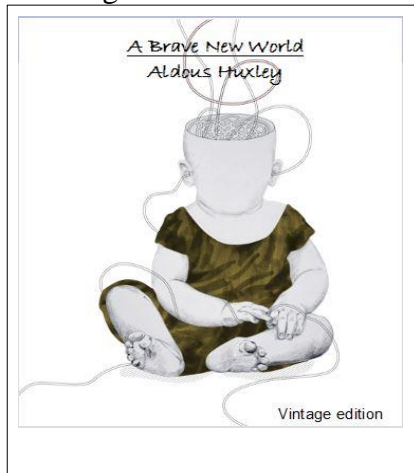


Annexes

Annexe 1 : Brief analysis of *A Brave New World's* book cover.

This document is a forged document since it is only one of the several suggestions that independent artists submitted to Vintage Edition. Although it seems a very appropriate illustration for the novel, this book cover was not selected by the editor. The original artist is unknown and this illustration is but an imitation



submitted on the website “deviantart.com”.

Proposition of description : This document is a drawing. It could be a caricature about the babies of the future but on the top we can read “A Brave New World, Aldous Huxley”. Consequently, this document must be the book cover of Huxley's novel.

In the centre of the foreground, there is a baby who is sitting. We don't know if this baby is a boy or a girl because it is wearing a kaki and black uniform. Furthermore, the baby has no features on his face (he hasn't got any eyes, nor mouth, nor nose). It might mean that, in the future, babies will all look identical.

Besides, there are wires going into the baby's head. We can see the baby's skull which is full of wires. I think that this baby is connected to a computer.

Moreover, the background is all white, so the baby might be sitting in a hospital room. The room may be the 'conditioning room' in the novel.

This illustration is frightening because the baby looks like a robot. It might mean that babies will not be human in the future and that people will become puppets. Therefore, the novel certainly is a dystopia which deals with the consequences of technology and science on mankind.

Associated activities during correction : spot 2 genitive structures / spot the modal structures (degree of certainty).

Analysis :

The key notion in this illustration is the Unheimlich (i.e. the encounter with the uncanny). Indeed, a baby is a sacred being in contemporary Western civilisations towards which we are compelled to be affectionate. Babies draw empathy, kindness and we feel bound to protect them. Therefore, in dehumanising this innocent being (by the erasure of the facial features, the a-sexualisation through the kaki uniform and the brain made of wires), the author not only illustrates the conditioning operated in the NEO-PAVLOVIAN room in chapter 2 from *A Brave New World*, but also confronts us with a distorted human being.

Furthermore, the lack of colours in this illustration conveys the absence of passions. The lack of spacial anchorage (= the white background) further illustrates the sense of abstraction from both time and space.

The D.H.C. and his students stepped into the nearest lift and were carried up to the fifth

(Adapted from) ***A Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley, 1932** . Extract from **Chapter Two**.

floor.

I

INFANT NURSERIES. NEO-PAVLOVIAN CONDITIONING ROOMS, announced the notice board.

The Director opened a door. They were in a large bare room, very bright and sunny ; for the whole of the southern wall was a single window. Half a dozen nurses were engaged in setting out bowls of roses in a long row across the floor. Big bowls, packed tight with blossom.

The nurses stiffened to attention as the D.H.C. came in.

"Set out the books," he said curtly.

In silence the nurses obeyed his command. Between the rose bowls the books were duly set out – a row of nursery quartos opened invitingly each at some gaily coloured image of beast or fish or bird.

"Now bring in the children."

They hurried out of the room and returned in a minute or two with eight-month-old babies, all exactly alike and all dressed in khaki.

"Put them down on the floor."

The infants were unloaded.

"Now turn them so that they can see the flowers and books."

Turned, the babies at once fell silent, then began to crawl towards those clusters of sleek colours, those shapes so gay and brilliant on the white pages. From the ranks of the crawling babies came little squeals of excitement, gurgles and twitterings of pleasure.

The Director rubbed his hands. "Excellent!" he said. "It might almost have been done on purpose."

The swiftest crawlers were already at their goal. Small hands reached out uncertainly, touched, grasped, unpetaling the transfigured roses, crumpling the illuminated pages of the books. The Director waited until all were happily busy. Then, "Watch carefully," he said. And, lifting his hand, he gave the signal.

The Head Nurse, who was standing by a switchboard at the other end of the room, pressed down a little lever.

There was a violent explosion. Shriller and ever shriller, a siren shrieked. Alarm bells maddeningly sounded.

The children started, screamed; their faces were distorted with terror.

"And now," the Director shouted (for the noise was deafening), "now we proceed to rub in

the lesson with a mild electric shock."

He waved his hand again, and the Head Nurse pressed a second lever. The screaming of the babies suddenly changed its tone. There was something desperate, almost insane, about the sharp spasmodic yelps to which they now gave utterance. Their little bodies twitched and stiffened; their limbs moved jerkily as if to the tug of unseen wires.

"We can electrify that whole strip of floor," bawled the Director in explanation. "But that's enough," he signalled to the nurse.

The explosions ceased, the bells stopped ringing, the shriek of the siren died down from tone to tone into silence. The stiffly twitching bodies relaxed, and what had become the sob and yelp of infant maniacs broadened out once more into a normal howl of ordinary terror.

