

# Brave New World/Blade Runner

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## VCAA Study Design: Key Knowledge

- An understanding of the ideas, issues and themes in texts that are enriched by comparison of different perspectives
  - The features of written and spoken texts used by authors to convey meaning (settings, events, characters);
  - The features of comparative analysis: structure, conventions, language (relevant metalanguage)
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## VCAA Study Design: Key Skills

- Explain and analyse similarities and differences between texts (conceptual and authorial choices);
  - Use textual evidence appropriately to support comparative responses;
  - **Plan** comparative responses to take into account the purpose, context and audience in determining the selected content and approach
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## What does it mean to be human

In Blade Runner directed by Ridley Scott a central theme is the definition of being a member of the human race. Scientifically speaking, being a human means being a member of the species *Homo sapiens sapiens*, the most advanced species evolutionarily.

A form of social apartheid has developed between humans and genetically engineered humanoids known as Replicants. The Replicants are treated as an inferior race by the humans and are seen as a threat to the survival of humanity, so they aren't allowed to come to earth. This could refer to racial policies in Australia before 1971, where the aboriginal people were seen as subhuman, Germany during Nazi rule, where the Jewish population was forced into ghettos and eventually decimated with the Holocaust and in South Africa where racial segregation lasted from the late 1940s to the early 1990s with the apartheid policy installed in 1948.

The behaviour of the Replicants were different to humans in many ways, including but not limited to an absence of emotions in them, overly aggressive behaviour (from the lack of emotions/empathy) and hatred of humans. The presence of these traits in Replicants are not traits that humanity possesses. The Replicants are the product of genetic engineering (which alters them to a degree that they are no longer considered humans), and humans have the privilege to not have their DNA tampered with

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## Who is the Other: Them or Us?

Harrison Ford plays the retired Blade Runner in 2019 Los Angeles whose job is hunting rebellious Replicants that have escaped from the off-world colonies. He's a pro in identifying and "retiring" (killing) the Replicants and he is pushed back into service when a group of Replicants illegally return to Earth

The idea of humans and non-humans locked in battle is explored, with each trying to survive in this futuristic world where each moment their life might be under threat.

One of the key motifs in *Blade Runner* and in other science fiction films is the potential doubling of the human body and therefore the literal creation of human substitutes (Replicants).

Sci-fi explores the ability for cloning to make man both more and less than he already is.

### **Tyrell Corporation Motto: “More human than human”**

Deckard is an outsider who inhabits the borderlands between good and evil. He is empathetic towards the “bad guys” which help him track them down. Is he a Replicant?

Rachel is a Replicant who shows emotion, loyalty, caring and love and has a moral sense. Do we, or Deckard, qualify as humans against these obvious qualities.

The male Replicants are for military service and the female Replicants are for prostitution. All of the renegade Replicants came to Earth to extend their life span, as they are nearing their four-year lifespan (which is genetically programmed to inhibit them gaining human qualities)

The film is set in 2019 in a massively polluted Los Angeles. The future is depicted recognisably as a continuation of the familiar past, with compo site structures such as Chinatown and Times Square. There is a mixture of futurist buildings and “organic” multi-ethnic scenes. Some key elements in the setting are: Art-Deco neon signs in an assortment of languages, huge video billboards, airborne police vehicles, the presence of cloning/genetic engineering, the presence of an electronic slum, a presentation of a near future dystopia (further division between the upper and lower classes of society) and a presentation of a grimy, retrograde future-man is recognised as the spoiler of Earth.

- The atmosphere of the film is dark, evoking film-noir (detective or private-eye genre)
- Animal life is virtually extinct, very little of nature remains in the artificial environment.
- The test for Replicants involves checking eye movement while asking questions that sorts humans from Replicants. Deckard's test is a machine that can imitate humans emotionally and cognitively. Rachel ultimately fails the test and she pointedly asks Deckard whether he has ever run the test on himself

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### Speed Writing: 23rd March

*Creation:* Humans have been creating things for millennia, in the form of arts and culture and science. In *Blade Runner*, Dr. Tyrell is the creator of all the Replicants. Roy expressed his gladness to meet his maker (an euphemism for dying) but kills Tyrell soon after he kisses him. Some things created or discovered by humans turn back and harm us. In *Brave New World*, the DHC is in charge of the Hatchery and Conditioning Centre, where human embryos are being manipulated so as they're classified into each of the five castes denoted by a Greek alphabet.

*Prejudice and Control:* Humans are unconsciously afraid of things that are different or they're otherwise unfamiliar with as a part of the sympathetic response of the nervous system (fight or flight instinct). As a result, they want to control the things that are unknown and make them into things that are already known. For example, the humans in *Blade Runner* fear the Replicants greatly and installed a four year lifespan to control what they could do so that they are known. The caste

system in Brave New World has a strong presence and the embryos are artificially tampered with so that their castes are obvious. The Brave New World universe also has an oligarchy of 10 World Controllers that decides what each of the world's two thousand million inhabitants should do.

*Memories:* In Blade Runner, Roy's monologue before he died stated that memories may be forgot in the course of time, but they are permanent (similar to Lois Lowry's The Giver, where the concept of memories lasting for eternity is explored). Deckard also saw visions of unicorns in his dreams, which is supposed to be a mythical and non-existent being. In Brave New World, the newborn children's memories are installed in their minds when the babies are being deterred from books and flowers in a conditional reflection demonstration in the Hatchery and Conditioning Centre.

