

***Brave New World Plot Synopsis* (courtesy [Dramatic Publishing](#))**

The play is set in the future where mindless happiness is universal; where babies are not born but decanted from bottles; where human frustrations are eliminated by happiness drugs. Into this society comes John, a sensitive, human throwback. His relationships with the inhabitants provide a provocative and pertinent questioning of modern values.

Brave New World Character Descriptions, Fall 2015

DIRECTOR (OLD: 2004 Description): The Director is an intelligent man, but he lacks the humility that might ideally come from those holding important positions. He is condescending and harsh to those who are beneath him. However, his drive and motivation comes from his strong sense of purpose and ambition to run his hatchery at the top level of efficiency. He should be played as a hard-handed leader, who insists on maintaining an environment of fear in his factory to maintain respect and control over his employees.

DIRECTOR (NEW: 2015 Description): He remains intelligent. He has a kneejerk reaction to those who question his authority, especially if they are equally bright. This defines his relationship with Bernard Marx. One might postulate that he holds an inner sense of shame and insecurity related to the experience he had while visiting Malpais in his youth. While not conscious of his role in fathering a child, John, he is all too painfully aware that he abandoned a Beta minus in the wilds of the reservation. Perhaps this is the thorn which causes him to be such a painfully sharp instrument against certain people, especially Bernard Marx.

In audition, show me a man of intelligence, control, and confidence at the surface and a man of insecurity, jealousy, and pettiness underneath. We all know some of these individuals. Outwardly their facade of cool control and composure, amiability and confidence bristle. However, in hushed voices and backroom conversations they reveal their weaknesses, insecurities, and fractured sense of self, often without even realizing it. Let's see what you can come up with, gents!

MUSTAPHA MOND (OLD: 2004 Description): Mond one of the ten world controllers of society. He exists at the absolute top position of control in the hierarchy of the new world society. Unlike the Director, Mond is a leader who recognizes the need for positive interaction with those who work beneath him. He is highly intelligent, articulated, and unexpectedly philosophical. The person who plays this character should embody a sense of power and importance, but also display a genuine sense of good-naturedness towards others. This part may be given to either a male or female.

MUSTAPHA MOND (NEW: 2015 Description): Mond is a wonderful character. She (we're casting a female in this role) is the wizard behind the curtain. Intelligent and rational, observant and curious, Mond sits comfortably in her role as one of the elite ten human beings on the planet who are charged with holding together the society that is the brave new world. In her eyes, the system is as perfect as is possible. Supremely confident in its strength, she readily jumps at the chance to test its perfection by studying the process of integration by a savage-born into it. Even so, she is not all that she appears. In her youth, she too nearly lost favor with society and was close to being banished. Her role isn't easy, and her attitudes are quite wonderfully illustrated in her line, "Happiness is a hard master . . . especially other people's happiness."

Okay, what I want to see in audition is a calm, collected, and discernibly regal portrayal of a woman who sits on high and calmly revels in the order she has helped to maintain. However, she shouldn't be portrayed as arrogant, belittling, or aloof. I'm having a difficult time likening her to another character. She certainly is *not* akin to *The Hunger Games'* [President Snow](#). She has a genuine sense of concern for the well-being and comfort of other human beings on a grand scale. So me a magnificent lady of refinement, intelligence, curiosity, and calm order. She will not be heard from until callbacks!

HENRY FOSTER (OLD: 2004 Description): A prototypical Alpha male. He is good-looking, charming, and full of confidence. He has been seeing Lenina frequently, while also maintaining relationships with other women, as a good society abiding Alpha should. He holds low respect for Bernard Marx.

HENRY FOSTER (NEW: 2015 Description): Bernard views Henry as a rival, in a society where jealousy (along with all other emotions, save for happiness) is frowned upon. Henry should be portrayed as being confident, bold, charming, intelligent, and debonair to a fault. He is a model citizen. He also serves as a foil to Bernard. That doesn't offer much depth though, does it? Yeah, you can read this guy surfacey and hit the necessary tone. What else can you show me about Henry in audition? Use your brains and make interesting choices for us to watch!