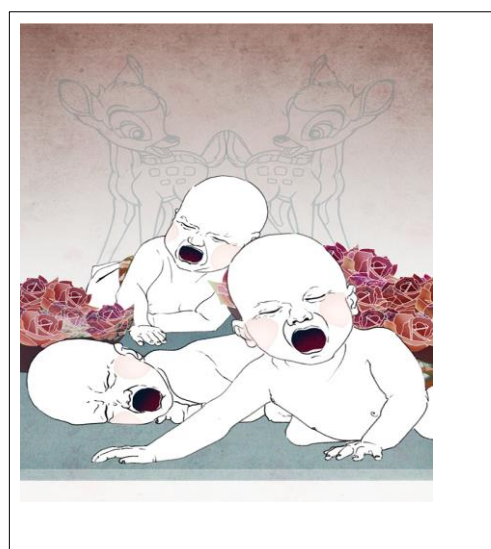
"Offer them the flowers and the books again."

The nurses obeyed; but at the approach of the roses, at the mere sight of those gaily-coloured images of pussy and cock-a-doodle-doo and baa-baa black sheep, the infants shrank away in horror, the volume of their howling suddenly increased.

"Observe," said the Director triumphantly, "observe."

Books and loud noises, flowers and electric shocks – already in the infant mind these couples were compromisingly linked; and after two hundred repetitions of the same or a similar lesson would be wedded indissolubly.

What man has joined, nature is powerless to put asunder.



Brief analysis : Although this extract from Aldous Huxley's novel is fairly long, it has been reduced to its minimal substance (at least I believe so). The aim of the textual reduction was to simplify the extract since certain lines were quite intricate in terms of style and meaning.

→ Systematicity : the construction of this narrative is systematic in the sense that the Director systematically uses the imperative whether he is talking to the nurses or the student. Once an order is given, it is obediently executed by the nurses. Much like the experiment is bound to be repeated on the babies in a pavlovian manner, the frame of the narrative is repetitive.

→ absence of opposition : in spite of the atrocity of the experiment (tasting babies) there is not a single ounce of rebellion in this extract. The students passively observe and the nurses readily obey the DHC's commands. This feature implicitly hints at a conditioning that has been successfully going on for generations. Not only is hierarchy strengthened by this conditioning (kaki being the colour of the working-class in the novel) but it also indirectly highlights the notion stated at the end : "what man has joined, nature is powerless to put asunder". Indeed, once conditioning has been established, there seems to be no going back since there is no questioning of the morality of such or such action.

→ Science in this extract is used to legitimate what morally conscious beings would consider intolerable. Whereas the main witnesses of this experiment (i.e. the students) cannot question the legitimacy nor the morality of it, we (as the subsidiary witnesses) cannot remain un-disturbed.

→ A dystopia ? Within the narrative-world, the systematic conditioning of new-borns contributes to the stability of society and the hermetical caste system prevents any disruption in the pyramidal structure. Hence, rebelling within the fictional universe is a step towards chaos, and it is viewed as such by almost all characters. Yet, from our vantage point, this rigidly codified and scientifically legitimated system is a dystopia since it generates large-scale dehumanisation. There arises the question : can social order coexist with individual freedom and passion?

Finally, Huxley's novel highlights the conditioning of human beings through scientific methods which empty the individuals of their substance. To a certain extent, his anticipation of the future has been realised since we are being force-fed virtual fantasies and desires through advertising, TV and Computers and although the material conditions of living have never been so satisfactory in the history of mankind (i.e. access to health, leisure and comfort) it seems that happiness has not been much improved. Having all our essential needs taken care of basically does not make us easier to please.

Consequently, the philosophical issues regarding freedom and happiness raised in *ABNW* are even more relevant today than they were in 1932.



Still frame from “the Simpsons”

Description :

This document is a still frame from the famous TV show “The Simpson”, that is why the characters are yellow.

In the foreground, on the left there are several (= many) pupils stacked on top of each other. They are sitting on brown chairs behind grey desks. This surely means that there will be more pupils in the future but that the classrooms will be as small as nowadays.

In the foreground, on the right, there is a huge TV. On the screen, we can see a man who is standing and smiling. He probably is the pupils' teacher. This certainly means that human teachers will be replaced by virtual teachers by 2050 and that lessons will be recorded. On the bottom right-hand corner, we can see part of a real teacher. He or she might be reading a book or marking papers. The physical teacher is not looking at the pupils.

In the background we can see a small window on top of a cupboard. The weather is sunny outside but the pupils are staying inside. I think that this illustration criticises young people's fascination for screens over outdoor activities. Indeed, the pupils seem mesmerised by the TV.

This cartoon probably criticises the consequences of technology on the classrooms. According to this illustration, the pupils of the future will be passively watching a screen whereas teachers will just have to play a video instead of teaching.

Associated activities during correction : Spot the adverbs of probability / spot a comparative structure.

Key elements of analysis :

→ discrepancies : size (TV / students + room/TV + recorded teacher/physical teacher)

→ indoor v outdoor : small window shows fine weather + nature versus small, cramped, grey classroom.

→ attitudes : numerous mesmerised pupils / 'perfect' smiling virtual teacher / useless real teacher probably reading a magazine.