Anti-Utopian Fiction: Definition and Standards for Evaluation.

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ANTI-UTOPIAN FICTION: DEFINITION AND STANDARDS FOR EVALUATION

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in

The Department of English

by

William Gordon Browning
B.A., Louisiana Polytechnic Institute, 1960
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This study provides a definition of anti-utopian fiction and a series of standards for evaluation of anti-utopian works. The definition and standards are derived from analysis of three books commonly acknowledged to be anti-utopian: Eugene Zamiatin's *We*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. First, a tentative definition is offered, suggesting that the anti-utopian work is a comment on the significant elements of the author's society, that it has for a setting some unexplored locality or some future time, that the techniques employed are fictional and the techniques of Menippean satire, and that the author uses a predictable series of formal means to assure his book's effectiveness. *We*, *Brave New World*, and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are analyzed in detail according to this definition. The analysis of each work also includes a discussion of critical problems not directly related to the definition but essential to the comparative evaluation that comes later. The foremost of these problems involves the extent of Orwell's indebtedness to Zamiatin in his choice of plot, characters, and setting.

The final chapter offers a definition based upon the tentative one but containing changes indicated by the
findings of earlier chapters. One change is the addition of a statement that the anti-utopian work must contain a message for every generation, not just the author's own. A set of standards for comparison is then presented; these standards are adapted from the definition and can be altered to provide standards for evaluation of any single anti-utopian work. For instance, the question of which author has been the wisest, the most inventive, and the bravest in his choice of a setting can be revised to ask if a single author has been wise, inventive, and brave in this respect. We, Brave New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four are compared by this set of standards to demonstrate that the standards are valid.
CHAPTER I
DEFINITION OF TERMS

Ever since Sir Thomas More coined the term "Utopia" in 1516, it has been assumed that it applies to a work of the literary imagination in which the author describes what he considers to be a perfect society. One critic has defined the term as referring to "a 'nowhere land,' some happy island far away, where perfect social conditions prevail, and human beings, living under an immaculate constitution and a faultless government, enjoy a simple and happy existence, free from the turmoil, the harassing cares, and endless worries of actual life."¹ This definition fits a great many of the works usually considered to be depictions of utopias, but it is too narrow to be completely serviceable. The imaginary society described in William Henry Hudson's A Crystal Age, for example, does not have an immaculate constitution; but Hudson's book comes very close to describing what we have come to regard as the utopia of literary tradition in most respects. Professor Frank E. Manuel, however, has pointed out that a literary tradition satirizing utopian idealism has existed as long as the

tradition picturing ideal societies; he cites Aristophanes' *Parliament of Women* as a negative parallel to Plato's *Republic* and gives as other examples the many parodies of More's *Utopia* which appeared shortly after its publication. More recently, Lytton intended *The Coming Race* to be a projection of what the excesses of nineteenth-century England would produce in the future if allowed to continue.

When one thinks of anti-utopian fiction, though, he ordinarily thinks of the period between 1920, the year when Eugene Zamiatin's *We* was published, and 1949, the publication date of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. These two books, together with Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), are almost universally accepted as the outstanding products of a time which has come to be regarded as the "brilliant moment" of this particular type of literature. I shall refer to each of these three books throughout this paper as "anti-utopian," not because the term is necessarily more accurate or comprehensive than "satiric-utopian" or "negative-utopian" or "reverse-utopian" or "dystopian," but because it seems to have acquired a slightly larger degree of popularity than the other terms.

My overall purpose in this study is twofold: first, I shall present a definition of "anti-utopian" fiction

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3 Ibid., p. 311.
and test its workability by applying it to the three works which are universally considered anti-utopian no matter how the term is used: We, Brave New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four. The discussion of each of the three books in terms of the definition should bring into focus most of their significant features. There are some points that must be made in more detail than we can expect our definition to allow for. One of these points is that although Zamiatin's book is claimed by some critics to have greatly influenced one or possibly both of the later anti-utopians, neither Brave New World nor Nineteen Eighty-Four was so thoroughly patterned after We that they do not deserve evaluation as works of individuality and originality.

The other point is that a great many critics are mistaken in assuming that Huxley and Orwell were pessimistic to the extent that they were prophets of doom who were more interested in predicting the ruin of civilization than in warning mankind about the possibility that such ruin might come. This second point is especially crucial; for if it cannot be shown that all three books were warnings rather than ominous predictions, the predictions could not be evaluated according to the same standards as the warning. The predictions would more properly belong to a category we shall call "ex-utopian," a category which will be defined later in this chapter. These points must be made or at least considered before we can approach the second
part of our twofold purpose, a comparative evaluation of
the three books under consideration. Such an evaluation,
in addition to providing insight into the relative merits
of We, Brave New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four, should
provide standards by which any work fitting our definition
could be evaluated. It is hoped that the set of standards
for evaluation can be developed from the characteristics
that make up the definition.

Before approaching any specific problems of evalua-
tion, we must define the terms which can be expected to
appear frequently and which are vital to this study. The
first word that needs definition is, of course, "utopia."
To define "utopia" is more difficult than it might at first
appear, but once we have arrived at a suitable definition
for this term we obviously have gone a long way toward de-
fining "anti-utopian." In starting, we will do well to
heed the remarks of Negley and Patrick, who have declared
that it is "questionable whether there are in the English
language two more ambiguous words than utopia and utopian.
In both denotation and connotation, these words have ac-
quired a latitude of usage which almost defies definition."\(^4\)
Negley and Patrick then proceed to list three characteris-
tics which they say distinguish utopian literature from
other varieties:

1. It is fictional.

\(^4\)Glenn Negley and J. Max Patrick, The Quest for Utopia
2. It describes a particular state or community.

3. Its theme is the political structure of that fictional state or community.\footnote{Ibid., p. 3.}

It is strange that Negley and Patrick fail to mention the fact that the fictional account will always describe a society that the author considers to be ideal. They are possibly attempting to leave enough room in their definition for the inclusion of books like *We*, *Brave New World*, and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*; but it appears that Zamiatin, Huxley, and Orwell might have removed their books from the utopian tradition when they chose to describe future societies that were imperfect rather than perfect. This question, however, can be dismissed if we acknowledge from the start that our definition of "anti-utopian" will include a section to the effect that an anti-utopian author always deals with an imperfect society. We are using Negley's and Patrick's definition of "utopia" only as a stepping stone to our own definition of the other form.

There are facets of Negley's and Patrick's definition which need further elaboration. For one thing, we should at least acknowledge the advice of Bertrand de Jouvenel, who has issued the following warning concerning the word "utopia" and its uses:

*The term should not be used as a qualitative [sic]. You expound and advocate some political or social blueprint which*
arouses my incredulity; I feel that your scheme cannot possibly be adopted or that if your system were perchance instaured [sic], it could not possibly maintain itself. These reactions I may properly express by calling your views "chimeric": it is more usual, in such case, to call them "utopian," but this is an unfortunate practice. The term thus being used as an adjective expressing a personal evaluation, the same proposal may be utopia to some minds, while not to others.6

Jouvenel is saying in the above quotation that the term "utopian" is an unfortunate one because its meaning is going to vary according to the way a person uses the term in a given context. The critic is suggesting that this difficulty can be avoided if the term "utopian" is discarded altogether and replaced by exclusive use of the noun "utopia," which carries a strictly literary connotation. In a literary sense the term comes to mean "a work of fiction which has the same basic form and which was written with the same basic sort of intentions as More's Utopia." It seems to me, however, that the adjective "utopian" can also be used in a strictly literary sense, meaning "in imitation of or reminiscent of More's Utopia." It is this literary meaning that Basil Willey, for instance, has in mind in his observation that in sections of Gulliver's Travels Swift uses the "Utopian method" to tell his story.7 This is the meaning that will be

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6 Bertrand de Jouvenel, "Utopia for Practical Purposes," Daedalus, XCIV (Spring, 1965), 437.

intended when the term is used in this study; since More coined the term, the best place to start in framing a definition would seem to be with the definition he intended for it. We will profit from keeping Jouvenel's warning in mind that any time we use the word "utopia" in reference to philosophical matters rather than literary matters, we will be using a word for which the definition is variable. It should also be emphasized that literary utopias were created before the time of More; such works cannot be excluded from our definition simply because the term had not been invented when they were written.

What did the term mean to More? It was intended to imply something between "outopia," or "no place," and "eutopia," "the good place." The resulting word is ambiguous, but intentionally so. The implication is that the society will become "eutopian" if ever realized, but there is a further implication that no such place is possible on earth.® Professor Green has presented evidence that More realized the futility of hoping for the actual realization of a society like the one he imagined.® The distinction between a utopia and a eutopia is significant because we shall not wish to exclude a work from our

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®de Jouvenel, p. 437.

®A.Wigfall Green, Sir Francis Bacon (Denver, 1952), p. 273.
definition on the grounds that the reader, or even its author, recognizes its impracticality. Northrop Frye has concluded that "the utopia is a speculative myth; it is designed to contain or provide a vision for one's social ideas, not a theory connecting social facts together."\textsuperscript{10} Frye illustrates his point by mentioning the actual communities which have been modeled after the theories of utopian writers and the invariable failures of such enterprises. These failures come, says Frye, because the author "looks at his own society first and tries to see what, for his purposes, its significant elements are. The utopia itself shows what society would be like if those elements were fully developed."\textsuperscript{11} Frye's reference to "significant elements" here is crucial to our definition; the use of this phrasing makes it possible for us to exclude from our list of literary utopias a large percentage of the Buck Rogers type of fiction, since the authors of such works fail to restrict themselves to projections of the significant elements of our society and wander into the realm of pure fantasy for the sake of excitement and adventure. Any author, on the other hand, who forms his picture of an imaginary society by projecting what he considers to be the significant elements of his own society

\textsuperscript{10}Northrop Frye, "Varieties of Literary Utopias," \textit{Daedalus}, XCIV (Spring, 1965), 323.

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 324.
into a fictional locale has, at least in one respect, presented us with his personal vision of a utopia. He has, in fact, been motivated by the attitude which William Henry Hudson called basic to all authors of utopian fiction: "a sense of dissatisfaction with the existing order of things, combined with a vague faith in or hope of a better one to come."\textsuperscript{12}

If we are to stay with More's book as our model of utopia, we must make clear the point that certain aspects of utopian fiction can be expected to vary with the age and with the political and social climate. Sometimes the lack of variation is noteworthy: the elements of More's imaginary society which led Karl Kautsky to call \textit{Utopia} a "foregleam of Modern Socialism"\textsuperscript{13} were also present in Plato's \textit{Republic}, written more than three hundred years before the birth of Christ; Bellamy's \textit{Looking Backward}, written in America in the nineteenth century, is an illustration of the fact that the basic social philosophy of Plato and More can be traced into the utopian fiction of more recent times and other countries.\textsuperscript{14} The works

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\textsuperscript{12}W. H. Hudson, Preface to \textit{A Crystal Age} (London, 1887), p. v.
\textsuperscript{13}Karl Kautsky, \textit{Thomas More and His Utopia} (New York, 1959), p. 171.
\textsuperscript{14}Lewis Mumford, "Utopia, the City and the Machine," \textit{Daedalus}, XCIV (Spring, 1965), 277.
\end{flushright}
which follow More's example—or which anticipated More—most closely are grouped together by Manuel into a category which he calls "Utopias of Calm Felicity." The authors writing within this tradition have characteristically assumed that societies could be constructed in which laws, customs, and educational techniques would be designed in such a way that the good side of human nature would come to the fore. Some sort of communistic sharing of property would eliminate a primary source of conflict, and a revamped system of courtship and mating would remove another.\textsuperscript{15}

An important alteration took place in the fundamental approach to utopian literature around the beginning of the nineteenth century. This new type of utopia, referred to as "open-ended" by Manuel, differs most radically from the earlier type in that the setting is nearly always in the future. Imaginary societies directly imitative of More's had been typically depicted as existing in the present but on uncharted islands or in other such remote localities. Butler's Erewhon is a late example of this approach. Erewhon must be listed as exceptional, though; for by the middle of the nineteenth century, exploration of the earth's far corners had become so extensive that the idea of a totally isolated society had become implausible. Furthermore, industrial and social trends of the time, particularly in England, had caused "a new historical

\textsuperscript{15} Manuel, pp. 296-297.
consciousness" that led authors to look into the future in conceiving their utopias.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 303-304.} Despite its ideological similarities to the first group, therefore, Looking Backward fits as neatly into this second category as it does the first.

Manuel also finds it convenient to set up a third category, one which has become prevalent in this century. The books that fall within this group he calls "Eupsychias" because of the psychological problems created for the authors of utopias by the advent of Social Darwinism with its doctrine of survival of the fittest and Freudianism with its emphasis upon the conflict between civilization and happiness.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 310-311.} Since any architect of a utopian society who did not choose to ignore these theories was faced with a whole new set of problems in setting up his social system, two distinctively different trends developed, says Manuel, each solving the problem in a different way:

In one, based upon the hypothesis of a growing spiritualization of mankind, the dross of the body seems to be left behind. In the other, a fantasy of greater rather than diminished sensate gratification is pivotal, and all human activity is libidinized. But the polarization of these two major present-day utopian situations must give us pause. It has been our contention that in the past the dominant utopian types have been at least relatively uniform, each in its own age. Now we find the persistence
of flagrantly divergent tendencies. We could take refuge in a conception of the psychological identity of opposites. Or perhaps these counter-currents are simply two different fantasies for dealing with the gnawing reality of aggression once the problems of work have been resolved in a world of material abundance.18

Manuel goes on to explain the differences between the two approaches in dealing with this basic problem by saying that "in the state of pure, virtually disembodied spirituality there can by definition be no room for aggression; and in the state of totally unrepressed gratification or non-repressive sublimation—however differently they are defined—the two-headed Cerberus of frustration-aggression is silenced forever."19

Professor Manuel is by no means the only critic who has attempted classification of utopian fiction according to philosophy and form, and his is not the only way of viewing the utopian trends which have developed throughout the history of the tradition. Joyce O. Hertzler, for example, has distinguished between types of utopias according to the authors' purposes. Hertzler maintains that the Republic was composed as an outlet for the expression of Plato's philosophy, that Utopia was a satire aimed at the evils and excesses of More's own time, that Bacon's New Atlantis was an elaboration of its author's pet theories, that Harrington's Oceana was a proposed

18Ibid., p. 318.
19Ibid.
solution to the political problems confronting England at the time of its publication, and that these works should be approached in different ways because of these differences. Negley and Patrick consider the most important development to be the "significant change of focus from reform of the individual to reform of institutions," which became apparent in the nineteenth century. They cite as the best illustration of this change Edward Bellamy, who "believed that men were essentially and fundamentally good, and that the inadequacies and evil observable in the actions of men were directly attributable to the inefficient and inequitable institutional structure of their society." Such approaches, no matter how accurate they may be, do not cancel out Manuel's observations; and the most vital consideration as far as this survey is concerned is the fact that these different outlooks considered together should enable us to distinguish the elements which serve to identify the literary versions of utopia.

First of all, the ideal society being described is in one way or another inspired by the society in which its creator lives. This inspiration may be negative to the extent that it comes from the author's dissatisfaction with his own time or his own environment, or it may be

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21 Negley and Patrick, p. 77.
positive in its emphasis upon the projection and amplification of the current society's desirable elements. Most of the scientific utopias, including Bacon's New Atlantis, belong to the second type. In any case, there will be a certain amount of dissatisfaction present, even if it arises from nothing more than an impatience for the future to hurry up and get here or from a sense of disappointment that the author will no longer be around when the golden age arrives. Next, the imaginary society is pictured as existing in a setting inaccessible to would-be visitors because of time or remoteness. Finally, the techniques employed by the author are the techniques of fiction. It would be impractical and inappropriate to include within our definition works which Northrop Frye classifies as social contracts; these social contracts, Frye explains, deal with the past rather than the present. We shall also want to exclude from consideration religious prophecies because, as Manuel suggests, they are predictions of acts of grace rather than projections of human actions. Frye points out two typically literary qualities that are almost always present in utopian fiction:

In the first place, the behavior of society is described ritually. A ritual is a significant social act, and the utopia-writer is concerned only with the typical actions which are significant of those social

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23 Manuel, p. 294.
elements he is stressing. . . . In the second place, rituals are apparently irrational acts which become rational when their significance is explained. In such utopias the guide explains the structure of the society and thereby the significance of the behavior being observed. Hence, the behavior of society is presented as rationally motivated. It is a common objection to utopias that they present human nature as governed more by reason than it is or can be. But this rational emphasis, again, is the result of using certain literary conventions. The utopian romance does not present society as governed by reason; it presents it as governed by ritual habit, or prescribed social behavior, which is explained rationally.24

Thus we may say that a literary utopia is a work of fiction which projects the significant elements of the author's own society into an ideal imaginary state or community inaccessible, for one reason or another, to the reader. But what of books like We, Brave New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four? It is significant that all three of these works fit our definition except for the fact that the societies they describe are not ideal. Zamiatin, Huxley, and Orwell all received their inspiration from their own societies: Zamiatin's motivation was similar to Harrington's and, in a way, to More's; his purpose was to express his conviction that nothing good would come out of the Bolshevik revolution.25 Huxley and Orwell were inspired by somewhat similar circumstances:

to Huxley, the most significant aspects of the society were the growth of science at the expense of spiritual growth and the loss of interest in the individual; Orwell was more interested in the political situation in general and the spread of totalitarianism in particular. Despite these differences, however, all three books were designed as projections of what their authors considered to be the significant aspects of their own societies. Detailed proof of these statements will be provided in later chapters.

Also, each author chose the future for his setting. Zamiatin chose a time a thousand years away, Huxley six hundred, and Orwell only thirty-five. Huxley later questioned the time he had selected, saying that many of the evils he had anticipated were already becoming common and acknowledging that Orwell's date was in some areas probably more realistic.26

Each of the three authors used the techniques of fiction, but we must at this point remember Frye's warning that there are forms of fiction other than the novel. He would have us classify works like We, Brave New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four as "Menippean satires," fictional works that differ from novels in that they deal more with mental attitudes than with people. The people within

such books, says Frye, "are handled in terms of their occupational approach to life as distinct from their social behavior. The Menippean satire thus resembles the confession in its ability to handle abstract ideas and theories, and differs from the novel in its characterization, which is stylized rather than naturalistic, and presents people as mouthpieces of the ideas they represent." 27 The characters of the three books will be analyzed and compared later in this survey in order that we may demonstrate the accuracy of Frye's remarks and establish standards for evaluating the authors' success in the creation of these characters.

