

Paper 1 Comments for Maddie Goggin

1. What is the author's main claim? Is that claim sufficiently **clear** and **compelling**, or should it be revised? The main claim and its supporting structure of specific questions is clear and reasonably compelling. I differ with you on a couple of points, most importantly in that I am highly skeptical of Aldous Huxley. All my study of him to date leads me to think that he was much too sympathetic with the views expressed by Mustapha Mond and his real-world analogues. In short, I rank Huxley (and his brother Julian, as well) among the class of people CS Lewis calls "the Conditioners".
2. Can you tell which prompt the author is responding to? Has she or he responded fully to the prompt? Yes, it's prompt # 10, and the response is solid.
3. Assess the author's use of evidence: To summarize briefly, I would say that your use of evidence overall is quite good. You choose good quotes, incorporate them smoothly, and in general make smart comments about the evidence. One area of weakness, however, is noticeable in your comments about John the Savage on page 2, where you wrote as follows: "John serves as an example to show how a life devoted to a non-human God is a life full of deprivation, guilt, and unhappiness. This point is thoroughly expressed by John's suicide. Even though he claims that "God's the reason for everything noble and fine and heroic," John's life ends not in a hero's death, but rather with him taking his own life out of shame and despair (Huxley, *Brave New World* 213)." The problem I see here

is that you don't acknowledge how skewed Huxley's representation of religion truly is. He gives only two narrowly conceived and (almost) equally repugnant options: the confused, hyper-individualistic religion embraced by John, and the hideous World State religion of sex, drugs, and loss of individuality. The reality, of course, is that human religions can't be so conveniently dismissed – unless they are caricatured first, which is precisely what Huxley does with them! Huxley is essentially trashing the entire idea of religion by making it appear ridiculous; furthermore, he sets John up for failure, making Mond look much smarter than John. If we aren't careful readers, we completely miss the fact that Mond is a complete liar. Huxley is a bit of one too, I suspect.

- Selection of evidence
- Ordering of evidence
- Incorporation of quoted material
- Analysis of quoted material

4. Note any sentences that seem faulty, and “diagnose” them if you can. (Copy/Paste and then highlight problem areas.) By placing those characters in a stable, **content** society, Huxley sheds new light on how potentially fulfilling each source of purpose would be. (Contented?) Fanny is **never** described as only having minor personal conflicts, and each one easily solved; her main function in the novel is to give Lenina advice on how to be happy. (I'm pretty sure you didn't mean “never”.) This demonstrates how John challenges the benefits of a society united in purpose, raising the question of what role society should play in determining the purpose of an individual, and also how important

this question is in the framework of the novel, since it describes the main conflict between John and **the New World**. (The World State, in other words.)

5. Do you like the title of the paper? Why, or why not? It's not a *bad* title, but it doesn't have much pizzazz, nor does it give much of an indication of your own specific "take" on the general topic. Your writing on the whole *does* have pizzazz, so I have a hunch you could come up with a more engaging title.
6. Note any examples of faulty, missing, or erroneous citation. Double check your Works Cited. You're missing place of publication on the items in your list.
7. Did the author use at least two secondary, scholarly sources? Did he or she make good use of them? Yes, but I would have liked to see you doing more with Pieper. He was passionately opposed to totalitarianism, and some of his remarks about the limits of human authority over other human beings are profoundly relevant to the abusive World State dictatorship.
8. Summary & grade: This is a strong paper, fluent and well-written on the whole. It's a bit too short, however, to give you space to develop some of your good insights more rigorously. Paper grade: A-