*Free will and obedience:* All of the inhabitants in the Brave New World universe are subject to intense brainwashing by hypnopaedia to ensure the utmost obedience to the ruling government. Free thinking was not possible in the lower castes (due to intelligence impediment during artificial pregnancy) whilst it is strongly discouraged in the top castes. In Blade Runner, the Replicants were rebellious and don't accept humans as their rulers.

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## Explore the Exposition of Blade Runner and Brave New World

*Sound:* Heavy, synthetic, eerie sound in the beginning (credits, title crawl) to create a sense of menace in the Blade Runner universe. In the scene of Leon's interview, when he's about to shoot his interviewer (Mr Holden), a indistinct heartbeat is heard (rising the tension). It dies away and then climaxes when Leon shot Holden. Upbeat but eerie music played when Deckard is arrested by Gaff (as the police car is ascending).

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## Chapter Summaries for Brave New World

**Chapters One and Two:** Many details regarding the dystopian and sterile universe of Brave New World are shown in the opening chapters. Natural childbirth is phased out (considered a very inappropriate subject by the inhabitants of the World State), replaced with test tube babies that are conditioned to suit their function and their caste (discussed below): "...in those days of gross viviparous reproduction, children are brought up by their parents and not in State Conditioning Centres". This eliminates the natural ability (perhaps a right) of humans to reproduce and obliterates family life, a major indicator for the degree of humanity present in a society. The Bokanovsky Process, known to us as cloning, exists to create identical embryos for people in the lower castes: "One egg, one embryo, one adult-normality. But a bokanovskified egg will bud, will proliferate, will divide. From eight to ninety six buds". This is controversial in our society, as playing God is considered by many to be a crime against humanity, however it is perfectly legal in the secular World State. The hierarchy of the World State is revealed as a caste system, with the Alphas being the top caste and the Epsilons being the bottom caste, who are widely regarded as being subhuman: "We decant our babies as socialized human beings, as Alphas and Epsilons, as future sewage workers or future... Director of Hatcheries". There are clearly some humans that are more human

than others (similar to Tyrell Corporation's motto "More Human than Human" in Blade Runner). Whilst the DHC tells a group of people touring the Hatchery and Conditioning centre, the students take down his words almost ad verbatim (implying almost no free thinking exists in the World State, a mind control mechanism): "Still leaning against the incubators he gave them, while the pencils scurried illegibly across the pages, a brief description of the modern fertilizing process". René Descartes said "Cogito ergo sum" (I think therefore I am) and the ability to think freely sophisticatedly (which is taken away in favour for a stable society) is all that distinguishes humans from non-humans. The after birth conditioning of the infants are explored in further detail in chapter 2. Conditional Reflection is applied to manipulate children into being afraid of books and nature, because books may threaten to undermine the power of the World Controllers and nature isn't driving people to spend enough money: "Primroses and landscapes, he pointed out, have one grave defect: they are gratuitous. A love of nature keeps no factories busy. It was decided to abolish the love of nature". Again, limiting free and higher order thinking is a limitation if the citizens' humanity. Brainwashing in the form of argumentum ad nauseum (hypnopaedia) exists to install the World State values into the subconscious mind of the children.

**Chapters Three and Four:** More examples of The World State's control over its citizens are showcased in chapters 3&4. The World State's control over mature children's behaviour is quite unacceptable by today's moral standards. They are encouraged to have sex (dubbed "erotic play" by the adults) and they play very sophisticated games that are designed to get them to spend more money for the equipment when they grow up: "Imagine the folly of allowing people to play elaborate games which do nothing whatever to increase consumption". If anything happened that made a citizen of the World State feel even remotely uncomfortable/unpleasant, there's a drug called *soma* that lets him/her to escape from reality: "...if ever by some unlucky chance such a crevice of time should yawn in the solid substance of their distraction, there is always *soma*, delicious *soma*". Lenina is described in more detail, as a promiscuous woman who's frowned upon by the others seems to be emotionally reserved exclusively for Henry Foster (a worker in the Hatchery and Conditioning Centre), contrary to The World State's belief of "everyone belongs to everyone else" which is a phrase repeated on multiple occasions by Fanny (Lenina's friend). In order to fit in with her friend's views, she flirts with Bernard: "Anyhow, she was publicly proving her unfaithfulness to Henry. Fanny ought to be pleased". From this fact, one could see that she is tied up on what other people think of her, demonstrating her shallow character. Free, deep and meaningful thinking was greatly frowned upon, as it is thought to cause solitude which is something regarded by the public to be something really awful (as seen in later chapters): "Mental excess could produce, for its own purposes, the voluntary blindness and deafness of deliberate solitude, the artificial impotence of asceticism". The propaganda disseminated by the World State probably indoctrinated its citizens to think this way.

**Chapters Five and Six:** Although modern religion had faded away from peoples' memories, a new religion called Fordism persists in the World State as an universal religion for its citizens. However, the World State only have it exist because it promotes taking *soma* and having recreational sex, both of which are unhealthy activities that limits the citizens' ability for thinking freely: "...it was as

though some enormous n\*\*\*\* dove were hovering benevolently over the now prone or supine dancers” “The dedicated soma tablets were placed in the centre of the table”. The messages delivered through hypnopaedia includes the crave for *soma*, in addition to the previous messages of caste-awareness and consumerism endorsement: ““A gramme in time saves nine,” said Lenina, producing a bright treasure of sleep-taught wisdom”. The hypocrisy of the World State is depicted by its claim that it's a free and perfect society (fundamentally flawed, as one's utopia might be another's dystopia. Bernard seems to be someone who's distressed about the sterility of society. The numerous limitations imposed on free thinking certainly doesn't make it free): “I am free. Free to have the most wonderful time. Everybody's happy nowadays.” Bernard, because of his Alpha Plus mental conditioning, is capable of deep thought, and is not deterred by his acquaintances' disapproval of it. He challenges each and every aspect (eg refusing sex with Lenina, going to the restricted Savage Reserve) about the society he's living in which ultimately lead to his exile: ““I didn't want it to end with our going to bed,” he specified. Lenina was astonished.”