BERNARD MARX (OLD: 2004 Description): An Alpha-Plus who does not fit the part. He is much shorter than the average Alpha, which causes him to be the source of endless ridicule. This ridicule then causes him to become more disconnected with his society, which then causes him even greater ridicule. He is caught in a vicious circle. However, once he brings the savage back to society, he becomes instantly popular. His luck with women increases, however, so does his arrogance. The actor who portrays Bernard must be able to display a phenomenal transformation in personality as the play progresses. A difficult role, to be sure.

BERNARD MARX (NEW: 2015 Description): I can't alter much of what I initially thought of the character of Bernard. He is a wonderful, leading role. The richness of this part comes from how far the character does transform from beginning to end. He's a nice case study. Nerd transforms into cool, smooth operator. Power goes to his head, and he becomes the very thing he once reviled, a self-absorbed, arrogant, man with a paper-thin layer of sincerity and character. Can you say, "hypocrite"? You know this person? Have you watched his or her transformation?

I think that's a pretty simply roadmap for the approach in auditions. What I'll be looking for are clearly defined, stark changes in his personality during various scene reads. Everything should change as he changes, including physicality, expressions, gestures, and tone. It's a very choice role, guys. Work for it!

HELMHOLTZ WATSON (OLD: 2004 Description): Hemholtz is very similar to Henry Foster, but even more confident and successful in life. He has a very agreeable occupation as a feelie writer, which awards him constant admiration by women. He is a very close friend to Bernard. We later learn that their friendship is based on their mutual sense of disconnection with society. However, Hemholtz prospers in the society, while wanting to do more through his writing. Bernard, on the other hand, flounders in the society. Hemholtz should be played with confidence and poise, but should also appear truly likeable and sympathetic to the audience.

HELMHOLTZ WATSON (NEW: 2015 Description): Again, I won't counter any of my earlier thoughts. I will say that Helmholtz is one of my favorite characters from the novel. He's popular, successful, intelligent, and genuinely good-natured. He hasn't been corrupted by his good fortune. At the end of the play, he's even given the chance to go on to greater things, a gift from Mond. Make me like him in audition. Play natural, genuine confidence and likeability, sans douchieness.

LENINA CROWNE (OLD: 2004 Description): A Beta, Lenina is still allowed to regularly interact with Alphas. She is a model citizen of her society but has recently caused her best friend distress over her actions. In recent weeks, Lenina has been seeing the same man, without dating anyone else. However, she soon breaks this pattern by accompanying Bernard Marx to a savage reservation in what is presently the western half of the United States. Lenina should be played as a good-natured and innocent woman. She generally fits her role in life to a tee and does not question her society or its structure and rules. The actor who plays Lenina must also be adept at portraying a very passionate and romantic nature. This will be crucial in her scenes with John, for whom she holds great affinity.

LENINA CROWNE (NEW: 2015 Description): Broken record. I stand by everything in my previous character description for Lenina. I'll add that she should be played with a solid grasp of the art of flirtation. She knows the standard techniques for suggesting mutual interest in another, and she has no hesitation or difficulty in navigating the world that is relationship management in the society. However, John throws her for loop. She discerns his interest in her, but he never acts upon it, despite her deafeningly obvious signals of mutual interest. It is this aspect of the plotline that makes the portrayal of the role interesting and a challenge. I would also add that her conditioning under the society's norms prevent her from understanding John's interactions. Moreover, some of her natural responses and behaviors seem to be borderline abhorrent to him.

Alright. Let's get down to the nuts and bolts of the audition approach. So me a confident, young woman who knows how to flirt. So me Lenina's solid intellect, but also show me her curiosity. Not many women of this society are willing to belong with Bernard. She is not the norm. She finds his unorthodoxy alluring. The greatest challenge of this role comes at the close of our story as she responds to John's death. Sorry, spoiler alert. Whoops, guess I should have given the alert before the spoiler itself. Okay, be genuine in portraying Lenina. Don't "act" for me, especially during her most challenging scenes. Additionally, show me outward confidence as she interacts with John, while also given unintended hints of inner frustration by his lack of action.

