Notes from the Underground by Fyodor Dostoyevsky exposes the paradox and effect of human consciousness in relation to one's happiness. The realm of consciousness that the Underground Man lives in is his metaphorical underground. Throughout the text, the narrator, the Underground Man, justifies his unhappiness, poor quality of life, and lack of action by explaining that his hyper-consciousness is a debilitating disease. This prevents him from being able to make decisions about which actions to take throughout his life. He hates himself for his inability to lead a life of action but attempts to ease his feelings of worthlessness by exaggerating his level of intelligence. If he can persuade himself that he is above other people, such as the men of action, because of his intellect, maybe he can survive his personal hell. The underground man repeatedly attempts to convince himself that while the men of action seem to enjoy their lives, it is at the expense of intellect. According to him, their happiness is a result of their inability to be hyper-aware. Despite his argument to appease his thoughts, he contradicts himself by expressing his misery. He dives into what it means to be conscious of one's individual and unique self: the thoughts, feelings, and desires of a man who is able to open his eyes to the world around him at the expense of his own happiness.

The rampant, disorganized thoughts of the Underground Man in Part I set the scene of what his underground is; the dark, lonely space in his mind where his intellect runs wild. He is hyper-aware of his surroundings, his orientation, and his social standing within his town of St.
Petersburg; however, this awareness is precisely what causes him to be forever trapped inside of his underground. “Nevertheless, I remain firmly convinced that not only is being overly conscious a disease but so is being conscious at all.” (Page 710) If only he could live a simple life like the rest of mankind, and go about his day without interrogating his own thoughts. Unfortunately, he truly believes he is too intelligent to complacently move along with the ebbs and flows of life. He insists that he spend his time obsessing over the what-ifs and could-be scenarios in his mind; he ruminates over events that have long passed because he has never been able to make the necessary amends in order to move forward, “Imagine if, two years had already passed since he’d insulted me…” (735). Two years had passed in this instance of him being insulted, and he has yet to make a decision about his course of action for revenge because he is too aware of the possible outcomes; he wants to make sure the affair is meticulously planned. Of course, he blames his inability to lead a normal life on his outstanding intellect. He is so intelligent, according to himself, that he is able to see men as the sheep they are, just living day to day, without any regard for the deeper meanings or implications of their actions. Nevertheless, he is the one living in misery due to his consciousness.

As the underground man continues to over-analyze his thoughts, he drives himself deeper into his underground, “Even then I was carrying around the underground in my soul.” (Page 733) further reinforcing that his underground is a self-contained result of his consciousness. As his notes move into Part II, he exposes an array of events that have occurred in his life from his underground perspective that justify his solitude. His interpersonal relationships are disrupted by his hyper-consciousness affliction; he contradicts himself by pleading for human contact through awkward encounters. He then goes into detail about why he cannot befriend people who are below his intellect and level of self-awareness, “They failed to understand essential things and
The Underground Man successfully encompasses the inner turmoil and paradox that arises from one’s hyper-consciousness. As humans, we have the choice to mind our own business, and move throughout our day to day life without concern for the meaning of our existence, or to open our eyes to unveil the reality of the world we live in. As a result of becoming hyper-aware, we consequently inflict pain on ourselves. Decision making becomes difficult due to constantly questioning the motive and outcome of actions. This awareness allows for the ability to understand the pain of others and leaves behind the deep human desire companionship. The only way to feel joy in relationships is to force others to feel the same misery that is inflicted upon himself. However, other party cannot grasp the knowledge of this hyper-consciousness. The despair of the underground cannot be left, so others must be brought down into it to feel better about oneself. Ironically, the deep underground is a result of being above the realm of physical human existence. All is lost once the reality of life is exposed, and what else is there to do than remain in the underground of one’s consciousness where happiness is obsolete.

Later Draft

* effective argument
* for readers
* you can't even say it.

# What I * am trying to convey about consciousness.
took no interest in important, weighty subjects, so that I couldn’t help considering them beneath me.” (Page 744). He is frustrated that he cannot form a functional relationship so he goes on his tirade about how his hyper-consciousness, and ability to see what the others cannot, is the reason he cannot have companions, thus keeping him in his misery. He blames his inaction on his intelligence and desperately tries to rationalize why other men seemingly have successful lives, “Now I live out my days in my corner, taunting myself with the spiteful and entirely useless consolation that an intelligent man cannot seriously become anything and that only a fool can become something.” (Page 708-709) He is unable to move in any direction because his conscious mind continues to reveal the inadequacies in becoming anything.