**Chapters Seven and Eight:** The fear of the unknown is prevalent in typical World State citizens like Lenina. They believe that unfamiliar (eg the culture of the Savages) things bring instability to their society, so they reject them: ““Queer,” said Lenina. “Very queer.” It was her ordinary word of condemnation. “I don't like it. And I don't like that man”She pointed to the Indian guide...”. John seems to have a mental condition in his younger years called Oedipus Complex. In Freudian psychology, Oedipus Complex is a child's hostility towards people of the same gender (especially towards one's parent of the same gender) resulting from the subconscious desire to have sex with the parent of the opposite sex (Popé and Linda likes each other, John is jealous) “He ran across the room and stabbed--oh, the blood!--stabbed again (at Popé)”. All the time the citizens of the World State are deceiving themselves through *soma* that suffering is non-existent. When they're surprised with this unfamiliar and awful state (either by witnessing it or experiencing it), they turn to more *soma*: ““Too awful,” she kept repeating, and all Bernard's consolations were in vain. “Too awful! That blood” She shuddered. “Oh I wish I have my *soma*.”” Linda, who is an ex-World State citizen, had been living at the Savage Reservation ever since John was born because it's inappropriate to have a natural pregnancy and delivery. She's an instable character and she (much like Lenina) fears that she would be treated like an outcast (back at home) if she did or say anything unorthodox. However, Linda isn't suited to life on the Savage Reservation either as the Savages hold different values to the civilised world: “And you're supposed to mend it if it gets torn...It wasn't my business”. John, like his mother, possesses an unstable character as well. He cannot effectively control his emotions and frequently have bouts of rage towards Lenina and then remorse (conflicted personality, just like Hamlet): “Being mad's infectious I believe. Anyhow, John seems to have caught it from the Indians”.

**Chapters Nine, Ten and Eleven:** Lenina, having had enough of the Indians' behaviour that's considered inappropriate back at home, goes on a *soma* holiday to forget about it. *Soma*, once again, demonstrates its ability to dull people's senses to unpleasantness: “...within ten minutes had embarked for lunar eternity. It would be eighteen hours at the least before she was in time again”. The DHC, a crafty and sinister character, taunts Bernard in front of his colleagues how he will be

exiled to Iceland and there's nothing he could do about it. In return, Bernard humiliated him by bringing in Linda and John, with John addressing him as his father (giving birth naturally is a gross breach of World State etiquette). The Director resigns in shame, as he (being a typical shallow World State citizen) couldn't bear the thought of what other people think of his scandal: "...for the poor man had resigned immediately afterwards and never set foot inside the Centre again". One of his comments that Bernard is a heretic and is a threat to The World State because he has a mind of his own not dictated by anyone (showing more suppression of free-will): "By his heretical views on sport and soma, by the scandalous unorthodoxy of his sex-life, by his refusal to obey the teachings of Our Ford and behave out of office hours...he has proven himself an enemy of Society". Linda possesses a similar personality to the Director, goes on a *soma* holiday that would last until her death because she wants to escape from the constant bombardment of other people's thoughts (for example, at her physical appearance): "...this was by far the strongest reason for people's not wanting to see poor Linda--there was her appearance", "The return to civilisation was for her the return to *soma*...The holiday it gave was perfect"

**Chapters Twelve, Thirteen and Fourteen:** As John becomes a kind of celebrity for exposing the Director's scandals, Bernard tries to catch on to a part of John's fame (it's Bernard's idea, after all, to bring John and Linda back to civilisation for confronting the DHC). However, as John need to take a break from civilisation, he locks himself in his room. As Bernard had invited some important figures to come and see the Savage, his elated feeling of victory diminished very quickly as his guests reprimanded him for his "hoax": "Pierced by every word that was spoken, the tight balloon of Bernard's happy self-confidence was leaking from a thousand wounds". After Mustapha Mond reads a scientific paper that doesn't conform to the World State's values (no freedom of expression), he states that the author should be sent to St. Helena, an island made famous as a place of exile because Napoleon Bonaparte was exiled there. This foreshadows Bernard's and Helmholtz's exiles to Iceland and Falkland Islands respectively: "His transference to the Marine Biological Station of St. Helena may become necessary". The concept of privacy appears to be virtually non-existent in The World State, as Henry Foster (another typical World State citizen) is very nosy about Lenina's sex life: "Going out with someone else?...Is it Benito?". Because the society of The World State works in a relatively unsophisticated manner, many aspects about it (eg relationship between people, popular culture) are superficial. Emotions are quite shallow because when people act on their impulses, they usually make bad decisions, which bust the myth of The World State being a perfect society. Lenina is unable to comprehend John's love towards her and this caused them both to be frustrated at each other: "'Then why on earth didn't you say so?" she cried, and so intense was her exasperation that she drove her sharp nails into the skin of his wrist. "Instead of drivelling away about knots and vacuum clean". Propaganda are disseminated to educate the public to uphold these values (racial discrimination?): "Ooh! ooh! the stereoscopic blonde and anh! the more than real blackamoor. Horror, horror, horror".

