

MF 101-02: Introduction to Media Studies
Tuesday/Thursday 11:10 am-12:30 pm, Harder 203
Monday 7:00-9:30 pm, Emerson Auditorium
Professor Paul Benzon
pbenzon@skidmore.edu

Office: Palamountain 333
Office Hours: Wednesday 11:30am-12:30pm,
Thursday 12:45-1:45pm, and by appointment
Course Blog: <https://intromediastudies02.wordpress.com/>

Course Description

We live in a culture saturated by media. From the television shows and films that stream to us on our laptops and tablets to the images and updates we consume on our phones, media texts and technologies are so omnipresent within contemporary life that they seem almost invisible. Yet this seeming invisibility makes it all the more important that we look closely at the workings of media technology, and that we ask critical questions of the media that surround us. What roles do different media forms play in producing artistic and social meanings? What powers do media hold over us, and what powers might they give us as consumers and producers? How have media changed from the beginning of the modern period to our contemporary moment of digital convergence?

In this course, we will ask these and other questions as we explore the broad and eclectic terrain of media and film studies. We will hone our skills in the critical analysis of a range of media forms, including film, television, radio and sound, and the internet and new media. Studying key texts in these forms alongside a selection of critical writings, we will consider how media technologies create aesthetic effects and how they play crucial roles in shaping social questions of identity, power, community, and artistry. Our ultimate goal will be to become more critically aware as students, consumers, producers, artists, and citizens within contemporary media culture.

Course Goals

In this course, you will

- Become conversant with foundational concepts, questions, and concerns in the field of media studies
- Learn to analyze media texts closely and critically, making use of formal analysis and theoretical frameworks in class discussion as well as in your own scholarly writing
- Engage texts across a range of media with an eye towards larger social, cultural, and historical questions, aided by theoretical and critical concepts and writings
- Analyze media historically, considering the questions and issues of contemporary media culture alongside those of earlier periods
- Participate in class discussions and workshops focused on the formal and cultural analysis of media
- Write thoughtfully and critically about media texts in a range of formats and contexts

Required Texts

All print readings are available in the Course Packets. Video clips to be viewed for class will be accessible either from a class YouTube playlist at <http://bit.ly/mf101benzon> (marked YT on the course schedule) or otherwise as noted. Full-length films will be watched during our screening block and will also be available on reserve at the library for further study and use in papers and other assignments.

Grading

You must complete all of the following course assignments in order to pass the course:

Class Participation	15%
Course Blog and Daily DJing	15% (13% blog, 2% DJing)
Discord	5%
Sequence Analysis	10%
Music Video Analysis	15%
Television Studies Anthology	18%
Digital/Film Paper	22%

Late work will be marked down one grade level for each class period after the due date (for example, from a B+ to a B for one late day). Extensions will only be granted in the case of an emergency documented by a college dean.

Preparation, Participation, and Class Structure

We will spend our class time each day on a variety of different activities, including but not limited to full-class discussions, small-group discussions, writing workshops, and in-class writing. While I may occasionally give short lectures, the bulk of our time will be spent talking and engaging together with the course material and with each other's ideas. In order to do this, it is essential that you come to class prepared to address the day's material. This means completing all reading before class, bringing any relevant texts to class, and being prepared to discuss them thoughtfully. You should have interpretations, questions, and responses to share with the class, and you should be prepared to offer these on your own as well as in being called on in our conversation. Strong class participation includes contributing regularly to class discussion in a range of ways, listening respectfully and attentively to others, responding thoughtfully to their comments, and working diligently during in-class work both on your own and with others—in order to do well in the participation element of the course, you should expect to do each of these each day. More generally, the more each of you brings your own thinking to the discussion, the more all of us will get out of class—I encourage you to offer perspectives, ideas, examples, oppositions, questions, and other contributions as much as possible. If you are uncomfortable with speaking in class, please let me know or come see me at the beginning of the semester so that we can work together to make things easier for you.

In order to facilitate a productive experience for everyone in class, please be in your seat and ready to start at the beginning of class time. Unless I indicate otherwise or there is an emergency, please remain in your seat during class—this will allow us all to remain focused on our work at hand (this means using the restroom, getting water, etc., **before or after class** rather than during class).

