I will argue, according to the two most common understandings of happiness delineated by Lyubormisky, King, and Diener, The denizens of the Brave New World are much happier than the citizens of our world. This tells us that happiness is not the most important value, contrary to popular belief.

In their paper, Lyubormisky, King, and Dieter propose that happiness is "the frequent experience of positive emotion, ... and infrequent (though not absent) negative emotions." (816) Later on, the say that one good indicator of happiness is life satisfaction. Since the concepts are intertwined, happiness can be approximated with a measure of overall life satisfaction. The inhabitants of the Brave New World surpass the inhabitants of our world on both possible interpretations.

Consider the first definition, that happiness is the frequent experience of positive emotion. In the Brave New World (BNW) their frequent use of soma results in far more positive emotions overall than our world could possibly match, even with the feeling of the reservation dwellers and the occasional negative emotion experienced by the inhabitants of BNW in between soma holidays. The only way our world could compete would be to have everyone strung out on ecstasy or heroine almost all the time. That is to say, for our world to use a soma analogue itself. Someone might argue that due to their use of soma, the inhabitants of BNW have no real negative emotions to put the happiness soma brings them into context, thus the happiness they experience is less intense than our own happiness. However, this overlooks that the citizens of BNW are not on soma constantly, and therefore do on occasion experience negative emotions. Regardless of how trivial the causes of these negative emotions may appear to us, the conditioning of the BNW citizens makes them very real to them, and since emotions are subjective in nature, we must grant that the do in fact have very real negative emotions to put their soma holidays in perspective.

The second definition is even easier for the BNW to accomplish, compared to our own. The predestination department ensures that each denizen of BNW receives some task to perform, and the conditioning that the denizens receive ensures that they all take great satisfaction from their work and station in life. If life satisfaction is a measure of happiness, then the BNW citizens are very happy indeed. Despite how hollow their satisfaction may seem to us, from their perspective it is quite real, and since satisfaction is measured from their perspective, it is obvious that they are satisfied with their lives.

What should be understood about the BNW is that it functions, in part, to provide a reduction to absurd the notion that happiness is the most important value. It is a common thing to say that one only wishes to be happy, and yet we recoil at the thought of living in the BNW. If happiness were truly the only value we cared about, we should be tripping over one another to get to the BNW, as opposed to shrinking back in horror. If we say we wish to have the most happiness, and were then offered the choice of living in the BNW or our world, there is no possible reason we could come up with to forsake the greater happiness of the BNW and remain in our world.