It is not only logical but also convenient to base our definition of anti-utopian fiction upon Negley's and Patrick's definition of utopian literature, but we have said that Negley and Patrick differ from the majority in their unwillingness to include within their list of utopian characteristics a statement to the effect that the literary utopia is invariably an attempt to depict an ideal society. The most obvious justification for separating We, Brave New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four from the utopian tradition and calling them anti-utopian is that they picture societies which their authors visualize as imperfect rather than perfect. Zamiatin,

Huxley, and Orwell projected what they considered to be the significant aspects of their own societies into the future and began to fear, as Professor Howe has put it, "not, as liberals and radicals always have, that history will suffer a miscarriage; what they fear is that the long-awaited birth will prove to be a monster."\textsuperscript{28} Howe goes on to explain that Europeans, constantly exposed to the idea that humanity is progressing at all times toward a utopian goal, can be expected to acquire a fear that the answering of their prayers will bring a worse situation than the present one.\textsuperscript{29} When such a message is put into fictional form, the result is the sort of Menippean satire that Frye discusses; and the fiction consequently is subject to a whole series of disadvantages, listed by Howe as follows: "It must confine itself to a rudimentary kind of characterization, it cannot provide much in the way of psychological nuance, it hardly pretends to a large accumulation of suspense."\textsuperscript{30} Howe asserts, nevertheless, that the anti-utopias achieve their impact through the use of five formal means common to all three of the books under consideration here. The first of these means is the description of a human weakness which causes the

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{29}\textit{Ibid., pp. 13-14.}\\
\textsuperscript{30}\textit{Ibid., p. 16.}
\end{flushright}
imagined society to fall short of perfection. This weakness, says Howe, "provides the possibility and particulars of the conflict, while it simultaneously assures that the outcome will be catastrophic. Since the ending of the anti-utopian novel is predictable and contained, so to say, within its very beginning, the tension it creates depends less on a developed plot than on an overpowering conception."31 The second means is the presence of a central idea which possesses dramatic simplicity but historical complexity, an idea which causes human values to change and thus creates the catastrophe. Third, says Howe, the anti-utopian author must exhibit skill and inventiveness in his use of detail. The degree of this skill, he maintains, provides a basis for comparison of the three books:

Orwell's book is impressive for its motivating passion, less so for its local composition. Huxley's is notably clever, but too rationalistic and self-contained: he does not write like a man who feels himself imperilled by his own vision. Zamiatin is both passionate and brilliant, clever and driven. His style, an astonishing mosaic of violent imagery, sustains his vision throughout the book in a way that a mere linear unfolding of his fable never could.32

The fourth technique listed by Howe is one which becomes necessary because of the conflict between the need for a powerful central idea and the need for clever

\[31\text{Ibid.}\]
\[32\text{Ibid.}\]
supporting detail. This technique is a balance between the improbable and the plausible. The author must go beyond the reader's conception of reality, but not so far that the reader ceases to believe in the possibility of the fiction's eventually becoming reality. Finally, says Howe, each author relies upon his readers to bear in mind the impact of the utopian vision upon our society. The critic points out the fact that "the anti-utopian novel thus shares an essential quality of all modern literature: it can realize its values only through images of their violation. The enchanted dream has become a nightmare, but a nightmare projected with such power as to validate the continuing urgency of the dream."33

Although Howe's comments are of vital assistance to anyone seeking standards for evaluation of anti-utopian fiction, it is possible to demonstrate that some of the apparent weaknesses of Nineteen Eighty-Four and Brave New World which lead Howe to rank Zamiatin's book above them were actually made necessary by the authors' philosophies or purposes. This proof will come in later chapters, along with discussions of the ways in which the three books meet Howe's requirements. In the meantime, we shall examine other critics' approaches to anti-utopian fiction in general.

33 Ibid.
Before we go any further, a distinction must be made between anti-utopian literature and the fiction of a group of men George Woodcock calls "ex-Utopians." In the latter category Woodcock includes men like George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and Arthur Koestler; these men, he says, originally based their hopes for a better future upon the assistance of inhuman forces, such as the evolution of a Superman or the development of an impersonal and infallible political system. Such dreams, Woodcock contends, indicate a lack of faith in the man of the present; and when the authors are led to conclude that the future holds no utopia, then they become convinced that nothing except the supernatural or the extraterrestrial can save the race. Woodcock states the opinion that men like Shaw, Wells, and Koestler are not isolated individuals. In his opinion, "the resurgence of revivalist religion and the vast popularity of the otherworldly fantasies of science fiction writers are phenomena which suggest that men like Wells and Koestler are the intellectual spokesmen of a widespread feeling that, for man as he is, progress has come to an end and only the realm of miracles can offer a solution to his dilemmas."34

The distinction which Woodcock makes between books like Wells's Mind at the End of Its Tether and We, Brave

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New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four is that the authors of the anti-utopias have not given up on mankind. Man becomes a villain in ex-utopian writings but remains a hero in the anti-utopias; the critic acknowledges the fact that the anti-utopians present bleak views of the future in their fiction, for the future they visualize offers a world in which freedom has yielded to a uniformity so universal that there is no possibility of change. But Woodcock also emphasizes the fact that the anti-utopian works are warnings rather than prophecies. Huxley and Orwell in particular, he maintains, "suggest that, if certain tendencies towards regimentation which have appeared throughout the world are allowed to develop without hindrance, then we may within a foreseeable future find ourselves trapped in a world where freedom, and all the values that go with it, have withered and been forgotten . . . ."35

Although substantial portions of later chapters will be devoted to demonstrating the validity of Woodcock's argument, at this point it must be acknowledged that a great many critics have failed to make the distinction that Woodcock so wisely makes. Christopher Hollis, for example, says that by the time of Nineteen Eighty-Four, Orwell "had himself fallen almost completely a victim to Swift's mood. He set out to refute Swift, but in the

35Ibid.
end it was Swift that conquered him, and in his last testament he left us a record of a world in which, as completely as in any world of Swift, 'there is none that doeth good, no, not one.'

G. C. LeRoy says that Nineteen Eighty-Four "springs largely from the disbelief in man that characterizes the disillusioned radical," and James Gray claims that Huxley's tragic weakness is the hopelessness with which he views mankind's future. These men are, in effect, equating ex-utopian and anti-utopian fiction. But others, more perceptive in their appraisals of We, Brave New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four, have arrived at the same basic conclusions as Woodcock. Richard Voorhees, for instance, says that Nineteen Eighty-Four "no more indicates that universal totalitarianism is inevitable than a danger sign on a highway indicates that a wreck is." Erich Fromm agrees that Orwell's book is a warning rather than a prophecy.


although he claims on the other hand that all three of the negative utopias "express the mood of powerlessness and hopelessness of modern man just as the early utopias expressed the mood of self-confidence and hope of post-medieval man."\textsuperscript{41}

Adam Ulam, one of the critics who looks upon the anti-utopians as prophets of disaster, has commented on the relationship between these authors and those who belong to an older conservative tradition, a tradition which offers the basic belief that economic and scientific progress are in no way related to happiness.\textsuperscript{42} Professor Howe expresses a different view: he suggests that Zamiatin, "a dissident from Communism," Orwell, "a heterodox socialist," and Huxley, "a scion of liberalism," were not inspired by this conservative tradition, "even while wryly borrowing from it."\textsuperscript{43} While Ulam acknowledges that the reaction of the conservative to the miscarriage of history "ranges between resignation and amusement,"\textsuperscript{44} Howe describes the anti-utopian's reaction in this manner:

The particular intensity of such fiction derives not so much from the horror aroused by a possible vision of the future, but from

\textsuperscript{41}Ibid., p. 259.
\textsuperscript{42}Adam Ulam, "Socialism and Utopia," Daedalus, XCIV (Spring, 1965), 384.
\textsuperscript{43}Howe, p. 13.
\textsuperscript{44}Ulam, p. 384.
the writer's discovery that in facing the prospect of the future he had been trained to desire, he finds himself struck with horror. The work of these writers is a systematic release of trauma, a painful turning upon their own presuppositions. It is a fiction of urgent yet reluctant testimony, forced by profoundly serious men from their own resistance to fears they cannot evade.45

We will elaborate further upon the relative seriousness with which the three authors approach their literary undertakings; but on the basis of the evidence and opinions presented above, we are ready to start with the list of characteristics that make up our tentative definition of anti-utopian fiction. If the need for alterations of the definition becomes apparent as we proceed, these alterations will be made. The four features of our tentative definition are as follows:

(1) The author is, in one way or another, commenting on the nature of his own society by taking what he considers the most significant aspects of that society and projecting them into an imaginary environment. This projection reflects the author's dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs.

(2) In creating the imaginary society, the author can use for his setting either an isolated and therefore unexplored locality, previously untouched by other culture; or he can use some time and place in the future. The

45 Howe, p. 13.
extensiveness of exploration and the growth of air travel in recent years have practically removed the first possibility.

(3) The techniques employed to tell the story are fictional techniques, marked especially by a tendency to describe the imaginary society ritually and to explain it rationally. The book will fall within Northrop Frye's category of Menippean satire, however, not the category of the conventional novel.

(4) Lacking the technical advantages available to the novelist, the writer of anti-utopian fiction uses a predictable series of formal devices to assure his book's effectiveness. The most important aspect of this fourth characteristic is that the author visualizes a society which, unlike societies described in conventional utopian fiction, falls far short of the author's definition of perfection. The weaknesses which make it a nightmare society will characteristically be human weaknesses.

Having listed these four features, we are now prepared to examine We, Brave New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four individually, first demonstrating the ways in which they fit our definition and then determining the standards by which they may be evaluated. This examination should go a long way toward determining their merits relative to one another and to other fiction.
CHAPTER II
WE

Eugene Ivanovich Zamiatin was a Russian-born novelist and playwright who participated in the revolution of 1905 and who, after missing the February revolution of 1917, hurried to Russia from England in time to take part in the events of that October and to travel about delivering speeches in behalf of the new government. Before long, however, Zamiatin began to notice cause for alarm in the totalitarian tendencies exhibited by Lenin and his subordinates. The result of this alarm was what has come to be regarded by many critics as the greatest artistic success in the modern anti-utopian tradition, We (1920).

Since We is less familiar to English-speaking people than Brave New World and Nineteen Eighty-Four, it seems advisable at this point to include a thorough summary of Zamiatin's book. The narrator, D-503, lives in a society projected approximately a thousand years into the future; it is sealed off from disease and bad weather by a huge glass wall. D-503 is a very important person; for he is the builder of the Integral, the great space ship which will allow, the State Gazette proudly proclaims, "the subjugation of unknown creatures to the beneficent
yoke of reason—creatures inhabiting other planets, perhaps still in the savage state of freedom. Should they fail to understand that we are bringing them a mathematically infallible happiness, it will be our duty to compel them to be happy."¹ When D-503 wishes for a change of pace from the beauty of mathematical symbols, turning cranks, and balanced beams, he calls upon 0-90. As D-503 describes her, 0-90 is a young lady whose "looks matched her name; she is 10 centimeters or so shorter than the Maternal Norm, she is as rounded as if she had been turned on a lathe, while that rosy 0, her mouth, is open to meet every word of mine halfway." (We, p. 170) Since D-503 is registered in 0-90's name, they are allowed to meet in his room on Sexual Days with the blinds lowered over the transparent walls. The hero is completely happy following the Tables of Hourly Commandments issued by the Benefactor of the One State and enforced by his Bureau of Guardians until he falls under the influence of E-330, a female coworker who is described as being "slender, hard, willfully pliant as a whiplash." (We, p. 173) She seduces him and introduces him to such ancient and forbidden pleasures as the drinking of alcohol and the smoking of

¹Eugene Zamiatin, We, in Russian Literature in the Soviet Period, trans. B. G. Guerney (New York, 1960), p. 168. Further references to We will refer to this edition and will be included within the text. The character called E-330 in Guerney's translation is sometimes referred to as I-330 by other translators.
tobacco. They spend many hours together in the House of Antiquity, a museum displaying many relics from past ages but also secret headquarters for the Mephis. The members of this organization, led by E-330 and her associates, periodically escape through the House of Antiquity to the outside of the wall and gather in a meadow to discuss their plans for razing the wall and capturing the Integral. Unfortunately, D-503's transgressions are detected by the Guardians; a simple brain operation brings him back into the fold, he betrays his former friends, they are tortured as he looks on indifferently, they are executed, and everything returns to normal.

In the introduction to his translation of We, B. G. Guerney has attempted to separate Zamiatin's book from the tradition which was to produce Brave New World and Nineteen Eighty-Four. Guerney finds the following differences to be the most significant:

Official Soviet criticism errs in styling We a pasquinade against the socialistic future: Zamiatin may have fallen into the error against which the hardly radical Lord Macaulay warned, that of condemning a construction or a revolution while either is still incomplete. And, as of now, Mayakovsky was an infinitely more percipient prophet than Zamiatin; nevertheless the latter did not play quintain with his own times; his Benefactor was no Big Brother scarecrow but none other than Lenin himself; he did not write either to fill his belly or on a full belly, and paid at an exorbitant rate for the courage of his convictions. Finally, since none of his exceedingly many copyists
had his wit or his puissance in satire, We remains the satire-fantasy, or sardonic Utopia, of our times.2

Guerney suggests that Zamiatin's familiarity with the political situation in his time gives him an insight and a motivation not available to Huxley or Orwell; Orwell, in fact, remarked at one time that no great English novel had been written on the subject of totalitarianism because Englishmen had not had the opportunity to see totalitarianism work from the inside.3 Zamiatin was possibly also superior as a satirist to either of the other two men, although a great many of the apparent deficiencies in Brave New World and Nineteen Eighty-Four are actually strategic and necessary to the authors' purposes. Nevertheless, the conclusion Guerney draws from these assumptions, that We differs from the other two books "in all the important respects,"4 is a false one. Its falsity can best be demonstrated by a return to our list of basic anti-utopian characteristics. Once we have shown the ways in which We, Brave New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four all share these important characteristics, Guerney's claim can be dismissed.


4Guerney, p. 167.
In our examination of We, it would seem appropriate to start with Guerney's contention that the book is patterned after Zamiatin's own society; for this contention is related to the way in which We fits the first part of our definition. It becomes clear after a glance at the circumstances described in the book that Zamiatin uses what, from his point of view, were the significant aspects of the Soviet society as his pattern for the fictional world he envisions. First, he feared the system that provided for only one political party; D-503's comments concerning the Day of Unanimity, the day when, as he explains, all the citizens "entrust the Benefactor anew with the keys to the impregnable citadel of our happiness," clearly reflect this fear. The implications of the satire in this section are unmistakable as D-503 elaborates:

Naturally this /The system/ bears no resemblance to the disorderly, unorganized elections of the ancients when (it sounds so funny to say it!) even the result of the elections was actually unknown in advance. To build a state upon utterly uncalculated chance happenings, blindly--what could be more senseless? And yet, as it turned out, centuries were required for this to be understood. (We, p. 275)

The narrator goes on next to observe that, as a matter of fact, "we have no room for any chance happenings whatsoever--nothing unexpected can eventuate." (We, p. 275) Therefore, the unfortunate consequences are not strictly political. Love is reduced to pure sex, rationed
out with coupons; babies are conceived for the greater
glory of the One State. Scientific progress, when directed
solely toward increasing the power of such a government,
leads to an eventual total loss of attention toward the
human being. D-503 frequently refers to himself as a
machine and as a number; when at last the Grand Operation
which removes all feelings and therefore all consideration
of treason is perfected, the Gazette of the One State
calls for rejoicing; for, as the paper explains to its
readers, "You are perfect; you are on a par with machines;
the road to 100 percent happiness lies clear ahead." (We,
p. 310) Such a message, although illustrated by a look
into the future, would be pointless if its roots were not
in the present.

The most frightening part of the situation in We is
that an external happiness of sorts is achieved. D-503
describes it in these terms: "I smile; I cannot help but
smile: they have extracted some sort of sliver out of
my head; my head is light, empty. To be more exact: it
is not empty, but there is nothing extraneous in it, noth-
ing that would interfere with smiling (smiling is the nor-
mal state for a normal human)." (We, p. 352) This was the
sort of empty-headed happiness, Zamiatin seems to be saying,
that the Soviet Regime was setting up as a goal; in any
case the promise of happiness was the reward the Soviets
were (and are) offering in return for individual freedom.
Guerney points out that the Benefactor of this future society is patterned after Lenin, and the society itself is inspired by the nature of the early Soviet political system with its totalitarian emphasis upon conformity and governmental control. Professor Walsh, however, comments upon the effectiveness of *We* as a prophecy of many practices unknown to Lenin but common during the Stalin regime and practices present in other totalitarian states. Such anticipations do not reduce the effectiveness of the book as a projection of the situation in 1920; instead, they demonstrate the insight with which Zamiatin was able to grasp the significant aspects of the Lenin government and foresee their future consequences.

