**Socratic Seminar—Dystopian Fiction**

*The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*

**Quotes and Analysis score 2x raw points**

**Goldstein’s Book:**

1. Why was inequality necessary for the Party? Is it necessary for similar reasons today? How is the Party ensuring inequality? What things are we doing in America to ensure inequality? What are the economic and emotional basis for a hierarchical society? Why would a society where everyone is wealthy but only a few have power fail?
2. How is ignorance strength? Does it apply to 2020?
3. How are the social classes chosen? What is most important for the Party at each level? Does the prophecy about the ‘low,’ ‘middle,’ and ‘high’ switching places in revolutions ring true?
4. What roles does *Doublethink* play for the Party? Do we *Doublethink* in America?
5. What is the purpose of modern warfare? Why can’t anyone ever win the war? Do they want to?
6. Is Big Brother real? When was he born? Does it even matter in an oligarchy/bureaucracy? Why?
7. What has made war not dangerous? Why does it matter? Why is war peace? Does it apply to 2018? Why does the Party bother telling the people who they are fighting or when the enemy switches?
8. What is most important in Goldstein’s book? Why?
9. Speculate: How is freedom slavery for the Party? This chapter was not included in *1984* but feel free to speculate about the contents of this chapter.
10. What flaws exist in Goldstein’s book? What about Orwell’s inclusion of the book in *1984*? Is it necessary? Does it matter to readers why the Party is the way it is?

**Smith’s Lecture:**

1. How do Oligarchies subvert democracy? How is this happening in the USA? Should we fear Oligarchy and Bureaucracy? Why/Why not? How relevant are these in America?

***The Future is History* Readings:**

1. What is totalitarianism? What parts of totalitarianism do you see in the world today? How do truth and privacy play into totalitarianism?
2. How does totalitarianism effect a population’s personality? Is totalitarianism more or less possible in 2018? Why does it matter that *Homo-Sovieticus* is still alive in Russia?
3. To what extent are the characters in *1984* similar to *Homo-Sovieticus?*
4. How does revisionist history, fake news, and unreliable information play a role in creating *Homo-Sovieticus*?