Brave New World and Blade Runner Theme Analysis.

Comparison of Texts.

In Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*, there is a parallel of thematic structure and human issues that run alongside Ridley Scott’s *Blade Runner*. Both texts display a dim view of the future where the natural rhythm of the world has been besmirched and finally destroyed in place of a monotonous and artificial flat-line. In both texts, there is a greatly increased proportion of industrial production.

In *Blade Runner*, soaring buildings are present and choking plumes of ashen smoke and fire rise hundreds of feet into the air from the industrial towers of the city. There is blackened urban sprawl for miles around, and there seems absolutely no representation of nature anywhere. *Brave New World* presents the picture of a society that has become so clean, and so ordered that there is no longer any need for nature, nor any strong link to its wilderness.

**Brave New World.**


We are moving toward the Tyrell Corporation across a vast plain of industrialization, menacing shapes on the horizon, stacks belching flames hundreds of feet into the sky the color of cigar ash. There is no sign of the natural world, mountain like buildings erupt from the earth and pierce the smog-choked clouds of the sky. There is an artificial dominance in this scene; only the lights of giant electronic billboards illuminate the dank streets where millions of people scurry like so many animals.

To and fro between building and building, not pausing unless necessary, for there is nothing to look at, nothing to admire, all that is left is the man-made monotony of this dead world. The filthy light that filters through the close sky above has soiled everything and there is a clogged glow of the sun.

The camera starts to pan towards the Tyrell Corporation building, and can almost be seen in its entirety, it is enormous and takes up the entire field of vision, the camera continues to pan up, as if ascending into heaven – higher and higher towards seemingly impossible elevation. Suddenly there is the aspect of the sun shining off the building ’s glass windows, a stark contrast to the darkness below, but even the awesome power of the sun has been befouled as it now pours an cheap orange light upon the high reaches of the Tyrell Corporation.

Quotations/Speaker:

There is no narration bar the visual abhorrence displayed to the viewer. There is no need to further illustrate the extreme measures that man has taken to remove to wild and unpredictable elements of nature, for it seems that is what has happened so that man can progress further along the path of self-improvement.
Context/Purpose:

The purpose of this scene is very clear, to show the direction that man has traveled in, and the path in which humankind is going. To put this scene at the very start of the film, Ridley Scott is giving it a basic significance as not only an introduction to the story, but as an introduction, and a shock filled one at that, to society. The sheer magnitude of some of the buildings, and the depth and darkness of the streets leads us to think Scott is painting a very detailed portrait of the future where man has developed the natural world to something unrecognizable from its former self.

This scene has shock value too, as it is the first thing the viewer sees, and is therefore the first thing that they may be able to judge the society on. The artificial world has now been able to completely replace the stunning magnitude of the natural world’s beauty by constructing buildings that mimic mountains and leveling the natural rhythm of the wild. Man has finally denied the wilderness in return for the luxuries of civilization, but it seems Scott draws an ironic contrast.

The civilization that has become so paramount, the very same that constructs great buildings to protect its people from the wild, that illuminates the night with the neon glow of commercialism has become the wilderness, it is now the dark foreboding entity that poses the greatest risk. Its citizens are subject to its piercing stature and now must attempt to escape it by means of off-world colonization.

It seems that even the wild retreat that once offered a release from the harsh discrepancies of civilization has now become a controlled and regulated process. People now have to qualify and meet certain requirements before they may escape the choking haze of Earth. So now profiteering from the idea of a new, natural world has become the greatest business venture, but again, Scott draws an ironic parallel, if these are the same businesses that have already raped the natural balance of the earth, can they seriously be trusted to handle to unknown natural elements present upon another world?

However, it seems that the endemic and dark monotony that rules the lives of most earth dwellers would lead them to think the idea of a new life upon a new world would be the chance to start again in a sanctuary unblemished by the foul touch of man. Even if it is run and controlled by the same ethics that starve the earth of its natural harmony, it would seem to be the greatest catch 22 situations of all.

Film Techniques:

The amazing use of the camera to make to approach to the Tyrell Corporation appear to be an ascent into heaven through the hellish fires of the industrial towers, and rising up from the squalid accommodations of below of the “little people” is very important. As the Tyrell Corporation becomes larger and larger, the camera tries to pan around to fit it in the whole picture, impossible however, due to its sheer size.

Like heaven, it also appears to have impossible constructs and angles that defy physics, but the viewer feels as though it is being lifted up from the insignificance of below into the kingdom of a greater power, the glaring sun bouncing off the thousands of reflective panels. With the fires and smoke of the real world behind, Tyrell Corporation seems almost holy in its appearance as a beacon of power and strength.
In Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*, technology and society have once again conquered and removed most of, if not all of the natural checks and balances of the wild. However, in *Brave New World* not only has the physical environment been changed dramatically as in *Blade Runner* with monolithic buildings and a vast metropolis, but *Brave New World* describes a society that has now become its own creator.