**Chapter Fifteen and Sixteen:** *Soma* in particular is very useful for controlling the population as it lets people ignore any problem (problems, in a supposedly utopian society like the World State, supposedly does not exist). John, after seeing that *soma* is depriving the people of their independent

reasoning, condemns it and throws it out of the hospital's window. Since he isn't tainted by The World State's indoctrination, he is capable of thinking critically: "'Don't take that horrible stuff. It's poison, It's poison... Poison to soul as well as body... Throw it all away, that horrible poison'". It is also sprayed in John's hospital riot to pacify the Delta children who were wrecking havoc: "Two minutes later the Voice and the *soma* vapour had produced their effect. In tears, the Deltas were hugging and kissing one another". Independence is a good quality that exists solely in the Savages, who seems to embrace it with their rite-of-passage ceremonies. However, it's totally absent in The World State. John exposed the inadequacy of The World State in a fit of rage shortly after his mother's death: "'But do you like being slaves?' the Savage was saying as they entered the Hospital. His face was flushed, his eyes bright with ardour and indignation. 'Do you like being babies?'"'. In the interrogation with Mustapha Mond, Bernard and Helmholtz are sentenced to exile and he engages in a deep and meaningful conversation regarding why the past was eradicated. His explanation is that the past brings reminders of an imperfect world, a subject that disturbs citizens of The World State: "But that's the price we pay for stability. You've got to choose between happiness and what people used to call high art. We've sacrificed high art" Mond reveals that he has access to all the restricted books from the past and that he could read them at will and without the chance of getting into trouble for doing so (furthering the degree of hypocrisy present in "civilisation"): "It(Shakespeare's books)'s prohibited, you see. But as I make the laws here, I can also break them. With impunity..."

**Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen:** John's discussion about sophisticated culture with Mustapha Mond continued. Mond is depicted as an overly rational character and he tells John that *soma* is an altered form of religion, practised in place of Christianity. Christianity, according to Mond, may bring unhappiness to its worshipers from time to time as it acknowledges that there's problems in the world, so *soma* is used to create an illusion of everything being perfect when they're not: "God isn't compatible with machinery and scientific medicine and universal happiness...Christianity without tears--that's what *soma* is". Noble and heroic deeds are obsolete to fuel the myth that The World State is a perfect society (as nobility and heroism are qualities used for addressing problems): "...civilisation has absolutely no need of nobility or heroism. These things are symptoms of political insufficiency". Mustapha Mond makes it very clear that the pleasures (eg *soma* and sex) are used to maintain the stability of the society. These things disable an individual's capability to think independently and acting independently (ie selfishly) so that the "perfection" of The World State is unbroken. It is possible that the higher order and independent thoughts could incite rebellion, so the World Controllers must not allow sophisticated thinking to take place: "It would upset the whole social order if men started doing things on their own". Just before Bernard and Helmholtz are sent off to their exile locations, they pay one last visit to John. John tells them that he's disgusted with the civilised world, with the meaningless indulgence in pleasure being the most important pursue for its citizens. He decided to voluntarily go on an exile in order to purify himself from civilisation, just like how people atone themselves at the Savage Reservation: "'I ate civilisation...It poisoned me...I ate my own wickedness'". As discussed before, John's emotional volatility had caused him to

commit suicide after flogging at Lenina: “Just under the crown of the arch dangled a pair of feet...Slowly, very slowly, like two unhurried compass needles, the feet turned towards the right”

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## Brave New World: Overview

- Set in the far future, the novel depicts a society in which people's lives are completely controlled by world government or a benevolent dictatorship (a dystopian future with total conformity).
  - Foetuses are created by artificial fertilisation in test tubes and “parents” are unknown (state control of nature, nurture, hereditary and environment). Citizens are not allowed to fall in love, marry or have their own children.
  - Society is divided into different levels, with each level performing different functions.
  - Children are given whispered messages in their sleep that teach them to be content with their place in society.
  - The happiness drug, *soma*, is freely distributed so that unhappiness is never experienced.
  - It is a society where freedom has been sacrificed for happiness and stability- respect belongs to society as a whole rather than to each individual.
  - Only a few individuals dare to question the society in which they live.
  - A “savage” is brought to this society- from one of the few places where people are allowed to live under natural conditions. Will he succeed in retaining the ideal freedom that his childhood taught him.
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## Ford's Figure in Brave New World

Throughout “Brave New World”, the citizens of the World State substitute the name of Henry Ford for Lord (ie Our Lord=Our Ford). He is seen as a deity of some description. The World State revered technology instead of supernatural phenomena and beings (ie Gods and supposed acts of Providence)

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## Brave New World Themes vs Blade Runner Themes

### ***Science***

Blade Runner: Science is used extensively in the futuristic dystopia of Los Angeles, with artificial organisms (eg the Replicants) and high tech vehicles.

Brave New World: Artificial conditioning and cloning are used to restrict the people in the lower classes (with Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons being clones and are conditioned to be stupid and do menial things) in their intellectual abilities.

### ***Drugs and Alcohol***

Blade Runner: In the scene where Rick is talking with Gaff inside the police station, the characters are seen drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes.

Brave New World: *Soma* is used by the World State to control the population and creates an illusion of everything being perfect as well as suffering being totally eradicated.



## ***Social Hierarchy***

Blade Runner: The Replicants are seen as a primitive and inferior race and are widely feared for their violence. The humans' way of controlling them is by genetically limiting their life-span to four years so that they won't develop sophisticated emotions.

Brave New World: Five castes were installed by the government by artificial conditioning (limiting ability to think sophisticatedly) to determine who would serve what purpose in the World State. Higher castes look upon lower castes snobbishly as inferiors (eg in hypnopaedia messages, where the indoctrinated children are told the characteristics of people in different castes and that their own caste is the best).