The writer of utopian fiction in this century, it has been pointed out, is almost obliged to choose the future as his setting. Zamiatin picked a time approximately a thousand years in the future in order that he might take full advantage of the fictional techniques thus made available to him. We have mentioned the need for a creator of a literary utopia to include within his book a ritualistic description of the imaginary society; that is, one character or possibly a series of characters undertake the task of explaining the nature of the society to a person or a group of people who are unaware

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5Chad Walsh, *From Utopia to Nightmare* (New York, 1962), pp. 98-100.
of its nature. In We, the description emerges from the journal D-503 plans to leave inside the space ship for the edification of the inhabitants of other worlds. The basic problem which arises under these circumstances is a common one in anti-utopian fiction: the character who describes the society must either show his ignorance of what the author considers to be the real truth or this character must have some special way of learning the truth, since the author—the three authors under consideration in this study are no exceptions—invariably chooses to have his fictional rulers rewrite, distort, or destroy all historical records. The magnitude of this difficulty can be emphasized by a look at Nineteen Eighty-Four: Orwell's central character, Winston Smith, is able to learn about the past only because he acquires a copy of Goldstein's book, The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism; the interpolation of this manuscript within the framework of the plot takes away from Orwell many of the advantages he would ordinarily have enjoyed as a result of having chosen the techniques of fiction rather than those of straight propaganda. To avoid this sort of difficulty, Zamiatin gives his characters access to the facts through the materials available in the House of Antiquity. Yet it has been so long since such ancient cultures existed and everyone has been so thoroughly conditioned that he may be exposed to the facts without
comprehending their significance. As D-503 puts it, "I cannot conceive of a city that is not girt about by a Green Wall, I cannot conceive of a life that is not en-robed in the figured chasubles of the Tables of Hourly Commandments." (We, p. 176) Thus Zamiatin is able to present enough links between the present and the future to make his warning clear and at the same time to present a narrator who is a perfect specimen of future man as he will exist if the warning is not heeded. Zamiatin, not having been around when Stalin and Hitler were at work reshaping history, assumed that such a situation could exist only after hundreds of years. Orwell realized that no such length of time would be necessary, but he created a rather large technical problem for himself when he came to this realization, a problem which he solved only partially.

By letting E-330 and the other Mephis explain to D-503 the true nature of things, Zamiatin achieves a rational background for his narrator's ritualistic description of the One State; the details of the political setup are presented for the enlightenment of anyone who might come upon the journal when the space ship is found by the inhabitants of another part of the universe. In making such a presentation, furthermore, Zamiatin makes full use of the techniques of Menippean satire; each character becomes a mouthpiece for a particular philosophy.
D-503 is a typical product of this future age, unthinkingly spouting as if by rote the propaganda and slogans of the government at every opportunity, even after he has been seduced by E-330 into another way of life. E-330, on the other hand, is the mouthpiece for Zamiatin's own beliefs, the advocate of primitivism and of revolution for revolution's sake. The minor characters can all be classified as belonging either to the loyal subjects or the revolutionaries. Zamiatin was forced into this sort of presentation, for in a society where every effort has been made to reduce the populace to a series of numbers, there can be no other outwardly distinguishing personality traits.

Zamiatin makes talented use of the various formal means of giving impact to the message listed by Howe and discussed in the first chapter of this study (p. 19). The human weakness which turns the dream into a nightmare is the belief that happiness can be achieved for everyone; Zamiatin's theory is that this happiness can only be achieved if everyone is made to think and act like everyone else, and even then it will be a superficial and exterior kind of happiness. The tragedy of the situation arises from the fact that an individual can be reduced to the state of D-503 at the end of We and convinced that it is the "normal" and "proper" state.

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reader feel that the situation is implausible. By contrasting the space ship and the rest of the One State's domain with the primitivistic life on the other side of the Green Wall, by giving each of these groups a spokesman, and by bringing the spokesmen together in a romantic attachment, Zamiatin has provided the link which creates the necessary balance between the plausible and the improbable. We find it possible to believe in the world inside the Wall for two reasons: first, we are constantly reminded of the twentieth century in the discussions of the "progress" which has caused the One State to exist; second, we are tied to the present and even to the past by the contrasting environment provided by E-330 and her primitivistic followers.

Finally, the reader is forced into the recollection of the utopian dream, as the reader of any anti-utopian fiction must be if the warning is to come through with full impact. Professor Walsh has commented upon the aspects of Communism which make it especially terrible when it becomes nightmarish reality in a society:

The Russian Revolution in theory and to some extent in practice incorporates a great deal of Western enlightenment and humanism. It has a doctrine of human brotherhood and justice, and it does not divide mankind into superior and inferior races. Thus any corruption of the Communist dream, while not exactly a corruptio optimi, is at least a corruptio boni, and has a significance that the various stages of fascism and nazism could not possess. Zamiatin and others like him are warning us not against the horrible
consequences of a political theory wicked and stupid from the start, but against the
enormities that can rise from a relatively good movement when it becomes twisted,
perverted and demonic.°

Walsh's remark that "Zamiatin and others like him are warning us" raises a point which is highly signifi-
cant, for we are not the audience Zamiatin had in mind when he wrote the book. In the respect that an anti-
utopian author is issuing a warning to the members of his own society, any book belonging to this category is
in danger of becoming dated within a very short time after its publication unless we can locate within its pages a
theme universal enough to be applicable in any society at any time. Each of the three books under consideration
in this study has such a theme: in We it is what Professor Walsh has called "the enormities that can rise from
a relatively good movement when it becomes twisted, perverted and demonic"; in Brave New World it is the effect
scientific advancement has upon the individual; in Nineteen Eighty-Four it is the evil consequences of totalitarian
rule, no matter what variety of totalitarianism it might be. We must remember to include within our set of stan-
dards of evaluation the fact that any anti-utopian story which does not have a universal theme of this sort is
certain to become dated within a single generation.

8Ibid., p. 104.
We can conclude that Zamiatin's fear of the perversion of the Communist movement was intensified by his original faith in its goodness. Understanding of this and other points already discussed in this chapter will help us to form an evaluation of *We*, but it is impossible to draw any valid conclusions about the relative merits of *We*, *Brave New World*, and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* without first considering the influence of Zamiatin's book upon the other two authors. Sincerity and intensity of feeling are qualities which are extremely difficult to measure in a literary work; it is, nevertheless, essential to attempt the measurement of these qualities in a comparison of anti-utopias because there is no room for insincerity or artificiality in a book dealing with the fate of mankind. This matter of literary influence becomes especially significant with regard to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, for this book has been frequently praised as the most imaginative of Orwell's books. If we discover that the features of the book which have been cited as evidence of the author's heightened imagination are really the products of Zamiatin's imagination, then our critical approach will have to be revised.

We cannot altogether deny the influence of *We* upon the later works, for its similarities to the anti-utopias of Orwell and Huxley are undeniable. But these similarities have, it seems to me, caused some critics to assume
a direct relationship which does not exist. The first critic to make such a mistake was Orwell himself, in his discussion of We in "Freedom and Happiness." Orwell maintains in this essay that Brave New World must have been inspired by the Russian book because, Orwell says, "Both books deal with the rebellion of the primitive human spirit against a rationalised, mechanised, painless world. . . . The atmosphere of the two books is similar, and it is roughly speaking the same kind of society that is being described, though Huxley's book shows less political awareness and is more influenced by recent biological and psychological theories."9 Obviously the similarities mentioned by Orwell do exist. A close look at some publication dates, however, will show that the relationship between We and Brave New World is almost certainly coincidental. We, although it was first published twelve years before Brave New World, was not translated into English until 1924. Professor John Atkins has gone into great detail concerning the various foreshadowings of Brave New World in Huxley's own work, including some of the speeches in Crome Yellow, published two years before We was translated into English.10 The best example of

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these foreshadowings to be found in *Crome Yellow* is in Mr. Scogan's theories concerning class distinctions. Scogan's imaginary society is made up of Directing Intelligences, Men of Faith, and a Herd. The Directing Intelligences will have complete control of the society, but they will exercise this power by conditioning the Men of Faith to believe that the ideas of their superiors are their own. The Men of Faith will not be reasonable like the Directing Intelligences but will be intense enough in their faith to see that their projects are put into practice.\textsuperscript{11} These ideas are close enough to the class system of *Brave New World* to indicate that Huxley was not indebted to Zamiatin in this important respect, unless we assume that Huxley took the trouble to read *We* in the original immediately after its publication in Prague. It seems logical to assume that if he had done so he would have mentioned it sooner or later. Rudolf Schmerl has pointed out that Huxley's theories changed to some extent during the ten years between *Crome Yellow* and *Brave New World*, but not enough to indicate the influence of another author. According to Schmerl, "the most important difference between the early sketch and the finished novel is that in 1922 Huxley, through Mr. Scogan, imagined a world in which the place is best fitted to the individual and the individual is then made

comfortable in it, while in 1932 he described a world in which the individual is fitted to a predestined place, fitted so tightly that he could not be comfortable out of it."\textsuperscript{12} One after another, Huxley's political and social theories appeared in his writings prior to the time that they were combined for the first time in Brave New World. For example, his contention that passion interferes with efficiency and therefore is coming to be considered undesirable is discussed in his essay on Baudelaire (1929).\textsuperscript{13} Such facts by themselves do not prove that Huxley was not influenced by Zamiatin, but taken together they indicate that he was developing a line of thought the germs of which were already present within his mind before Zamiatin's book became available to English readers.\textsuperscript{14}

It can be demonstrated that Orwell is erroneous in his more specific claims of relationship between We and Brave New World. To begin with, it is difficult to justify his contention that the atmosphere of the books is similar: Zamiatin's is filled with irony, but what little humor there is is tinged with pathos; Huxley's book, on the other hand, contains a quality that has caused one


\textsuperscript{14}Atkins, p. 213.
critic to say: "Reading the novels of Aldous Huxley is just a little like going on a tremendous spree. One has a thoroughly good time at the moment and only afterward remembers to be censorious." More will be said later of the humor in Brave New World. Even more important are the significantly different approaches Zamiatin and Huxley take to what Orwell calls "the rebellion of the primitive human spirit." In his foreword to the 1946 edition of Brave New World, Huxley finds it necessary to comment on what he feels is "the most serious defect in the story, which is this. The Savage is offered only two alternatives, an insane life in Utopia, or the life of a primitive in an Indian village, a life more human in some respects, but in others hardly less queer and abnormal." In this manner Huxley denies any real sympathy toward a primitivistic solution to the problems of the modern world. Professor Hollis insists that the only solution as far as Zamiatin was concerned lay in primitivism:

To Zamiatin [sic] this inhuman tyranny was foretold as the consequence of the acceptance of a machine civilization. Zamiatin was of a Russian tradition, which stretches back to Dostoievski and beyond, to which the West, alike with its capitalism and its communism,

was the enemy of freedom and to which the Russian soul could only be saved and Russian freedom preserved if Russia kept herself uncontaminated by the complexities of Europe. Salvation to him lay in a return to primitive ways.17

_We_ provides clear proof that the tradition discussed by Hollis still was an essential part of intellectual Russian thought in the 1920's. That it was the sort of solution Zamiatin had in mind is made abundantly clear when E-330 accuses D-503 of being "overgrown with ciphers; ciphers are crawling all over you like lice. You ought to be stripped of everything and driven naked into the forests." (We, p. 298) Huxley, on the other hand, goes to a great deal of trouble to show the consequences of a primitivist approach to modern problems by sending the Savage "naked into the forests."

While it is impossible to prove that Huxley even read _We_ before he wrote _Brave New World_, the influence of _We_ upon _Nineteen Eighty-Four_ is obvious and significant. The Russian work, referred to by Orwell as "one of the literary curiosities of this book-burning age,"18 is at least a partial source of the plot, characters, and symbols of Orwell's book. In each work there is a rather colorless hero who is loyal to his totalitarian leaders and who is dismayed by his disloyal thoughts until

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18 Orwell, "Freedom and Happiness," p. 15.
in each case an attractive and rebellious heroine leads him into a more joyful and rewarding way of life. In each case the hero is "cured" of his revolutionary tendencies by the authorities; in We, D-503 is rendered harmless by means of an operation, whereas in Nineteen Eighty-Four Winston is tortured until he even renounces his love for Julia. Both societies are presided over by mysterious men-Gods, Zamiatin's being known as the Benefactor and Orwell's as Big Brother. Most important of all, the aims of both novels are the same: to warn the world against the dangers of totalitarianism. This last similarity is certainly a literary parallel rather than an influence; for almost everything Orwell ever wrote, fiction and non-fiction, carried this same argument. The other mutual elements are linked so closely that one critic is justified in referring to Zamiatin as "if no more, at least Orwell's Holinshed."\(^{19}\) Such evidence, it should be added, is not a sound basis for Guerney's judgment that Nineteen Eighty-Four is "We-stenciled."\(^{20}\) In the first place, we have already demonstrated that Zamiatin was operating within a Russian tradition, one which was completely foreign to Orwell. The basic difference between the two books may be, as Hollis suggests, only

\(^{19}\) Hollis, p. 199.

\(^{20}\) Guerney, p. 166fn.
that the two men were of different nationalities, but this is a distinct and important difference in its own right. Hollis has commented in the following statement on the way in which Orwell handled his source materials:

If therefore—as I daresay was so—Zamyatin's we was consciously present to his mind as he wrote 1984, we can then say that he reshaped Zamyatin's warnings to show their relevance to an English society and to a modern world in which totalitarian governments had appeared impartially on the right and on the left. In opposition to those who look on 1984 as an exposure of what would happen to us if we were conquered by Russia, Orwell was anxious to show that the Russian features of such a society are but incidental and that in essence it can happen here just as well as there. The tri-partite division of the world plays no part in Zamyatin's picture.

Even if Orwell was indebted to Zamiatin for a great deal of his inspiration, it would seem also that the influence of Zamiatin is frequently overstressed because both he and Orwell turned to Soviet Russia as a contemporary model of their future societies. Zamiatin, of course, was writing from personal observation. Orwell, lacking this advantage, was forced to depend upon the observations of others to some extent; his principal source of information was Trotsky, whose resemblance to Orwell's Goldstein is no coincidence. Irving Howe has pointed out that Orwell was indebted to the Russian

21 Hollis, pp. 199-200.

22 Ibid., p. 200.
scapegoat even in his prose style. Orwell's style, Howe has suggested, is imitative of Trotsky throughout The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism but particularly in the scientific references employed in connection with unscientific matters and in the use of compressed paradoxes. Another case in which Orwell was able to relate his attack on totalitarianism directly to Russian methods without any reliance upon Zamiatin was in his description of the way in which the rulers of Oceania changed history to suit their own purposes, rather than burning the books in the fashion of Hitler. This technique, of course, was introduced and refined by Stalin; therefore, it was a matter which Zamiatin could only anticipate but which Orwell could report as it was actually happening. Even if the Englishman could not view the development of Soviet Communism from the inside, he had more time than Zamiatin to watch it develop. Much of what Zamiatin could only guess about had already taken place by Orwell's time, and much of the Russian influence comes from observation rather than from Zamiatin.

Many of the facets of Brave New World and Nineteen Eighty-Four which are similar to parts of We actually came to Huxley and Orwell through extra-literary influences.

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24 Ibid.
which can most profitably be discussed in other connections. The evidence presented thus far should be sufficient to show that the two English books deserve the attention of critics as something more than mere copies of Zamiatin's anti-utopia. Further chapters will deal with the ways in which Brave New World and Nineteen Eighty-Four fit the anti-utopian form, the messages which these two books convey, and the comparative success with which the three authors fit their works into the form.
Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) is so familiar that little summary of its plot should be necessary. It is fortunate that this is the case, for the author's method of telling his story is even more complex than Zamiatin's. The scene shifts dizzyly from place to place: in one twelve-page section the setting changes every time a new sentence begins.\(^1\) Furthermore, Huxley does not always bother to identify the speaker in long sections containing practically nothing but dialogue.

The story takes place in the year 632 A. F. (After Ford). Henry Ford is an object of worship in a society in which the techniques of modern science and mass-production have produced the ultimate in efficiency. This efficiency has extended to the creation of human beings, as the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning explains to a group of students at the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre, where the opening scenes take place. Bokanovsky's Process enables scientists to produce ninety-six babies from one egg; the processing

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\(^1\)Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (New York, 1946), pp. 56-57. Further references to *Brave New World* will refer to this edition and will be included within the text.
and post-natal hypnopaedic suggestion allow a grouping of all people into five classes. One of the hypnopaedic recordings, played over and over for a group of sleeping children, summarizes the distinctions between these classes:

Alpha children wear grey. They work much harder than we do, because they're so frightfully clever. I'm really awfully glad I'm a Beta, because I don't work so hard. And then we are much better than the Gammas and the Deltas. Gammas are stupid. They all wear green, and Delta children wear khaki. Oh no, I don't want to play with Delta children. And Epsilons are still worse. They're too stupid to be able. . . . (p. 31)

Every possible means of pleasure is made available to the inhabitants of this world, from movies that can be felt to a marvelous drug called soma that removes all pain and all worry. The only ones who fail to take advantage of such things as the Feelies and soma are people like Bernard Marx and Helmholtz Watson, people who do not conform because they have not been hatched under the proper conditions. Marx does not really approve of the complete sexual freedom practiced in his society, but he still is attracted to Lenina Crowne and on one occasion takes her on a vacation to an Indian reservation. There they discover the Savage, whose mother has been accidentally deserted and trapped within the walls for a number of years. She and her son are returned to the civilized world, but the son is unable to adjust to the world of happiness and progress: he finds more truth in Shakespeare's
plays than in the Controller's philosophy. Finally, unable to maintain his sanity in this environment, the Savage retreats alone into the wilderness, where he turns a whip upon those who invade his privacy and finally upon himself. Marx, although he does not wish to leave the life of comfort and guaranteed happiness, and Watson, also unable to adjust, are sent to a lonely island with a bad climate. The book ends as a group of visitors find the Savage hanging from the arch of his doorway, a suicide.

