CHAPTER II
SCOPE FOR THE STUDY AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

2.1. Scope for the study

The Science Fiction of Huxley, Orwell and Bradbury, however, are not fantasies, but they are concerned with the present, and past, social problems condemning non-human values. It is by applying Marxist and Neo-Marxist approaches to the study of these novels that their social criticism become transparent, which otherwise tend to be lost sight of in the admiration of the marvels and destructive powers of the application of scientific ideas and techniques to our individual, social and political life. There is, thus, scope for studying the social relevance of these novels.

2.2. Limitation of the study

Due to constraints of time and length of the project in covering three major authors, the researcher confined himself to only the three major works of these authors and did not attempt a detailed analysis of all their works. Again, in the study, the researcher kept close to the social and political implications that emerge from the analysis.

2.3. A Brief Survey of the Development of Science Fiction

Science Fiction is the fictional treatment of the effects of science and technology by way of portraying futuristic societies. It generally deals with events that do not happen in the real world. In addition, these events are treated rationally
in terms of cause and effect. Science Fiction is concerned with the changes in the society caused by the scientific inventions and discoveries.

Roberts remarks that Science Fiction is a “specific artistic response to a very particular set of historical and cultural phenomena: for instance, that Science Fiction could only have arisen in a culture experiencing the Industrial Revolution…” (Critical 47)

The rapid developments in science and technology created an awareness that much more was to be known. Krishnamoorthy comments that, “the intrinsic fear of the unknown was manifested in the profusion of Gothic fiction, with eerie atmosphere and spine chilling horror…coupled with the desire to speculate on the unknown from the known, led to the birth of science fiction” (14).

Science Fiction provided the basis for creating a futuristic society. It is different from fantasy which belongs to the realm of the impossible. But Science Fiction represents the actual. Franklin suggests that the range of Science Fiction extends from “the present Earth … to the limits of the possible universes that the human imagination can project, whether in the past, present or future or alternative time-space continuums.”

Science Fiction has its roots in the epics of Greek civilisations which feature “superhuman characters like the residents of Mount Olympus and include a marvelous voyage to far distant worlds … inhabited by one-eyed giants, a six-headed monster, creature that swallows ships and a woman who chemically transforms people into animals” (http://andromeda.rutgers.edu).

Imagined voyages belonged to the realm of the impossible. But the discovery of magnetic compass, and the technological advances in ship building
eased voyages, and encouraged discovery of new nations. Copernicus’ discovery that the cosmos is vast and the planets are not revolving around Earth influenced the writers to write about imaginary voyages to the moon and other planets which later became a recurrent theme of literature. The laws of planetary motion developed by Johannus Kepler enabled him to imagine living in the moon in Somnium (1634). Such discoveries made the writers dream of an ideal place where people are eternally happy, forgetting the real life problems that haunt the contemporary society.

Plato’s The Republic (380 BC) serves as an early model for Utopian writings. It presents a country ruled by a group of intelligent, and good people, for the welfare of the whole nation. Based on the ideas of Plato, Cicero’s De Re Publica (52 BC) discusses the characteristics of different governments, emphasising the need for an ideal State based on reason and justice. Thomas More’s Utopia (1516) projects such an ideal society. The ills of the laws, government, economics, morals of the European nations at that time, and the gross inequalities in the distribution of wealth are highlighted in Book I of Utopia. Book II compares the ills of the contemporary society with the good governance of the imaginary country, Utopia, which is free from these problems.

Likewise, The New Atlantis (1624) by Francis Bacon envisages the future of human discovery and knowledge. It depicts an imaginary island, Bensalem, discovered by a crew of a European ship. The customs and the islanders’ quest for scientific knowledge are explained in this book.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, dreaming was considered the only means of dealing with a futuristic world. The imaginary voyages were treated as the narrative form of satirical fantasies, and scientists became the satirical targets
in Margaret Cavendish’s *The Blazing World* (1666) and the third book of Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726). James and Mendlesohn ed. quote Brian Stabbleford, who commented that such works paved way to the “tradition of ‘anti-science fiction’ whose reliance on similar motifs and narrative strategies has always resulted in its subsumption within the genre whose ambitions it opposes.” (15)

Science Fiction writers of that period tried to project views opposed to popular belief. Though most of the imaginary lunar voyages projected in novels appeared to be ludicrous, they were built on the proposition that moon, and the planets, were other worlds. This heliocentric theory of the solar system, according to James and Mendlesohn ed. “became the champion of the cause of science in its contest against religious faith because Christian Church had adopted the geocentric cosmology propounded by Aristotle” (16). Gabriel Daniel’s *Voyage au monde de Descartes* (Voyage to the world of Descartes) (1692), and Christian Huygens’ *Cosmotheoros* (1698) attempted to find an appropriate narrative form to reveal the fact that the sun was merely a star. Imaginary voyages through space helped these writers to deal with this issue.

