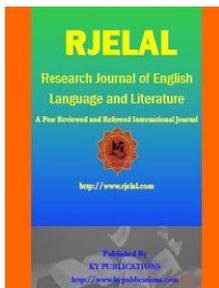




**FROM UTOPIA TO DYSTOPIA:  
A Comparative Analysis of the Dystopian Visions in Aldous Huxley's  
*Brave New World* and Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time***

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**ABSTRACT**

This article investigates the dystopian visions in two science fiction novels: Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976). The purpose of this article is to compare the dystopian elements of setting, government control, punishment, family structure and death in the two examined novels. The article demonstrates the function and the role of science fiction elements as a literary device and to explore a grim picture of dystopian societies. The two novels provide a strong criticism of their societies utilizing the concept of dystopia as one of the most common topics in literature generally and in science fiction particularly. It also explores how dystopian writings play a central role in uncovering the shortcomings of societies and exhibiting a formative criticism towards them. The article will analyse the setting as well as the characters who reveal clearly the amount of suffering in their society.

**Keywords:** Science fiction, Utopia, Dystopia, Huxley, Piercy.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Writings about the impact of utopia and dystopia on the life of citizens are extremely crucial subgenres in science fiction literature. Such writings portray a clear picture of the effects of utopian and dystopian visions on the lives of individuals. Science fictional elements are useful literary devices that explore and criticize utopian and dystopian societies. The two selected novels in this study namely *Brave New World* (1932) by Aldous Huxley and *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976) by Marge Piercy are reflections of their contemporary social and political scenes. Dystopia had a high literary value since it satirizes and criticizes the social, economic, and political issues of societies. It urges

the reader to find new alternatives for his current life and think about new solutions to the problems of society. In other words, dystopia is not an escape from the society; rather it is a warning towards our behaviour and actions in the contemporary life. Therefore, utopian and dystopian writings remain five hundred years as a literary genre since Plato's *The Republic*.

Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* stand amongst the masterpieces of utopian and dystopian literature. Each author has had different life experiences that drove him to reflect upon a different period. They explore the periods of the early twentieth century in Britain and the 1970s in

America. Huxley's society is surrounded by scientific developments that led to controlling, dominating and manipulating people by scientific developments while Piercy's society is a male-dominated one where women have no place. The authors of the two novels clearly show how John in *Brave New World* and Connie in *Woman on the Edge of Time*, revolt against the rules of their societies. The following paragraphs will introduce the dystopian visions reflected in the two societies investigated in the two novels.

### 1. The futuristic setting

As for the utopian novel, it should have a faraway place in the future where the main character enjoys an ideal life or suffer to survive and, in this case, it turns to be a dystopia. John and Connie play the role of the hero who suffers in his/her community and desire to lead a utopian life. In that distant place, Both John and Connie enter a journey of suffering like that of their society. They are unable to adapt to the principles of that society. Huxley and Piercy employ the futuristic setting and Time travel, tools of the utopian writer, as a satire of their society and to reflect their ideas in these two societies.

They present two different time and places in the future; Huxley introduces the events of his novel in the year 632 A.F in the World State of London where human life has been controlled by a few people at the top of a World State. Aldous Huxley presents in his novel a river of events that highly fit the concept of dystopia. The early lines in the novel establish a dystopian picture of the setting of his novel: "A SQUAT grey building of only thirty-four stories. Over the main entrance the words, CENTRAL LONDON HATCHERY AND CONDITIONING CENTRE, and, in a shield, the World State's motto, COMMUNITY, IDENTITY, STABILITY" (*BNW* 1). Huxley devotes the first six chapters in the novel to depict the dystopian setting of the brave new world. The life of citizens in this world has been totally industrialized. The first scene establishes a clear picture of how this society is controlled by science and technology. The processes of birth, aging, and death appear horrible in this world. Bernard Marx, an Alpha-Plus psychologist, appears as an unhappy

person in the world where the drug soma is the only sources of happiness.