Although I will lecture relatively rarely, that does not mean that you should not take notes on what the class has to say about the material we are discussing, just as you would in a lecture course. Having a record of the class' comments, concerns, debates, etc., will be extremely valuable to you in preparing to develop topics and arguments for further writing and thinking in the course. More broadly, consistently remaining actively engaged in our discussions, even if only as a listener and note-taker at certain moments, will help you to develop as a critical thinker and writer.

During class discussion, I expect you to be attentive to what your classmates have to say and respectful of their ideas and opinions. Thinking critically and openly about complex issues is a crucial part of college education—we all have a responsibility to create a classroom atmosphere where everyone is free to offer his or her opinion, as long as we all do so respectfully and kindly.

Laptops and tablets may be used in class only for class-related work such as note-taking, class writing, and research. Even if you are using such a device for class work, please put it away promptly if and when I ask so that we can turn our attention to specific other things. If inappropriate computer or electronic use becomes a problem for some members of the class, I will revoke permission to use them for the class as a whole. If you have questions about whether a certain use of technology is appropriate or not, please don't hesitate to ask me.

Course Blog

Over the course of the semester, you will post regularly to a course blog focused on the texts and issues we will be discussing in class. This work will serve several purposes: firstly (and most immediately), it will give us a chance to think and talk critically about some of the course material before we discuss it in class and to gear our discussion towards issues and questions that are important to you or that you are curious about. In giving you the opportunity to bring new material and new areas of concern into our conversation, it will also help you to generate topics, ideas, and arguments for papers.

Blog Posting. Note that the blog is located on our independent course website at <https://intromediastudies02.wordpress.com/>, **not on Blackboard** (although we will use Blackboard for email, papers, and other elements of the course). You are not required to register with WordPress in order to post on the blog, but you must subscribe to the blog so that you receive notifications of new material that I post, and you should include your name or other identifying information in your posts so that we can all follow the conversation online and I can give you credit for your work. The current post will appear at the top of the page—click on the comments link for that post to read what others have written and post your writing.

Blog Content. Your work on the blog will take different forms at different points in the semester. Sometimes I will post a question for you to respond to, while at other times your posts can be more open-ended; sometimes I will ask you to address a particular passage or other element from the reading, while at other times I will ask you to think about a broader issue or question that connects several texts. The blog is a space for us as a group to be reflective about the material we are discussing, and to begin to air initial responses, interpretations, and reactions before we pursue them more fully in class discussion. In this spirit, your posting to the blog should be thoughtful and analytical—you should always ground your writing in quotation and close analysis of our reading for the day, and you should offer interpretations and critical questions rather than summaries or solely personal responses. The more engaged an approach you take, the stronger your posts will be and the more you will be able to bring to our discussions.

Each of your posts should be **at least 250 words** (this is roughly equivalent to one double-spaced typed page—you might write and edit your post in Microsoft Word or a similar program so that you know the length of your post and so that you have a backup of it on your computer). I encourage you to include images, links, video clips, and other media elements in your posts.

Blog Scheduling. Unless I specify otherwise, each week's post will be due **by 9:00am before Tuesday's class** (consult the course schedule below for specific details). **Because of the time-sensitive nature of the blog, late posts will not receive credit.**

Blog Grading. I will grade your main analytical posts on a scale of 0-4 each week. Criteria for each grade are as follows:

Grade Characteristics

- 0 The post is missing or late.
- 1 The post is severely underdeveloped: it does not quote or cite the relevant text(s) and does not engage the issues they raise in a substantive or specific way.
- 2 The post is underdeveloped: it discusses the text(s) in a way that is generalized, personal rather than analytical, and/or based largely in summary, and may not quote or cite them directly.
- 3 The post is successful: it quotes, analyzes, and engages with textual material in order to make analytical claims about the issues the material raises, but may not develop those claims or ideas to their fullest potential.
- 4 The post is exceptional: it uses textual or other material to make thoughtful, original analytical claims and/or connections, and engages and analyzes the issues it raises in independent, in-depth ways.