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## Blade Runner: Analysis of Key Scenes

**Deckard performs a Voight-Kampff test on Rachael:** (*Costuming*) Deckard wears corduroy pants, signifying that he sees himself as a “down to earth” kind of person (maybe as disguise?). Rachael's clothes were all black and formal. Black is traditionally a colour associated with mystery, as mysterious as the fact that Rachael could be a supposedly emotionless Replicant but have memories installed in her. Dr. Tyrell wears a shirt and blazer/suit to appear formal. This gives him the stereotypical image of an “evil” businessman, hinting at his power.

Quotes:

Rachael: “I should be enough for him (a hypothetical husband).”

Dr. Tyrell: “Rachael is an experiment.”

Dr. Tyrell: “How many questions does it take to spot one (Replicant)?”

**Deckard and Rachael developed their relationship (Rachael kills Leon):** (*Camera Angles*)

Jumps back and fourth when Deckard chases Zhora through the streets and retires her to create a sense of tension. The camera points up at Deckard and Leon when they fight (with Deckard under Leon) to show that Leon has the upper hand. The camera suddenly switches to Rachael after she killed Leon and saved Deckard to portray a feeling of surprise. During the silences between and within Deckard and Rachael's conversations, the camera oscillates between the two characters to draw attention to the brewing feelings/emotions they have for each other. Sometimes, when Rachael reflects on her installed memories, the camera always show her (from underneath) being very emotional about the fact that they're not real. At the end of the scene when Deckard and Rachael are kissing, the camera shows them both, depicting a kind of unity that spontaneously appeared between them.

**JF Sebastian takes Roy to see Dr. Tyrell:** (*Lighting*) Dark lighting when Roy and Sebastian ascent in the elevator, flashes of light on their face (film noir conventions). Dr. Tyrell's room is poorly lit with instable artificial light (candles flickering) to signify the characters' emotional fluctuations. The exterior of the Tyrell Building is dark and foreboding with a dark, highly polluted (sooty) background.

Quotes:

Dr. Tyrell: “The light that burns twice as bright burns half as long.”

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## Themes in Blade Runner

- Themes- Creation (perfection), real controlled emotions, isolation, social hierarchy.
- Cells, incubation and DNA mutation

- Perfection in the form of Replicants (tattoo vs ageing wrinkles), Rachael referred to as 'it'
- Humans: ageing and emotions

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## Brave New World Setting (Quote Bank)

- "Hasn't it occurred to you that an Epsilon embryo must have an Epsilon environment as well as an Epsilon hereditary."
- "No civilisation without social stability. No social stability without individual stability."
- "The mind that judges and desires and decides- made up of these suggestions are *our* suggestions." (Human mind is diverse, but can be controlled and conditioned)
- "Go on being socially useful even after we are dead." (Operation of society, consumerism)
- "The spidery steelwork of gallery above gallery faded away in all directions into the dark." (Scaffolding similar to *Blade Runner*-older buildings, architecture (size and power))
- "Books and loud noises, flowers and electric shocks...what man has joined, nature is powerless to put asunder." (Man's struggle with nature (science vs. nature))
- "Ninety-six identical twins working ninety-six identical machines" (Lack of individuality)
- "Most historic facts are unpleasant." (Natural has been replaced by the artificial)

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## Passage on Science and Technology

Science and Technology was used extensively by the World State to control the population effectively, which entails limiting the citizens' ability to think sophisticatedly, freely and independently. The World State also created an illusion of an utopian society where everyone's supposedly happy and suffering is totally nonexistent (ie via conditioning through hypnopaedia and the consumption of *soma*) to keep its citizens docile. All of these measures by which the World State maintains control over society are made possible or facilitated by science. "The slower but infinitely surer methods of ectogenesis, neo-Pavlovian conditioning and hypnopaedia." The World Controllers' (eg Mustapha Mond) everyday vocabulary are almost robot like, infested by sterile and scientific language. This is because science is the very thing that keeps them in a powerful position by keeping the people from revolting, as they are happy and docile, perhaps from the intake of *soma*. (*Describing the development of soma*): "Two thousand pharmacologists and bio-chemists were subsidized in A.P. 178...it was being produced commercially. The perfect drug...*soma*". *Soma* is also engineered to dull the mind so that the person taking it would be unable to think critically (of the society) like a human (humans are distinguished from animals solely by the capability to think and doubt, as stated by Descartes).

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## Essay Planning (Point of View/Contention/Quote Bank)

In dystopian fiction pieces such as *Blade Runner* and *Brave New World*, the suggestion of what makes an organism a human is explored thoroughly. Questioning those in power and thinking critically plays an important role in possessing a high degree of humanity. Scientifically, the definition of a human is any individual belonging to the species *Homo sapiens*, however in these works of fiction just being a member of *Homo sapiens* is not enough. Science offers many solutions to society's problems, however if not utilised "properly" (ie manipulating society into being stable), it could be a Pandora's Box of Trouble and is tightly controlled, as seen in the Replicants being banned from Earth and scientific minds being banished in *Brave New World*.

