

MIDTERM MEME PROJECT

ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW

THIS PROJECT IS DUE ON BLAZEVIEW BY 11:59 PM ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

This assignment invites you to reflect creatively on your readings from the first half of the semester by creating a series of memes. A meme, if you are unfamiliar with the term, is a form of cultural shorthand in which an image or a video is used to convey a particular idea and is spread across social platforms. These images and videos are often altered and built upon, evolving the original idea into something else, or simply posted with a new caption to transform its meaning. Context has a huge impact on what a meme means, or how relevant it is to the intended recipient. Whatever the message, though, a meme can impart significantly more information than simple text alone. For this assignment, I am asking you to create and submit three memes of your own that reflect key takeaways from the first half of the semester. These can take the form of images, GIFs, TikTok-style videos, etc. You should imagine your peers in this class as the primary audience for these memes. You will be graded primarily on your creative repurposing of ideas from the readings and your ability to articulate key concepts from the course in your memes. Links to meme generators, examples of memes, and other assignment details are available on BlazeVIEW.

CORE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MIDTERM MEME PROJECT

This assignment allows for immense freedom and creativity on your part. While I want you to feel mostly unconstrained as you conceptualize this assignment, I do have three core requirements for you:

- All of your memes must *explicitly* engage with our course materials and/or themes. If you are struggling with ideas, please consult the examples on BlazeVIEW and/or talk to me.
- Only *one* of your memes can use *The 1619 Project* itself (the document) as its primary focus.
- Regardless of the chosen format, you must submit three *different* memes for full credit.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AS YOU PLAN FOR THE MIDTERM MEME PROJECT

- Which themes and/or texts from the first half of the semester interest me the most?
- What form am I most comfortable working in? Images? GIFs? Videos?
- Are there existing memes that I am interested in repurposing with new images or text?
- Am I looking to take historical images and produce text for them?
- Am I looking to work with more contemporary images or memes instead?
- Do I have access to the skills or software to edit memes beyond using meme generators?
- Are the memes I have created going to be easily accessible and understood by both the professor and my classmates? If not, do I need to include a short rationale explaining my choices?
- In a class that focuses heavily on issues tied to race, ethnicity, and other identity categories, is my meme content appropriate and sensitive—especially when grappling with issues that do not stem from my personal experiences? *Please be especially attentive to the dangers of digital blackface.*

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

Although memes may seem silly and not worthy of serious attention, they do serve an important role in popular discourse. With the increased power and reach of social media, memes have become formative tools for circulating and shaping ideologies. As critical thinkers, it is therefore important that we learn not only how to analyze memes, but also how to communicate with image-texts that are sophisticated and visually engaging. It is my hope that you will not only have fun with this assignment, but that you will see it as an opportunity to demonstrate *multicultural literacy* and develop *multimodal writing skills*.