Daily DJing

Once over the semester, you will serve as the DJ for one of our class meetings. As our Daily DJ, you are responsible for picking one song that resonates with our class material for the day, whether thematically, lyrically, tonally, culturally, or otherwise; this song will serve as the “opening music” for the day’s class. This assignment is an opportunity for you to find creative ways of framing, contextualizing, and responding to our course material. By **9:00am on your assigned day**, you should email me a link to a public version of your chosen song (YouTube, Soundcloud, etc.), with a short (one-paragraph) explanation of why you’ve chosen it and how it speaks to the day’s material, and you should be prepared to explain your selection to the class during our discussion. I will circulate a signup for individual dates early in the semester. **Because of the time-sensitive nature of this assignment, late DJ submissions will not receive credit and cannot be made up.**

Discord

Over the course of the semester, we will continue and augment our collective thinking outside of class on the Discord discussion platform. I will lead a setup workshop during our first screening block. Once we are set up on Discord, you should approach it as a space to engage with one another and the questions and issues of the course in creative ways: starting channels, sharing ideas and responses, and posting images, memes, gifs, links, etc., are all highly welcome and encouraged. As part of your classwork on Discord, you should make at least five class-related posts per week (although I encourage you to post more—as many as you find productive or useful—and I imagine that many people will find themselves going over that minimum fairly frequently). For more in-depth information on how to use Discord for this course and what to post, see the separate handout at the end of the syllabus.

Rather than grading every post(!) or grading your work on Discord every week, I will grade it holistically twice over the semester. This means that I will respond to and assess your work once early in the semester (most likely around the time of our conferences on the sequence analysis assignment—see below for more information) and once at the end. Because Discord is a relatively new platform, our work here will be somewhat experimental. The best way to do well on this ongoing assignment is to take it seriously and to post consistently, substantively, and creatively, using the platform as a way to continue our work outside the classroom in a productive way—be sure not to put yourself in the position of making lots of “catchup” posts at the last second before grading.

Sequence Analysis

As part of our work with film early in the course, you will choose one film from our class viewings and analyze a sequence of 8-10 shots from that film that you find particularly significant. Working with the terms and concepts we develop in class, you will document and analyze each shot in your chosen sequence and write a short (1-2) page analysis of the formal effects of your sequence overall. Your goal in this assignment is to show how those formal effects create larger aesthetic and thematic meaning. We will discuss your analysis in an individual conference after it is due.

Music Video Analysis

Following from our work in class and in the short shot analysis assignment, you will select a music video from a list of choices provided and write a 4-5 page analysis of that video in terms of formal composition, narrative form, and cultural representation. Your goal in this assignment is to make a specific, independent analytical argument about how the cinematic elements of your chosen video contribute to its larger thematic and cultural meanings and implications.

Television Studies Anthology

As part of the section of our course on television, you will write a 5-6 page chapter for an imagined class anthology on television studies in the twenty-first century. This chapter is a chance for you to analyze a television series in relation to a cultural, social, or technological issue that is of particular interest to you. . I will provide more in-depth instructions for this assignment in advance of the due date, and a short topic proposal will be due as part of the working process for this assignment.

Digital/Film Paper

For your final assignment in the course, you will write a 7-9 page paper that analyzes how a recent film addresses questions of new media and digital culture. This assignment is an opportunity for you to utilize the skills of formal analysis of media texts you have developed over the semester to engage with larger issues and questions of media culture in the twenty-first century. I will provide more in-depth instructions for this assignment in advance of the due date.

Attendance

You are permitted a total of **three absences** throughout the semester without penalty. **Keep in mind that this includes not only our regular Tuesday/Thursday class meetings but also our Monday evening screenings.** We will not have screenings every week of the semester, and they will not always run the full three hours, but the ones we do have are mandatory and you should plan for them as noted on the course schedule below. In addition to watching/listening to media content during this time, we will also frequently engage in short discussions, in-class writing, and consideration of course assignments.

For each subsequent absence, your final course grade will drop one-third of a letter (e.g., from an A- to a B+), and after four absences, you risk failing the course. Repeated or excessive lateness will also count as an absence.

If you miss all or part of a class or screening, it is your responsibility to keep up with the work for the course—make sure to follow the syllabus, stay on track with the reading, turn in any written work that was due for the day, and consult a classmate, check the course website on Blackboard, or come see me during my office hours to talk about what you might have missed in class.

Office Hours

I want each of you to be successful in this class. Helping each of you develop as readers, writers, thinkers, and students of media and culture is important to me, and I want to do what I can to help you achieve those goals and succeed in my class. More importantly, I have a great deal of interest in the material we will be working on this semester, and I would love for you to get the same enjoyment and excitement from it that I do. If you have any questions, problems, or things you want to discuss—about the course, the readings, writing assignments or paper ideas, the Media and Film Studies minor, life at Skidmore, future academic or career plans, or anything else at all—or if you simply want to talk more about what we're doing in class, please come see me. I encourage you to think of meeting with me not just as a last resort or something to do when you need help, but as a central part of making your learning more productive, meaningful, and enjoyable. My office hours are Thursday 12:45-1:45pm and Wednesday 11:30am-12:30pm in Palamountain Hall 333—this time is set aside for us to talk and for me to help you and work with you. If you aren't free during that time, get in touch with me before or after class or by email and we can set up a time that is more convenient. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you are having trouble or feel you need help, or for any other reason at all.

