

**PROFESSOR:** The humanities, to me, particularly at MIT, are essential, indispensable, to help break those infamous walls and build bridges. Why? Because the humanities are the only disciplines of philosophy, psychology, linguistics, history, writing, women and gender studies, that can give us the tools to understand how phenomena connected to race, to language, to religion, to gender, to sexual orientation, to have the tools to be able to understand how they can be used or misused for domination or for liberation.

This is the only group of studies, of disciplines, that give us those tools. As Paulo Freire and [INAUDIBLE] said, we have to learn to become literate. Not literate just being able to read, but being able to, as we, as Freire says, to read the world, and read the word. Because as we read the word, we have to understand the impact of what we read on the way the world works. And the way the world works often is based on these hierarchies of power that are often embedded in the text we read. But we're not able to critically understand those texts and see how they create a myth, or maintain those hierarchies of power, then we're going to become part of these hierarchies We help maintain them.

So the humanities give us the tools to be critical about these hierarchies and be able to distance ourselves from them, and perchance to even undermine those hierarchies, and create more inclusive, and more-- kinder, more humane societies.