*Blade Runner: After a bloody mutiny by a NEXUS 6 combat team in an Off-World colony, Replicants were declared illegal on earth - under penalty of death.*

*Blade Runner: Because by the second day of incubation, any cells that have undergone reversion mutations give rise to revertant colonies like rats leaving a sinking ship. Then the ship sinks.*

*Blade Runner: Morphology, longevity, incept dates. (Scientific intel regarding the Replicants)*

*Brave New World: But we can't allow science to undo its own good work.*

*Brave New World: Art, Science-you seem to have paid a fairly high price for happiness.*

*Brave New World: (regarding how science doesn't embrace the fact that everyone has something to do in the World State, as it is a shortcut to labour) Besides, we have our stability to think of. We don't want to change. Every change is a menace to stability. That's another reason why we're so chary of applying new inventions.*

*Brave New World: (regarding the need to science to be controlled) Science is dangerous; we have to keep it most carefully chained and muzzled.*

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## Essay Planning- What does it mean to be human?

**Paragraph 1: (Setting- Agree);** Agree with physical, cultural and social aspects of the text, create own definition for being a human.

**Paragraph 2: (Characterisation- Challenge);** Challenge morals, judgements and development presented in the texts.

**Paragraph 3: (Themes- Messages);** What is the underlying viewpoint of each author (think about warnings/cautions, reflections, challenges and subversion)? What moral and ethical standpoints is each text trying to make?

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## Essential Elements from Brave New World and Blade Runner

*Brave New World- Aldous Huxley: **Setting:** Set in the distant future (2540CE) with very advanced technology, Brave New World prophetically suggests what may become of the human race if the pursuit of happiness is put before all other more meaningful pursuits. The technology is used to control the citizens of the World State (the country that apparently rules the world in the Brave New World) **Characterisation:** The characters in Brave New World have varying degrees of emotional depth. The World State uses many mediums to control people's thinking and emotions and these mediums have taken toll on many of the characters' emotional depth. Lenina is shallow and confines to the guideline of having sex all the time. Bernard and Helmholtz possesses an above average amount of emotional depth, as they could challenge the society they live in (which ultimately led to their exiles). Above everyone else, John seems to possess the most amount of emotional depth as he isn't a product of the World State. John is born away from civilisation and has access to highly emotional literature pieces (such as Shakespeare's plays) which is banned in the World State. **Messages:** Aldous Huxley is trying to deliver a message to modern day civilisation to question those in charge and our own thoughts whenever we can (for that's what makes us human). He also warns against pursuing relatively meaningless/superficial goals like universal happiness, as our unique quality of being human would be emptied during the pursue from our lack of free thought.*

*Blade Runner- Ridley Scott: Setting:* Set in a futuristic and polluted Los Angeles in 2019, the characters in *Blade Runner* navigates through the storyline in the midst of highly advanced understandings of science and technology. **Characterisation:** Like in *Brave New World*, the characters demonstrates differing degrees of emotional depth. Initially the Replicants (including Deckard (probable, but unconfirmed) and Rachael) are shown to be very violent and cold as they are unable to perceive others' pain that resulted from their actions (ie empathy) due to their genetic programming. Rachael and Deckard successfully developed emotions, however as Roy started to develop his own emotions against his genetic conditioning, his self destruction switch kicked in and he died. Roy's emotions may have been more genuine than the emotions experienced by the human characters, as at four years old his emotional state would be analogous to a child (purity, innocence). The humans experienced a regression of their humanities as it had drowned in the sea of technology surrounding them. **Message:** Ridley Scott may be cautioning us against utilising too much technology as not doing things ourselves makes us lose our humanity (maybe anti-genetic modified organisms?). It suggests that overly developed technology may deprive humans of their humanity because the thin boundary of being human and being subhuman would become poorly defined.

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## Practice Essay Introduction

Dystopian science fiction pieces such as *Blade Runner* and *Brave New World* depicts imaginary futures of our world overran by the dissolution of human qualities. The subject of what makes an organism a human is explored thoroughly in these kinds of texts. Scientifically, the definition of a human is any individual belonging to the species *Homo sapiens*, however in these works of fiction just being a member of *Homo sapiens* is not enough. Philosophically, constantly questioning those in power and thinking critically plays an important role in acquiring a high degree of humanity. Science offers many solutions to society's problems, however if not utilised "properly" (ie manipulating society into being stable in *Brave New World* or used to control other organisms considered to be subordinate in *Blade Runner*), it could be a Pandora's Box of Trouble and is tightly controlled. This is seen in the Replicants being banned from Earth in *Blade Runner* and people with overly scientific minds being banished in *Brave New World*.

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## Last Scene in Blade Runner (Roy chases Deckard)- Sounds

Soft raindrop sounds builds up a sense of suspense when Deckard is fleeing from Roy. Roy Batty's animalistic howling is a mechanism of intimidation. Church (funeral?) bells chiming, foreshadowing the death of Roy. When Roy appears through the ventilation shaft, ominous music started playing. The music becomes friendly, gentle and mystical sounding when Roy saves Deckard. When the dove was released, the music became even happier, with faint hope in the midst of all the dissolution of humanity being suggested. Wistful music plays after Roy dies, during Deckard's meditation. Heavy, synthetic and moody music played when Deckard's back at his apartment when he's looking for Rachael. Tinkling and mystical music plays when Rachael knocks over Gaff's origami unicorn.

*World Controller Quote Analysis:* The idea of being human according to the passage is an individual's ability to have genuine emotions towards other people around him/her. Stability would deprive us of humanity to some degree because in extreme cases like *Brave New World*, higher-degree emotions are totally sacrificed in exchange of stability. In *Blade Runner*, the society isn't

stable at all and people are capable of free emotions. However, the Replicants are unable to have a sophisticated degree of emotions, so that's what separates them from humans.

