**1. Summary:** *Brave New World* is a book about the future and what the world could possibly come to be like if humans were to allow the government to control every aspect of their lives. In the modern society of *Brave New World*, people are all created in bottles and no live birth happens, in fact live birth is considered and obscenity. While they are being created, the fetuses go through many different trials in order to condition the body to like certain weather or be a certain intelligence. After the babies are decanted, they are further conditioned to be the way that the government wants them to be. Nobody naturally grows up, they all must be molded into the “ideal” citizen. One character, Bernard Marx, does not feel like he fits in well with this society, he is an outsider, a loner, and wants to find something better in life. He meets this girl that he likes, Lenina Crowne, and wants to have a deeper relationship with her than just passing sex (which is the norm), and therefore takes her to a savage reservation, a place few people can access. In the Savage reservation, Indians are kept in their natural habitat and allowed to live out their days unaffected by the new technology from the modern world. While there they meet a man that is white (not darker skinned like all the other Indians) and whose mother was originally from the modern world, but got lost on a trip there and ended up being stuck there forever. She gave birth to him in the reservation and named him John. She told him many stories about the outside world, and because of these fantastical stories he wants to go and see the modern world. Bernard takes John and his mother, Linda, back to the civilized world. Linda has grown old and ugly, a thing that does not happen in the new society, and therefore is shunned by all the other members of society. She lives out the rest of her days in a *soma* holiday, a drug that takes the user out of reality and into paradise without all of the horrible after affects. John is traumatized by her death. He already did not like the new world, because of multitudes of twins and
impersonal relationships, and hates it even more because of its dependence on drugs. He tries to “liberate” the masses by throwing away their drugs, but it backfires and the police are sent in to settle a riot that sprang up from his actions. He is sent to the World Controller, Mustapha Mond, and is told all about the society and why it is the way it is. He tries to argue against Mustapha, but makes no headway. He ends up living in a house a fair distance away from society and near nature. However, the crowds will not leave him alone and continue to harass him trying to get a reaction from him. After a video is published, showing him doing self-flagellation the crowds come in huge numbers out of fascination with the unknown and want to see him whip himself in public. Lenina comes, she is the woman that John had originally fallen in love with, but after she acted like a “whore” to him he hated her and told her he would kill her if she didn’t leave his sight. Upon seeing her, and goaded on by the thundering crowd, he proceeds to whip her to death. During the process the encircling crowd begins to mimic his actions and beat on one another. They begin to move around and sing a song called “Orgy-porgy”. The next day John awakens to find out that he had taken soma sometime during the event and realizes the atrocities he has committed. Later that day after hearing about the orgy of atonement even more people come to see him, and hope to experience it as well. They go into his house and find just under the crown of a staircase arch a pair of dangling feet slowly turning from one direction to the next. He had hung himself.

**Theme:** 1) It is impossible to create a perfectly stable society when the society is founded upon humans who are naturally unstable. No amount of “civilization” will completely eradicate the chaos that follows humans around like a plague. 2) No amount of conditioning or nurturing can completely extinguish a person’s nature. All people have instincts and behaviors that can never be completely squashed out, even by intensive psychological behavioral conditioning.
2. **Main Setting:** It is the year 2540. Everything is regulated. People are conditioned to act a certain way and be happy with the position in life in which they were predestined to live. People are forced by addiction to take pills called *soma*. *Soma* is supposed to suppress people’s emotions and lift them out of reality. Although, human nature is suppressed within this society, emotions can never be completely eradicated, thus creating an unstable society, which the government tries to hold in check by drugging everyone. The setting emphasizes the fact that if we as a people continue down the path of the future and allow people to control us, this will only lead to the inability to handle reality; or tell the difference between illusion and reality. Also, in its over-the-tip cleanliness and “perfection”, there is hidden a dark and sinister secret. The excessive cleanliness is an attempt to erase the dirty reality of the society.