Accessibility

If you anticipate needing accommodations regarding any element of this course, please come talk with me early in the semester so that we can work together to create a plan for your success. You should also visit the Office of Student Academic Services at <http://www.skidmore.edu/accessibility/index.php> for more information.

Academic Integrity

Independent thinking and writing are crucial elements of both your work in this course and the intellectual culture of Skidmore more broadly. Violating these principles through plagiarism or other academic dishonesty is a serious offense. Plagiarized work will receive a failing grade for the assignment and may result in more serious consequences as well. If you have any questions about citation, attribution, or plagiarism, please do not hesitate to ask me before you hand in your work. For more information about Skidmore's academic integrity policy, visit <http://www.skidmore.edu/advising/integrity/index.php>.

Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct

Skidmore College considers sexual and gender-based misconduct to be one of the most serious violations of the values and standards of the College. Unwelcome sexual contact of any form is a violation of students' personal integrity and their right to a safe environment and therefore violates Skidmore's values. Sexual and gender-based misconduct is also prohibited by federal regulations. Skidmore College faculty are committed to supporting our students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. If a student chooses to confide in a member of Skidmore's faculty or staff regarding an issue of sexual or gender-based misconduct, that faculty or staff member is obligated to tell Skidmore's Title IX Deputy Coordinator. The Title IX Deputy Coordinator will assist the student in connecting with all possible resources for support and reporting both on and off campus. Identities and details will be shared only with those who need to know to support the student and to address the situation through the college's processes. If the student wishes to confide in a confidential resource, The Counseling Center Staff, Health Services, and Victim Advocates are all options available.

More information can be found at <https://www.skidmore.edu/sgbm/> or by contacting the Title IX Deputy Coordinator.

Course Schedule

The schedule below may change over the course of the semester. I will announce any changes in class and/or via email. It is your responsibility to keep abreast of these changes by attending class, checking your email and the class blog regularly, and contacting me or coming to my office if you have any questions.

Film

What are the formal and aesthetic properties of film? What are its origins? What possibilities does film pose as a medium—visually, narratively, culturally, politically? What stories can film tell and what effects can it create? How are these creations related to questions of identity, culture and power—what are the politics of seeing in a cinematic world?

Week 1: Seeing, Spectacle, and Spectatorship in Early Film

Tuesday, January 21	Course Introduction: What are Media? What is Media Studies?
Thursday, January 23	Read: Tom Gunning, “An Aesthetic of Astonishment: Early Cinema and the (In)Credulous Spectator” Tom Gunning, “The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, its Spectator and the Avant-Garde” Watch: Short Silent Films (YT clips 1-16) Blog Post Due 9:00am

Week 2: Film Form, Film Politics

Monday, January 27	Screening: Dziga Vertov, <i>Man With a Movie Camera</i>
Tuesday, January 28	Read: Timothy Corrigan and Patricia White, “The Elements of Cinematography” Watch: “How to Speak Movie Part 1: The Camera” (YT) Blog Post Due 9:00am
Thursday, January 30	Read: Timothy Corrigan and Patricia White, “The Elements of Editing” Sergei Eisenstein, “The Cinematographic and the Ideogram” (excerpts) Watch: “How to Speak Movie Part 3: Editing” (YT), Editing examples (YT 18-23)

Week 3: Film Form, Film Narrative, Film Aesthetics

Monday, February 3	Screening: Jordan Peele, <i>Get Out</i>
Tuesday, February 4	Read: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, “Narrative Form” Blog Post Due 9:00am
Thursday, February 6	Read: Timothy Corrigan and Patricia White, “The Elements of Mise-en-Scène” Raquel Gates, “The Last Shall Be First: Aesthetics and Politics in Black Film and Media” Watch: “How to Speak Movie Part 2: Mise en Scène” (YT)

Week 4: Gender, The Body, and the Gaze

Monday, February 10	Sequence Analysis Due Screening: Michael Powell, <i>Peeping Tom</i>
Tuesday, February 11	Read: Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" Blog Post Due 9:00am
Thursday, February 13	Read: Carol Clover, "The Eye of Horror" (excerpt)

Television

How does television function as a technological and social structure, and what are the political and social implications of that function? What possibilities does television create for narrative experimentation and social engagement? How is television changing in a digital context, and what are the artistic, cultural, and political implications of those changes?