Like Huxley's *Brave New World*, Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* takes place in a time and a place in the future; in the year 2137 in Mattapoisett. Marge Piercy explores both utopian and dystopian futures in *Woman on the Edge of Time*. It seems a utopian life to the central character in the early stage while events of the second phase happen in the year 2137. We can see how such a distinguished novel with different literary colours that makes it a unique feminist Science Fiction Dystopia. Piercy presents contradictions between the present and the future. Piercy uses contradiction as a technique throughout the events: she shocks us with a present that is clearly full of restrictions and problems that influence the characters negatively. Connie, Dolly and Luis's third wife Adele take drugs at times of crisis and problems like Soma of citizens of the brave new world. Similarly, Huxley presents the drugs as the best solution, for citizens in the world state, to escape from problems and suffering. Many of the men in the present are physically violent, like Connie's father and her husband Eddie, or verbally cruel, like Luis. Piercy tries to say that the time of the novel is the same as her time of writing by referring to 1976 in chapter fifteen (WET 289). Piercy juxtaposes this 1970s society with a future in which some of the problems in the present have been solved.

Piercy introduces Mattapoisett as a utopian society based on equality, cooperation, and justice without any gender differences or racism. Choosing Mattapoisett as a futuristic setting is regarded as one of the elements that classify the novel under the genre of utopian and dystopian novels. It is known that the utopian novel should have a faraway place in the future. When Connie Ramos travelled telepathically to Mattapoisett in the year 2137, she thinks that she will see "Rocket ships, skyscrapers into the stratosphere, an underground mole world miles deep, and glass domes over everything? She was reluctant to see this world" (WET 68). In the following extract, we can notice how technology is minimized in Mattapoisett to present a utopian environment. Luciente describes her village to

Connie who touches some differences between her real world and the futuristic world of Mattapoisett:

She saw [...] a river, little no-account buildings, strange structures like long-legged birds with sails that turned in the wind, a few large terracotta and yellow buildings and one blue dome, irregular buildings, none bigger than a supermarket of her day, an ordinary supermarket in any shopping plaza[...] We don't have big cities—they didn't work. You seem disappointed, Connie?"(WET 60)

Through this detailed description of Mattapoisett, Connie appears disappointed in that society because it is uncivilized as her native Mexican society where she enjoys life. She says "It's not like I imagined" (WET 61).

Unlike John, who likes the primitive life of the Reservation and rejects the lifestyle of the citizens of the World State who are fascinated by technology, Connie does not like the primitive society of Mattapoisett. In that society, they travel by bicycle, foot, or floater that is better than the noisy air travel and requires no costs. They look primitive in that community. They use bicycles as we find them. "Any bike not in use, I can use" (WET 364). There is a lack of luxury, prosperity, and modernity. There is a spread of human failings like insanity, illness, and death. Connie believes that such sufferings should have no place in Mattapoisett. Claire P. Curtis describes Mattapoisett saying:

The village of Mattapoisett is culturally and religiously Wampanoag (Native American). But ethnically the connection between genetic past and cultural past has been broken. Thus, the novel mentions villages that are Ashkenazic and "Harlem-Black," but the inhabitants of every village come from a variety (of rationally chosen) genetic material (157).

As for Connie, Mattapoisett represents the freedom she has never experienced where women have "an air of brisk unselfconscious authority Connie associated with men" (WET 67). It is a peaceful world with no war or any suffering. Like Huxley's World State, there is no violence, war, diseases,

suffering, or fear in Mattapoisett. Connie considers Mattapoisett society as a primitive one in "the dark ages" (WET 73), as any primitive village with its vegetable plots and goats. However, technology is an important part of Piercy's futuristic world; homes have solar panels, and transport is in "floaters", a type of hovercraft.

Susan Magarey, the founding editor of Australian Feminist Studies, comments on the futuristic society of Mattapoisett saying, "My own reading suggests that Mattapoisett has to be the accumulated result of a multitude of individual acts against oppression and exploitation" (332). She also considers Mattapoisett as a utopian future, but it lacks that sense of continuing possibility of open-mindedness. She summarizes the characteristics of Mattapoisett in the following extract:

Other utopian characteristics of Mattapoisett include its flexible division of labour, allowing everyone who parents to combine work and child care. Technology is deployed not for profit but rather to eliminate monotonous repetitive labour, to ensure a just and rational distribution of resources, and to maximise communication. Industrial and agricultural productions are automated, allowing everyone to engage predominantly in work that is rewarding: farming, which means helping things to grow; arts, crafts, design and performance; and research designed to improve the quality of life (334).

