PAPER #3: DYSTOPIAN NOVEL (20%)
Due May 12

A **dystopia** is the opposite of a utopia. Rather than a perfect society where everyone is equal, free and happy, a dystopian society is a world of nightmarish oppression, inequality and corruption. A well-written dystopia is meant to be a reflection or exaggeration of our own society, warning us of how things may go horribly wrong in our own world if we aren't careful.

In this class, we've argued about literature, and also examined all the ways that literature itself presents arguments to the reader: arguments about how the world is, how it should be, how people are, and what should be valued in life. And there are few genres of literature that make their arguments so clearly and forcefully as dystopian stories do.

Choose a novel to read out of the list of classic dystopias provided below. You will write a **1200 word** analysis of your dystopia, examining what arguments the author was trying to make with their story.

LIST OF DYSTOPIAS:
- *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell (rating: R)
- *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury (rating: PG-13)
- *A Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley (rating: PG-13)
- *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (rating: R)
- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry (rating: PG)
- *Children of Men* by P.D. James (rating: R)
- *V for Vendetta* by Alan Moore (rating: R)
- *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* by Philip K. Dick (rating: PG-13)
- *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro (rating: PG-13)
- *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler (rating: PG-13)

Be warned that many of these stories are disturbing. Some feature violence, sexual content, drug use, language, and mental illness. I've done my best to put "ratings" on them so you know what you're getting into, so if you're sensitive to those sorts of things, you might want to steer toward the milder books.

I'd recommend picking your book and getting started reading it early, so you have enough time to finish without being too stressed. If you start one and find you can't get into it, or it's too disturbing to you, feel free to choose another (just don't wait too long!). That said, though, don't quit on any of these books too quickly. Some of them may be hard to get into at first, but they will hook you if you give them a chance.

Your analysis should focus primarily on the questions: "What aspects of society is the author critiquing in this story? What is he/she trying to warn us about?"

Look at where the conflicts in the story arise. What obstacles does the main character have to overcome? What exactly has gone so wrong in this society? How do those in power maintain their power, and wield it over others? What freedoms have been limited for regular people? And, most importantly, in what ways do these things reflect our own society?

A good dystopian story is like a mirror, showing us some aspect of our world or ourselves that is flawed and could potentially lead to a nightmare. Which flaws in humanity is this book trying to show us?

Your **claim** should state your overall position on what you think the major arguments of the book are. Use detailed quotes and evidence from the book to support your position throughout the paper.

In addition to your novel, you are required to include at least **3 secondary sources** to help you with your analysis. These sources may be anything from a biography about the author, to professional literary criticism of the novel, to articles about current-day issues that are relevant to the novel's concerns.

- As usual, I recommend using the HCC library database to find good sources. The librarians are always happy to help you research. If you don't know how to access or use the online library databases, just ask. I may go over it in class if enough people ask.
- You are not limited to only finding your sources from the HCC library, however. Just make sure that whatever other sources you find are professional & authoritative; don't use any old random blog you stumbled upon somewhere.
- Study-helper websites such as SparkNotes, Shmoop, etc., can be very helpful for getting inspiration and insight, but use them with caution! *Be careful not to plagiarize*. Do not simply copy/paste from these websites and run a few words through a thesaurus. Turnitin may not catch you, but I will, and I will not be pleased.
- You can't use Wikipedia as a source. But searching through the Wikipedia footnotes is often a useful way of finding good sources.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FINAL PAPER:

- An introduction with a clear **thesis statement**, stating what novel you're analyzing and what your main claim about the novel is.
- Incorporate several **direct quotes** from both the novel and your secondary sources to support your points, as well as from any additional sources, if you decide to use them.
- All of your quotes and paraphrased information should be correctly cited in **MLA format**.
- Include a properly formatted **MLA Works Cited Page** at the end. This should list the novel you analyzed, your three required secondary sources, and any additional sources you may have used.
    - If you aren't sure how to make a proper Works Cited page, please refer to the MLA Style Guide on the HCC Library's website: https://library.hccs.edu/mla-guide/bibliography
- **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE.** If you use an author's exact words, you must put them in quotation marks and cite your source. Otherwise, you must paraphrase. Both direct quotes and paraphrases should be cited.
- Length: 1200 words. You can go over that if you want, but don't write me a whole book.

FORMAT REQUIREMENTS:

- Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt. size
- Double-spaced; indented paragraphs; no extra spaces between paragraphs, please.
- MLA style heading and page numbers. If you aren't sure how to do this, please refer to the MLA Style Guide on the HCC Library's website.

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:

- **Rough Draft** = due Wednesday 5/4 (online)
    - Submit your rough draft of Paper #3 to Canvas by no later than midnight on Wednesday night. It should be at least 600 words, though it doesn't have to have an ending yet. At the end of your rough draft, please include at least 3 questions about the paper that you want your peer review partner to answer, e.g. "Do you think ___ part is weak? How would you suggest improving ____?"
- **Peer Review** = due Sunday 5/8 (online)
    - You will be randomly assigned someone else's rough draft to peer review. Look over it, leave feedback for how they might improve, and fill out the rubric that will be

included. To get full credit for this assignment, you must 1) edit the paper, 2) answer the questions your partner asked at the end of their paper, and provide some general feedback; and 3) fill out the rubric, with comments where applicable.
  ○ Someone else will also be looking over your own rough draft too, so use their feedback when you are typing up your final draft.
● **Final Draft** = due Wednesday 5/11 (online)
  ○ Submit the final 4-5 page version of Paper #3 by no later than midnight on Wednesday. Remember, I do not accept late work when it comes to the three big papers. Once midnight hits, if I don't have your paper, it's a zero—no exceptions.
● **Revision** (optional) = due anytime before Sunday 5/15
  ○ After I have graded your paper and given you feedback, you have the option to revise the paper again and turn in a new version in order to raise your grade. How much your grade changes depends on how much work you put into it and how much you take my feedback into consideration. You may submit a revision anytime throughout the semester. All revisions should be sent to me either through Canvas inbox or email, with the subject line clearly stating what it is.
    ■ NOTE: You may not actually see an improvement in your grade for a while, especially if you turn in a revision early, since I often don't get around to grading them till close to the end of the semester.

OTHER OPTIONAL HELP:

● I will be giving everyone basic feedback on your rough drafts, but if you'd like me to give you more detailed feedback (helping with grammar, organization, etc.), then you can email your rough drafts to me early and I will look over them when I have time. However, I will not look over any rough drafts sent to me the day before the final draft is due, so make sure you send it before then—the earlier, the better!

● You may also have an HCC tutor look over your rough draft ahead of time. You can contact an online tutor by going to https://hccs.upswing.io/. Provide me with evidence that a tutor looked at your paper, and I will give you extra credit points. :-)