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Assignment: Compare "1984" and "Brave New World"

Although many similarities exist between Aldous Huxley's A Brave New World and George Orwell's 1984, the works books

though they deal with similar topics, are more dissimilar than alike. A Brave New World is a novel about the struggle of Bernard Marx, who rejects the tenants of his society when he discovers that he is not truly happy. 1984 is the story of Winston who finds forbidden love within the hypocrisy of his society. In both cases, the main character is in quiet rebellion against his government which is eventually found to be in vain. ...

Since its publication in 1932, Brave New World and its author has been the subject of much commentary and much criticism. Many people consider this Huxley's most important work: many others think it is his only work. This novel has been praised and condemned, vilified and glorified, a source of controversy, a subject for sermons, and required reading for many high school students and college undergraduates. This novel has had twenty-seven printings in the United States alone and will probably have twenty-seven more....

Brave New World is a masterpiece of science fiction. Huxley has imaginatively employed scientific facts and theories to produce a classic of its kind. This novel is in the tradition of Jules Verne, the French novelist who wrote Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea and Journey to the Center of the Earth, and H. G. Wells, the English novelist who wrote War of the Worlds. Few writers of science fiction have equaled Huxley's ability to make the unbelievable seem believable and to make the improbable seem probable. His own interest in science, its use and misuse, its peril and its promise, contributed to the accuracy of his presentation and to the horror of his envisioned Utopia. ...

In A Brave New World history is ignored completely whereas in 1984 it is literally rewritten in order to suit the present.

The role of science in both books is extensive and complicated. 1984's telescreens cannot be turned off, as A Brave New World has "feelies," an advancement on "talkies" which added sound, "feelies" add tactile senses to a movie as well. Science and human progress is not acknowledged in A Brave New World (Smith) excepting when it increases consumption, whereas it is twisted with ironic titles in 1984, "They were homes of the four Ministries between which the entire apparatus of government was divided: the Ministry of Truth, which concerned itself with news, entertainment, education, and the fine arts; the Ministry of Peace, which concerned itself with war; the Ministry of Love, which maintained law and order; and the Ministry of Plenty, which was responsible for economic affairs. Their names in Newspeak: Minitrue, Minipax, Miniluv, and Miniplenty." ...

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Orwell is considered a failed prophet and both he and "1984" remain as enigmatic and controversial as ever. A man of contradictions, Orwell chose to live in near poverty for most of his life despite being educated in some of England's finest schools. He hated authority, yet spent five years as an officer with the Indian Imperial Police in Burma.

He was an avowed socialist who nonetheless despised communism. Many of his writings were openly racist and anti-semitic, yet he campaigned tirelessly to improve life for lower-class people. And despite his apparent disdain for organized religion, he asked for and received a funeral and burial in the Church of England. Both Orwell, whose real name was Eric Arthur Blair, and "1984" are misunderstood to this day....

Both books forewarn of a day when humankind might fall slave to its own concept of how others should act. The two books ask not whether societies with stability, pacification, and uniformity can be created, but whether or not they are worth creating. It is so often that one wants something and in wanting romanticizes it, thus bringing disappointment when the end is finally obtained. They serve as a reminder that it is necessary to have pain to compare with joy, defeat to compare with victory, and problems in order to have solutions.

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