Piercy uses time travel as a literary tool to juxtapose the suffering and the horrors of Connie's society against the utopian future that is conditioned upon the present. Time travel is used as a metaphor for being exposed to other times and cultures. This literary tool seeks to reject the current conditions and aims to "speak to those who listen" (WET 196). Connie's journey to Mattapoisett has two purposes. Firstly, it leads her to a new experience of evils and sufferings. Secondly, it gives Piercy the chance to develop the episode of her depicted utopian world which supports the individual growth and guarantees personal welfare. Connie plays the role

of the central character that connects these two times and places together.

As Peter Ruppert notes, such open utopias typically achieve their openness through increased reader participation. In particular, he suggests that "in making the reader aware of his or her own role in shaping what the future will be, Piercy shows that the struggle for Utopia depends on our actions in an open-ended historical process" (139). Luciente says to Connie "Maybe we exist. Yours is a crux-time. Alternate futures co-exist. Probabilities clash and possibilities wink out forever" (WET 177). Piercy tries to show her reader all the shortcomings of the regime in her society in the 1970s.

Thus, Connie plays a central role as the link between the present and the future. If Connie is mad, then Mattapoisett is a vision of a diseased mind and her journey into the future is unreal. Celia Betsky claims: "Piercy projects the ambiguity of whether reality or imagination is at work; she penetrates the relationship between Science Fiction and delusion" (20). She depicts Connie to clarify the intersections of gender, class, race, and mental illness. She puts her as the powerless woman who suffers in her world. Piercy explores a mixture of utopia and dystopia. According to M. Keith Booker:

Piercy's mixture of realism with fantasy of both utopian and dystopian kinds is clearly designed to challenge [the ideology of rationalism that declares Connie to be mad] by presenting explicit defamiliarizing alternatives...She projects a Utopia based on fundamentally different principles than those which inform her contemporary society, then depicts a nightmarish Dystopia whose principles are in fact recognizably similar to those of present-day America (341).

Throughout the novel, Piercy gives a clear description of the difference between the utopian life of Mattapoisett and Connie's dystopian life. The juxtaposition between Connie's two societies serves the author's aim, which is to criticize gender, race, and sex. With the juxtaposition of the two societies, the reader can realize that wrong policies of any system may lead to a dystopian society. Piercy presents Mattapoisett as a typical community in the

future. But, it has many different aspects from real communities. Childbirth and parenting appear as the most different aspects.

The opposing views of science and technology show the individual interests of each writer. Huxley's main character stands against the excessive use of technology and sees it as the source of oppressive power in their life. While, Piercy main character is the victim of the scientific developments, and consequently, she stands against it as she views it as the reason beyond her suffering. Both writers are optimistic, and they have hope for a better future. The two works combine both positive and negative views of the future. Piercy resorts to science fiction to depict and introduce their feminist issues like other feminist writers. She discusses topics such as gender, sexuality, racism, and social equality with men as they call for different feminist societal demands. Huxley and Piercy are not attacking the development of science; they are indeed attacking those sorts of science that could be used in a way that may harm human beings and life. Both authors have successfully woven science into utopian societies.

## 2. The oppressive government

There are numerous dystopian elements in the social life of the two novels. For instance, you can find in the dystopian novel an oppressive central government that controls everything in society. Also, you can witness the weakness of the individual who stands powerless in the face of these dominated governments. It is what citizens face in the Brave New World as depicted by Huxley. John, the savage, appears weak in front of the strict government of the world that applies a broad range of rules for keeping stability and forcing people to keep working as machines without any request or needs. Likewise, Connie Ramos appears in *Woman on the Edge of Time* as a weak Chicana woman who endures in her society that classifies her as insane throwing her alone in a hospital surrounded by walls. The protagonist in the dystopian novel appears throughout the novel fighting against the oppressive control of the government. Typically, this is what happens in the two novels investigated in this thesis. Both John and Connie battle against the abusive government and the norms of their society.