James and Mendlesohn ed. quote Brian Stabbleford’s remark that the most ambitious cosmic visions of the eighteenth century was reported in *Arcana Coelestia* (1749-56) by the Swedish mystical theologian Emmanuel Swedenborg, having been influenced by his works in physics, geology and mathematics. In France, imaginary cosmic voyages became popular with “the use of magical devices borrowed from Antoine Galland’s translation of the *Arabian Nights* (1704-1717)” (17).

The stories about the future became popular during the eighteenth century. The expeditions of explorers like James Cook (1728-1779) resulted in the fact that
there were no unexplored regions anymore. The futuristic worlds were portrayed to create a sense of wonder. Louis Sebastian Merciers’ *L’AN 2440* (1771) takes the readers seven hundred years into the future in order to present a better Paris created by the advancement of science and technology.

Writers faced many problems with the use of traditional narrative frameworks when they attempted to project a futurist world. Traveller’s tale was used as a narrative form in Utopian Fiction. But, when the traveller visits inaccessible regions, writers struggled to make it plausible. James and Mendlesohn (ed.) remark that, “The problem to find an appropriate narrative framework for projecting contes philosophiques became acute during the nineteenth century” (18).

Poe’s *Hans Phaal* (1835) highlighted the problem in extending travellers’ tales about different regions to the Earth’s surface. Balloons could not be a convincing means of extraterrestrial exploration. So he experimented with different narrative frameworks like dialogue of the dead, and mesmerism, in his works such as *The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion* (1839), *A Tale of the Ragged Mountains* (1844) and *The Facts in the Case of M. valdemar* (1845).

While myths, legends, fantasies adventures, and imaginary voyages, served as the progenitors of Science Fiction, the developments outside the world of literature were also responsible for the making of this new genre. *Frankenstein* (1818) by Mary Shelley was the first fiction inspired by the scientific speculations of its time, and uses it as a central premise for projecting an altered setting. *Frankenstein* is thus considered the origin of British Science Fiction. It is about “the power of the scientist to create, matched with the unforeseeable nature of the consequences of that creation” (Roberts *Critical* 48). It is modelled on the scientific
speculations of that time, and raises the question of the responsibility of a creator
towards his creation. Victor Frankenstein, a scientist, created a monster using the
various parts of the cadavers collected from graveyards and gave life to it. Deprived
of love and affection from others, the monster started wreaking vengeance on him.
Many novels that deal with the abuse of science are influenced by this idea even
today.

For nearly half a century after the publication of *Frankenstein*, no significant
Science Fiction novel was produced. Edgar Allan Poe (1809 - 1849) used Science
Fictional motifs in his short stories. Several of Verne's novels, such as *Five Weeks in
a Balloon* (1863), *A Trip from the Earth to the Moon* (1865), and *Twenty Thousand
Leagues Under the Sea* (1870), used ideas that Poe had employed in his short stories.
Like Poe, Verne filled his narratives with scientific details, but unlike Poe, for whom
science served as a background for adventure, Verne made science itself an
adventures.

*Looking Backward* (1888) by Edward Bellamy (1850-1898), an American
writer, presents his futuristic vision of an Utopian society. The protagonist of the
novel falls asleep under hypnosis in 1887, and awakes in 2000. In the futuristic
society, there is no disparity between the rich and the poor. The government
effectively runs all industries, and treats everyone alike.

Science Fiction became popular in England only during the end of the
nineteenth century through the writings of H.G. Wells (1866-1946). In his novels, he
expressed his fascination for making human beings encounter strange life forms.
Wells’ *War of the Worlds* (1898) presents the encounter between human beings and
Martians. Roberts quotes the remark of Aldiss, an English author of both general
and Science Fiction that Wells’ novel shows “the Imperialist European powers of the day, and how it felt to be on the receiving end of an invasion armed with superior technology” (Roberts, *Critical* 64).