Our first task in discussing *Brave New World* is to analyze the ways in which it fits into the anti-utopian framework we have set up in the first chapter. First of all, we can establish that the book is a projection into an imaginary environment of what the author considered to be the significant aspects of his own society. In drawing such a conclusion we must point out the differences between Huxley's book and Zamiatin's in this respect. The basic difference is that Huxley had no definite political model, such as the Lenin regime, to use as the basis for his projection the way Zamiatin did. In a way this lack of a specific political target for his satire proves to be a disadvantage; but, not having Zamiatin's advantage of observing totalitarianism from the inside, not having as much time as Orwell to watch Soviet totalitarianism develop, and writing before Hitler's methods became common knowledge throughout Europe, Huxley could
not avoid this difficulty. In another way the lack of a definite political frame of reference was no hindrance at all to Huxley; the elements of twentieth-century life which Huxley considers most significant are not really political in their origins. According to Huxley, the chief villain is not Marx or Lenin, although these two have become heroes in the nightmare society he imagines. Rather it is Henry Ford who is the God of this society, because as Huxley sees it, the confusion of a world in which mass-production is prevalent and technological "progress" is rapid causes people instinctively to seek totalitarianism as an antidote for confusion. Thus the terror of the vision is apparent to Americans and Europeans who have no experience with dictatorships but who have been exposed to mass-production and its inevitable (at least to Huxley) offsprings: planned obsolescence, conformity, and uniformity. At least one political scientist has commented on the validity of Huxley's outlook by observing that the "reason why Nineteen Eighty-Four /and he might have added We/ seems so much closer to home is that our own experience has been almost exclusively with the conspicuous-production and police-state kind of dictatorship Orwell is describing. We have no historical experience with a conspicuous-consumption dictatorship

based upon an economy of plenty and absolute psychological conditioning—although this may well come to be the more serious danger in countries like the United States."³

Huxley, like Zamiatin, chose the future for his setting. The events of Brave New World take place six hundred years in the future, but the author later admitted that many of the horrors he had pictured suddenly seemed only a few generations away. Some of the dangers which, by the time he wrote his Foreword to the 1946 edition of Brave New World, seemed more imminent than they had in 1932 were the constant use of drugs similar to his soma, the subconscious indoctrination of children, the scientific division of classes, and complete sexual freedom.⁴

The society of Brave New World is described in a ritualistic way, but the manner in which it follows the ritual is technically more complex than the ritualistic procedures devised by Zamiatin. Whereas Zamiatin allows D-503 to speak for his future society and E-330 to speak for the author himself, Huxley presents several different perspectives through the speeches and actions of various characters. The first view we get of the society is on the guided tour provided by the Director of Hatcheries. His point of view, of course, is completely conventional

⁴Foreword to Brave New World, pp. xii-xiii.
in terms of the conditioning he has received; such complete submission to the conventions of the time is later reflected by Lenina Crowne, who goes around saying things like "A gramme \(\text{of soma}\) is always better than a damn," and "Everyone says I'm awfully pneumatic." A different outlook is provided by Bernard Marx and Helmholtz Watson, the biological freaks. These two men are dissatisfied with their lives but are unable to express any contrasting viewpoint because of their lack of experience outside their own realm of activities and because the age has embraced Ford's doctrine that "History is bunk." The Savage is a spokesman for an alternate way of life, but he is far from being a heroic figure. His solution, Huxley suggests, is just as preposterous as that of the conformists.\(^5\) The only person in the book who understands the implications of the society and who can recognize the loss of humanity and beauty without mourning the loss is Mustapha Mond, the Controller. His rational explanation of the situation is just as horrifying as D-503's explanation of his condition after his operation, and the horror in both cases comes from the same basic source: the people in both worlds are happy. Mond explains the situation in his society like this:

> The world's stable now. People are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can't get. They're well off; they're

\(^5\)Ibid., p. ii.
safe; they're never ill; they're not afraid of death; they're blissfully ignorant of passion and old age; they're plagued with no mothers or fathers; they've got no wives, or children, or lovers to feel strongly about; they're so conditioned that they practically can't help behaving as they ought to behave. And if anything should go wrong, there's soma. Which you go and chuck out of the window in the name of liberty, Mr. Savage. (Brave New World, pp. 263-264)

The effectiveness with which the rational explanation of the ritual behavior is handled becomes evident during the discussion among Mond, Marx, Watson, and the Savage when Mond is deciding what to do about the others' radical tendencies; here Huxley uses an old but efficient technique, that of letting the characters anticipate arguments which might come from his readers. Mond is able to handle every objection thrown at him and in doing so demonstrates the possibility that the human will in reality could someday be influenced into the general submission described in this fictional work. There could be no better Devil's Advocate for Huxley's purposes than the Controller, who has chosen stability over truth and happiness over beauty, a man who knows both sides of the issue but who has chosen the wrong side according to Huxley. Huxley makes him eloquent in the defense of his position and by this means makes the warning much more frightening than it would be otherwise. Very little of the book's humor, it might be mentioned, is to be found in Mond's speeches.
That Huxley's fictional techniques in *Brave New World* are those of Menippean satire should be evident from the above comments; although Huxley's characters are not grouped into two distinct camps the way Zamiatin's are, their speeches and actions are all designed to indicate, as Huxley puts it, a choice "between insanity on the one hand and lunacy on the other."\(^6\) Other alternatives were possible, Huxley later came to realize; these will be discussed later. For the present, it is enough to say that every character in *Brave New World* is typed according to his attitude toward his society, and every bit of dialogue is designed by the author to illuminate details of the essential doctrines upon which this society is based. At times we are reminded explicitly of the issues involved: note the dialogue between the Controller and the dissenters. At other times the message is obvious to the reader but brought out casually or incidentally by the characters: see the passage in which the Savage is told he has been travelling at 250 kilometres an hour and replies, "Ariel could put a girdle round the world in forty minutes," (p. 188) or consider the song which Lenina sings in the shower: "Hug me till you drug me, honey;/ Kiss me till I'm in a coma:/ Hug me, honey, snuggly bunny;/ Love's as good as *soma."

\(^{6}\)Ibid.
for instance in a dialogue when we hear a name like Marx or Lenina, or in an oath to "our Ford." Always the characters tend to sacrifice any degree of humanity they might have achieved in order that they may become mouthpieces of one sort or another for the satire.

Huxley, like Zamiatin, employs a series of formal means to make up for the absence of the ordinary advantages available to novelists. The first of these is the exposure of a human weakness which causes the society to fall short of perfection; and this weakness as Huxley sees it is that people are willing to surrender anything and everything, including their freedom and their individuality, in order to achieve happiness. The power generated by this concept comes from the fact that a happiness of sorts can be easily achieved by extension of techniques already being used, in free countries such as the United States as well as in totalitarian states, if the populace is willing to make the necessary sacrifices. The dramatic simplicity of the idea contrasts with its historical complexity, and this contrast is the second device discussed by Howe. The complexity comes from a theory of Huxley's already discussed, that technological progress inevitably leads to social chaos, thus causing a change in human values and insuring the fact that the dream will develop into a nightmare.7

7Ibid., p. xiii.
The third means is a use of detail which is skillful and inventive, and it is here that the most vivid distinction between *Brave New World* and the other two notable anti-utopian books is apparent. Almost everyone agrees that Huxley is more clever than either Orwell or Zamiatin in his use of supporting detail, but many critics have insisted that Huxley's frequent use of humorous detail detracts from the force of his central idea. That the author's intentions are often humorous is undeniable: it is impossible to keep from chuckling or at least to keep from realizing that Huxley is not being completely serious when one reads his description of the rules for playing a game of Centrifugal Bumblepuppy (pp. 33–34) or hears the participants in a Solidarity Service sing verses like "Orgy-porgy, Ford and fun,/ Kiss the girls and make them One./ Boys at one with girls at peace;/ Orgy-porgy gives release." (p. 100) The humor is abundant; to point out and discuss further examples would be to labor the obvious. The question which arises is whether the humor is appropriate or not. Professor Ghose feels that Huxley "simplified the issue for the sake of comic effect"; Kessler acknowledges the lightheartedness of the approach, saying that *Brave New World* "is only a caricature of what could be." Kessler concludes that "the implications of this

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caricature--based as it is upon an economy of plenty--are perhaps even more frightening for 'liberal' Western society than Orwell's historically better known scarcity dictatorship based on fear, repression and misery. 9 Professor Cushing, although he says that Brave New World suffers from levity, agrees with Kessler, saying that "Mr. Huxley is eloquent in his declaration of an artist's faith in man, and it is his eloquence, bitter in attack, noble in defense, that, when one has closed his book, one remembers--rather than his cleverness and his wit, which one admires and forgets." 10 Thus, these critics acknowledge the author's skill in the use of detail and at the same time acknowledge Huxley's success in his handling of the fourth means discussed by Howe, the achievement of a balance between the improbable and the plausible. Huxley, perhaps more skillfully than Zamiatin, achieved this balance by using the humorous detail to underline the serious central idea. For example, we laugh when we visualize women walking around in belts lined with contraceptives until we stop and speculate that such a development could be a result of today's sexual "revolution," since some control of this sort would have to be exercised if unmarried sex became generally acceptable.

9 Kessler, p. 571.

Finally, Huxley relies upon his readers to engage in what Howe calls a historical act of recollection; and in his use of this device, Huxley once again outdoes Zamiatin and Orwell, in my opinion. His book's superiority in this respect arises from the fact that in the scientific utopias created from Bacon to Wells and Skinner, more so than in any other variety of utopias, we find a sense of excitement stemming from a confidence that technological advances of the particular author's age have placed Utopia within the easy reach of mankind. Because Huxley's greatest emphasis is upon science rather than politics, his message is more frightening than Zamiatin's or Orwell's. *Brave New World* is more clearly a distortion of the literary vision of Utopia than either *We* or *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

The above discussion of the ways in which our list of anti-utopian characteristics fit *Brave New World* has brought out many of the strong points of the book, among them the author's skillful handling of detail and his successful blending of this detail with the presentation of his central idea. But before we can attempt any thorough comparison of *Brave New World* with the other anti-utopias, we must first discuss some other apparent weaknesses. The charge most often directed against Huxley is his failure to offer a suitable alternative to the nightmare society he describes. The views of men like Gray and Fromm on
the matter have been discussed in the first chapter of this study, and there is no need to repeat them; but it would seem appropriate at this point to look at what Huxley has to say on the subject. By 1946 he had recognized the book's deficiencies in this respect and acknowledged their existence in the following statement:

In the meantime, however, it seems worth while at least to mention the most serious defect in the story, which is this. The Savage is offered only two alternatives, an insane life in Utopia, or the life of a primitive in an Indian village, a life more human in some respects, but in others hardly less queer and abnormal. At the time the book was written this idea, that human beings are given free will in order to choose between insanity on the one hand and lunacy on the other, was one that I found amusing and regarded as quite possibly true.\[1\]

Shortly before his death, Huxley published his own version of the perfect society in Island. Long before this, by 1946, he had come to most of his conclusions as to what the alternatives to the insanity of Brave New World should be. These alternatives provide sufficient insight into Huxley's philosophy to warrant quoting the author's summary of their nature here in its entirety:

If I were now to rewrite the book, I would offer the Savage a third alternative. Between the utopian and the primitive horns of his dilemma would lie the possibility of sanity—a possibility already actualized, to some extent, in a community of exiles and refugees from the Brave New World, living within the borders of the Reservation. In this community economics would be decentralist and Henry-Georgian,

\[1\] Foreword to Brave New World, p. 11.
politics Kropotkinesque and co-operative. Science and technology would be used as though, like the Sabbath, they had been made for man, not (as at present and still more so in the Brave New World) as though man were to be adapted and enslaved to them. Religion would be the conscious and intelligent pursuit of man's Final End, the unitive knowledge of the immanent Tao or Logos, the transcendent Godhead or Brahman. And the prevailing philosophy of life would be a kind of Higher Utilitarianism, in which the Greatest Happiness principle would be secondary to the Final End principle—the first question to be asked and answered in every contingency of life being: "How will this thought or action contribute to, or interfere with, the achievement, by me and the greatest possible number of other individuals, of man's Final End?"

By 1944, two years before he wrote the passage quoted above, Huxley published The Perennial Philosophy, a book he called an anthology of thought dealing with the metaphysic, psychology, and ethic of the divine Reality, to which he had added "explanatory comments." The explanatory comments are much more than explanatory: they show us the philosophical origins of the theories which provided an alternative to the world of insanity Huxley had described in 1932. They prove that he sought solutions to the problems he believed might develop by 632 A. F., sought them in fact, until, twelve years after Brave New World, he had developed a philosophical system which solved the

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12 Ibid., pp. iii-iv.

problems to his satisfaction. The proof of this point is a central one to this study, for it will serve to verify Huxley's position as an anti-utopian rather than an ex-utopian or as a consistent prophet of doom. It will show his purpose was to warn against the type of society *Brave New World* depicts instead of reflecting a belief that the realization of such a society is inevitable.

First of all, it should be emphasized that, unlike Zamiatin and Orwell, Huxley sought his solutions through a spiritual approach. This fact might come as a surprise to one who has read only *Brave New World*; for although the spiritual barrenness of the future society is obvious, there is no explicit presentation of its waste land qualities in the book. Professor Atkins comments that during the nineteen-thirties, as he puts it, "we have a strong intuition of Huxley's mind grappling reluctantly with matters it would prefer to ignore, but which impress themselves the more persistently as the years go by, until at last they appear to overcome his defences with an air of inevitability."\(^{14}\) Huxley came to view his society, Atkins concludes, as being so corrupt that only a spiritual awakening could solve its problems, but the author felt that such an awakening could be achieved. An examination of *The Perennial Philosophy* will demonstrate how Huxley's

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attitude is entirely different from the ex-utopian attitude that only a miracle can save mankind.

We would do well to summarize briefly the basic ingredients of The Perennial Philosophy, which is based to one degree or another upon elements of Hinduism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Christianity. According to Huxley, its eclecticism is the cure for all the evils that could produce a society like that of Brave New World. Although Huxley complains of an inability to express the philosophy adequately because of the limitations of language, the foundations of the doctrine are fairly simple in their makeup. First, man's object in life should be to achieve a unity or Oneness with God. Once this Oneness is achieved, man can acquire knowledge of the divine Ground, man's spiritual Absolute which can be experienced but not defined. Such knowledge can be achieved only by one who is willing to relinquish his own will in order to make room for the will of God. Practice of the virtues which must emerge from this relinquishing of personality develops into the Higher Utilitarianism mentioned in the Foreword to Brave New World. We must always be wary of the temptations which can create a nightmare society like that of Brave New World; one must bear in mind the fact that Huxley's philosophy is directed toward the individual. The author says at one point that "personal quarrels and private fears are, in their petty way, no less fatal to
the development of the spiritual life than are the greater calamities.\textsuperscript{15}

Our interest should be directed primarily at the elements of \textit{The Perennial Philosophy} which are specifically related to the dangers described in \textit{Brave New World}; the first of these is his discussion of science and its influence upon the modern world. Huxley starts with an explanation of the dual role of God as He exists in the soul and in the outer world. He then points out that in a world where for several centuries the emphasis has been upon scientific progress, any doctrine involving God's presence in the world around us must contain a corollary that since God is in Nature, Nature must be sacred. Here he is elaborating upon what he calls "the sinfulness and folly of man's overweening efforts to be her master rather than her intelligently docile collaborator. Sub-human lives and even things are to be treated with respect and understanding, not brutally oppressed to serve our human ends."\textsuperscript{16} In \textit{Brave New World}, this attitude is illustrated by Helmholtz Watson as his final renunciation of his society comes with his decision to live on an island with a "thoroughly bad climate." (p. 274) Even earlier in the book, we are exposed to Huxley's fear that in the future leaders like the Director will speak of nature in

\textsuperscript{15}The \textit{Perennial Philosophy}, p. 87.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 76.
a derogatory manner because a "love of nature keeps no factories busy." (p. 24) For the solution to this evil, Huxley looks to Taoism and the philosophy of Chuang Tzu, who, Huxley says, "has no desire to bully Nature into subserving ill-considered temporal ends, at variance with the final end of men as formulated in the Perennial Philosophy. His wish is to work with Nature, so as to produce material and social conditions in which individuals may realize Tao on every level from the physiological up to the spiritual."\textsuperscript{17}

This desire to dominate Nature is encouraged by technological advances making this domination possible. Our technology, says Huxley, has produced the noisiest society of all time. The advertising which contributes enormously to the noise is only a step away from the universal conditioning and refined conspicuous consumption of Brave New World. Advertising is a manifestation and producer of one of this century's greatest evils, as Huxley explains in the following statement:

Spoken or printed, broadcast over the ether or in woodpulp, all advertising copy has but one purpose—to prevent the will from ever achieving silence. Desirelessness is the condition of deliverance and illumination. The condition of an expanding and technologically progressive system of mass production is universal craving. Advertising is the organized effort to extend and intensify craving—to extend and intensify, that is to say, the workings of that force, which

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., p. 77.
(as all the saints and teachers of all the higher religions have always taught) is the principal cause of suffering and wrong-doing and the greatest obstacle between the human soul and its divine Ground.18

The basic trouble, as Huxley sees it, with this advanced technology and its accompanying evils is that it becomes, as it has in Brave New World, an object of a form of idolatry. The worship of science replaces the worship of God, and its doctrines are preached in all forms of advertising as if, Huxley says, "where gadgets are concerned, we can get something for nothing--can enjoy all the advantages of an elaborate, top-heavy and constantly advancing technology without having to pay for them by any compensating disadvantages."19 In other words, the synthetic happiness of Brave New World can be achieved only if people are willing to give up all the things that the Savage misses after he leaves the Reservation.

We have already mentioned the strong dangers which Huxley saw in the growth of mass production in our highly mechanized world. He saw a necessity for a quality we have mentioned, disinterestededness, along with two others, tranquility and humility. These three he regarded as the marks of charity. Because of a lack of charity, a culture devoid of love has emerged in this century:

18 Ibid., p. 219.
19 Ibid., p. 251.
Our present economic, social and international arrangements are based, in large measure, upon organized lovelessness. We begin by lacking charity towards Nature, so that instead of trying to co-operate with Tao or the Logos on the inanimate and sub-human levels, we try to dominate and exploit, we waste the earth's mineral resources, ruin its soil, ravage its forests, pour filth into its rivers and poisonous fumes into its air. From lovelessness in relation to Nature we advance to lovelessness in relation to art—an lovelessness so extreme that we have effectively killed all the fundamental or useful arts and set up various kinds of mass production by machines in their place. And of course this lovelessness in regard to art is at the same time a lovelessness in regard to the human beings who have to perform the fool-proof and grace-proof tasks imposed by our mechanical art-surrogates and by the interminable paper work connected with mass production and mass distribution.