One of the most common attributes of dystopian literature, one that is almost necessary, is the isolation of society that is being examined. Both *Brave New World* and *Woman on the Edge of Time* are entirely isolated from any other civilization around them. In the brave new world of London, Huxley presents human spirit as almost controlled by science. There is an excessive use of science and technology, and this shows up plainly in the conditioning process, Soma, hypnopedia, and the other technological instruments used in *Brave New World*. While Piercy presents the embryos, the artificial womb, brain change, the test tubes and some other different technological aspects. Human values like dignity, honor, and freedom have totally vanished. The world controllers make a rule to outcast anyone who thinks to live isolated to secure stability. In the novel, freedom of the individual is one of the fundamental beliefs and human ideals. As Carolyn Riley said, "The search for a more desirable way of life is clearly the most important single theme in Huxley's novels, what distinguishes Huxley's work from that of other moralists is the treatment of this theme within the framework of the "novel of ideas" (238). Mustapha Mond, one of the world controllers, sets out a few tenets like eliminating freedom and distinction. Alexandra Aldridge describes the *Brave New World* in his book *The Scientific World View in Dystopia* saying:

Community, identity, and stability are simply practical ends; they support nothing more than species survival—birth, copulation, and death in perpetuity. They are maintenance ends, not unlike those a good mechanic would claim as the goal of his vocation. (52)

Therefore, people neither know the meaning of freedom nor what is missing in their lives. They are brought up in a utopian place that provides them with certain norms and habits. Mond discloses to people why old things, like Shakespeare, are prohibited and urges them to look for new things. People have to keep buying and consuming for the sake of economy. Peter Firchow comments on the dream of universal equality according to Huxley saying:

The dream of universal equality is, in Huxley's view, just that: a dream. When you try to put the dream into practice, you get what? A nightmare. Thus, in sum, is the meaning of the so-called Cyprus Experiment in *Brave New World*, in which a population of twenty-two thousand Alpha-plus men and women are given the run of the island and complete control over their own destinies. (263-64)

There is a different perspective for punishment in the two communities in the two novels. In Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time*, if you commit a crime, you should come in front of the court. "Then you work out a sentence. Maybe exile, remote labor. Shepherding. Life on shipboard. Space service. Sometimes crossers cook good ideas about how to atone. You could be put in for an experiment or something dangerous" (WET 201). They are only given this chance of atonement with the first offense. But if a person commits a second crime, he/she will be executed. "You mean a second time? No. Second time someone uses violence, we give up. We don't want to watch each other or to imprison each other. We aren't willing to live with people who choose to use violence. We execute them" (WET 201).

Unlike Piercy, Huxley presents a different punishment to the citizens in his story. Exile to a remote island is the punishment in this brave new world. There is no need to use any form of punishment in that society because people themselves have no chance to think for committing any action against the state. As Margret Atwood says, "*Brave New World* has its own gentler punishment: for non-conformists, it's exile to Iceland, where Man's end can be discussed among like-minded intellects, without pestering 'normal' people- in a sort of university, as it were" (xi). The concept of punishment is a tool that used by the government to guarantee keeping stability.

### 3. Family structure

Class stratification in Huxley's *Brave New World* is near to that of medieval England in which people are divided into definite classes. Huxley gives the castes of his society the first five letters of the Greek alphabet; Alpha, beta, gamma, delta, and

Epsilon. At the highest point of society, the Alphas exist as perfect human beings, intelligent and physically attractive. While at the base of this society, the Epsilons live as stupid. All these five social classes aimlessly take after what the world controllers request them to do. The members of each category are classified according to their way of thinking and their physical power. Similarly, Everyone in Piercy's society is committed to doing a certain task like farming and cleaning. Other tasks like the prosperity of public, organizing the transportation, and public service are among the undertakings that everybody ought to additionally join in. The Director of brave new world comments on the difference of the degree of intelligence between castes "we don't need human intelligence" (BNW11). The lower class performs non-intellectual jobs like factory work:

Alpha children were grey. They work much harder than we do because they're so frightfully clever. I'm really awfully glad I'm Beta, because I don't work so hard. And then we are much better than the Gammas and 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. (BNW 22-23)

Huxley tries to show the dystopian classification of social class. As Ronald T Sion notes: "Brave New World depicts a technologically advanced, minutely organized world state whose inhabitants are programmed to eliminate individual differences to enforce a stable society. The promise of total happiness is portrayed as a dubious compensation for this repression." (127-128). Huxley tries to tell his reader that it is unfair and even silly future that is already written for people before they are born. It appears clearly when the D.H.C. states in his lecture to his students how by depriving certain embryos of oxygen will affect their stature: "The lower the cast, the shorter the oxygen" (BNW 11).

John witnesses a social life that is totally not enough the same as the life of the Reservation. In this new world, citizens do not have family or even companions. That society removes the need for family time. People in this new utopian world

have never encountered any kind of these relationships. They are raised up having the idea that parents and family are not adequate in their lives. Citizens are not even familiar with the word "mother" or "father", and this appears when John says: "It is my mother". The children laugh because they are new with the word itself.

"In brief," the Director summed up, "the parents were the father and the mother." The smut that was really science fell with a crash into the boys' eye-avoiding silence. "Mother, he repeated loudly rubbing in the death center?? Is true? And, leaning back in his chair, these, he said gravely are unpleasant facts; I know it. But then most historical facts are unpleasant" (BNW 19).

Correspondingly, there is no traditional family structure in Piercy's novel. Connie feels confused when she enters Mattapoisett in the year 2173 as they have some diverse standards and rules in that society. There is a different system of mothering in that society. It is strange that there is no mention of fathers in that society. It is common that all mothers breastfeed their children, and they get pregnant. In that community mothering is a matter of choice. The word "father" disappears. Likewise, the word "mother" is no longer used as a sex-determined. Both the mother and the father can breastfeed. Some hormones produce milk to fathers who can breastfeed like mothers. All children are housed together in extensive nurseries. Members of both sexes participate in all kinds of physical work. Mothering consists of a group of three called kid-binding who vow to care for the child. The three mothers can be a blend of males and females. Those three persons must stay together for mothering. Claire P. Curtis remarks on the utilization of innovation to give fathers the chance to breastfeed their children by saying:

Piercy wants to rethink reproductive technology so that a woman's body need not be the only gestational locale, and male breastfeeding is not only possible but clearly desirable. The irony of Piercy's work (He, She, It plays with the same idea) is that Connie is herself being proposed as

an experimental subject in a brain procedure (not unlike an electronically induced lobotomy) to control what are seen to be her violent tendencies. This technology points toward the future of virtual reality and contract sex. (157)

Children have the freedom to be separated from their family. They do not belong to their mothers. Rather, they belong to their community. They can leave their families at the age of twelve or fourteen. Curtis discusses Piercy's aim beyond using technology in the novel saying: "So the irony is that while the technology of one kind will lead to the downfall of human life, it is a technology of another kind that will save it. In this sense, Piercy is thinking about the relationship among humans, the natural and the artificial in a different way (157). On the other hand, a sexual partner can be changed because desires change from time to time. Connie says, "How can men be mothers! How can some kid who isn't related to you be your child?" (WET 105). Truth be told, this radical change in the family structure stuns Connie appalling.

In his book *Feminist Utopias*, Frances Bartkowski states: "the sexual rearrangements of Piercy's vision allow her to construct a comprehensive alternative family: a non-gender-specific world regarding tasks, functions, behavior, yet still a world of people biologically male and female" (69). Piercy tries to inform her reader about the suffering of mothering in the current society. She utilizes this concept of mothers as a mirror to reflect it in her genuine society. In her article "When Women and Men Mother," Diane Ehrensaft discusses family structures in the private level and the public level of work and politics. She states that "female dominated household... to believe it could not be otherwise: motherhood is women's "natural" calling and her obligation, or her sphere of power and expertise" (44).

Women are not responsible for pregnancy and giving birth. There are rooms known as "brooders" that produce embryos to replace the wombs. Ladies are not in charge of pregnancy and giving birth. There are rooms known as "brooders" that deliver embryos to replace the wombs.

