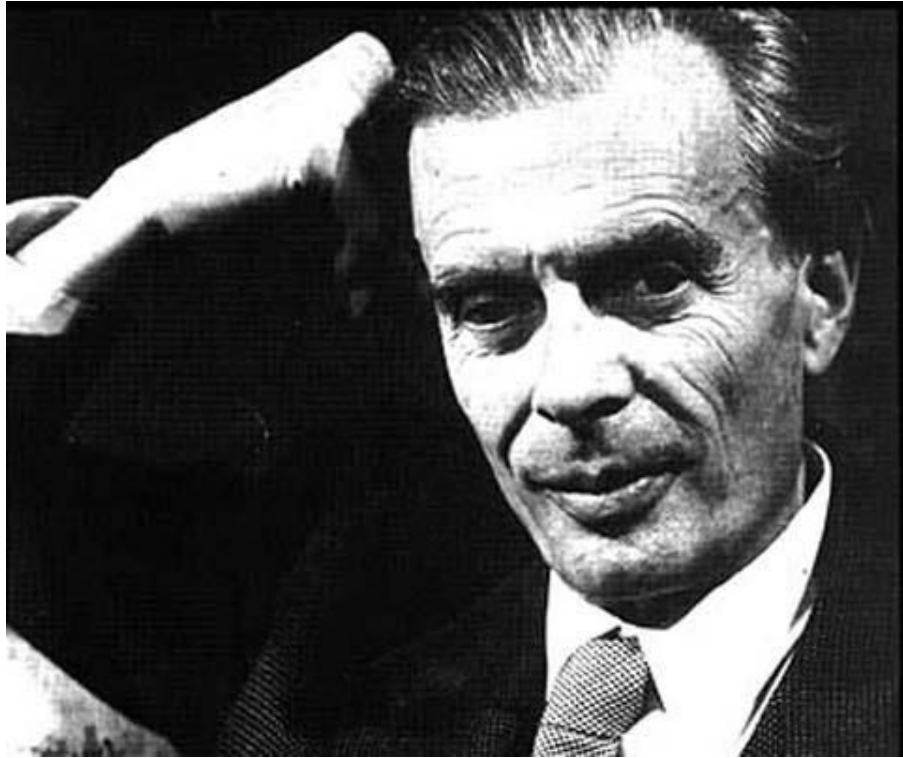


Aldous Leonard Huxley (26 July 1894 – 22 November 1963) was an English writer and one of the most prominent members of the famous Huxley family. Best known for his novels including *Brave New World* and a wide-ranging output of essays, Huxley also edited the magazine *Oxford Poetry*, and published short stories, poetry, travel writing, film stories and scripts. Huxley spent the later part of his life in the United States, living in Los Angeles from 1937 until his death.



Aldous Huxley was a humanist, pacifist, and satirist, and he was latterly interested in spiritual subjects such as parapsychology and philosophical mysticism.^{[1][2]} He is also well known for advocating and taking psychedelics.

By the end of his life Huxley was widely recognized to be one of the pre-eminent intellectuals of his time and respected as an important researcher into visual communication and sight-related theories as well.

Aldous Huxley was born in Godalming, Surrey, UK, in 1894. He was the third son of the writer and schoolmaster Leonard Huxley and his first wife, Julia Arnold, who founded Prior's Field School. Julia was the niece of poet and critic Matthew Arnold and the sister of Mrs. Humphrey Ward. Aldous was the grandson of Thomas Henry Huxley, the zoologist, agnostic and controversialist ("Darwin's Bulldog"). His brother Julian Huxley and half-brother Andrew Huxley also became outstanding biologists. Aldous had another brother, Noel Trevelyan (1891–1914), who committed suicide after a period of clinical depression.^[4]

Huxley began his learning in his father's well-equipped botanical laboratory, then continued in a school named Hillside. His teacher was his mother, who supervised him for several years until she became terminally ill. After Hillside, he was educated at Eton College. Huxley's mother died in 1908 when he was 14. In 1911, he suffered an illness (keratitis punctata) which "left [him] practically blind for two to three years".^[5] Aldous' near-blindness disqualified him from service in the First

World War. Once his eyesight recovered sufficiently, he was able to study English literature at Balliol College, Oxford. In 1916 he edited *Oxford Poetry* and later graduated (B.A.) with first class honours. His brother Julian wrote,

Following his education at Balliol, Huxley was financially indebted to his father and had to earn a living. He taught French for a year at Eton, where Eric Blair (later to become George Orwell) and Stephen Runciman were among his pupils, but was remembered as an incompetent and hopeless teacher who couldn't keep discipline. Nevertheless, Blair and others were impressed by his use of words. For a short while in 1918, he was employed acquiring provisions at the Air Ministry.

Post World War II

After the Second World War, Huxley applied for United States citizenship. His application was continuously deferred on the grounds that he would not say he would take up arms to defend the U.S. He claimed a philosophical, rather than a religious objection, and therefore was not exempt under the McCarran Act. He withdrew his application. Nevertheless, he remained in the country; and in 1959 he turned down an offer of a Knight Bachelor by the Macmillan government. During the 1950s Huxley's interest in the field of psychical research grew keener, and his later works are strongly influenced by both mysticism and his experiences with psychedelic drugs.



In October 1930, the English occultist Aleister Crowley dined with Huxley in Berlin, and to this day rumours persist that Crowley introduced Huxley to peyote on that occasion. He was introduced to mescaline (the key active ingredient of peyote) by the psychiatrist Humphry Osmond in 1953. Through Dr. Osmond, Huxley met millionaire Alfred Matthew Hubbard who would deal with LSD on a wholesale basis. On 24 December 1955, Huxley took his first dose of LSD. Indeed, Huxley was a pioneer of self-directed psychedelic drug use "in a search for enlightenment", famously taking 100 micrograms of LSD as he lay dying. His psychedelic drug experiences are described in the essays *The Doors of Perception* (the title deriving from some lines in the book *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* by William Blake), and *Heaven and Hell*. Some of his writings on psychedelics became frequent reading among early hippies. While living in Los Angeles, Huxley was a friend of Ray Bradbury.

On his deathbed, unable to speak, Huxley made a written request to his wife Laura for "LSD, 100 µg, intramuscular". According to her account of his death¹ in *This*

Timeless Moment, she obliged with an injection at 11:45 am and another a couple of hours later. He died aged 69, at 5:20 pm on 22 November 1963, several hours after the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Huxley's ashes were interred in the family grave at the Watts Cemetery, home of the Watts Mortuary Chapel in Compton, a village near Guildford, Surrey, England.

Media coverage of Huxley's passing was overshadowed by the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, on the same day, as was the death of the British author C. S. Lewis, who also died on 22 November. This coincidence was the inspiration for Peter Kreeft's book *Between Heaven and Hell: A Dialog Somewhere Beyond Death with John F. Kennedy, C. S. Lewis, & Aldous Huxley*. Huxley's literary legacy continues to be represented by the literary agency headed by Georges Borchardt.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aldous_Huxley