Unlike *Blade Runner*, *Brave New World* is a clean and crimeless society, people get what they want, and don’t want what they can’t get. This is because the Earth has become a world-state ruled by the Ten Controllers. In the first chapter, we see how the society is made, how people are artificially incubated and how they have no form of identity.

*Brave New World* presents a society that has been totally conquered by the artificial makings of its own people, a form of social masochism seems to be taking place, however, due to conditioning and the elimination of natural strong emotions, people are content with their lives and the castes they are predestined to. People are grown in batches, in huge hatcheries, before they are even born, the hand of science determines who they will be, and what they will do.

Nature has been eliminated and in its place, science now reigns supreme and controls every detail of the monotonous lives of the citizens that inhabit the world.

**Quotations/Speaker:**

“Community, Identity, Stability” is the state motto, and is repeated by highly important people such as the D.H.C when he is lecturing his students. This motto, like all of the hypnopaedic morals and idioms, re-enforces the power and overall stability of the government. People automatically believe it because they have heard it so many times, and theirs is apparently not to question the system.

“Making ninety-six human beings grow where only one grew before. Progress.” This is said by the D.H.C, and again, re-enforces the belief that science is the key not only to the greater good, but also to life in general. However, just because science is capable of attaining such a result, this does not mean that result is favourable, but in *Brave New World* the acceptance and embrace of science has become so important, that a Machiavellian mindset is in place to protect the process that is otherwise flawed and morally unfounded in the view of today’s society.

Another important quote, “Which brings us at last, out of the realm of mere slavish imitation of nature into the much more interesting world of human invention.” When describing the total and complete control of the fetus’ destiny. This illustrates how man has disrupted and eventually destroyed the natural course of birth and instead turned it into a mass-production operation that is performed upon an assembly line.

Finally, when Mr. Foster announces, “‘We also predestine and condition. We decant our babies as socialized human beings’”. We see that the ultimate predestination occurs, embryos are already made to be of a certain caste in society, with no chance to excel beyond their station, denying the most basic of all freedoms, self-determination.
Context/Purpose:

The purpose of this first chapter is to introduce the reader to the first of many stages of social development that we see in *Brave New World*. Huxley shows us the point of technological advancement that has been achieved, and the final and complete dominance science now has over nature. Parents are considered obsolete and the idea of natural birth is thought to be disgusting rather than an accomplishment.

The first chapter also shows the very open approach to sex and open relationships, as Henry Foster makes an appointment with Lenina in front of all the students, and proceeds to pat her like an animal. This illustrates the cultural change as well as the social change, for it is seen that when nature is broken, both in *Blade Runner* and *Brave New World*, society itself is warped to the principles and ethics that science produces, it just depends on who holds the power and the influence over the way that technology is used.

By Huxley giving the reader not only a tour of the hatchery, but also a tour of a portion of the society that operates within the novel, the reader is able to slowly understand some of the dramatic changes that have occurred to the culture and moral values of the people who dwell within the realm of the World State.

Finally, the true significance of the novel begins to develop very early because of Huxley’s explicit detail in the first chapter, he defines the intricate process of decanting, describes some brief history of the World State, and the reader is able to understand with more depth, the psyche of some of the citizens in *Brave New World*.

Language Features:

Huxley’s use of third person narrative supports the reader’s ability to comprehend the text more clearly; he uses meticulous sentences that succinctly explain the ideas and issues of the novel. Furthermore, Huxley is able to insert appropriate dialogue between the characters that helps define their motives to the reader.

For instance, “Sixteen thousand and twelve in this Centre,” Mr. Foster replied without hesitation. He spoke very quickly, had a vivacious blue eye, and took an evident pleasure in quoting figures.” This explains that Foster may be pedantic about figures at times, but is deeply involved in his work and enjoys imparting knowledge, and getting the credit for it.

Huxley uses very detailed language when describing physical objects, this is particularly evident, and incredibly useful, at the very start of the novel, when he is describing the Centre, “Cold for all the summer beyond the panes, for all the tropical heat of the room itself, a harsh thin light glared through the windows, hungrily seeking some draped lay figure, some pallid shape of academic goose-flesh, but finding only the glass and nickel and bleakly shining porcelain of a laboratory.”

It is this use of detailed language, and intuitive third person, that affords the reader a greater understanding of the issues Huxley is conveying, the third person allows us to see the character’s outward behaviour, Huxley also adds thought sentences that allow the reader to interpret what the characters are thinking as well. Overall, Huxley’s clarity of detail, and intuitive use of narration provides a greater appreciation of the issues he is pursuing and the message he is writing.