FANNY DUNN (OLD: 2004 Description): Another Beta, Fanny fulfills the position for Lenina that Hemholtz fulfills for Bernard. She is the perfect best friend. She care for Lenina, and constantly works to assist her friend. She offers continual council and advice to Lenina, and attempts to prevent her friend from incurring trouble in life. The actor who plays Fanny should be confident, but to a much lesser degree than Lenina. Fanny should be portrayed as the friend who doesn't always tell you what you want to hear but instead works to tell you what you need to hear.

FANNY DUNN (NEW: 2015 Description): Well, I'll start by saying that this character reminds me of a story I tell about a friend who taught kindergarten in London for a period. She learned a lesson in the subtle differences between British English and American English when she, out of frustration by her students' non-compliance to sit for story time, she yelled, "Come over here and sit on your [fannies](#) right now!" The entire group went instantly silent. And, presumably, the little boys were thoroughly confused. Okay, I need to post this information, so enough sideline chatter. I love my final statement about Fanny from the 2004 description. Yeah, that's her. Be that person.

JOHN "THE SAVAGE" (OLD: 2004 Description): John is a strikingly unique character. Once he emerges on the stage, the focus of the play greatly shifts from Bernard to him. He is truly an outsider. He has been shunned from the society of the reservation because of the color of his skin, as well as the fact that his mother has frequently slept with the husbands of many women in his village. Once he arrives in the modern society of the world state, he again begins to feel alienated. He is disgusted by the patterns, rules, behavior, and practices of those living in this society. In addition, the habits and principals that he was taught to appreciate living in the reservation are seen as humorous and a source of laughter to lose from the modern society. The actor who plays John must display a sense of intelligence, curiosity, and extreme inner strength. However, the audience must also see him as a character that is out of place and lost in both worlds.

JOHN "[THE SAVAGE](#)" (NEW: 2015 Description): No, not *that* "Savage"! I can't add much of anything new. He's a great acting challenge, guys. What happens in our future society following John's untimely death? Who knows? Does it have a lasting impact? Do his actions alter the behavior of Mustapha Mond in the weeks, months, and years that follow? Probably not in any significant way. John's greatest challenge is performance is portraying his inner affections for Lenina, while trying to outwardly hide them. It's a function of his conditioning, which taught the virtues of modesty. Additionally, his responses to his mother's death and he actions at the end of the play cannot be "acted" for our audiences. I'm guessing that 96% of you have not grappled with the exact experiences John undergoes. So you'll need to dig from the closest substitutes you can find as you find your approach to his most challenging scenes.

LINDA (OLD: 2004 Description): Linda is a wonderful character. She is ultimately lost in that she exists between two worlds as well. However, unlike her son, she becomes alienated in the modern society because of physical differences. Without the aide of modern medical procedures that are routine in the modern society, Linda has dramatically aged in the nature process. As such, her face is lined, her hair is grayed, and she has put on weight, all of which is unheard of in the modern society. However, she still desires to return to, and then fully exist in this society from which she was raised. The actor who portrays Linda should display similar attitudes and characteristics as Fanny might. However, we must also slowly see that she is ultimately incongruent with the world she lost many years before.

LINDA (NEW: 2015 Description): She's a great role, ladies. She is an innocent whose life has been difficult and unforgiving. Despite these circumstances, she's not hardened or become embittered over time. She remains a loving human being with whom the audience should genuinely empathize. I want to see her innocence and inner-goodness in audition.

ARCH COMMUNITY SONGSTER (2015 Description): He's a pompous ass. Sorry, but he is. I hate this guy. Totally full of himself. Anyway, we can make him interesting. Hey, what if we used a [voice modulator](#) when he offers the impromptu speech at the party? Might be cool!

MISS ROTHCHILD (2015 Description): Morgana is the manager of a factory owned by the Electrical Equipment Corporation. She provides a tour of the factory to John and Bernard. Her role in the novel is completely different. No worries. We don't have much information about her, so she's a reasonably open slate for development. Just make sure she conforms to the conformity, as do most all of our world's characters.