Week 5: TV as Social System

Monday, February 17	Sequence Analysis Conferences This Week Screening: Prime-Time TV
Tuesday, February 18	Read: Raymond Williams, "The Technology and the Society," "Programming: Distribution and Flow" Listen/Watch: Gil Scott-Heron, "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised;" Richard Serra and Carlotta Fay Schoolman, "Television Delivers People" (YT) Blog Post Due 9:00am
Thursday, February 20	Read: Jane Feuer, "The Concept of Live Television: Ontology as Ideology" Watch: ABC <i>Good Morning America</i> Broadcast 8/7/78, "Welcome to Today" (YT), and a recent episode of late-night television

Week 6: TV as Narrative and Culture

Monday, February 24	Music Video Analysis Due Screening: Vince Gilligan, <i>Breaking Bad</i> ; Reed Morano, <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>
Tuesday, February 25	Read: Jason Mittell, "Complexity in Context" Blog Post Due 9:00am
Thursday, February 27	Read: Anne Helen Petersen, "The Radical Feminist Aesthetic Of <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> "

Week 7: TV as...Not TV?

Monday, March 2	No Screening Television Studies Anthology Chapter Proposals Due
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Tuesday, March 3 **Read:** James Poniewozik, “Streaming TV Isn’t Just a New Way to Watch. It’s a New Genre”
 James Poniewozik, “The Great Streaming Space-Time Warp Is Coming”
Blog Post Due 9:00am

Thursday, March 5 **Read:** Farhad Manjoo, “How Netflix Is Deepening Our Cultural Echo Chambers”
 Neta Alexander, “Catered to Your Future Self: Netflix’s ‘Predictive Personalization’ and the Mathematization of Taste”

Week 8: Commercial Break

Monday, March 9 **Spring Break**

Tuesday, March 10 **Spring Break**

Thursday, March 12 **Spring Break**

Sound

What are the implications of using recorded sound as a means of creation and expression—what possibilities does such a use create for artistic and social production? What communities, spaces, and modes of living does it speak to? How is the production and consumption of sound changing in a digital context? What are the implications of sound’s digitization for economics, politics, ownership, and intellectual property?

Week 9: Sonic Technology and Remix Aesthetics

Monday, March 16 No Screening

Tuesday, March 17 **Read:** Ulf Poschardt, *DJ Culture* (selections)
Listen: Donna Summer, “Love to Love You Baby,” Larry Levan @ Paradise Garage (YT)
Blog Post Due 9:00am

Thursday, March 19 **Read:** Tricia Rose, “Soul Sonic Forces: Technology, Orality, and Black Cultural Practice in Rap Music”
Watch/Listen: Grandmaster Flash, “The Adventures of Grandmaster Flash on the Wheels of Steel” (all versions on YT 33-35)
Television Anthology Chapters Due

Week 10: Sonic Production and Consumption in the Digital Moment

Monday, March 23 No Screening

Tuesday, March 24 **Read:** Eric Harvey, “Station to Station: The Past, Present, and Future of Streaming Music”
Blog Post Due 9:00am

Thursday, March 26 **Read:** Liz Pelly, “The Problem with Muzak”
Listen: Mall Music Muzak (YT)

New Media

What new questions and issues does networked digital media raise? What problems and possibilities does it create for expression, experience, engagement, connection? What is new about these possibilities, and what draws upon earlier media? What are the politics of life in a digital world? How can we use digital media to become more engaged, informed citizens in a public world?

