

Speed, it seems to me, provides the one genuinely modern pleasure. True, men have always enjoyed speed; but their enjoyment has been limited, until very recent times, by the capacities of the horse, whose maximum velocity is not much more than thirty miles an hour. Now thirty miles an hour on a horse feels very much faster than sixty miles an hour in a train or a hundred in an aeroplane. The train is too large and steady, the aeroplane too remote from stationary surroundings, to give their passengers a very intense sensation of speed. The automobile is sufficiently small and intoxicating speed-purveyor, with the galloping horse. The inebriating effects of speed are noticeable, on horseback, at about twenty miles an hour, in a car at about sixty. When the car has passed seventy-two, or thereabouts, one begins to feel an unprecedented sensation—a sensation which no man in the days of horses ever felt. It grows intenser with every increase of velocity. I myself have never travelled at much more than eight miles an hour in a car; but those who have drunk a stronger brewage of this strange intoxicant tell me that new marvels await anyone who has the opportunity of passing the hundred mark. At what point the pleasure turns into pain, I do not know. Two hundred miles an hour must be absolute torture.

Aldous Huxley