the outside world and force them cling to the resources provided by the controllers whether helpful or harmful.

Starting with the fact that both worlds are governed by a totalitarian system, the characters struggle to find their place in their respective worlds without creating a kerfuffle within the hierarchy. The citizens tend to obediently follow the nonsense the controllers pump into their minds through the various propaganda techniques used. As seen in both the movie and novel, each state has their own motto that instills a sense of responsibility in each person to follow that directive. For Brave New World, the World State's motto "COMMUNITY, IDENTITY, STABILITY." (Huxley 1). is the mindset that the entire population has. That mindset drives them to believe that only when each category has reached its full potential will their utopia be perfect. The Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning expressed "'If we could bokanovskify indefinitely the whole problem would be solved.'"(7-8). That problem being not enough constant stability and having people with their own individual identities and thoughts reacting to the surrounding problems. In like manner, Blade Runner's motto "A new life awaits you in the Off-world colonies. A chance to begin again in a golden land of opportunity and adventure!" is there to convince the population of a perfect utopia far away from earth where there's little struggle amongst the ranks. Even with these mottos in place, the protagonists believe there is still something fundamentally wrong with the bureaucratic and corporate control, making them question why they still follow their ideologies.

Furthermore, this conformation to uniform expectations has made it so citizens are afraid of the outside world and feel as though the outsiders cannot be trusted and must be banished by consequence. At the beginning of Lenina and Bernard's visit to the savage reservation, Lenina exclaimed "'It's awful. We ought not to have come here.'"(75). She is appalled by seeing elderly people and interactions between people in a familial manner. Since she was never exposed to this way of living, she only knew what the controllers had told her, which made the separation between the new world and savage life that much bigger. In respect to the movie, the earthlings are afraid of going to the Off-world because they believe that all the untrustworthy replicants will be inhabiting the land with them and in their minds, the replicants are what's wrong with their utopian society. This fear comes from the controllers presenting the notion that lands other than the new world are unsatisfactory compared to their perfect utopia.

Although the two works of art use different systems of control they maintain similar dystopian societal characteristics to shape a dehumanized state. Blade Runner uses primarily corporate control, with Dr. Eldon Tyrell being the main replicant creator, whereas Brave New World is

largely controlled bureaucratically by Mustapha Mond, the Resident Controller for Western Europe and the D.H.C., Thomas. The replicants are manufactured in such a way that they are robotic people, meaning they are emotionally inexperienced and have memories implanted in their mind to make it seem as though the are normal. This method does not work because blade runners can detect the fake emotions through their normal appearance by conducting an iris screening. With a slight difference, the government in Brave New World provides its citizens with the means to fabricate a false-sense of happiness for themselves by distributing the drug soma. "'One cubic centimetre cures ten gloomy. But, I say!'"(41). This way of happiness brainwashing to the point of compliance went against many characters beliefs. John, who had come from savagery, had seen what negative effects the drugs can have on a person's life and decided to take matters into his own hands by attempting to stop the soma distribution.

"'Free, free!', the Savage shouted, and with one hand continued to throw the soma into the area … "Men at last¡'-and in the interval also throwing the poison out by handfuls through the open window. "Yes, men! men!" and there was no more poison left. He picked up the cash-box and showed them its black emptiness. 'You're free!'"(146).

John caused chaos amongst all the soma addicted citizens because his view of soma were contradictory to the states. From his perspective, soma destroys the person on the inside and replaces it with a fake embodiment of emotions. Likewise, Bernard refuses to take soma to artificially replace his unwanted emotions. Lenina questions Bernards choices and asks him, "why don't you take soma when you have these dreadful ideas of yours. You'd forget all about them. And instead of feeling miserable, you'd be jolly. So jolly,"(62). Not only would Bernard be so jolly but he would also be more easily manipulated by the government to obey the rules. Unlike the rest of the citizens, Bernard went against the status quo to stick to feeling all his natural emotions. Correspondingly in Blade Runner, the replicant Roy showed he had a soul when he was being retired and he let a dove go symbolising his soul soaring into the air. This went against not only the programming but also Dr. Tyrell's vision for the replicants. In dystopian worlds, there will always be characters that try to rebel and not follow the crowds, because they realize that something is terribly wrong with the societal order.

In summary, the rebellious behaviours of the protagonists are exemplified through the use of dystopian elements in both Blade Runner and Brave New World. With propaganda playing a huge on in how the citizens view the controllers and their philosophies, their fear of the outside world grows, whilst becoming dehumanized from their own emotions, leading them to be easily persuaded into less than fortunate scenarios. Without the contradictions and questions from the protagonists, the new worlds may have achieved their idea of a perfect utopia, or they might be striving for something even more technologically advanced. The new worlds will constantly be in a cyclical battle with those who see through the mindless indoctrination the controllers instill and the subservient citizens.