H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine: An Invention* (1895) portrays the process of evolution at work till the end of time. In America, Jack London (1876-1916), an American author, journalist, and social activist, wrote sociological novels turned to Science Fiction, and transformed it into socio-political speculation. But the human concern and social commitment that characterised the Science Fiction of writers like H.G. Wells, and Jack London curiously disappeared from both American and English literature during the next two decades.

*A Modern Utopia* (1905) by H.G. Wells imagines a One World government where national boundaries lose their significance. In the novel, the citizens are free to choose their own work, and leisure. People of lesser order are banished from society, and are not allowed to beget children. In Russia, Alexander Bogdanov’s *Red Star* (1908) which is subtitled ‘The First Bolshevik Utopia’ presents the pre-revolutionary Russia, and predicts the future scientific, and social developments in Russia. In this imaginary society, everybody is equal, and workers determine their own working hours. *In Men Like Gods* (1923) H.G. Wells portrays an imaginary world called Utopia where a group of Englishmen are transported. The imaginary society is scientifically advanced, and is governed by an effective Socialist World Government.

During the 1920s and 1930s Science Fiction magazines became popular. Many contributors to the early Science Fiction magazines were not specialists in scientific speculation, but “adaptable professionals willing to supply the new market
with variations on what they had been writing for detective, western or general adventure magazines.” (James and Mendlesohn ed. 35)

The first popular Science Fiction magazine was *Amazing Stories*. Roberts comments that the editor of this magazine, Hugo Gernsback, considered Science Fiction an “important fiction making the world a better place to live in, through educating the public to the possibilities of science and the influence of science on life” (Roberts, *Critical* 68). Science Fiction magazines focused on highlighting the wonder of science. John Campbell (1910-1971), the editor of *Astounding Science Fiction* (1937), insisted that Science Fiction should be grounded in science, and the celebration of science. At the same time, he also insisted that “the science should be properly integrated into the story, that there should be no undigested scientific lectures dropped into the text” (68). In his opinion, Science Fiction is more about the response of people towards science, its inventions, and discoveries.

The marvels of science and technology were projected by the Science Fiction writers in order to create a Utopia, an ideal country that promise happiness and equality.

Like Utopian fiction, Dystopian fiction too projects the longing for a better order of living. It presents a negative view of the future of society and mankind. While Utopian works look at the brighter side of life projecting a future where lifestyle is improved by scientific and technical development, Dystopian works hold an opposite view. “Dystopia is Utopia’s polarized mirror image. While utilizing many of the same concepts as Utopia – social stability created by authoritarian regimentation – Dystopia reads these ideas pessimistically” (web 3).
Dystopia refers to a place where nobody wants to live. It is a place where people are denied equality, and have to live in misery. Science Fiction writers use Dystopia to criticise the contemporary society. In a Dystopian society, the citizens are dehumanized, and the free will of an individual is abolished. The Dystopian society is in stark contrast to the Utopian society which promises equality and liberty. The protagonist of a Dystopian novel feels that he is trapped in that wretched place, and struggles to escape from it, or tries to modify it. While portraying the struggles of the protagonist, the Science Fiction writer questions the existing social, and political systems.

By rousing a sense of fear and futility, Dystopian works question the perfectibility of man. They affirm that having a perfect society is unattainable, and planning for such society may have awful effects. They became popular during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These were the years of transformation of values. The success of a Dystopian fiction is determined by the familiarity established by it. It makes the reader understand its semblance with the contemporary world. If he can identify the trends leading to Dystopia, the novels become more gripping.

The social aspects of science and technology started receiving attention in the twentieth century. The period from the late thirties to the end of forties is called the Golden Age of Science Fiction. John W. Campbell, the editor of the most influential Science Fiction magazine *Astounding Science Fiction*, shaped the careers of individual writers, and gave direction to the genre. In the late thirties, and early forties of the twentieth century, Campbell introduced to Science Fiction several new writers, constantly encouraging them, and frequently offering ideas. Chief among
these writers are Robert A. Heinlein (1907-1988), Isaac Asimov (1920-1992), and Theodore Sturgeon (1918-1985).

Theodore Sturgeon is different from the typical sociotechnological Science Fiction writers of the twentieth century. His fame rests on a small quantity of short stories and novels sensitively presenting love, religion and psychology in Science Fictional terms. His first novel *The Dreaming Jewels* (1950) questions our concepts of reality. Sturgeon's most famous novel, *More Than Human* (1953), projects a futuristic society in the ladder of evolution. In the novel, a number of less-than-fully grown human characters – team up to form Homo Gestalt, a complete, more-than-human group which is capable of unusual psychic feats. Sturgeon makes the novel a critique on human values and attitudes by combining a touching love affair, childish pranks, painful persecution, revenge and misery of loneliness.