The Underground Man, due to his ability to self-analyze, knows that life is easier and enjoyable for the men of action and despises their ignorance is bliss lifestyle. He recognizes the potential for a better life if he pulls himself out of the depths of his underground, but he cannot do so because his hyper-consciousness has created a vicious cycle he cannot escape. The seen cannot be unseen; he can’t simply extract himself from his hyper-conscious mind and hope for happiness through ignorance. Because he cannot be a happy man, he spreads his malady onto those around him. He treats his associates as wretched as possible to momentarily feel joy in making others feel as miserable as himself. “For a while, I felt that I’d turned her soul inside out and had broken her heart; the more I became convinced of this, the more I strived to reach my goal as quickly and forcefully as possible.” (Page 765) Paradoxically, he feels worse about himself afterward, “…I was fully aware of the despicable meanness of my own spiteful stupidity; yet, at the same time, I couldn’t restrain myself.” (Page 755) because he is immediately aware that his underground is unfathomable to those he encounters.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annotation Guide: Question</th>
<th>Self Assess Score</th>
<th>Peer Eval. Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does your title specifically name what your essay is about? (not in a generic/general way?)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>How does your opening sentence seek to engage readers?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the paragraph’s first sentence effectively introduce the main claim and overall idea of the paragraph to come?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reread the entire paragraph: does every sentence contribute to the paragraph’s overall idea?</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark transition words. Have you signaled transitions to connect ideas between the sentences in the paragraph?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does your last sentence effectively wrap up the paragraph by connecting back to the main idea?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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(3d) Concluding sentence

A final sentence that usually reiterates or sums up the paragraph’s claim.

(4a) Integrating quotations

Do not just drop quotations into your text. Smoothly incorporate all quotations using signal words. For further info., click here.

Have you integrated the quotation smoothly and effectively into your text?

4 4

(4b) Format for in-text citations

For info. on formatting MLA-style Works Cited or in-text citations, visit the Purdue online writing lab, searching “purdue owl works cited”

Does each quotation (direct or indirect) contain a citation to the author and page # of the source being cited?

3 5

(4c) Works Cited page

For info. on when to use italics, underlining, quotation marks, click here.

Is full information provided for each source? Is the bibliography correctly formatted?

4 4

(4d) Uses quotation marks, underlining, italics properly

For info. on when to use italics, underlining, quotation marks, click here.

Is your use of quotation marks, underlining, and italics correct?

4 5
Self-Annotation Assignment  (due by Oct. 11)

To review your work in a careful way and reinforce your learning about the key elements of critical analysis writing, perform the following self-annotations:

1) You need to mark or circle each element in your text (handwritten or typed).
2) Provide an annotation addressing the question posed in the “Annotation Guide.”
3) Score the element in the chart below, from 1-5, using the scoring guide at right.

Using this Self-Annotation system properly should help you slow down and pay attention to distinct elements of your work, to make sure you’ve done your best and produced an essay that you will be proud of and pleased with. Once you’ve completed your self-evaluation, seek the assistance of a Learning Center writing tutor or a trusted peer from class for a second opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Elements of a Critical Analysis</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Annotation Guide: Question</th>
<th>Self Assess Score (1 - 5, see above)</th>
<th>Peer Eval. Score (1 - 5, see above)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduces a Theme (not just a topic)</td>
<td>A theme is a claim about how the subject works in the text; a debatable opinion about the subject; an abstract concept articulating what the work is about; an underlying meaning within the work, often a truth or insight about life—not necessarily something intended by the author</td>
<td>Does the essay introduce a theme rather than merely a topic? Is your argument or claim about the topic clear?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Makes a Claim — worked on this during session, will change it will be much more effective</td>
<td>To make a claim, you must stick your neck out, articulate a position that is debatable, something that not everyone will agree with.</td>
<td>Is the claim something that needs to be argued/justified, rather than a fact or something obvious? Does the claim seek to answer a how or why question?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies Evidence</td>
<td>Details and examples (including indirect reference to or direct quotation from the text) to support your paragraph’s claim.</td>
<td>Mark and label each piece of supporting evidence. Is it clear how the evidence supports the point you are making?</td>
<td>4</td>
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(continued)