Under such a system, we can assume, even people could eventually be mass-produced; the result would be a greater efficiency. The trend in this direction is aided by the education of our young in a way approximating the hypnopedia described in Brave New World. Huxley says: the "popular philosophy of life has ceased to be based on the classics of devotion and the rules of aristocratic good breeding, and is now moulded by the writers of advertising copy, whose one idea is to persuade everybody to be as extraverted and uninhibitedly greedy as possible, since it is only the possessive, the restless, the distracted, who spend money on the things that advertisers want to sell."

\[20\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 93-94.\]
\[21\textit{Ibid.}, p. 160.\]
The author's theory that technological advancement leads to totalitarianism has been mentioned previously; he elaborates on this theory and its implications in *The Perennial Philosophy*. According to Huxley, totalitarian states are the chief source of political idolatry; he points out that they cultivate a system of political monism, "according to which the state is God on earth, unification under the heel of the divine state is salvation, and all means to such unification, however intrinsically wicked, are right and may be used without scruple." The consequences of such a system are detrimental to the basic concepts of *The Perennial Philosophy*. Huxley points out:

This political monism leads in practice to excessive privilege and power for the few and oppression for the many, to discontent at home and war abroad. But excessive privilege and power are standing temptations to pride, greed, vanity and cruelty; oppression results in fear and envy; war breeds hatred, misery and despair. All such negative emotions are fatal to the spiritual life. Only the pure in heart and poor in spirit can come to the unitive knowledge of God. Hence, the attempt to impose more unity upon societies than their individual members are ready for makes it psychologically almost impossible for those individuals to realize their unity with the divine Ground and with one another.23

A recent critic of *Brave New World* has questioned the motivations of Mustapha Mond, saying that Mond is not a believable character because no one in a position to understand the entire situation the way the Controller is could

22Ibid., p. 11.
23Ibid.
be expected to choose the way of life Mond chooses. The logic and skill with which Mond presents his arguments have already been acknowledged. We are still left with the question of whether or not it is possible for a person who is aware of an alternative way of life to defend such a nightmare society, much less assume the most important role in its administration. I should like to suggest that the motivations for Mond's behavior are implicit in the ideas reflected by Huxley in *The Perennial Philosophy*, although the author does not take the trouble to explain these motivations in *Brave New World*. He thought, the above quotation shows, that excessive privilege and power were dangerous; the most significant part of his conviction is that he saw them to be irresistible to almost any man. Acton's statement that "all great men are bad," he felt, is frequently accurate, for he saw in the nature of society encouragement to the lover of power: first, the slowness with which power is ordinarily acquired increases a man's desire for it; furthermore, the desires increase with age because power becomes easier to acquire as one grows older. What is worse, those who have no power in the state get a vicarious pleasure from the power enjoyed by the rulers.25

25*The Perennial Philosophy*, pp. 121-122.
The desire to retain his power would be enough motivation to discourage Mond from retreating to a Reservation or an island. But while this theory provides an explanation for the Controller's actions and for the actions of many political leaders of the twentieth century, Huxley had concluded by the time he wrote The Perennial Philosophy that rulers like Mond were not inevitable; they were only inevitable in a society with a political structure like that of Mond's society. Only two basic restrictions are necessary to prevent the power lovers from taking control: power must be divided among a group of rulers, and terms of these rulers should be as short as possible. Huxley admits that these rules are more difficult to enforce in actual practice than they would appear to be in theory.26

A great man, the author also acknowledges, can be good if he meets two conditions: "He must deny himself all the personal advantages of power and must practise the patience and recollectedness without which there cannot be love either of man or God. And, second, he must realize that the accident of possessing temporal power does not give him spiritual authority, which belongs only to those seers, living or dead, who have achieved a direct insight into the Nature of Things."27

These are the essential elements of Huxley's Perennial Philosophy, and it may be seen from the above discussion

26 Ibid., p. 122.
27 Ibid., pp. 123-124.
that although Huxley was amused by the idea that modern man might be faced with a choice between two varieties of insanity, he was not pessimistic about the future of the human race to the extent that his anti-utopian *Brave New World* was intended as a prophecy of doom. In 1932 he was searching for the solutions which had become clear to him by 1944, and the fact that he was searching is enough to place *Brave New World* within the anti-utopian tradition and to assure us that this book can be evaluated by the same standards as Zamiatin's *We*.

Before we can finish our comparison of the books there are additional critical problems which arise in connection with *Brave New World* that must be considered. Some of the greatest problems, it seems to me, come from some rather unlikely omissions in the book. The first of these omissions, the failure to provide a suitable alternative to the society of *Brave New World*, is a costly one: the necessity of spending as much time as has been spent in this study demonstrating that Huxley was interested in preventing the development of the nightmare society serves to underline this weakness. The critic should not be placed in the position of having to prove which tradition the author wants his work to fit into. Another omission which on the surface seems equally costly is Huxley's failure to take into account the influence nuclear power would have upon our society; the implications of our progress in that direction, he admits in the
1946 Foreword, should have been obvious to him at the time he was writing Brave New World. In a way this omission helps to demonstrate the correctness of placing the book into the anti-utopian category rather than the ex-utopian; for if, according to Huxley, nuclear warfare becomes a reality, then the doom of mankind is sealed. This conclusion is an inevitable consequence of his thoughts on the subject whether he ever acknowledged its inevitability or not; he comments on the horrors of wars before Ford in the first chapter of Brave New World. Such a conclusion provides still another alternative to the society of 632 A. F., complete extinction, but there was no convenient way Huxley could discuss this alternative in Brave New World. The possibility of extinction is connected to Brave New World in that war is one more evil consequence of a planned society. Atkins discusses in some detail Huxley's conviction that national planning can be expected to disturb one nation's relationships with other nations, and his further conviction that the same conflict always arises to a lesser degree in the tension resulting from clashes between national and local interests or even between local and individual interests.\(^2\) The easiest way to get rid of these conflicts is to create a world state; but the type of society that would result, Huxley shows in Brave New World, would be too high a price to pay even for world peace.

\(^2\)Atkins, p. 201.
Although Huxley felt the tendencies toward war could be discouraged, Atkins shows, by a trend toward economic independence, the author was convinced of the danger of these economic causes of war lingering on indefinitely because people get vicarious satisfaction, excitement, and a feeling of success from war. In *Ape and Essence* (1948) Huxley eventually issued a fictional warning concerning the future of the human race if war was not abolished. At this point we can profit by taking a fairly close look at this work for two reasons: first, *Ape and Essence* provides valuable insight in that it highlights the author's fear of war and his failure to deal with its consequences in *Brave New World*; and second, the similarities and differences between the two works provide us with an excellent opportunity to test the workability of our tentative definition of anti-utopian fiction, for *Ape and Essence* comes as close as any work ever written to falling within the anti-utopian framework without actually doing so.

*Ape and Essence* opens in a contemporary setting. Two motion picture executives discover a rejected script and find it so fascinating that they attempt to meet the author, William Tallis, but discover that he has recently died. Tallis's screen play begins with several shots of apes engaged in human activities and then moves to the

29 Ibid.
twenty-second century. The men of the future act more like apes than the apes: a scientific expedition visits America for the first time since the last war and discovers the natives digging up corpses to get their clothes. Dr. Poole, a botanist, narrowly avoids being buried alive and then is educated in the new way of life by a young female worker who is attracted to him.

Every conceivable means of destruction has been employed in the war, and the descendants of the survivors show the effects in more ways than one. Many of the babies are deformed and are killed if the physical defects are serious, but the mental effects are even more drastic. No efforts are being made to rebuild civilization, and all education is based upon one word, NO. Man has proved himself unable to cope with his own emotions and has almost made himself extinct. In the following statement, Atkins pinpoints the elements in our society which led Huxley to anticipate such a world:

Fear ultimately casts out humanity. Fear had become the very basis and foundation of modern life: fear of technology, of science, of our fatal institutions, of our Great Men, of the War we don't want to plan unceasingly. And then there was truth without charity. Knowing the menace of this, the World Controller in Brave New World had chosen to abandon the search for truth. But we have done the opposite, we have made an idol of truth, and truth without the wise guidance of love is Moloch.30

30Ibid., p. 221.
Love in this world of the future consists of a yearly orgy that lasts a fortnight. The deformed babies are sacrificed to Belial, and the women cast aside the NO's that customarily adorn their breasts, buttocks, and genital organs. Sex has necessarily become seasonal--radiation has made women reproductive only during a five-week period--and the season has been shortened even further, for woman has come to be regarded as a vessel of the Unholy Spirit, an instrument of Belial. And in this age, Belial is the ruler. Man has become dedicated to the propitiation of his reign and has been corrupted by him in every way possible. As Atkins puts it, "man's duty towards his neighbor was to do his best to prevent others doing to him what he would like to do to them." This worship of Belial began, says the Arch-Vicar, in an earlier age. Consider, for example, the twentieth-century attitude toward progress; it was obviously inspired by an evil force. The Arch-Vicar explains it in these words:

Progress--the theory that you can get something for nothing; the theory that you can gain in one field without paying for your gain in another; the theory that you alone understand the meaning of history; the theory that you know what's going to happen fifty years from now; the theory that, in the teeth of all experience, you can foresee all the consequences of your present actions; the theory that Utopia lies just ahead and that, since ideal ends justify the most abominable means, it is your privilege and duty to rob, swindle, torture, enslave

31 Ibid., p. 222.
and murder all those who, in your opinion (which is, by definition, infallible), obstruct the onward march to the earthly paradise.32

This passage and others like it show the basic difference between Brave New World and Ape and Essence. At the end of his life, Huxley had faith in the human race. Final conclusive proof of his faith is provided in an article published only two months before his death, in which he states that "nothing is inevitable . . . . We have the power to deal with the problems of the modern world, if we will use it."33 Ape and Essence contains none of this optimism. It, like Brave New World, is a warning; but it is a warning issued with an air of resignation, with what Atkins calls "a tinge of bad temper . . . . the exasperation of a schoolmaster whose pupils will not attend."34 Yet Atkins presents a strong case for his opinion that Ape and Essence was written in a cynical mood that did not last and that Huxley later felt Brave New World to be a more accurate forecast of what the future might hold. In works written after Ape and Essence, the critic points out, Huxley refers to Brave New World and ignores the second book when he considers possible possibilities.


33Aldous Huxley, "My Point of View," Knight, IV (September, 1963), 75.

34Atkins, p. 223.
future consequences of man's present actions. This difference between the two books is significant enough to warrant an extension of our definition so that it will exclude books like *Ape and Essence*, which comes closer to falling within the ex-utopian category that the anti-utopian because of the author's cynical attitude at the time of its composition. It cannot properly be called an ex-utopian work because it does not reflect a renunciation of an earlier hopefulness that Utopia will be realized on Earth. Neither can it be called an anti-utopian book, for it does not deal with a flaw in the perfection of the perfect. Instead, it starts with an imperfect society and attempts to demonstrate that the imperfections will almost certainly prove fatal. To make the distinction perfectly clear we shall revise the first part of our tentative definition to read as follows:

(1) The author is, in one way or another, commenting on the nature of his own society by taking what he considers the most significant aspects of that society and projecting them into an imaginary environment. This projection reflects the author's dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs, but not to the extent that it is a prophecy of doom or a warning that we must brace ourselves for a certain disaster. It must instead be a warning accompanied by a faith, or at least a hope, that the

situation can be improved if man will only accomplish a certain series of necessary reforms.

I have commented upon two ways in which *Ape and Essence* departs from the anti-utopian framework: it fails to show a flaw in the perfection of the perfect future society, dealing instead with a thoroughly imperfect society of the future projected on the basis of the logical evaluation of a thoroughly imperfect society of the present; and it suggests, not that such a society will result if certain changes are not made, but that the changes called for implicitly in *Brave New World* and explicitly in *The Perennial Philosophy* will not be made. So the destruction of the race is highly probable. Whereas in *Brave New World* Huxley seems to be saying "I hope not," in *Ape and Essence* he seems to be saying "I told you so." *Ape and Essence* quite possibly fails to fit into the anti-utopian category in a third respect. The world described is one of despair and hopelessness. Consequently the author makes no effort to propagandize; the techniques he employs are not precisely those of Menippean satire. It can be further demonstrated that they are not the techniques of a conventional novel either, but such a proof would take us away from the subject at hand and is not necessary to this study.

Huxley's anticipation of planned societies led him to a number of more specific fears, such as the fear of war. Even if we realize what dangers he was warning us
another or keep one man from utilizing his talents more productively than another.36 Huxley, Atkins contends, thought communism to be just as impractical, although he recognized the strength of its appeal to idealists. He felt that the weakness of the system lay in its assumption that all problems could be solved by equalization of incomes.37 The philosophy which Huxley developed concerning the relationship of the classes left him open to charges like those made by Granville Hicks shortly after the publication of Brave New World; Hicks, who found it difficult to believe that a man with Huxley's aristocratic tendencies could be "really much concerned about God and romance and the beauty of motherhood..." remarks:

Apparently we have been doing Mr. Huxley an injustice in thinking of him as a bored, cynical and generally rebellious young man. He is, on the contrary, quite well satisfied with life as it is. And why, when you stop to think of it, shouldn't he be? He has money, social position, talent, friends, prestige, and he is effectively insulated from the misery of the masses. Of course he demands the right to suffer bravely. Of course he wants something to worry about—even if he has to go a long, long way to find it.38

While Hicks seems to have misunderstood Huxley's intentions to some extent, it is impossible not to see

36Ibid., pp. 194-195.
37Ibid., pp. 193-194.
that Huxley was a great deal more interested in the plight of the lower classes in theory than he was in practice. His attitude is basically aristocratic; he looked upon freedom, especially in his youth, as something which everybody wanted but which few people could handle once it was achieved. The young author had no objection to slavery as long as it was not unduly oppressive and as long as it could be disguised under another name. Huxley, Atkins says, thought that the ideal society would be ruled by aristocrats, but he saw how aristocratic rule if administered by the wrong people could create evils as great as those it overcame. For proof of this fact, we can look at Evarard Webley, a character in Point Counter Point. Webley advocates government by the "best," but Atkins observes that Webley's definition of "best" is shaped to include himself, no matter whom it excludes. Webley disguises his thirst for power under his outward insistence that he is only interested in saving his own kind from the tyranny of the stupid mob which is attaining dictatorial power on the basis of size alone. Webley's attitude toward the masses is obviously not Huxley's.

At times Huxley seems no more tolerant of the masses than Webley. Although he shows a tendency toward a greater

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39 Atkins, pp. 187-188.

40 Ibid., p. 193.
appreciation of democracy in his later years, at the time of *Brave New World* his appreciation was only theoretical. He is for the most part repulsed by people in the mass; they show him no individual initiative or imagination, but still they act as if their opinions are as important as his. In the following statement, Atkins concisely summarizes some of the occasions when this attitude emerged in the author's fiction other than in *Brave New World*:

Intellectually, Huxley felt he owed the unfortunate at least his compassion. But like Mr. Hutton in "The Gioconda Smile", who as an undergraduate had once spent three days at a mission in the East End, he was filled with "a profound and ineradicable disgust". This response, with its accompanying load of guilt, continually crops up in the fiction. Sebastian Barnack, in some ways a recreation of Huxley's youth, as recalled in the 1940's, always felt uncomfortable in the proximity of the poor. He felt ashamed, supposed he should have emulated his father and become a left-wing politician, but politics seemed futile. In *Antic Hay*, Mercaptan expresses his admiration for Bruin Opps, who said with perfect openness that the poor and the ill and the old made him feel sick.41

This intolerance might have arisen to some extent at least from Huxley's notion that aesthetic pleasure and the attendant progress could come only from the enjoyment of leisure. Atkins comments on the author's theory that "the aim of political effort was really no more than making the world safe for leisure and culture,"42 and in the

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article published two months before his death Huxley candidly admitted that he did not believe in working too hard.\textsuperscript{43} Since the poor had to work hard just to stay alive and could not therefore attain any respectable degree of culture, they could make no tangible contribution to the society. Part of Huxley's distaste for the masses, I should also like to suggest, comes from his opinion that they are indeed unruly masses instead of individuals operating independently of one another. For this situation he could offer no solution, but he was anxiously awaiting the day when a solution would be found:

One way to guarantee the individual is to develop his potentials. We should find out how to do this. Whenever I meet someone connected with a foundation this is one of the things I beg them to do. Ten years of research and fifty million dollars could produce amazing results. We mustn't be afraid of "quacks" and "phonies" who come up with interesting ideas. We're not following the leads. In education for instance, we could train imagination, perception, even the autonomic nervous system, the latter to alleviate pain. We should train the mind-body, not just the mind.\textsuperscript{44}

Does not the answer to the question of why Huxley set up the elaborate class structure of \textit{Brave New World} lie in the above comments? The author is not suggesting that this structure is evil in itself. The Alphas and Betas contribute in their way to the society, and the

\textsuperscript{43}"My Point of View," p. 75.
\textsuperscript{44}Ibid.
lower classes contribute in their way. They are contributing as much, Huxley seems to be saying, as the lower classes of this century do to our society. The reason why neither the Epsilons nor our poor people contribute any more than they do is that each group thinks as a mass rather than as individuals; the only difference is that in the future society this circumstance has been deliberately planned by the rulers. When an entire class thinks as a body, when this feature is accepted as a fact of life and then is extended to the upper classes the way it is in *Brave New World*, the entire society is in trouble. Huxley observed a trend of this sort among the upper classes of his own time:

> It's the lack of intellect I object to. There is a tendency to write of people as if they were without a brain. For instance, take a very gifted man like Tennessee Williams--even his plays are strangely mindless. An enormous intellectual effort is needed to run a complicated society like this one, yet it is all left out in contemporary dramas and novels. It's a kind of realism that isn't realistic.\(^4^5\)

A critic evaluating anti-utopian fiction is tempted to assume that an author disapproves of everything in his imaginary society which is not specifically labeled as being all right by one of the characters. The above discussion should have demonstrated that such is not a safe assumption in the evaluation of *Brave New World*. In the first place, as has already been discussed in this chapter,

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\(^4^5\)Ibid.
Huxley seldom allows his fears for the future of mankind to obscure his view of the humorous side of life, whether it be the life of the twentieth century or of a future age. Second, since the author's frequently overlooked original intention was to parody the novels of H. G. Wells, he indulges in caricature more often than not. The chief source of possible confusion is, to my way of thinking, Huxley's unwillingness to sacrifice technical achievement for the sake of propagandistic clarity. Although we can gain a fairly clear picture of what Huxley is saying in *Brave New World* by examining his other works, the fact remains that no such examination should be necessary if the message is as urgent as Huxley seems to think it is. Of course the central message, that our technological growth is outstripping our intellectual and spiritual growth, comes through clearly and forcefully. The question is whether the cleverness of the supporting detail makes up for the cloudiness with which much of the machinery of the society's operation is enclosed and whether the levity with which it is presented keeps *Brave New World* from being rated as highly as *We* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. An answer to this question will be attempted in a later chapter, after we have considered *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by itself.