Apart from presenting wonder, Science Fiction prepares man for future. Krishnamoorthy quotes the words of Arthur C. Clark (1917-2008), a British Science Fiction author, who suggests that Science Fiction writer, “by mapping out possible futures as well as a good many impossible ones…encourages in his readers flexibility of mind, readiness to accept and even welcome change – in one word, adaptability” (3). Looking for change for betterment is an inherent quality of mankind. Science Fiction writers project the possibility of change, though most of the time it is not about betterment, by focussing on the problems of the contemporary society, and how they can be either accentuated or mitigated by the use of science and technology. Krishnamoorthy endorses that Science Fiction writers have focussed their attention on the problems of the society. “The process they adopt is called
extrapolation i.e., projecting the current trends and developments forward in time” (3).

Robert Anson Heinlein is the most successful Science Fiction writer introduced by Campbell. Heinlein wrote short stories and novels that were known for their innovative ideas, fast action, racy narration, and commentaries on man and society. *Double Star* (1956), the first of Heinlein's Hugo award winning novel, is notable for its character delineation. The bizarre encounters of a time-traveller with several editions of himself is the subject of Heinlein's short story *By His Bootstraps* (1941). Heinlein's second Hugo award winning novel *Starship Troopers* (1959) deals with military training, and discipline, at great length, but the main focus is on a citizen's acceptance of responsibility for his society, and the consequent need for disciplined action through rigorous training. His novel *Stranger in a Strange Land* (1961) was his third Hugo winner.

*Farnham's Freehold* (1964) stresses Heinlein's view that values such as freedom, democracy, and sentiment have no meaning when survival of the human beings is threatened. A group of white people are thrown into future, and they find themselves chattels of the ruling black race with their former black servant, as a member of the black race. *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* (1965), Heinlein's fourth Hugo winner, is an account of the process of revolution at work. It presents an imaginary Lunar Colony trying to get freedom from the Imperial Terran Administration which is strongly reminiscent of the American struggle for independence.

Science Fiction is recognised as an important genre after the explosion of atom bomb in 1945, and man’s landing on moon in 1969. These events indicated
that life was subject to change. The drastic changes in the society, due to the
scientific and technological advancement, were projected in the novels of Isaac
Asimov.

Isaac Asimov is considered the most widely known modern Science Fiction
writer. His Science Fiction is characterised by three qualities – neatness of plot,
apparent plausibility of scientific devices, and clarity of narration. His series of
robot stories and Foundation Trilogy establish him as a master of Science Fiction.
The robot stories have been collected in two volumes: *I, Robot* (1950), and *The Rest
of the Robots* (1964). The fear about the possibility of man-made creatures enslaving
mankind has been a recurrent theme in Science Fiction, starting with *Frankenstein*
(1818), and passing on to *Erewhon* (1872). Asimov, on the other hand, tries to
minimise this fear, and this is achieved through 'Three Laws of Robotics' worked out
jointly with Campbell. The first law demands that robots should, under all
circumstances, ensure human safety. The second law imposes on robots total
obedience to all orders issued by human beings. The third law provides self-
protection by robots. The seventeen stories, and the two novels forming the Robot
Series are all based on these three laws, and highlight conflicts resolved through the
application of these laws.

*The Foundation* series of stories, voted for a special Hugo award as the best
all-time series by the World Science Fiction Convention in 1966, consists of eight
stories first published separately between 1942 and 1950, and later connected with a
prefatory part into three volumes: *Foundation* (1951), *Foundation and Empire*
(1952), and *Second Foundation* (1953). *The Foundation* series projects the galactic
macro-history encompassing four centuries of struggle for the preservation of
knowledge and culture. The Foundation series is admittedly based on Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776), but with an optimistic difference. If the cause of the decline can be analysed, and the course of action can be predicted through the application of science to history, then perhaps, it may be possible to control the events to some extent, and minimise the harm.

The Foundation series depicts Hari Seldon as a creator of a scholarly society trying to prevent future Dark Age. Seldon’s theory, ‘psychohistory’, enabled him to predict the fall of galactic empire, and to alleviate its effect as well. According to this theory, people in large groups behave predictably. “This faith in predictive social science led not only Asimov, but a number of other writers as well to begin considering social dynamics more seriously, writing stories that emphasized politics, religion and other collective activities” (James and Mendlesohn ed. 39).