DR SHAW (2015 Description): Dr. Shaw is the physician assigned to care for Linda during her preparation to bow out of life. She follows protocol skillfully, and realizes how kind she is being by cutting Linda's life short in order to stave off a continuity life of suffering in her abhorrent state. Hey, again, she's a product of her conditioning. Don't judge!

MISS KEATE (2015 Description): Miss Keate is the headmistress of a conditioning school in London. She's attractive, well-spoken, and a guardian of the educational system in the new world. She looks forward to "Death Days." Who wouldn't? They serve chocolate éclairs on those days. Nice!

BENITO HOOVER (2015 Description): He's a one of Lenina's former lovers. She described him as being "too hairy." Bernard doesn't enjoy his exchange with Benito, following Lenina's departure. Bernard offer a lovely quote in considering Benito's behavior. He genuinely attempts to offer Bernard comfort, as he's been conditioned to do. Bernard states, "Those who meant well behaved in the same way as those who meant badly." Wow. Interesting, no?

WARDEN (2015 Description): [The warden](#)... NO! Not that kind of warden. (Idiot.) The Warden is the warden of the Malpais Reservation. He serves as a guide for Bernard and Lenina as well as the audience, as his dialog offers us nicely subtle plot exposition describing the lives and practices of the savages who populate the reservation. They're all such silly, backward people. And, oh, they do make one laugh! He instantly has the hots for Lenina, and he makes no show of covering up his interest. Why would he? You're not supposed to in our society. Get it?

MISS JOANNA DIESEL (2015 Description): She is a beta secretary, or, to be politically correct, an administrative assistant. We might also use the title "[executive liaison](#)." Ah, great film, and a brilliantly funny scene! Okay, Miss Diesel serves as the executive liaison to the Warden on the reservation. She knows how to manage her manager quite well.

HITLERETTE BRADLEY (2015 Description): She's a star of numerous [feelies](#), and, yeeeah, she's very pneumatic! She's one of Bernard's party guests, following his stratospheric rise in popularity.

NURSE (2015 Description): She's a nurse in the hospital for the dying. Being the proper lady that she is, she's quick to chasten John's use of filthy language in front of children. (He actually used the "m" word!)

INDIAN GUIDE (2015 Description): He's the member of the reservation who leads Bernard and Lenina on their tour of Malpais.

YOUNG MOTHER (2015 Description): She's young. She's a mother.

OLD CRONE (2015 Description): He's not as spry as the young crone. She's old, ugly, thin. She's had a tough go of it living on the reservation.

HIGH PRIEST (2015 Description): He leads the ceremonial dance, ushering a young warrior into manhood. He also has a doctorate of theology

TWO ASSISTANTS (2015 Description): They are savages from Malpais. They assist during the ceremony. (Obviously.)

INDIAN BOY (2015 Description): He's just a boy! Well, and he's Indian.

DANCERS (2015 Description): They shake it.

DRUMMERS (2015 Description): They keep the beat going.

EPSILONS (2015 Description): They're the lowest members of the caste system. And they're "semi-moronic." Just like teenagers!

TRAINEES (2015 Description): They're Alphas and Betas. Their job is to make sure the children learn reel good.

TWO GIRLS (2015 Description): They're Betas. They ain't Alphas, but they're still pretty hot. Sorry, "pneumatic."

WAITRESS (2015 Description): She serves food.

HOSPITAL ATTENDANT (2015 Description): She's a gamma. She's not sure she loves the State's healthcare system, and she's pretty sure it all stems back about 75 years to something called "Obamacare." (And, again, she's a gamma, so there's that.)

THREE CHILDREN (2015 Description): They're Delta's and they get to visit the hospital for the dying. Chocolate éclairs and all the best toys! They *looooves* going to the hospital for the dying!

TWO POLICEMEN (2015 Description): They're Betas. They're in uniform. Do they tickle your fancy, ladies?

EXTRAS (2015 Description): We'll have TONS of opportunities for the extras to have stage time. We'll need lab technicians, students, resident savages of Malpais, children, restaurant patrons, party guests. Believe me, you'll be onstage A LOT!