46 Kessler, p. 571.
CHAPTER IV
NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four, published in 1949, is like Zamiatin's We in describing a future society by tracing the activities of one individual. In Nineteen Eighty-Four, the man's name is Winston Smith. He is a citizen of London, which by the time of the story is part of a land called "Oceania." In Oceania, a single political party rules the people according to three slogans:

WAR IS PEACE
FREEDOM IS SLAVERY
IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH.¹

Smith works in the Records Department of the Ministry of Truth, rewriting and destroying articles and news releases from the past to make them fit current Party policies. At the beginning of the book we learn that he is not completely happy with his life; for he is keeping a diary, a crime which in itself "was not illegal (nothing was illegal, since there were no longer any laws), but if detected it was reasonably certain that it would be punished by death, or at least by twenty-five years in a forced-labor camp" (p. 8); and this diary reflects his unhappiness. He manages to keep his revolutionary

¹George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four (New York, 1949), p. 5. Further references to Nineteen Eighty-Four will refer to this edition and will be included within the text.
tendencies secret for some time, in spite of the fact that posters on every wall warn that "Big Brother Is Watching You" and telescreens in every room watch every move that is made. His downfall begins when he is led by a co-worker named Julia into a love affair. Since the Proles, or common people, are considered insignificant and harmless by the leaders of the Party and therefore have no telescreens on their walls, the lovers meet in a room above a store in the section of town inhabited by the Proles until at last they find that their room does indeed have a telescreen and that they have been led into a trap. Winston is tortured in numerous ways but finally surrenders his individuality and his dignity to the State when he is threatened with the torture he fears most: unless he gives in, his head will be placed in a cage full of starving rats. He surrenders to the extent that he is willing to let Julia receive the punishment instead of himself.

The above summary should illustrate the fact that the plot of Nineteen Eighty-Four is somewhat skimpy. The reasons for this skimpiness should emerge from an evaluation of the book in terms of our anti-utopian characteristics and from a look at some of Orwell's intentions. This chapter will show what I believe to be the most significant strengths and weaknesses of the book and pave the way for a relative evaluation of all three of the works under consideration in this study.
First, the author is commenting on the nature of his own society by taking what he considers to be the significant aspects of that society and projecting them into an imaginary environment. In the way he makes these projections, Orwell has much more in common with Zamiatin than with Huxley because the most significant aspects of twentieth-century life are, according to Orwell and Zamiatin, political. Orwell made the statement a few years after the publication of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* that everything he had written for a number of years, including his anti-utopian work, had been "against totalitarianism and for democratic socialism." By 1949, Orwell had become so alarmed by the spread of totalitarianism he felt compelled to issue the warning that all the evils described in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* could actually be realized in this century. In the sense that the book deals exclusively with the dangers of totalitarianism it is more narrow in its scope than either *We* or *Brave New World*; whether this narrowness proves to be an advantage or disadvantage is a question which will be discussed later.

Orwell also employed the second anti-utopian characteristic: like Zamiatin and Huxley, he chose the future for his setting. Orwell was, in a way, braver than the other men; he chose a time only thirty-five years away.

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That is to say, he was brave if we agree with Huxley that a book about the future is worthwhile only if it proves at least in part to be accurate as prophecy. Huxley's statement serves to illustrate the unusual paradox facing anti-utopian writers: the accuracy of their foresight can be appreciated by future generations only if the books are failures as prophecy; they can never be appreciated at all if the authors prove to be prophets, for each author has envisioned a society in which anti-utopian literature will have been destroyed, rewritten, or distorted in some other way. This is one of the reasons why proof that the books are warnings rather than predictions of an inevitable future is necessary in a study of this sort. That Huxley was aware of the paradox and was anxious to prove the effectiveness of *Brave New World* as prophecy (for the sake of mankind as well as for the sake of his reputation) is shown in *Brave New World Revisited*, in which he goes to considerable trouble to discuss the aspects of the future society already appearing in his own time. Orwell, on the other hand, was brave to the extent that he chose a future date within the life span of many of his readers. This choice of date was undoubtedly precipitated by the urgency with which Orwell felt his message had to be delivered. As Richard Voorhees puts it, "the world would

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This sense of urgency is also probably responsible for some of the apparent flaws in Orwell's technique.

Voorhees comments in the passage just quoted from that Orwell considered the emergency to be so near at hand there was no time to convert the material into a conventional fictional framework. Because of this sense of urgency, the third characteristic of anti-utopian fiction, the use of fictional techniques, applies to Nineteen Eighty-Four to a lesser degree than it applies to the other major anti-utopias. Orwell's book contains some very lengthy interruptions in the flow of action. As Winston reads The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism, the work of the scapegoat Emmanuel Goldstein, we read it too; for as much of the book as Winston gets to finish before his arrest is included word-for-word within the text. Goldstein, although the book that bears his name is later discovered to be the creation of Party leaders eager to supply an object of hatred, is almost certainly intended by Orwell to remind us of Trotsky; Howe comments on the effectiveness with which Trotsky's style is emulated. This interesting bit of detail does

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not obscure the fact that Orwell interrupts the flow of the plot more than once in order to include excerpts from Goldstein's book. Orwell, furthermore, has invented a language he calls "Newspeak," and he expects us to read his lengthy appendix explaining all the significant features of this language which he fears will have become official by 1984. He exhibits a great deal of skill in his explanation of the characteristics of Newspeak, and his point that language can be one of the most effective tools at the disposal of totalitarian rulers is a point which undoubtedly needs to be made. Similarly, the inclusion of the pages from The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism enables Orwell to avoid the trap Huxley fell into: there can be no doubt in the readers' minds as to the nature of the machinery that makes the society of Nineteen Eighty-Four function. The fact remains that the techniques employed by Orwell in these two areas are not the smoothest or most effective available to him.

I am not suggesting that Nineteen Eighty-Four should be excluded from our list of anti-utopian fiction on the basis of these techniques, for in all other respects the book is obviously a work of fiction and deserves evaluation by the same standards as We and Brave New World. For instance, Orwell's presentation takes the form of ritual. The outward features of the society are revealed
through the discussions between Winston and Julia and the more subtle features through the reading of Goldstein's book and through the question-and-answer sessions in which O'Brien, the Party official, undertakes to break Winston's will. O'Brien is able to reveal the truth in these conversations because he is certain that Winston will eventually give in. The explanation of the society's workings is rational as far as the explanations within The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism are concerned; O'Brien does not go to much trouble to present rational arguments—his techniques are based more on fear and pain than on reason—but he acknowledges at the outset the truth of the contents of Goldstein's book. (pp. 264-265)

Also, the techniques employed by Orwell in Nineteen Eighty-Four, we must conclude, are those of Menippean satire. Each character is presented as a leader of the Party, a pawn of the Party, or an enemy of the Party. Winston Smith serves the same sort of function as D-503 in We and Bernard Marx in Brave New World in the respect that he is able to present both sides of the picture, having been thoroughly indoctrinated in the ways of the world he lives in but having developed revolutionary tendencies which enable him to analyze for himself and for the reader the basic evil of this kind of world. The other major characters, Julia and O'Brien, represent the two extremes. O'Brien obviously exists in order to reveal
to us the motivations and attitudes of a Party leader; Julia provides a love interest as well as a political viewpoint, but the love, we must remember, arises from Julia's desire to revolt against the life designed for her by the Party. She professes on paper a love for Winston before they even converse, and after the liaison becomes closer, she speaks of political matters even when they are in bed together. The techniques of Menippean satire supply a sort of synthetic morality to what otherwise would be an inexcusably immoral situation. The adulterous behavior of these two characters is a symbolic gesture against the State, and they therefore cannot be judged by the same moral standards that we might apply to characters in a conventional novel.

Like Zamiatin and Huxley, Orwell uses a series of formal means to assure the effectiveness of the book. The first of these means is the exposure of a human weakness which causes the fictional society to fall short of perfection. The weakness detected by Orwell is the same as the one detected by Huxley, an inability on the part of any man to handle power without letting it corrupt him. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* this matter receives a great deal more explicit emphasis than in *Brave New World*; for Orwell considers it to be of vital importance, the basic issue that had to be resolved before any other steps could be taken to prevent the coming of such a nightmare society.
Professor Voorhees has described the author's attitude toward power as being a paradoxical balance between revulsion and resolution. Voorhees explains the paradox:

He could detect the presence of power and the desire for it in minimal amounts and under camouflages that would conceal them from most people. . . . Yet he was not intimidated by the greatest concentrations, the greatest displays of power. He was horrified by the evils of power, not terrified.⁶

Philip Rahv finds Orwell's attitude toward power revealing to the extent that he recommends it "particularly to those liberals who still cannot get over the political superstition that while absolute power is bad when exercised by the Right, it is in its very nature good and a boon to humanity once the Left, that is to say 'our own people,' takes hold of it."⁷

The second of these formal means, the presence of a central idea which possesses dramatic simplicity but historical complexity, is applicable to Nineteen Eighty-Four as well as to the other anti-utopian works; Orwell's idea is that the nature of modern warfare has made possible a society like the one he describes. In the future society, he says, "the reasons for which war is waged have changed in their order of importance. Motives which were already present to some small extent in the great wars of the early twentieth century have now become

⁶Voorhees, p. 75.
dominant and are consciously recognized and acted upon."
(p. 187) The element which enables the changes to take
place is the technical progress that has resulted in self-
contained economies. In a self-contained world no scar-
city of markets or competition for raw materials exist.
The desire for power remains, nevertheless, and can be
satisfied only by the maintenance of a perpetual state
of war. According to Orwell, the aim of modern warfare
"is to use up the products of the machine without raising
the general standard of living." (Nineteen Eighty-Four,
p. 189) If the standard of living rises, inequality tends
to disappear; therefore, the solution for those with the
power is to keep producing goods without distributing
them. Only war can make such a situation possible. (Nineteen
Eighty-Four, pp. 190-191)

Part of Orwell's attitude toward war and its function
in the twentieth century must have been formed by his ex-
periences in the Spanish Civil War. The year he spent
in Spain gave him the chance to view the working of to-
talitarianism from the inside; he went there as a Communist
partisan but soon found out that the Communists were more
concerned about Hitler than about the revolution and were
consequently trying to prolong the war instead of trying
to win it.8 Professor Rees suggests the additional possi-
bility that much of Orwell's preoccupation with the

8Lionel Trilling, "George Orwell and the Politics
falsification of history must have come from his knowledge of the lies being told about the Spanish war by Communist journalists living in countries other than Spain. 9

The third formal means available to the anti-utopian writer, the use of skill and inventiveness in the selection of detail, is the one in which Orwell falls short of the other two authors under consideration. I have already quoted (p. 19) Howe's opinion that Nineteen Eighty-Four is more notable for its motivating passion than for its local composition, but I should like to suggest that some rather impressive detail is engendered by this passion. Even if we accept Huxley's theory that terror is not an efficient means of running things, we are horrified, as Orwell intended we should be, by the details of Winston's torture and possibly even more horrified by the graphic details of the condition to which he is reduced, this presented in a graphic passage:

"Look at the condition you are in!" O'Brien said. "Look at this filthy grime all over your body. Look at the dirt between your toes. Look at that disgusting running sore on your leg. Do you know that you stink like a goat? Probably you have ceased to notice it. Look at your emaciation. Do you see? I can make my thumb and forefinger meet around your bicep. I could snap your neck like a carrot. Do you know that you have lost twenty-five kilograms since you have been in our hands? Even your hair is coming out in handfuls. Look!" He plucked at Winston's

head and brought away a tuft of hair. "Open your mouth. Nine, ten, eleven teeth left. How many had you when you came to us? And the few you have left are dropping out of your head. Look here!"

He seized one of Winston's front teeth between his powerful thumb and forefinger. A twinge of pain shot through Winston's jaw. O'Brien had wrenched the loose tooth out by the roots. He tossed it across the cell.

"You are rotting away," he said; "you are falling to pieces. What are you? A bag of filth. Now turn round and look into that mirror again. Do you see that thing facing you? That is the last man. If you are human, that is humanity. Now put your clothes on again." *(Nineteen Eighty-Four, p. 275)*

Another point which should be considered before we condemn Orwell for a lack of effectiveness in his choice of detail has been brought up by Chad Walsh. Orwell describes his nightmare society, Walsh states, in terms of science and technology already available in his own time, whereas Huxley and Zamiatin resort to brain operations, decanting, and prenatal conditioning. The significance of this fact is that Orwell's message, although it is not often accented by clever detail, carries an urgency which the others sacrifice.

The fourth means of making anti-utopian fiction more effective, the balance between the improbable and the plausible, is achieved in Nineteen Eighty-Four by a contrast between the almost unbelievable control that the

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rulers exercise over their subjects and the terrifyingly realistic way in which the control is acquired and maintained. A person would be able to withstand an onslaught on his individuality, one can say; but such an affirmation would be subject to great suspicion because the person must face the object of his greatest fear, whatever it may be. The advances made by modern medicine and technology make it impossible to deny the possibility that the knowledge of critical fears can be detected.

Finally, Orwell relies upon his readers to bear in mind the impact of the utopian vision upon their society. In fact, he prods them into this act of recollection in the following quotation from *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*:

In the early twentieth century, the vision of a future society unbelievably rich, leisured, orderly and efficient—a glittering antiseptic world of glass and steel and snow-white concrete—was part of the consciousness of nearly every literate person. Science and technology were developing at a prodigious speed, and it seemed natural to assume that they would go on developing. This failed to happen, partly because of the impoverishment caused by a long series of wars and revolutions, partly because scientific and technical progress depended on the empirical habit of thought, which could not survive in a strictly regimented society. As a whole the world is more primitive today than it was fifty years ago. (Nineteen Eighty-Four, pp. 189-190)

In the opening pages of this chapter and in earlier chapters, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has been called a warning; indeed, we must consider it a warning if we are to
evaluate it by the same standards as we apply to *We* and *Brave New World*, for we have already shown that Zamiatin offered a solution to the evils he described and that Huxley sought and eventually found what he considered to be solutions to the problems that he thought could create a *Brave New World* on earth. Obviously a book which is nothing more than a prophecy of inevitable doom could not be evaluated by the same standards, since its composition would be governed by an entirely different kind of purpose. The opinions of men like Hollis, LeRoy, and Gray that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is nothing more than a cry of despair have already been quoted (p. 23); but I intend to show that Orwell had a solution in mind for every major evil he described in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, or at least that he was asking for reform in areas where he could offer specific solutions.

First, it must be emphasized, Orwell saw no cure in capitalism for the evils of totalitarianism. His impressions of capitalism, as Voorhees explains, were drawn largely from his "down-and-out" days. By living with working-class families, the author was given the opportunity to learn the falsity of certain ideas taken for granted by most liberals. An example is the misconception that working-class boys resent being taken out of school so that they can go to work. Another discovery Orwell made was that capitalistic landlords who rent to the poor
solely for profit do not cause deterioration of living conditions so much as the working-class woman who owns one house in a slum and rents another in order to make ends meet. The third and most important discovery was that poor people are not satisfied with their lives but are dismayed by the filth and poverty surrounding them.\textsuperscript{11}

These conditions leave them in a position of helplessness similar to that of the Proles in \textit{Nineteen Eighty-Four}, ignored by the ruling powers who give them only enough to discourage rebellion.