Hand of Darkness (1969) by Ursula Le Guin is an exploration of a neuter society where sexual differences never play any role though jealousy and love remain in the society.

The 1980s witnessed the rapid transformation in the life style of people due to information explosion. Internet started shaping the mindset of the people. As a result, a new term ‘cyberpunk’ was coined by the Science Fiction writer Bruce Bethke in 1983, “to describe stories about the information explosion…” (67).


Science Fiction is, thus, regarded as a genre, or division of, literature that produces fictional worlds different from the real one we live in. It also entertains the reader by predicting the future scientific innovations. Rogers ed. comments that it is considered, “a vast and accommodating genre; flexible enough to include the thriller, the romance, the adventure story, horror, and even the historical novel” (90).

The contributions of Huxley, Orwell and Bradbury who are the main authors taken upon the present study are discussed in the next section (2.4).
2.4. Contribution of Huxley, Orwell and Bradbury to Science Fiction

Writers like Aldous Huxley (1894-1963), George Orwell (1903-1950), and Ray Bradbury (1920), however, use Science Fiction to express their concerns about the contemporary society. Rogers ed. quotes the words of Livi Michael who asserts that “in the hands of the best writers, Science Fiction is a tool reflecting contemporary society in much the same way that Swift’s satires reflect to us all that is comic, grotesque, appalling about his world, and indeed our own” (90).

2.4.1. Aldous Huxley

Aldous Huxley was born on July 24, 1894 in Godalming, Surrey in England. He was the descendent of illustrious ancestors. He was the grandson of Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895), a famous biologist who was called ‘Darwin’s bulldog’ and helped him in creating the theory on the evolution. His aunt was Mrs. Humphrey Ward (1851-1920), a renowned late-Victorian novelist, and the daughter of Matthew Arnold (1822-1888). Aldous Huxley’s mother, Julia Arnold, was the granddaughter of Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), a famous educator. One of the brothers of Aldous Huxley, Julian Huxley (1887-1975), was a great zoologist, and also the first director of UNESCO. According to Firchow, Huxley’s family resembles great Roman families who seemed to specialise in producing their own characteristic virtues or vices among their family members. “The Huxleys are probably the only family, or almost fully, documented case (and this would have surely pleased T.H.Huxley (1825-1895)) of natural selection along intellectual lines: a living proof of the theories of the great progenitor” (9).
We can observe that Huxley is influenced by the atmosphere in which he grew up. Science, intellectualism, and aestheticism are blended in his nature. After completing his schooling in the private schools near Godalming, Huxley went to Eton to prepare himself for a career in biology. But at sixteen, he suffered from partial blindness, and was forced to withdraw from school. After several operations, he lost vision completely in one of his eyes while having a severely impaired vision in the other. Later, he learnt Braille and German, and decided to become a writer. His mother passed away in 1908 due to cancer when he was just fourteen. It made him understand the transience of human happiness. In addition, one of his brothers, Trevenen, with whom Aldous Huxley was very affectionate, committed suicide in 1914. “And behind all these personal darkness, was the vaster, impersonal darkness of the threat and then the reality of the Great War” (Firchow 12).

Finally, Huxley completed a degree in English at Balliol College, Oxford. Because of his disability, he could not join his college mates in the military. Initially, he approached the War with patriotic rush. Later, he understood that many of his friends would never return to Oxford. *Point Counter Point* (1928) and *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936) are considered his semi-autobiographical works, and Quarles and Anthony Beavies, characters in these novels, thank their crippled legs for excusing themselves from joining the army.

He worked as a farm labourer in Garsington Manor, an estate owned by Sir Philip and Lady Ottoline who disliked the War. Huxley had an opportunity to acquaint himself with Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), Osbert (1892-1969), Robert Graves (1895-1985), D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930), and Lytton Strachey (1880-1932).

It was only in Garrington that Huxley was aware of the horrors of war and it appeared to be an unusual place like “an island of light in a vast sea of darkness, a Red Indian Reservation of reason and civilization surrounded by the savages of democracy and hysteria” (Firchow 17). We can find its echoes in the New Mexico Reservation of *Brave New World* (1932).