3. **Opening Scene:** The opening scene starts with the director of the hatcheries giving a tour of the facility to young, new students. He is showing them how humans are created and conditioned to be the way the government wants them to be. It’s rather foreboding and takes a while to completely understand what’s going on, but the beginning definitely gives the reader chills and feelings that this is not right. Humans are trying to control the world, and all of its inhabitants. Create a perfectly balanced world, something that is impossible to do. From the very beginning the reader knows something bad is going to happen, because nothing can be run perfectly smoothly without having horrible secrets hiding beneath the surface. The opening scene serves to create a cautious and fragile feeling, as if this whole perfect society could come crashing down at any second. People are trying to stabilize things that can never completely be stable, and therefore there is bound to be some issues.

4. **Closing Scene:** The book ends with the savage killing Lenina and getting the crowd of on looking civilized people into a big orgy, after which he hangs himself. This scene is all about
repressed human emotions. The onlookers have never before experienced any sort of violence. They are immediately drawn into the Savage’s violent actions and begin to beat on one another. The nature of humans is dark and sinister, with violence and brutality lurking behind corners of the mind, waiting to make an appearance. Even after all of their conditioning to hate blood and injuries, and shun violence the civilized humans can’t help but have their deep emotions stirred and a longing for passion of some sort to come forth. They are drawn to the violent acts like thirsty horses to water, hoping to quench their suppressed feelings for violence and need to feel strong emotions. Even the savage who loves God so much gets wrapped up in the tumultuous event and ends up killing Lenina, the woman he had originally loved. He also goes against his morals by inadvertently taking soma during the orgy. Even he who hates the drug and the idea of distorting reality must take some of the drug to escape from the awful truth of life; that we are an instable race that loves to destroy beauty just as much if not more than we like to create it.

After discovering these things, the savage decides that he can no longer live in a world so messed up; with humans that have no outlet for the emotions that they are not supposed to have, and therefore engage in behavior that is morally wrong yet triggers the same exhilarated receptors in the brain as a good or less harmful act might do as well. Suppressing natural human emotions is no better than allowing a person to revel in there infamous and dark feelings, because eventually those locked away emotions will need to find a way to be expressed, and most likely not in a good way.

5. HTRLLAP Chapter: The Chapter “…Except Sex” from Foster’s book, “How to Read Literature Like a Professor” applies to this new civilized society. Everyone in the new society is constantly having sex; they even have the line “Everyone belongs to everyone else”.

Contradictory to most books with sex in them, this sex is not liberating, nor does it give its
characters freedom from social constraints, but rather it chains them further to society and makes them mindless slaves. By performing sexual activities throughout their lives, the individuals lose the mystery and emotional passion that usually accompanies sex. Society tells them to have “lustful” sex and that it is good and natural. By giving in, the people are allowing society to control them and dictate how they live their lives, taking away the individual’s ability to be emotionally attracted to a member of the opposite sex. Plus, their sex produces nothing good; no close relationships and no children are produced from the excessive amounts of sex they engage in. It’s become just another mindless activity for people to do and gain sensual satisfaction and taken any authentic reproduction and opportunity for growth that is normally a part of sex.

6. Memorable Quotes:

| How does our desire to transfer responsibility to others reflect a degradation of our society? | “One of the principal functions of a friend is to suffer (in a milder and symbolic form) the punishments that we should like, but are unable to inflict upon our enemies” (121). | This quote is significant because it really displays the rotten side of human nature. Jealously and vindication are part of human nature, even in the “perfect society” and can never be eliminated, no matter what means are used. It is a rather depressing commentary on human nature; true, but sad. |
| Why is sticking to personal convictions sometimes greater than our own happiness? | “’All right then,’ said the Savage defiantly, ‘I’m claiming the right to be unhappy’” (163). | The Savage is defying the civilized world and clinging to the ability to think and live freely without drugs and brainwashing. He would rather live in a world with pain and raw emotion, instead of a world where happiness and immediate satisfaction are the key reasons for life. He believes in a greater purpose to living than just satisfying the flesh. |