Week 11: Social Media and Identity Construction Online

Monday, March 30	VR Experiences for Next Week: Scheduling by Doodle poll
Tuesday, March 31	Read: Lisa Ehlin, “The Subversive Selfie” Blog Post Due 9:00am
Thursday, April 2	Read: Amy Adele Hasinoff, “Sexting as Media Production: Rethinking Social Media and Sexuality”

Week 12: Virtual Reality: 21st-Century Spectacle

Monday, April 6	VR Experiences – Scheduling by Doodle poll
Tuesday, April 7	Read: Peter Rubin, “Presence: What It Is, Where To Find It, How To Stay There” Blog Post Due 9:00am
Thursday, April 9	Read: Nate Freeman, “A History of Violence: Jordan Wolfson on His Shocking Foray into VR at the Whitney Biennial” Mengna Da, “Jordan Wolfson Evades the Politics of His Violent Images”

Week 13: The Politics of Data

Monday, April 13	No Screening
Tuesday, April 14	Read: Siva Vaidhyanathan, “The Problem with Facebook Is Facebook” Blog Post Due 9:00am
Thursday, April 16	Watch: Zeynep Tufekci, “We’re Building a Dystopia Just to Make People Click on Ads” (YT) Read: Kevin Roose, “The Making of a YouTube Radical” (online)

Week 14: Internet Culture: Aesthetics, Attractions, Spectacle, Politics

Monday, April 20	No Screening
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Tuesday, April 21 **Read:** Kate M. Miltner and Tim Highfield, “Never Gonna GIF You Up: Analyzing the Cultural Significance of the Animated GIF”
Amanda Hess, “The Silent Film Returns—on Social Media” (print/online)
Blog Post Due 9:00am

Thursday, April 23 **Read:** Lauren Michele Jackson, “We Need to Talk About Digital Blackface in Reaction GIFs”
Alexandra Juhasz, “How Do I (Not) Look? Live Feed Video and Viral Black Death”
Watch: Amanda Hess, “The White Internet’s Love Affair with Digital Blackface” (YT)

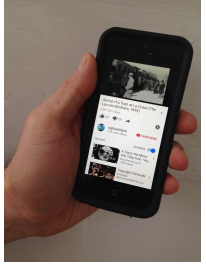
Week 15: Endings and Beginnings—The Future of Media Studies

Monday, April 27 No Screening

Tuesday, April 28 **Final Class: Conclusions, Reflections, Celebrations**
****Digital/Film Paper Due Monday, May 4 at 9:00am****

Introduction to Media Studies

Professor Benzon



How to Use Discord in this Class

Discord is a digital platform for text, image, and audio conversation. While it has its origins in the gaming community, it can be used for any group- or community-based discussion or activity. In this class, we will use Discord as a way of recording our thoughts about the texts we read and the issues they raise in real time, sharing that thinking with one another outside of the classroom, and engaging questions and issues of media culture through the material and language of media itself.

Getting Started

- **Register.** If you don't already have a Discord account, go to discordapp.com and register for one. If you already have an account, you may want to start a separate one just for this class—that decision is up to you.
- **Join.** Once you've registered, join our class server at <https://discord.gg/qhaCZ3p>. There you'll find several main channels for discussion and posting—explore those and feel free to start your own!

Posting for Class

The number one rule to being a productive, successful Discord poster for this course is to **be substantive**: it's fine to write to me with basic questions about class business or to have some social chat with classmates, but make sure that the majority of your posts for class engage the course material, your classmates, and me in a way that advances and/or adds to our ongoing class conversation. *Relatedly, everything you say on Discord for this class should be civil and respectful—you should consider it a public forum, and you should not use it in ways that are antagonistic, offensive, or otherwise inappropriate.*

Ways to Post for Class:

- **Live reading.** You should read actively for this (or any) course, writing down as many notes, questions, ideas, important passages, etc., as possible as you go. Discord is a great way to do this publically and collaboratively—using it as a way of taking notes online in conversation with classmates will deepen and extend how you understand the material.
- **Respond to classmates.** Relatedly, having multiple people posting about the same readings and issues provides a great opportunity for dialogue and debate—you can use Discord to ask and answer questions about the readings, add to what others are already saying, disagree or start a debate, etc.
- **Use media.** Perhaps most relevant to our course material in particular, Discord allows you to post images, gifs, memes, emoji, etc.—use these tools as ways of thinking about the course material in ways that are themselves rooted in media. How might you express an author's argument in a meme? What gifs capture your reactions to certain ideas, topics, or issues? Be creative and find out!

These possibilities for posting are only some initial suggestions about how to use this platform for our class—the overarching guideline is to be thoughtful, critical, creative, and engaged. If you've got questions about how to use Discord for our class (technical, content-related, or something else), email me at pbenzon@skidmore.edu, or write me on Discord at [@pbenzon](https://discord.gg/qhaCZ3p).