12ACP and SCW Remote Learning #4 – 3/27/20

1. Click on the Wikipedia link below, and **read the first few paragraphs of Fyodor Dostoevsky’s bio**. Feel free to read more if you’re interested, but the first few paragraphs should give enough context for the novella I’m asking you to read.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fyodor_Dostoevsky>

1. Now click on this second link. You’ll find a number of different formats for reading Dostoevsky’s *Notes from Underground*. I have to apologize this is not my favorite translation. I prefer the one we have book copies of in school (the language is clearer and more fun to read), but alas those are not available to us.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/600>

It’s a novella divided into parts I and II (which are themselves divided into sections that

also have roman numerals. For the sake of clarity I’ll call them “part” and “section”

respectively. Part I features the narrator, who never tells us his name but scholars refer

to as *The Underground Man*, ranting about his beliefs and opinions—these are

presumably an explanation as to why he has isolated himself “underground.” Some

translations have “underground” as “under the floorboards,” but we don’t know exactly

where he is. Part II is an actual story with characters and whatnot (and it takes place in

St. Petersburg), whose *plot* justifies why he went “underground.” We’ll take it all a little

bit at a time.

**For this assignment, read Part I sections I, II, III, and IV.** (20-25pages if in a book)

1. Write me an email with the following:
2. Optional personal update.
3. Your response to the following prompt:
4. The Underground Man could be considered an antihero—a protagonist who lacks conventional heroic qualities. He’s an extreme one at that—he not only antagonizes the normal virtues of society, but also antagonizes the readers themselves. Some of his opinions, however contrarian, are appealing. Which of his experiences below have you had some form of yourself? How so? Or, which of these opinions do you at least partially agree with? Why?

* Wishing to be sick
* Taking pleasure in the unhappiness of others
* Frustration due to uncertainty of own identity, or preferring to be something small or bad to being nothing at all
* The foolishness of “becoming something” in society
* Consciousness itself as a burden or “illness”
* Finding pleasure in your own pain (e.g. tootheache)
* Running into a wall (metaphorically)
* Not wanting to accept the laws of nature (e.g. 2+2=4)

**\*If you accept this challenge, send me your response by Monday 3/30\***