1. Explore the thematic sanitization of bid budget Hollywood films through an analysis of Todd Philips’s *Joker*, both the film’s content and its reception – critical and audience. Make the case that it’s narrative and directorial style was not just inspired by Martin Scorcese’s work, but actively copying the formula. Then illustrate the thematic differences of these film. Touch on:

* Joker’s strategy to in no way alienate audiences on a thematic level. Interpretations of the film are easily molded to fit one’s preconceived notions. Somehow this movie illustrates X and Y’s beliefs about society. Compare to Taxi Driver’s comparatively alienating sociopolitical messaging.
* Discuss how each film approaches mental health
* Importance: Films are immensinely influential in giving people’s new perspectives on a wide variety of things. Diluting the perspective given is, in effect, making people more insulated in the perspectives they receive.

1. Explore the all too common case of a morally detestable artist. Argue in cases like music, author’s messaging is far too common to truly separate them from their work. But in contrast to the common sentinment that either 1) we should just detach them, or 2) protest their work, I want to make the case that this “context” has the potential to build onto their music in fascinating ways. While I am unsure what I want to focus on, there’s some examples:

* Burzum, Varg Vikernes’s solo black metal project. A convicted murder and church-burner, Varg is a pagan ethnonationalist wanting for Scandinavia to reclaim its historical, pre-medieval heritage. This context transforms songs like “Jesus’s Death” from standard theatrical hyperbole to a haunting, painful manifesto.
* Roman Polanski and Chinatown. While the latter movie predates the statutory rape Polanski exiled himself to Europe over, it seemingly tells a metaphor for himself. A member of the Los Angeles elite uses his status and money to rape a young child and evade its required punishment all while keeping his status in tact.
* Importance: Most people would argue that the emotional expression of art is an important part of what makes it compelling, and if this emotion is backed up with real world connections, it therefore resonates more.