Orwell actually considered capitalism to be as great an evil for the worker as totalitarianism, but the results of both were the same. The working man, forced into a state of passivity, feels himself to be controlled by a group of unknown powers at work to stop him from doing everything he wants to do.\textsuperscript{12} Orwell's solution, of course, was socialism; he was consistent in his prescription of this cure, although he was, as Voorhees says, "witheringly contemptuous" of most socialists.\textsuperscript{13} The reason he thought socialism could succeed where the other political systems were certain to fail was that it provided the only means by which all the classes could be unified. This unification

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11}Voorhees, pp. 90-91.
\item \textsuperscript{12}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 94.
\item \textsuperscript{13}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 115.
\end{itemize}
was urgent as well as essential, Orwell thought; he saw in twentieth-century England a unique development. A breakdown in the aristocracy before the First World War had caused a corresponding lowering of the upper-middle class, the professional and military people who owned no land. These people knew about all the comforts of life but could afford very few of them. After the first war they became so intent upon keeping up appearances that they were becoming more poverty-conscious than those who were actually living in poverty.\textsuperscript{14} The problem as Orwell saw it was that the lower the members of the middle class sank financially, the more contemptuous they became of those lower in the social scale than they were; consequently, class distinctions were sharpening rather than subsiding. To complicate matters even further, Tory politicians were allowing the state of affairs to worsen out of fear that socialism would deprive the citizens of their right to own property; this fear persisted although very few Englishmen owned property.\textsuperscript{15} This worsening situation is an instance of the sense of urgency with which Orwell approached the writing of \textit{Nineteen Eighty-Four}; he was dealing with an evil that already existed and that was getting more critical before his eyes.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 98.
\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 95.
One of the apparent paradoxes in the character of the man who has been called "perhaps the most paradoxical English writer of his time"16 was his regard, despite his hatred of it, for the old British order as the base upon which the salvation of the society could be built. Lionel Trilling offers a possible explanation for Orwell's attitude:

He must sometimes have wondered how it came about that he should be praising sportsmanship and gentlemanliness and dutifulness and physical courage. He seems to have thought, and very likely he was right, that they might come in handy as revolutionary virtues—he remarks of Rubashov, the central character of . . . Darkness at Noon, that he was firmer in loyalty to the revolution than certain of his comrades because he had, and they had not, a bourgeois past. Certainly the virtues he praised were those of survival, and they had fallen into disrepute in a disordered world.17

Orwell was fully aware of the difficulties standing in the way of unification of the classes. As usual, he was far from convinced the needed reforms would be accomplished. Seeing in socialism the only means for unification, he was alarmed by the prospect of some of its implications. Widespread mechanization, increased governmental control, and a decrease in individualism were certain to come in a socialistic society.18 These were some of the principal evils he warned against in Nineteen

16 Ibid., p. 15.
17 Trilling, pp. 164-165.
18 Voorhees, p. 106.
Eighty-Four. Furthermore, he remembered that as a little boy he had not been allowed to associate with lower-class children because it was feared he would pick up their accent. Uneducated Englishmen, he was aware, felt those who had formal educations to be superior.19 Worst of all was the obstacle which could be "summed up in four frightful words: 'The lower classes smell.'"20

A further aspect of Orwell's attitude toward the class structure is what Professor Hopkinson calls his "impression of working-class life . . . as a kind of warm feather bed into which one could sink, abandoning all pretensions."21 Hopkinson helps to explain the author's attitude toward the poor by showing how his family had ascended into middle-class respectability only a short time before; the struggle to achieve the plateau had been a useless one, Orwell seemed to feel. It would be much easier to relax and sink back into the lower class. The lack of material benefits would be balanced by a peace of mind which could not be attained by someone struggling to maintain a middle-class position.22 This attitude is

19 Ibid., p. 99.
22 Ibid., p. 17.
illustrated by the section of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in which Winston and Julia take the room above the shop; their life in this environment is carefree; in general, it appears, the life of a Prole is a happier one than the life of a Party member. This happiness is largely the result of the Party leaders' desire to give the lower classes just enough material comforts to discourage thoughts of rebellion. When it came to the matter of what it takes to keep the workers happy, Orwell disagreed with a great many liberal thinkers of his own time. These liberals, usually government officials or members of the upper class, constantly complained that unemployed workers who were on relief took their allowances and threw the money away on cheap amusements. Orwell maintained that these amusements were the outlet which workers instinctively turned to in order to escape momentarily from the customary misery and monotony of their lives. He realized that the lower classes were aware of the upper-class talk about their laziness and worthlessness and because of such talk felt guilty about their condition.  

The tendency of the workers to spend money on minor pleasures is recognized by the rulers in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and they encourage it because they realize the enjoyment of such pleasures will keep the workers happy enough to eliminate the

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23 Voorhees, pp. 92-93.
possibility of revolution and at the same time poor enough to insure their dependence upon the state.

We have mentioned Orwell's inability to see a solution in capitalism to the problem of class distinctions or to the larger problem of the spread of totalitarianism. To understand Orwell's point of view, as Voorhees says, we need only to look at Animal Farm. The principal target of the satire in this fable is obviously Soviet Communism, but the human beings who are driven off the farm at the beginning of the book are just as obviously meant to be symbols of capitalism. Their reactions to the revolution proceed from initial predictions that the animals will starve, to false rumors about polygamy and cannibalism, to concealed expressions of outright fear. The most obvious attack on capitalism is the farmer's remark in his after-dinner speech comparing the lower animals to the lower classes of humans; this speech is a fictional expression of the author's conviction that the class divisions could never be overcome through capitalism.

Voorhees has characterized the first part of Animal Farm as "partly a satire of the Tory protesting against any form of social change because he fears and hates it; the later history is partly a satire of the Tory wanting to get along well with dictatorships because it is good business to do so."24

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24 Ibid., p. 23.
Orwell, I have said, looked upon language as one of the foremost tools with which a totalitarian state could be established and perpetuated. In this area as well as the others I have discussed, the author thought reform to be possible. He does not intend to imply that the development of a language like Newspeak is inevitable, although there was little doubt in his mind that the success of a totalitarian regime arises to a large extent from the rulers' success in rewriting history, disguising the facts, and in general manipulating the language to suit their own purposes. Orwell saw a foreshadowing of such activities in the language of politics and bureaucracy in his own time; what was even more alarming was that he saw these trends spreading into the language of all men. But he had a cure in mind; this cure he presents in the form of six rules of clarity in "Politics and the English Language." The six rules are as follows:

(1) Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.

(2) Never use a long word where a short one will do.

(3) If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.

(4) Never use the passive where you can use the active.

(5) Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
(6) Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.25

Once again the solution is not a simple one, and Orwell acknowledges that he has undoubtedly broken all his own rules in this particular essay. Adherence to the rules, however, would be a small price to pay for reform of the political situation as well as the linguistic situation. Voorhees enumerates the extent of the reforms that Orwell felt could be accomplished by a general acceptance of his rules in the following statement:

One cannot, of course, reform in a day the kind of language which is "designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind," but one can at least write clearly and simply himself about politics. He will then have avoided the follies and vices common to all political camps, or at least the worst ones. Since he will not be speaking in any of the partisan jargons, his stupid and false remarks will be obvious, even to himself.26

With regard to language reform Orwell's plea is directed at the individual rather than at society in general. This approach is certainly consistent with the philosophy reflected in Nineteen Eighty-Four, for it is clear in the book that Big Brother can keep his grip over the people only if their personal dignity and individuality


26Voorhees, p. 56.
are destroyed. The destruction of these qualities in Winston is the purpose of all O'Brien's tortures.

There can be little doubt, Rees points out, that the price Orwell asks for personal salvation is a steep one. He asks more than a promise of loyalty to loved ones, country, and personal integrity; he asks for proof that such loyalty would endure even under torture. Rees remarks that a demand of this sort "may seem unreasonable, and perhaps it is an example of the strain of cussedness in [Orwell]'7. But it is also an example, if an exaggerated one, of the remorseless honesty from which his work derives its rare vitality and its unmistakable touch of nobility."27 It does seem unreasonable to expect a man to retain his freedom, his integrity, his unselfishness, and his dignity when rats are on the verge of eating his eyeballs out of his head; but Orwell is not interested in appearing reasonable and polite and conservative in Nineteen Eighty-Four. He is, in effect, drawing a line in the dust and insisting that we cross that line if our freedom, integrity, unselfishness, and dignity mean as much to us as we say they do. Orwell does have solutions, difficult though they might be, to the problems presented in his book.

I have devoted a great deal of space in this chapter to a discussion of the interpolation of Goldstein's book

27Rees, p. 27.
and the appendix on Newspeak within Nineteen Eighty-Four. We have also used such terms as "intense," "honest," "vital," and "noble" to describe Orwell's vision of the future. We have said little to indicate if Orwell's anti-utopian work is an artistic success. The matter of artistry disturbed Orwell for some time. A quotation from "Why I Write" will serve to demonstrate his concern for art:

> What I have most wanted to do throughout the past ten years is to make political writing into an art. My starting point is always a feeling of partisanship, a sense of injustice. When I sit down to write a book, I do not say to myself, "I am going to produce a work of art." I write it because there is some lie I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention, and my initial concern is to get a hearing. But I could not do the work of writing a book, or even a long magazine article, if it were not also an aesthetic experience.²⁸

Orwell might also have said that it is unlikely a literary figure will get a hearing unless his work involves the reader in an aesthetic experience as well as a political message. In the case of Nineteen Eighty-Four, he relied upon the urgency and intensity of the message to provide the tension and conflict we expect to find in any work of fiction. Zamiatin had provided him with the germ of an idea for converting his warning into a fictional form, but Orwell lacked two important advantages the Russian author enjoyed: a keen imagination and time to

experiment with the form. Nevertheless, the next chapter will demonstrate that in spite of these disadvantages Nineteen Eighty-Four compares favorably in many respects with *We* as well as *Brave New World*. This chapter should have demonstrated that Orwell's book follows the same basic form as the other two anti-utopian works and that it is a warning rather than a prophecy of doom or a cry of despair. Orwell was implicitly proposing as the sensible alternative to the society described in Nineteen Eighty-Four a society in which the individual's goal is personal integrity; a society in which all classes have merged into one socialistic democracy; a society in which the language is clear, concise, and honest; a society in which absolute power is not ordinarily granted but a society in which the individual is able to recognize and control the exercising of this power where it is necessary for it to exist. If there is an air of bitterness about the book, it is because Orwell saw cause for bitterness in the world of the late 1940's; this bitterness was undoubtedly deepened by his own illness. To interpret this bitterness as hopelessness would be to misinterpret the message.
At the beginning of this chapter, it would seem advisable to state a revised set of anti-utopian characteristics, including the changes indicated by the findings of earlier chapters. A work, it would seem, can be classified as anti-utopian if it possesses the following characteristics:

(1) The author is, in one way or another, commenting on the nature of his own society by taking what he considers the most significant aspects of that society and projecting them into an imaginary environment. This projection reflects the author's dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs, but not to the extent that it is a prophecy of doom or a warning that we must brace ourselves for a certain disaster. It must instead be a warning accompanied by a faith or at least a hope that the situation will be improved if man will only accomplish a certain series of necessary reforms.

(2) In creating the imaginary society, the author can use for his setting either an isolated and therefore unexplored locality, previously untouched by other cultures, or he can use some time and place in the future. The extensiveness of exploration and the growth of air
travel in recent years have practically removed the first possibility.

(3) The techniques employed to tell the story are fictional techniques, marked especially by a tendency to describe the society ritually and to explain it rationally. The book will fall within Northrop Frye's category of Menippean satire, however, not the category of the conventional novel.

(4) Lacking the technical advantages available to the novelist, the writer of anti-utopian fiction uses a predictable series of formal means to assure his book's effectiveness. The most important aspect of this fourth characteristic is that the author visualizes a society which, unlike societies described in conventional utopian fiction, falls far short of the author's definition of perfection. The weaknesses which make it a nightmare society will characteristically be human weaknesses.

We have already seen that this four-sided definition provides an adequate basis for separate discussion of the anti-utopian stories; We, Brave New World, and Nineteen Eighty-Four meet all four requirements without suggesting adjustments other than the ones we have already made. We may therefore draw the additional conclusions that any other work fitting the definition equally well is also an anti-utopian work and that any work not fitting it so snugly is not anti-utopian. With these conclusions as
a foundation, we may propose standards for comparative
evaluation of the three books under consideration in this
study, assuming these standards could be applied to other
anti-utopian works as well. If we reword the four parts
of our definition to enable such an evaluation, the result
is the following set of questions:

(1) Which author has apparently been most successful
as a prophet; that is to say, which seems to have been
revealed by subsequent developments to be the most accurate
in his selection of what he considers the most significant
aspects of his own society? Also, which author has been
most eloquent and forceful in expressing his dissatisfaction
with the current state of affairs? Which has been
the most constructive in his proposed solutions to the
problems of the society?

(2) Which author has been the wisest, the most inventive,
and the bravest in his choice of a setting?

(3) Which author has made the fullest use of the
fictional techniques available to him? Which one has
done the best job of making his characters believable in
spite of the fact that the techniques of Menippean satire
preclude the possibility that these characters might
achieve the human believability of characters in successful
novels?

(4) Which author has been the most clever and skillful
in his use of the formal means by which a work of
anti-utopian fiction can become more effective? Which
has been the most realistic in his selection and presentation of the human weakness that causes the utopian society to turn into an anti-utopian society?

In answer to the first group of questions, we must acknowledge that if Zamiatin's success as a prophet can be shown to be equal to that of Huxley and Orwell, he then will deserve more credit in this respect than the other two men because he drew his conception of what the future might be like from the observations of only a few months. Orwell, on the other hand, based his picture of future totalitarianism upon thirty years' observation of Soviet Communism and his observation from start of finish of German Nazism and Italian Fascism; and the elements of the society which Huxley considered to be most significant had been present for more than a hundred years or longer.¹

In connection with the success of *We* as prophecy, we may return to Professor Walsh's observation: Zamiatin was able to anticipate many of the excesses and perversions of Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany simply through his experience with the more moderate Lenin regime.² In a literal sense, the most remarkable foresight shown by Zamiatin is his anticipation of space travel; but the


²Chad Walsh, *From Utopia to Nightmare* (New York, 1962), pp. 98-100.
author must be given even more credit for his anticipation of a society in which every citizen is watched constantly for revolutionary tendencies, a society in which patriotism takes the form of a unanimous declaration of complete blind confidence in a dictator, a society in which those who fail to exhibit this kind of confidence can be forced to conform and like it. This foresight is impressive in spite of Zamiatin's failure to realize that the citizens' blind confidence in their leaders could be forced without the use of an operation like the one he describes. A slightly more serious shortcoming is the author's failure to see that for all practical purposes the nightmare, complete with space travel, would come true within a period of forty years instead of a thousand, not only in his own homeland but in other lands as well.

As for Zamiatin's eloquence and forcefulness in expressing his dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in his own time, Guerney emphasizes two highly significant points in the author's favor: first, Zamiatin wrote from conviction and from experience, not, Guerney says, "either to fill his belly or on a full belly"; second, Zamiatin knew that he would eventually have to pay for his honesty with censorship and exile. Guerney has also brought up a possible weakness in the book, the possibility that

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4Ibid.
"Zamiatin may have fallen into the error against which the hardly radical Lord Macaulay warned, that of condemning a construction or a revolution while either is still incomplete. . . ."\(^5\) Thus, we may conclude, Zamiatin achieved a remarkable degree of success as a prophet under the circumstances; but we may also conclude that Zamiatin, like Orwell, was led by the sense of urgency that directed him to write the book in the first place into certain technical difficulties he could have overcome if he had been able to write at a more leisurely pace.

In my opinion, there is one area in which Nineteen Eighty-Four is obviously superior to Nineteen Eighty-Four. That is in the solutions both authors propose to the evils they anticipate. I would even go so far as to rank Huxley above Zamiatin in this respect, for although Huxley is sometimes vague in Brave New World as to the remedies for the troubles of his society, he at least sees a return to the forest is no remedy. The picture Huxley presents of the Savage in Brave New World does much toward demonstrating the insanity of Zamiatin's solution in spite of the fact that Huxley was apparently not thinking of Zamiatin when he wrote the book. The Russian author is undoubtedly correct in attributing many of the evils in twentieth-century society to the complexities and dehumanization that grow out of modern technology. The suggestion that all the world's troubles

\(^5\)Ibid.
grow out of this technology seems a gross oversimplification; and the suggestion that a renunciation of the technology will solve all these troubles is the height of rationalization. This sort of presumptuousness is, it seems to me, a common fault in almost all literature of this type; Zamiatin, it seems to me, is much more presumptuous than either Huxley or Orwell.

Since Huxley felt, as he put it, that "a book about the future can interest us only if its prophecies look as though they might conceivably come true,"6 the author of Brave New World took great pains in his Foreword to the 1946 edition to demonstrate the elements of his fictional society already becoming apparent. He prefaced his observations with the remark that bottled babies and Bokanovsky groups still seemed implausible, but that these developments have a chance of coming true by A. F. 632. Otherwise he sees cause for alarm:

Meanwhile the other characteristic features of that happier and more stable world—the equivalents of soma and hypnopaedia and the scientific caste system—are probably not more than three or four generations away. Nor does the sexual promiscuity of Brave New World seem so very distant. There are already certain American cities in which the number of divorces is equal to the number of marriages. In a few years, no doubt, marriage licenses will be sold like dog licenses, good for a period of twelve months, with no law against changing dogs or keeping more than one animal at a time.7

6Aldous Huxley, Foreword to Brave New World (New York, 1946), p. xii.
7Ibid., pp. xii-xiii.
and urgency of his warning. Although most of his critics agree that the serious warning emerges effectively from the midst of the humorous detail, Huxley's lighthearted approach, it seems undeniable, accounts for much of the difficulty encountered in determining the alternatives Huxley offers to the evils of the fictional world he pictures. We have said that he either implied solutions in Brave New World or continued to search for the answers until he felt later that he had found them. One reason why so many of Huxley's solutions seem vague, why no amount of explaining can produce answers to some of the questions raised in the book is that the author lets his sense of humor intrude even into his presentation of the theme. This intrusion is demonstrated by Huxley's own statement: "This idea, that human beings are being given free will in order to choose between insanity on the one hand and lunacy on the other, was one that I found amusing \( {\text{Italics mine}} \) and regarded as quite possibly true."\(^9\) Later in the same paragraph Huxley describes himself at the time of the book's composition as an "amused, Pyrrhonic aesthete."\(^10\) Evidence that in 1932 Huxley was not a total disciple of Pyrrhonism is provided by the evidence of the third chapter of this study and by the fact that

\(^9\) Ibid., p. ii.

\(^10\) Ibid., p. iii.
a suitable alternative to the choices offered the Savage could have been offered within the confines of the Reservation. At the time he wrote *Brave New World* Huxley was as interested in presenting a clever dilemma as in proposing alternatives to the dilemma.

Since *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was published only a short time ago as compared to the other two books under consideration here, it is more difficult to judge its success as prophecy. There is one area in which Orwell's prophetic powers must be acknowledged, and that is the area of language. A recent article in a national magazine offers dramatic proof that Orwell had reason to be alarmed about the trend toward hiding the truth under an avalanche of euphemisms and abstractions. This article quotes an Atlanta Negro leader who calls civil-rights demonstrations "creative conflict," a Chicago police official who calls police dogs "crowd engineers," a New England zoning board that recently recommended that their city's dumps be referred to as "parks under construction," and some garbage-men in Milwaukee who asked that they be called by the title of "public-works combustible fieldmen." At the present time there is a movement underway to rename the United States Weather Bureau; the proposed new name is

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11Ibid., pp. iii-iv.
12"Words, Words, Words," *Newsweek*, LXIII (June 8, 1964), 95-96.
"Environmental Science Services Administration." Examples of this sort of camouflaging are overwhelmingly abundant, and every day reveals more evidence that Orwell's warning concerning language is appropriate and timely. As far as the purely political segments of Orwell's warning are concerned, the accuracy of his prophecy is being demonstrated by the continuing spread of totalitarianism in all parts of the world. One should not be surprised at the author's success in his political forecast, since much of the basis for his description of life in the future is based upon his observation of what had happened in Russia, Germany, and Spain. He does deserve credit for having isolated the significant aspects of these societies and for having illustrated their relevance to trends in English government and politics.