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## Practice Essay Paragraphs

**Body Paragraph 1:** Both *Brave New World* and *Blade Runner* are set in the future, with *Blade Runner* set in near future (2019CE) and *Brave New World* set in the distant future (632 After Ford, or 2540CE). *Brave New World* and *Blade Runner* are ostensibly antithesis to each other from the social aspect. *Brave New World's* World State is superficially an utopian society: "Everybody's happy nowadays.", however deep inside its structure, it is a dystopian society. The futuristic Los Angeles in which *Blade Runner* is set in makes no attempt to disguise the fact that it's a dystopian society, with decay in human society being ubiquitous. Many human qualities had been traded in for technology. The amount of humanity the characters possesses are higher than what's considered average in their respective societies. Society in *Blade Runner* has a lesser degree of control over peoples' emotions and thoughts and therefore there's more characters in *Blade Runner* who have more emotional depth. In contrast, *Brave New World's* characters are brainwashed into complying with the World State's guidelines of emotions, values and thoughts: "For that there must be words, but words without reason. In brief, hypnopaedia". Little happiness is experienced in *Blade Runner* whilst enforced happiness prevailed in the hedonistic society of *Brave New World* as a mind control mechanism, to ensure maximum stability for the World State. Both societies possesses a high a level of science/technology. The characters in both texts plays a crucial role in their plot developments.

**Body Paragraph 2:** The characters in both modern masterpieces are disappointed with their respective societies' insufficiencies of humanity. Their societies are all corrupted, with inverted moral values present in the real world. For example, the World State in *Brave New World* promotes moral values that present-day humans would consider controversial, dissolute or inappropriate. These values includes taking *soma*, a hallucinogenic drug whenever one can and having recreational sex whenever one can. Lenina abides by these rules as per her "conditioning" (brainwashing): "A gramme in time saves nine", "Every one belongs to every one else, after all.". On the other hand, Bernard, Helmholtz and John possesses an amount of emotional sophistication, as they are all outcasts of so called "civilisation". Bernard and Helmholtz spreads anti-conformity information like telling everyone about real freedom and individuality, maybe a bit of creativity (for Helmholtz): (Bernard) "Don't you wish you were free, Lenina?...In your own way, for example; not in everybody else's way." (Helmholtz) "'But what were your rhymes?" Bernard asked. "They were about being alone.'" They both experienced a change in emotional attitudes when they're told that they're going to be exiled, with Bernard's emotions being killed off (except for fear, fear of the unknown ie Iceland) whilst Helmholtz's emotions are just starting to develop (he sees his exile as a perfect opportunity to develop his own emotional writings). John also starts a riot because he was so disgusted with the indifference of the citizens' views on his mother's death, he challenges civilisations' morality decline: "A reparation, a duty. And suddenly it was luminously clear to the Savage what he must do (start a riot);". John possesses a greater amount of emotional depth (the key indicator for being human) because he wasn't a product of the World State and he has access to highly emotional Shakespearean writings, which are banned books in the World State: "But the new ones (feelies) are so stupid and horrible. Those plays, where there's nothing (to the storyline)". He changed from accepting civilisation to detesting it, and his conflicted emotions led to his suicide. *Blade Runner* characters also demonstrates varying emotional depth. The Replicants, who were widely regarded as subhuman, demonstrates more genuine emotions than in the human characters, against their genetic programming, but paradoxically adheres to the Tyrell Corporation's motto,

More Human than Human. They were programmed to die at four years of age to prevent them from developing real human emotions and are considered fully human in the criteria of having true emotions. Their emotions may be thought of as being more genuine than human emotions because at four years old their mental/emotional age is that of a child, which may go to show that they are as innocent as a child despite the many “questionable things” they've done in their lifetimes. Deckard, the protagonist, is an outcast of his society, maybe haunted by his bad memories as shown in his emotional sensitivity when Rachael asks him if he had accidentally killed a human when he thought that he killed a Replicant. To understand *Blade Runner* and *Brave New World* fully, one must take their respective creators (Ridley Scott for *Blade Runner* and Aldous Huxley for *Brave New World*). The people's free emotions had been thus enslaved by the technology which they're supposed to enslave.

**Body Paragraph 3:** *Blade Runner* and *Brave New World* were both intended as cautionary tales of what may become of the human race if we exchange our emotions and our creations that derived from our emotions for something else (technology in *Blade Runner* and stability+happiness in *Brave New World*): “...that's the price we have to pay for stability...choose between happiness and what people used call high art”. A central message is that our core humanity should never be traded for anything, otherwise the thin boundary line of being human and being subhuman would be blurred. We would then lose our humanity and become subhuman. Even the creatures we regard as subhuman could overtake us in their amount of humanity they possessed (for example, the Replicants in *Blade Runner*) if the human race's moral decline escalates. Both texts has the spotlight on unethical or unrestrained science, with *Brave New World* objecting psychological conditioning and *Blade Runner* criticising genetically modified organisms. The central message of the importance of free-will and free, deep and sophisticated emotions was emphasised in both texts, as some of the characters evidently question, love and feel for each other as well as themselves constantly (which adheres to Descartes' proposition of “Cogito ergo sum”): “I want to know what passion is...I want to feel something strongly”.

**Conclusion:** Dystopian texts *Blade Runner* and *Brave New World* presented their respective audiences with a somewhat similar setting (with both texts being set in a dystopia), a wide range of characterisation, and a subtle warning against trading in our quality of humanity for anything, however nice it seems. The settings of *Blade Runner* and *Brave New World* are different in the fact that *Brave New World's* setting is ostensibly an utopia (with a central philosophy of stability, as reflected through the World State motto: “Community, Identity, Stability”) , whilst the setting of *Blade Runner* is a clear dystopia. Both dystopian tales' characters experience different degrees of emotional depth, some undergoing a metamorphosis. They all deter us from sacrificing our humanity for some other ideal, as then we wouldn't be clearly defined as human. Hopefully the predictions these texts made will never come true.