Here embryos are growing almost ready to birth. We do that at nine months plus two or three weeks. Sometimes we wait ten months. We find that extra time gives us stronger babies. He pressed a panel, and a door slid aside, revealing seven human babies joggling slowly upside down, each in a sac of its own inside a larger fluid receptacle. (WET 94)

Similarly, children in *Brave New World* are formed in bottles and produced in test tubes in the Hatchery; a place that helps the government to create identical human beings. Children undergo a genetic engineering process where eggs are impregnated with chemicals within a certain temperature. So there is a significant scientific development in the process of birth in the two novels. Connie and Luciente talk about the role of science in society saying:

But it sounds like some dictatorship. I mean in our time, science was kept ... pure maybe. Only scientists could judge other scientists. All kinds of stories about how scientists got persecuted by the church or governments and all that because they were doing their science. (WET 96)

Kathy Rudy mentions in her article "Ethics, Reproduction, and Utopia: Gender and Childbearing in *Woman on the Edge of Time* and *The Left Hand of Darkness*" that "In Mattapoissett, motherhood is available to people of both genders. Indeed, Piercy virtually eliminates fatherhood as a function in her utopian world, without eliminating men" (29). She links Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* with Huxley's *Brave New World* saying:

Piercy's novel is in many ways a feminist rewriting of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, a novel that retained traditional gender stereotypes between men and women (and hence did not attempt to theorize women's liberation). Piercy's novel, however, stretches the reader's imagination about gender. In her elimination of pregnancy and live birth, Piercy demonstrates that gender roles are often dependent on associating women with live birth, and consequently that

many of our current stereotypes could be altered. That is, womanhood-and the negative valences often attached to our construction of it-is often intricately associated with biological motherhood. (28)

#### 4. The concept of death

The Savage rejects this belief as he thinks that suffering of death should exist. The scene of the death of John's mother's in the hospital shows the dystopian approach to death in the Brave New World. To make children avoid the fear of death, the nurses bring them to see the dead people and play around them. They do not have any death rituals. The government of the Brave New World deals with death this way to avoid any sadness. It is the soma that causes Linda's death as she takes many tablets of Soma until she loses consciousness. In a desperate moment next to his mother, John says, "But, Linda! Don't you know me?" (BNW 179). Then, John shouts at the nurse and the children, because seeing his dead mother is very touching to him. He starts screaming at children saying "she is my mother". In fact, those children do not even know what the word "mother" means. Spiritual feelings like family life and love are abolished in this new civilized world that attributes these feelings to the past.

Mother, monogamy, romance. High spurts the fountain; fierce and foamy the wild jet. The urge has but a single outlet. My love, my baby. No wonder these poor pre-moderns were mad and wicked and miserable. Their world didn't allow them to take things quickly, didn't allow them to be sane, virtuous, happy. What with mothers and lovers, what with the prohibitions they were not conditioned to obey, what with the temptations and the lonely remorse, what with all the diseases and the endless isolating pain, what with the uncertainties and the poverty—they were forced to feel strong. And feeling strongly (and strongly, what was more, in solitude, in hopelessly individual isolation), how could they be stable? (BNW 33)

The dramatic climax of the novel comes with the scene of Linda's death because John's feelings

change from dissatisfaction to anger. Linda's death escalates the events of the novel. John shows his savage nature with his anger and disapproval for Soma after his mother's death. These feelings of anger lead to the dramatic climax in which John loses control when he enters the Soma lab trying to prevent people from receiving their doses. He becomes nervous and starts shouting that Soma is a poison. He says they are all slaves, and he is going to free them. Then he starts throwing the Soma out of the window saying:

"Listen, I beg of you," cried the Savage earnestly. "Lend me your ears." He had never spoken in public before and found it very difficult to express what he wanted to say. "Don't take that horrible stuff. It's poison; it's poison."

"I say, Mr. Savage," said the Deputy Sub-Bursar, smiling propitiating. "Would you mind letting me ."

"Poison to soul as well as body."

"Yes, but let me get on with my distribution, won't you? There's a good fellow."