Later, Huxley wrote novels which are more popular than his poems. From his first book *Limbo* (1920) to his last novel *Island* (1962), Huxley’s works cover forty three years which is a significant period in European history. These were years of change and transformation of values. The tremendous shock created by the two World Wars was mainly responsible for creating disorder in the established world of the nineteenth century.

Huxley proves himself a man of ideas through his novel *Chrome Yellow* (1921). *Antic Hay* (1923), *Those Barren Leaves* (1925), *Jesting Pilate* (1926) and *Point Counter Point* (1928) helped Huxley to establish himself as a writer with intellectual ideas. For his novel *Brave New World* (1932), Huxley chooses Science Fiction as the mode to depict the problems of his society in transition. The rapid strides in the realm of science and technology lent charm to the age which, in reality, witnessed the loss of human values. Huxley envisions a futuristic society where everything, including human progeny, is under State control.

*Eyeless in Gaza* (1936) is the picture of a man groping for a way of life that will bring meaning and purpose to his existence. In many ways, it is a picture of Huxley, and his change of attitude. In the novel Anthony Beavis changes from a self-
indulgent, detached philosopher who sneers at life, to a humanistic pacifist who views life through the eyes of a lover. Huxley's own change of attitude was remarkable, and he changed from a pessimist and portrayer of futility to a prophet and philosopher preaching mysticism. Both Anthony Beavis, and Aldous Huxley find peace in Eastern mysticism.

*After Many a Summer Dies the Swan* (1939) is an exaggerated picture of the Hollywood known to Huxley when he lived, and worked in California. In this novel, Huxley creates a character who lives by his philosophy, and shows where it ultimately leads to. The character, Jo Stoyte, wishes to find the secret of longevity so that he will be able to continue his pursuit of the sensual life; when he discovers that the price of longevity is the loss of humanity, he indicates his willingness to revert to an animal state in order to retain the animal pleasures.

During the 1940s he wrote *Time Must Have a Stop* (1945), *The Perennial Philosophy* (1946) and *Ape and Essence* (1949). He witnessed the havoc created by World War II, and got moral strength from Eastern philosophy. In the 1950s Huxley published *Devils of Loudun* (1952), *The Doors of Perception* (1954), *Brave New World Revisited* (1959) and *Island* (1962). In *Brave New World Revisited*, he expresses his fear that the dehumanisation expected in *Brave New World* (1932) may arrive faster than he had expected.

*Brave New World* criticises the contemporary society for relinquishing human values. The novel highlights the fact that the person who controls, and uses knowledge will be benefitted from it. It proves that scientific discoveries and inventions can be used by the people in power to control common men.
This novel presents a bleak picture of the loss of human values in the World State, imagined by Huxley. ‘Community, Stability and Identity’ is the motto of the World State. It maintains stability by maintaining a rigid class structure – Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons. Children are produced in Hatcheries as per the requirement of the World State. They are chemically and psychologically conditioned to accept their social status without any dissent. Bernard Marx, an Alphas plus, suffers from inferiority complex as he is shorter in stature than the average Alphas. The addition of alcohol to his blood surrogate is the reason for it. Helmholtz Watson, a lecturer at the College of Emotional Engineering, too, feels that he is different from other citizens of the World State because of his mental excess. Bernard is attracted towards Lenina, a Beta. While journeying to Savage Reservation, Bernard and Lenina meet John, the Savage. His mother, Linda, a citizen of the World State, while accompanying her lover, Thomas, the present Director of Hatcheries, was left behind, and lived miserably with her son, John.

John falls in love with Lenina, and he, along with his mother, is allowed to return to the World State by the World Controller. John becomes famous in the World State, but soon feels dejected by the loss of value system in the ‘civilized’ new world. Pained by the idea that there is no room for platonic love in that world, he becomes violent when Lenina advances to use him to quench her sexual need. On the contrary, his mother, Linda, enjoys her return to the World State, and consumes ‘soma’, a hallucinating drug, continuously till she dies in Park Lane Hospital. Finally, John commits suicide unable to tolerate the dehumanisation in the ‘civilised’ world.
Huxley’s *Brave New World* presents a seemingly perfect society using the advancement in science and technology such as eugenics. He is, even, considered to be a prophet for his idea of using eugenics in creating a Utopian society. In the novel, the citizens of the World State are always happy, and never experience old age or poverty. The present study aims at bringing out Huxley’s criticism on the contemporary society for the loss of human values, and purposeless living.