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## Blade Runner/Brave New World Practice Comparative Essay (Assembled Version)

Dystopian science fiction pieces such as *Blade Runner* and *Brave New World* depicts imaginary futures of our world overran by the dissolution of human qualities. The subject of what makes an organism a human is explored thoroughly in these kinds of texts. Scientifically, the definition of a human is any individual belonging to the species *Homo sapiens*, however in these works of fiction just being a member of *Homo sapiens* is not enough. Philosophically, constantly questioning those in power and thinking critically plays an important role in acquiring a high degree of humanity. Science offers many solutions to society's problems, however if not utilised “properly” (ie

manipulating society into being stable in *Brave New World* or used to control other organisms considered to be subordinate in *Blade Runner*), it could be a Pandora's Box of Trouble and is tightly controlled. This is seen in the Replicants being banned from Earth in *Blade Runner* and people with overly scientific minds being banished in *Brave New World*.

Both *Brave New World* and *Blade Runner* are set in the future, with *Blade Runner* set in near future (2019CE) and *Brave New World* set in the distant future (632 After Ford, or 2540CE). *Brave New World* and *Blade Runner* are ostensibly antithesis to each other from the social aspect. *Brave New World's* World State is superficially an utopian society: "Everybody's happy nowadays.", however deep inside its structure, it is a dystopian society. The futuristic Los Angeles in which *Blade Runner* is set in makes no attempt to disguise the fact that it's a dystopian society, with decay in human society being ubiquitous. Many human qualities had been traded in for technology. The amount of humanity the characters possess are higher than what's considered average in their respective societies. Society in *Blade Runner* has a lesser degree of control over peoples' emotions and thoughts and therefore there's more characters in *Blade Runner* who have more emotional depth. In contrast, *Brave New World's* characters are brainwashed into complying with the World State's guidelines of emotions, values and thoughts: "For that there must be words, but words without reason. In brief, hypnopaedia". Little happiness is experienced in *Blade Runner* whilst enforced happiness prevailed in the hedonistic society of *Brave New World* as a mind control mechanism, to ensure maximum stability for the World State. Both societies possess a high level of science/technology. The characters in both texts play a crucial role in their plot developments.

The characters in both modern masterpieces are disappointed with their respective societies' insufficiencies of humanity. Their societies are all corrupted, with inverted moral values present in the real world. For example, the World State in *Brave New World* promotes moral values that present-day humans would consider controversial, dissolute or inappropriate. These values include taking *soma*, a hallucinogenic drug whenever one can and having recreational sex whenever one can. Lenina abides by these rules as per her "conditioning" (brainwashing): "A gramme in time saves nine," "Every one belongs to every one else, after all.". On the other hand, Bernard, Helmholtz and John possess an amount of emotional sophistication, as they are all outcasts of so called "civilisation". Bernard and Helmholtz spread anti-conformity information like telling everyone about real freedom and individuality, maybe a bit of creativity (for Helmholtz): (Bernard) "Don't you wish you were free, Lenina?...In your own way, for example; not in everybody else's way." (Helmholtz) "'But what were your rhymes?" Bernard asked. "They were about being alone.'" They both experienced a change in emotional attitudes when they're told that they're going to be exiled, with Bernard's emotions being killed off (except for fear, fear of the unknown ie Iceland) whilst Helmholtz's emotions are just starting to develop (he sees his exile as a perfect opportunity to develop his own emotional writings). John also starts a riot because he was so disgusted with the indifference of the citizens' views on his mother's death, he challenges civilisations' morality decline: "A reparation, a duty. And suddenly it was luminously clear to the Savage what he must do (start a riot);". John possesses a greater amount of emotional depth (the key indicator for being human) because he wasn't a product of the World State and he has access to highly emotional Shakespearean writings, which are banned books in the World State: "But the new ones (feelies) are so stupid and horrible. Those plays, where there's nothing (to the storyline)". He changed from accepting civilisation to detesting it, and his conflicted emotions led to his suicide. *Blade Runner* characters also demonstrate varying emotional depth. The Replicants, who were widely regarded as subhuman, demonstrate more genuine emotions than in the human characters, against their genetic programming, but paradoxically adheres to the Tyrell Corporation's motto, More Human than Human. They were programmed to die at four years of age to prevent them from

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*Blade Runner* and *Brave New World* were both intended as cautionary tales of what may become of the human race if we exchange our emotions and our (beautiful) creations that derived from our emotions for something else (technology in *Blade Runner* and stability+happiness in *Brave New World*): “...that's the price we have to pay for stability...choose between happiness and what people used call high art”. A central message is that the human race's core humanity should never be traded for anything, otherwise the thin boundary line of being human and being subhuman would be blurred. We would then lose our humanity and become subhuman. Even the creatures we regard as subhuman could overtake us in their amount of humanity they possessed (for example, the Replicants in *Blade Runner*) if the human race's moral decline escalates. Both texts has the spotlight on unethical or unrestrained science, with *Brave New World* objecting psychological conditioning and *Blade Runner* criticising genetically modified organisms. The central message of the importance of free-will and free, deep and sophisticated emotions was emphasised in both texts, as some of the characters evidently question, love and feel for each other as well as themselves constantly (which adheres to Descartes' proposition of “Cogito ergo sum”): “I want to know what passion is...I want to feel something strongly”.

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