In the matter of eloquence, Orwell runs a poor third to Zamiatin and Huxley; the author of Nineteen Eighty-Four is more concerned with the urgency of his message than with meeting the demands of polished fiction. This sense of urgency comes through with a great deal of force. We and Brave New World arouse a feeling of indignation in the reader; Nineteen Eighty-Four evokes a feeling of fear in spite of the clumsiness with which the interpolations are handled. It inspires a type of fear tending to arouse a desire for reform in the reader rather than leaving him with a feeling of helplessness; once this desire is created,
the would-be reformer can find the specific evils explicitly stated in the book, along with an implicit statement of what is needed to accomplish the desired reforms. These implied solutions to the problems are too rationalistic, as we might expect in a work of anti-utopian fiction: it is naive, for instance, to think that a system of democratic socialism no matter how skillfully administered could get rid of English class prejudices. It is even more naive to assume that we can remedy all the excesses and evils of absolute power simply by recognizing their existence. Orwell, on the other hand, seemed much more keenly aware of the difficulties involved in warding off potential catastrophe than the other two men; he is painfully clear in his fictional account of what it will take for right to prevail, clear to the extent that he allows his main character to surrender his will when this character realizes what it will take to retain it. Orwell's solutions, rationalistic though they may be, also show some practicality. Huxley's solutions are often vague, and some would not be clearly formulated for another dozen years after the publication of Brave New World. Zamiatin's solution is outrageously rationalistic and, it seems to me, completely impractical.

The above comments are related to the second set of questions; much of the urgency in Nineteen Eighty-Four--and, consequently, a large part of the atmosphere of terror
that arises from the urgency—is attributable to Orwell's choice of a setting only thirty-five years into the future. In *We* and *Brave New World* we get the feeling that someday such a world might exist; in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* we get the feeling that if we do not act quickly, we shall be living in such a world. The minor inconveniences the other two men avoid by choosing to date their settings so far in the future do not obscure the power achieved in Orwell's book by its sense of immediacy. Zamiatin was motivated by a similar urgency, but it does not come through to the reader in *We* the way it does in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

In some parts of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* Orwell fails to take full advantage of the fictional techniques available to him. His technique of including the sections from *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism* within the framework of the plot and including the appendix at the end to explain the predominant features of Newspeak saddled him with the disadvantages of fiction without any of the advantages. Composition of these sections must have required just as much creative effort and inspiration as the writing of the rest of the book, but the material that resulted is no more interesting or engaging than most political non-fiction. On the other hand, Zamiatin's style has been described by Professor Howe as "an astonishing mosaic of violent imagery," which
a society and the degree to which one could grow depen-
dent upon the comfort and ease of such a world. Both
Zamiatin and Orwell, though, take advantage of their he-
roes' unusual roles; and both D-503 and Winston possess
a certain degree of humanity. Their humanity in each
case arises from the fact that neither hero is actually
very heroic. D-503's outstanding characteristic is his
complete innocence. He is apparently a man of consider-
able professional skill, a mathematician who is chiefly
responsible for the building of the space ship. He is
also completely and blindly faithful to the One State
until he is approached by E-330. She literally seduces
him into the camp of the revolutionaries, for he never
shows any real understanding of what the contemplated
revolution is all about. The only issue that D-503 really
concerns himself with is his love for E-330, and he is
unable to express even to himself the development of this
love. Love is a scarce commodity in his world. At the
beginning, this drab hero is irritatingly smug. He has
all the answers, answers which have been supplied him by
the One State. Later in the book his indecision is mad-
dening as he tries to tear himself away from his old be-
liefs, but his love for E-330 is always touching in spite
of her loving him for his ability to give her access to
the space ship. The inner conflicts D-503 experiences
provide a dramatic tension unusual in anti-utopian fiction.
Winston Smith is not innocent like D-503; neither is he an important cog in his society the way D-503 is in his. Winston's humanity arises from the author's skill in picturing him as an average man. Physically, Winston is unimposing even before his torture begins: he is in his late thirties, possessing what Orwell describes as a "pale and meager body, with the varicose veins standing out on his calves and the discolored patch over his ankle." (Nineteen Eighty-Four, p. 144) He is frightened into tears by his dreams and terrified to the point of nausea by rats, a fact that eventually leads to his downfall. There is nothing admirable about Winston except his courage in defying the state; and this courage finally vanishes under torture. We are unable to sympathize with Winston as he surrenders his will to the State as much as we sympathize with D-503 in his surrender, for Winston's downfall has resulted from weakness rather than from a physical operation. Nevertheless, his weakness is a human one; and we tend to think of Winston as a man, not as a political symbol. As a fellow man, the reader is touched (and terrified) by the picture of the broken figure at the end of the book drinking gin in the pub and crying over the patriotic music played over the telescreen. One feels Winston's love for Julia is more the result of loneliness, physical attraction and a desire for understanding than of any true communion of souls; still, the love
develops and is a further example of the way in which Winston becomes a human character. His denial of this love is the most tragic and the most dramatic event described in any of the three major anti-utopian works under discussion.

In order to provide the answers to our fourth set of questions, we must turn again to Professor Howe's list of formal means by which the anti-utopian works achieve their impact. Howe enumerates, it will be recalled, the following five means, which he contends must be employed in the writing of anti-utopian fiction:

(1) It posits a "flaw" in the perfection of the perfect. . . .

(2) It must be in the grip of an idea at once dramatically simple and historically complex: an idea that has become a commanding passion. . . .

(3) It must be clever in the management of its substantiating detail. . . .

(4) It must strain our sense of the probable while not violating our attachment to the plausible. . . .

(5) In presenting the nightmare of history undone, it must depend on the ability of its readers to engage in an act of historical recollection. . . . \(^{14}\)

If we continue our comparison according to the same methods we have used thus far and formulate a list of questions based upon Howe's characteristics, our list will look like this:

\(^{14}\)Ibid.
(1) Which author comes closest to describing a society that obviously would be perfect except for one flaw?

(2) Which book reflects the greatest intensity and the greatest urgency of projection?

(3) Which author is the most clever in his management of supporting detail?

(4) Which author does the best job of straining our sense of the probable without violating our attachment to the plausible?

(5) Which author shows the greatest knowledge and awareness of the utopian dream?

In answering these questions I shall not attempt to follow the list step by step, for often two or more questions possess a common answer. For instance, in considering *We* and *Brave New World* we discover the answers to the first and last questions are intertwined to the extent that it would be foolish to attempt separating them. According to both Zamiatin and Huxley, the flaw in the perfection of the perfect is a characteristic human desire which is reflected by the utopian literature of all ages, the desire for complete happiness at any cost. Both authors point out the fact that people can be deceived by this utopian dream. They will surrender their freedom and their individuality in search of its fulfillment. Both describe societies which are "perfect" in one respect:
The rulers are able to provide happiness for every citizen. The flaw is that there is no place in either society for the citizen who demands the right to suffer and the right to love. Zamiatin probably deserves more credit than Huxley for his description of the imperfection of the perfect. He is able to illustrate his point by indirect reference to his experiences in Soviet Russia. The success of the Russian Revolution, he had learned from observation, was based upon the promise it offered of fulfilling the utopian dream, but he had also learned that there was very little likelihood that the dream would not be corrupted by Communist leaders.\footnote{Walsh, p. 104.}

Although the relationship between the answers to our first and fifth questions with regard to Nineteen Eighty-Four is not so obvious as in the other two books, the relationship is there. The basic flaw in Orwell's society of the future is the characteristic inability of man to withstand the temptations of power; and this strong tendency toward misuse of absolute power, according to Orwell, will prevent the promise of a Utopia on earth from being achieved. The desire for power leads to a desire for regimentation, the desire for regimentation leads to a discarding of the empirical habit of thought, the discarding of this habit causes scientific
and technical progress to halt, and the trend in twentieth-century utopian thought has largely been concentrated upon what Orwell describes as "the vision of a future society unbelievably rich, leisured, orderly and efficient—a glittering antiseptic world of glass and steel and snow-white concrete. . . ." (Nineteen Eighty-Four, pp. 189-190)

Orwell had just as strong a historical sense as Zamiatin and Huxley. Unlike Zamiatin and Huxley, Orwell was handicapped by a conviction he held throughout his life. He thought no Paradise in any form could ever exist anywhere. Furthermore, he carried this belief to an extreme. He automatically disapproved of anyone who believed there could be a Paradise in this life or after its end. He maintains in his essay on Arthur Koestler that people "can only be happy when they do not assume that the object of life is happiness," which is approximately the conclusion Zamiatin and Huxley had reached; but Orwell's refusal to think in terms of an earthly Utopia or pay any attention to anyone who did quite possibly left him without as keen an awareness of potential distortions of the utopian dream as that possessed by Zamiatin. Huxley was handicapped in the same manner by his insistence in the years before Brave New World was written that there was no "point of troubling one's head

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with speculations about what men may, but almost certainly will not, be like in A.D. 20,000. . . ."^{17}

We have already said *Nineteen Eighty-Four* carries a greater sense of urgency than *We* or *Brave New World*, but we should add that in the matter of intensity Zamiatin appears superior to the other two authors. Even if the Russian had not succeeded to the extent he does in this respect, he quite possibly would deserve the highest ranking in this category by default because Orwell's interpolations and Huxley's levity tend to weaken whatever degree of intensity might otherwise have been present in their books. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is highly intense in places but not from start to finish; the intensity of *We* builds steadily from the first meeting of D-503 and E-330 until the operation and the frighteningly effective anti-climax in which the central character describes calmly and indifferently in a few paragraphs his betrayal of his friends and their subsequent torture. (*We*, pp. 352-353)

Another matter which has been discussed thoroughly but which needs further comment concerns each author's handling of detail. Huxley is the most clever in this respect, and Orwell is the least imaginative. Huxley's cleverness at times hinders him instead of helping him;
Zamiatin deserves credit for his conception of the spaceship and for his descriptions of the minor characters in his book. A matter which we have not discussed is the ways in which the three authors employ a common literary device, the symbol. The symbols in Brave New World are usually very obvious but also effective ones, like the contraceptive belts and the different-colored uniforms indicating class distinctions. Other effective symbols are the T's, which have replaced crosses since the worship of Henry Ford has replaced Christianity, and the characters' names, which reflect the ideals of the age. The only really significant symbols in Nineteen Eighty-Four are Big Brother, who represents the essence of the Party, and Goldstein, who symbolizes resistance to the Party and consequently becomes a scapegoat and an outlet for organized hatred. The effectiveness of these symbols is unquestionable, but Big Brother was quite possibly inspired by Zamiatin's Benefactor. Even if such an influence could be positively determined, Orwell would deserve credit for the idea of placing pictures of his symbolic leader on every wall and thereby making him a sort of watchdog as well as ruler; the Englishman also deserves credit for creating Big Brother's opposite, Goldstein, for whom there is no equivalent in We.

Zamiatin deserves special praise for the use of two symbols other than that of the Benefactor. The first is
the use of numbers in the place of names, a device slightly tarnished through overuse in recent years but which must have been more effective forty years ago. The use of these numbers indicates the loss of individuality that men have encountered in the One State. The second effective symbol is the wall that surrounds the city. This wall is a two-fold symbol of the scientific progress man has achieved at this future time and of the loss of beauty involved in the antiseptic happiness of the One State. There is no aroma of flowers, and there are no birds to sing; Zamiatin implies their absence is more important than the absence of unpleasant weather and disease. These are not the most complex or the most effective symbols ever devised by a literary man, but they contribute significantly to Zamiatin's expert handling of detail and help considerably to make up for the deficiencies caused by the author's inability to employ certain techniques available to writers of other varieties of fiction.

The question as to which author does the best job of straining our sense of the probable without violating our attachment to the plausible is a difficult one to answer, for each author seems to have been extremely successful in this area. I am inclined to believe that Zamiatin deserves the least amount of credit because he chose a setting so very far in the future. It is difficult to think of any event as implausible when the event is not
scheduled to occur for a thousand years; one is inclined to think anything could happen in that length of time. Huxley uses the distant setting of his own book as an avenue of escape when he can find no evidence that one of his warnings is coming true, but it is to Huxley's credit that he stretches the limits of plausibility a great deal further in his book than Zamiatin does in his. It is much less difficult to imagine an enclosed city a thousand years from now when large sports stadia are already being enclosed with domes and equipped with air-conditioning than it is to imagine 17,000 babies with one mother six hundred years from now. Quite possibly Orwell deserves the most credit in balancing the improbable and the plausible because he chose such an early date for his setting and because he failed to use any gimmicks such as decanting of babies or brain operations. A warning that a world like that described in Nineteen Eighty-Four can be created in less than forty years without the aid of scientific gimmicks strains our sense of the probable almost to the breaking point, but the detail with which the author explains the way it could happen and the subsequent development of certain trends he located for us make us admit that his warning is possibly a valid one.  

18 Huxley, Foreword to Brave New World, p. xii.
The results of the above comparison produce what seem to be certain inevitable conclusions. The first of these conclusions is that in any comparative analysis of the three major anti-utopian works using a set of standards similar to those set forth in this study, Brave New World will appear superior to We and Nineteen Eighty-Four in only one important category, the one dealing with cleverness in the presentation of supporting detail. A book, this conclusion would seem to suggest, can be highly enjoyable or even intellectually stimulating and still be a failure in terms of the rigid criteria of anti-utopian fiction. It is the author's cleverness which makes Brave New World worth reading, but it is the inappropriate overuse of humorous detail that deprives the book of the sincerity and intensity that contribute so extensively to the relative success of We and Nineteen Eighty-Four.

The second conclusion is that determination of the extent of Orwell's indebtedness to Zamiatin is not so essential to a comparison of We and Nineteen Eighty-Four as we originally assumed it to be and as many critics have assumed it to be. The reason for this conclusion is that the areas in which it appears likely that Nineteen Eighty-Four is superior to the Russian book are areas in which the two books are radically different and in which, therefore, no influence can be assumed. Almost everything truly outstanding about Nineteen Eighty-Four stems in one
way or another from its sense of urgency; no real sense of urgency can grow out of a book which deals with a time a thousand years away. A related conclusion may be drawn: the sense of urgency makes several other aspects of Nineteen Eighty-Four more successful than they might otherwise have been. It leads Orwell, for example, to come more fully to grips with detailed potential solutions to the world's problems than either Zamiatin or Huxley did.

A final conclusion we can draw from our comparison is that one mistake or one bit of bad judgment can go a long way toward ruining a work of anti-utopian fiction. Zamiatin used bad judgment in choosing a date for a setting so far in the future. Orwell's feeling of urgency, which I have frequently complimented, takes the form of unfortunate haste in the sections of The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism which were shoved into the manuscript without any particular artistry or imagination; Huxley's book suffers drastically from his lighthearted approach. The effects of Huxley's mistake are especially apparent because there are evidences of it throughout the book; perhaps it would be wiser to say that Huxley should never have undertaken the writing of an anti-utopian work, for his sense of humor seems out of place when we consider the fact that he is writing about the fate of mankind.

The mistakes are revealed glaringly by a comparison of the three books. They show up first in one phase of evaluation and then in another. They lead us to conclude
that in a form of fiction which is hampered from the beginning by certain restrictions in characterization and plotting—the characters can never be as complex as those in a successful novel, and there can be no real suspense about the ending—a single flaw in technique can be fatal. In this respect if in no other, the author who has written a successful anti-utopian work has accomplished more than the successful conventional novelist. In a very real sense, the anti-utopian writer has to make every word and every detail count.

The aims of this study have been to define the term "anti-utopian" and to provide a set of standards for evaluating anti-utopian fiction. This chapter and the ones before it have demonstrated the feasibility of my definition. I also feel that this final chapter has shown the feasibility of a set of standards for evaluation adapted from the definition. This approach has yielded some significant information about *We*, *Brave New World*, and * Nineteen Eighty-Four*; it appears that other anti-utopian works could profitably be compared with these three books (or any one of the three) by application of the same procedure. Furthermore, the questions could be adapted for evaluation of a single book in the following manner:

(1) Has the author been successful, at least to some extent, as a prophet; that is to say, has his accuracy in the selection of what he considered at the time
the most significant aspects of his own society been revealed by subsequent developments? Has he been eloquent and forceful in expressing his dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs? Are his proposed solutions to the problems constructive?

(2) Has the author been wise, inventive, and brave in his choice of a setting?

(3) Has the author made the fullest possible use of the fictional techniques available to him? Has he made his characters believable in spite of the fact that the techniques of Menippean satire preclude the possibility that they might achieve the completely human believability of characters in a successful novel?

(4) Has the author been clever and skillful in his use of the formal means available to him? Has he been realistic in his selection and presentation of a human weakness that causes the utopian society to turn into an anti-utopian society?

In addition to the four major sets of questions we have already listed, we have decided that a fifth question must be asked:

(5) Does the book have a universal theme so that it will not be dated with the passing of the generation at which it is specifically directed?

With regard to the formal means at the author's disposal, the following questions may be asked:
(1) Is the author successful in describing a society that obviously would be perfect except for one flaw?

(2) Does the book reflect great intensity and great urgency of purpose?

(3) Is the author clever in his management of supporting detail?

(4) Does the author do a good job of straining our sense of the probable without violating our attachment to the plausible?

(5) Does the author show a keen knowledge and awareness of the utopian dream?

If the answer to all these questions is positive, then the author has achieved total success within the anti-utopian form. One question which must get a positive answer if asked about Zamiatin's *We*, Huxley's *Brave New World*, or Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is the question of whether there is any nobility of purpose involved in the composition. Each man in his own way is trying to ward off a catastrophe. Let us hope that each is successful in this respect if in no other.
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