Huxley criticises the contemporary society which resembles the World State of his novel in many aspects. The old values no longer find a place in a modern, and materialistic society which believes that pleasure is the ultimate end of life. His visit to America made him understand the futility of modern culture.

### 2.4.2. George Orwell

Totalitarian countries, on the other hand, try to establish stability through coercive methods. George Orwell effectively portrays the dehumanisation of people in a totalitarian country in *Nineteen Eighty Four* (1949).

Georg Orwell, Eric Arthur Blair in real life, was born in 1903 in Motihari, Bengal, India, where his father, Richard, worked for the Opium Department of the Civil Service. At the age of one, he was brought to England by his mother Ida. First, he was sent to a small Anglican parish school, and later studied at St. Cyprian’s school. After finishing his studies at Eton, he joined the Indian Imperial Police in Burma. He developed a hatred for any type of authoritarian principle, Imperialism in particular, in Burma. It is expressed in his essays such as ‘A Hanging’ (1931), and ‘Shooting an Elephant’ (1936).

In *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937), Orwell describes how, after viewing the Great Depression during the 1930s, in the industrial north of England, he becomes a
democrat socialist despite his upper middle class background. Fyvel (1982) asserts that “The Road to Wigan Pier is clearly an angry book, unique in English political writing of the time” (63). During the outbreak of Spanish Civil War, he joined POUM (Workers’ Party of Marxist Unification). In Homage to Catalonia (1938), he admires the absence of class structure in the revolutionary Spain. Later, he felt that the worker’s revolution was betrayed by the Spanish Communist Party. Orwell’s next novel Coming Up For Air (1939), according to Fyvel deals with Orwell’s “dislike of London as nightmarish metropolis, his pervasive fear of impending war and his nostalgia for the imagined safety of his childhood past” (84). During the World War II, he worked with BBC, and despised its strategy for propagating its ideas.

In 1944, Orwell published Animal Farm, a book against Stalinism. It is a political fable based on Russian Revolution, and its betrayal by Joseph Stalin. It exposes the danger of extremist stance in politics, and satirises the attitude of Utopian revolution which promises drastic change from the past. Animal Farm expresses Orwell’s fear that people in power will resort to any means to perpetuate their own power.

Orwell highlights his nightmare about the loss of human values under a totalitarian regime in Nineteen Eighty Four (1949). In this novel, he presents a society under State control using modern technology for surveillance. The Party controls the society by following rigid class system – Inner Party members, Outer Party members, and Proles. The protagonist of the novel, Winston Smith, a citizen of Oceania and member of the Outer Party, is governed by the Party. The story takes place in London, the chief city of Airstrip One. Its leader, Big Brother, symbolises
the ruthlessness with which Stalin ruled Russia. This novel has all the elements found in a Dystopia. Its four ministries, Ministry of Truth, Ministry of Love, Ministry of Peace, and Ministry of Plenty, aim at propagating the ideals of the Party, rewriting history to suit the present stance of the Party, torturing the prisoners to make them accept the supremacy of the Party, handling war, and making the people live under the illusion that their living condition is better than that of their predecessors. The society created by the Party is based on fear, and hatred, lacking emotions like friendship, and love.

The Party ensures that nobody expresses their feelings openly, or questions its principles. Winston, the protagonist, meets Julia who, also, does not like the Party, and falls in love with her. They find an ally in O’Brien, a member of the Inner Party. They become the followers of a secret Brotherhood headed by Goldstein (who symbolises Trotsky, a revolutionary in Russia), and act against the dictates of the Party. Soon, they are arrested by Thought Police, who monitors the people for any surreptitious activity, and made to confess their mistakes. Actually, O’Brien is the representative of the Party, and he tortures Winston until he accepts the Party ideals unquestioningly. This novel depicts the fate of an individual battling for sanity in an overwhelmingly oppressive totalitarian regime.

*Nineteen Eighty Four* is considered a political fantasy that criticises Stalin’s rule in Russia. The novel depicts how, with the aid of modern technology, the rulers can control the citizens. This thesis attempts to establish that Orwell is not concerned only with Russia under the rule of Stalin, or the abuse of technology by the people in power. Rather, he condemns totalitarian regimes in general, and
portrays the pathetic condition of people in the hands of autocrats. He denounces the social, and political systems in England, Russia and Spain.