With the cautious tenderness of one who strokes a notoriously vicious animal, he patted the Savage's arm. "Just let me." "Never!" cried the Savage. (BNW 185-186)

Huxley tries to tell his readers that the reaction of John shows his savage characteristics as well as the strict actions of the government in the World State. In fact, John is free to call for the need for spiritual values, and the government of the World State is free also to eliminate any feelings that might cause instability. Then, John talks to Mustapha Mond criticizing the life of the world state directly saying:

But I don't want comfort. I God, I want poetry, I want real danger, I want freedom, I want goodness. I want sin."

"In fact," said Mustapha Mond, "you" reclaiming the right to be unhappy."

"All right then," said the Savage defiantly, "I'm claiming the right to be unhappy". Not to mention the right to grow old and ugly and impotent; the right to have syphilis and cancer; the right to have too little to eat; the right to be lousy; the right

to live in constant apprehension of what may happen tomorrow; the right to catch typhoid; the right to be tortured by unspeakable pains of every kind." There was a long, silence. "I claim them all." Said the Savage at last. (BNW 211-212)

The previous long discussion between John and Mond represents the climax of the events. Huxley introduces this discussion to compare between the two different ideologies towards the Brave New World. The result of this discussion is neither victory for John nor Mond. Both have clear justifications; Mond answers all the questions raised by John giving direct answers. He declares to John that values like religion, art, family, freedom, and individuality are all sacrificed for the sake of social stability. Thus, Huxley gives the reader the chance to choose one of the two ideologies, either to choose the ideology of the primitive civilization of John or the ideology of the civilized society of Mond. According to John, his discussion with Mond reveals how dystopian features in that society. John travels to this society to have free will, choices, initiative, and spiritual freedom. In this world, people are prohibited from practicing such things. In the last chapter in the novel, Huxley presents a gloomy future for John in particular and all mankind in general. The Savage asks God for forgiveness for his lust for Lenina and the death of his mother. In the end, he refuses to live under the rules of that highly scientific society and decide to commit suicide.

Likewise, Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* presents death as entirely different concept from our own. In that futuristic society, no child can be born till someone in society dies. Piercy tries to show how this society is strictly controlled. She also shows that the age of human is not long. They create a new child when they lose one to replace this person in society. Thus, the population remains the same as they replace the highly qualified people in society with a similar one. This happens for example when one of the characters, Jackrabbit, dies in war; a similar one is created to replace him and maintain his role in society. They create persons with higher characteristics when a distinguished person dies.

## Conclusion

The selection of these novels intends to show the aims of the author of how dystopia constructs society and how dystopia gives the chance to the writer to criticize their society ills effectively. Also, it clarifies how feminist dystopia gives women the ability to call for their rights in a male dominated society. Furthermore, the two novels highly fit the concept of dystopia in science fiction. The authors of both *Brave New World* and *Woman on the Edge of Time* present two possible futures of the main characters in the two novels where both utopia and dystopia are commonly present. They present utopia and dystopia in a science fiction atmosphere where scientific developments play a central role in shaping most of the events. Hence, the main character has two options; either to adapt to the rules of society or to refuse them calling for a change. Both writers, in different styles, insist equally on providing a better future for human beings. It is clear that both of them focus on their main characters, John and Connie, to show how much suffering and struggle they face in their societies. Each gives readers a sense of different times existing together. Each presents a vision that there is a possible future in the present. The two novels share one important similarity that both authors choose a main character and shape his/her struggle to stage the utopian life they are living.

The two novels combine elements of dystopian social life according to the main characters in the two novels. The savage, the central character in the Huxley's novel, consider the new world of London as a dystopian society free of emotion, love, spirituality, and individualism. Whereas citizens of the World State consider their life as a luxurious life free of any problems, suffering, or any diseases. Even if they face such things, they can get off their problems easily by taking the Soma. On the other hand, we can see in Piercy's novel how Connie, the main character, is caught between a utopian world and a dystopian world. We can find in the two novels an oppressive government that controls society, a different perspective of punishment, untraditional family structure, and a diverse idea of death. In other

words, the two protagonists move from a utopia to a dystopia.

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