

Dialectical Journal

Brave New World—Aldous Huxley

As we read, you will want to write down certain quotes that seem important to the story and that particularly strike your interest. **This dialectical journal is intended to organize the important quotes from the story chronologically and reveal your reflections about these quotations.** This can be used for many of the assignments that we will be doing with the book you are reading. Below are a few examples that reveal the type of responses I am looking for.

Page Number	Quotation	Reflection/Analysis
page 1	EX: The light was frozen, dead, a ghost. Only from the yellow barrels of the microscopes did it borrow a certain rich and living substance, lying along the polished tubes like butter, streak after luscious streak in long recession down the work tables	This is a wonderfully crafted sentence. The interplay between death and living, static and fluid, and colorless and colorful could be easily overlooked. The words “frozen,” “dead,” and “ghost” communicate a feeling of frigidity; interestingly, there is little interplay between light and dark (something we usually attribute to life and death). Instead it is movement vs. stationary. The sentence gains momentum at the simile “lying along the polished tubes like butter,” and seems to “streak” to its end. It is ironic that the “frozen, dead, ghost-[like]” light “borrows” a “living substance,” almost as if death, personified, reawakes for this scene.
page 4	EX: “Not philosophers but fretsawyers and stamp collectors compose the backbone of society”	“Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world” (Percy Bysshe Shelly-Romantic Poet). When I read this quote from <i>Brave New World</i> I couldn’t help but remember this quote by Shelly. Interestingly, however, these quotes seem to contrast in their ideals. Whereas Shelly, a Romantic who believed he could achieve transcendence through poetry, proposes that poets, those of the figurative realm, legislate the world through their musings on nature and society, the quote from BNW suggests that it is those people, dealing with the minutiae of existence, dealing with the tangible, that compose and hold up society.
page 16	EX: “And that, “ put in the Director sententiously, “that is the secret of happiness and virtue—liking what you’ve got to do. All conditioning aims at that: making people like their unescapable social destiny”	TEIRESIAS: It is not your fate to fall because of me. It’s up to Apollo to make that happen. He will be enough. (<i>Oedipus Rex</i>). This quote rings true even in the Greek play <i>Oedipus Rex</i> . Much like Oedipus was a victim of an “unescapable social destiny” so too are the preconditioned embryos. The only difference is that Oedipus does not relish in his destiny, but instead tries to fight it. I wonder if similar things will happen to those members of society who are relegated to a lower social class.
page 23	EX: “A love of nature keeps no factories busy. It was decided to abolish the love of nature, at any rate among the lower classes; to abolish the love of nature, but <i>not</i> the tendency to consume transport” (23).	This is an amazingly calculated and thought out society. However, it strikes me that in their attempt to be so calculated, they are overlooking potential within human nature. The candid confession that they want a certain class to hate nature but love transport seems wrong. In an attempt to create a perfect society, they are creating the opposite. Would it be easier, though, if I were conditioned to hate anything but work? Would I work harder? Would I even know ?

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