2.4.3. Ray Bradbury

As Orwell presents the predicament of an individual, and the loss of human values in an authoritarian government, Ray Bradbury, an American Science Fiction writer, is concerned with the social issues of his time. He was born in Waukegan, Illinois, in 1920. His father, Leonard Spaulding, hailed from a long line of editors and publishers who owned their own publishing firm, Bradbury and Sons, at the turn of the century. His aunt, Neva Bradbury, influenced him to read books, and write at an early age. When he was young, Bradbury was very much excited by the futuristic worlds portrayed in the magazines, *The Amazing Stories* and *Tarzan*.

At school, he was introduced to other types of stories, and decided to become a writer. His first story, “Pendulum”, was published in *Super Science Stories* in 1941. His writing career began during the 1940s as a writer for pulp magazines such as *Black Mask, Amazing Stories*, and *Weird Tales*. His early fantasy tales are published in the anthology *Dark Carnival* (1947). With the publication of *The Martian Chronicles* (1950), Bradbury established himself as a writer of sophisticated Science Fiction. It is a collection of short stories connected by a single device – settling of human beings in Mars. They are the tales of space travel, and environmental adaptation. However, Bradbury uses these stories to highlight important issues of the post-World War II such as racism, censorship, abuse of technology, and nuclear warfare. Bradbury’s *The Illustrated Man* (1951) based its stories on the tattoos of the title character. His later collection of short stories,
Dandelion Wine (1957), The Machineries of Joy (1964) etc. are not so significant as The Martian Chronicles (1950).

In addition to short stories, Bradbury has also written novels. Fahrenheit 451 (1953), was first published as a short story, and later expanded into a novel. It is about a futuristic society where books are burned because they are considered to be potential threats to social order. His novel, Something Wicked This Way Comes (1962) is about a father attempting to save his son, and a friend, from the forces of a mysterious travelling carnival. Death Is a Lonely Business (1985), a detective story, features Douglas Spaulding, the main character of Dandelion Wine (1957), as a struggling pulp magazine writer.

Throughout his life, Bradbury is closely associated with reading and writing, activities that require critical thinking. Outraged by McCarthyism during the late 1940s and 1950s of that era, Bradbury uses future as a stage for revealing his emotional reactions to it. He expresses the need for freedom of speech and critical thinking in Fahrenheit 451 (1953).

Guy Montag, the protagonist of Fahrenheit 451, is a fireman whose duty is to set fire to the houses with books. His wife Mildred, a typical citizen of such hedonistic society, is fond of watching television than interacting with human beings. The teenaged neighbour of Montag, Clarisse, makes him understand the futility of such existence. She tells Montag that she comes from a strange family that does peculiar things such as talking to each other, and walk places. After talking to her, Montag realises that he is not really happy with what he is. His meeting with Faber, an old professor, enables him to arrive at a conclusion. He decides to talk to
others about the importance of reading books. Then, he made desperate attempts to talk to his wife about books. But he was unsuccessful in his attempts, and feels that the TV walls stand between him and his wife.

Captain Beatty, the fire chief, senses the problem of Montag, and tells that such things happen to all firemen. He justifies the banning of books, as they have the tendency to make man feel sad. Finally, he concludes that books cannot be liked by all groups as they favour one group, and are objectionable to others. So, books are burnt in the imaginary city created by Bradbury.

Then, Montag convinces Faber that books can be kept secretly in the houses of firemen to discredit their profession so that their houses will, also, be burnt. In the meantime, he attempts to read a poem to his wife and her friends. But they are horrified by this act, and it is reported to the fire chief. Finally, Montag’s house was set fire. But, he destroys the Mechanical Hound, and kills the fire chief to escape from the place only to be chased by another Mechanical Hound that is set to kill the people against the rules of the government. Somehow, he manages to reach the nearby forest where he meets Granger and his friends, each, having memorised a book, becomes a walking book. Granger tells that his group is waiting for humanity to become ready for books again so that they can be useful to the world. Suddenly, they see jets hover over the city, and drop bombs. Granger senses the need to go to the city to rebuild it, and they are also compared to phoenix that rises again and again from its own ashes.

*Fahrenheit 451* by Bradbury deals with the banning of books, a symbolic act of destroying ideas and ideals enshrined in them. The wall televisions, seashell
thimble radios, and the Mechanical Hound that can be set to kill a person following his chemical index create an impression that this novel portrays a futuristic society. But this study attempts to establish that Bradbury, actually, criticises the American society for indulging in mindless entertainment at the cost of critical thinking.