

The Crier

Meme Culture: Is There a Dark Side to This Internet Phenomenon?



AUTHOR: SARAH BOGDAN

PHOTO: UGANDAN KNUCKLES

Bad Luck Brian. Grumpy Cat. Doge. Overly Protective Girlfriend. Ugandan Knuckles. If you've been on the Internet, it's almost impossible for you not to have seen a meme like these. These are all images that have become instantly recognizable jokes as they are spread through social media. Even viral videos, like "What Does the Fox Say," "Numa Numa," "rickrolling," and "Harlem Shake"

are considered memes. In general, memes are harmless creations that bring people together, providing conversation starters and favorite jokes and things to text to a friend.

Sometimes, however, memes aren't so harmless. They can be offensive, for example—such as if the creator of a meme uses vulgarity, profanity, or racist/sexist stereotypes in the

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For instance, last summer Harvard revoked their offers of acceptance to at least ten potential students after it was discovered the teens were sending “sexually explicit” and racially insensitive memes in a group chat. This is one of the more obvious drawbacks to memes: if you post questionable material, your character will come into question. Then you could face repercussions, like getting rejected from the college of your dreams.

Another downside to the spread of memes is the possibility of unwanted Internet fame. For every picture of someone that goes on the Internet, gets paired with a caption, and goes viral, a real person is living somewhere and dealing with that fame. Usually, fame derived from memes is accidental. The people behind the picture (or video) are sometimes able to capitalize off of being Internet-famous, but often they are stuck with negative attention. This was the case for Heidi Crowter, a girl with Down syndrome whose photograph was used for a meme in the 2000’s. This meme made fun of those with learning disabilities, and it quickly became popular online. Heidi was the target of countless virtual bullies, and she is only one of many who have been affected by unwanted Internet fame.

Perhaps the strangest—and most dangerous—thing about memes is their ability to cloud people’s judgment. Throughout the history of Internet phenomena, people have drawn inspiration from trending memes to perform risky acts. The latest example of this is the Tide Pod Challenge, which peaked around the start of 2018. If you haven’t heard of it, you’re not

missing much. Memers noticed how the colorful Tide soap pods resemble a juicy fruit or snack, like Fruit Gushers or “candy ravioli.”

Hence the “Tide pod: forbidden snack” meme was born. This gave way to the Tide Pod Challenge, in which young people dare each other to eat the pods and film the challenge. There’s a reason detergent products say “Warning: Not Meant for Human Consumption”—the chemicals used in Tide pods can corrode the lining of the throat and stomach, damage the airways, and even lead to death. In the first couple weeks of January alone, the Poison Control Center received calls from about 100 people who’d eaten Tide pods and suffered the consequences.

Is it the desire to fit in, to stay relevant, that causes kids to act so irresponsibly? Or is it the desire to stand out, to garner attention and admiration from our peers? Either way, these actions are unwise, and they are influenced greatly by fad memes. However, memes aren’t all bad news! Many are truly funny and harmless at the same time. They can be an ice-breaker or even a form of stress therapy. Memes can pull people together by bringing awareness to shared experiences. In context, they can be very useful in teaching or proving a point. Satirical memes provide comedic relief and succinctly capture the flaws in a political argument. Some Internet challenges (if these can be considered memes) go towards a good cause, such as the Ice Bucket Challenge which encourages donations to the ALS Association. So don’t go deleting your memes just yet. Simply take a minute to think about the

Step Up Your Game, Profs!

AUTHOR: ANONOMOUS

The typical student takes 4 or 5 classes that usually take place Monday, Wednesday and Friday. If you're a Science major, you have a three hour lab associated with each Science class. The general college studying rule is 6-9 hours of studying per class per week. So if you have four classes and you study 6 hours a week for each of them, that's 24 hours of studying throughout the week ON TOP of already going to class. In addition to studying, students are asked to become fluent in Microsoft word, Excel, citation formats, good research methods, etc. Keep in mind, 71% of college students work some type of job, 26% of college students have a family and 100% of college students don't get enough sleep (my exaggerated statistic). So college students probably work 60-70 hours a week with going to classes, studying, and their actual jobs. No one said college would be easy so I'm not asking for any sympathy, but we are asked to do a lot in order to better our education and get a degree and we don't ask for a lot in return. So I am calling out professors who are either lazy or stuck in their ways, or maybe

both. You know who I'm talking about; the professors who don't put grades on blackboard!

They are either too set in their ways and need to learn the technology, or they know how and they don't want to spend the time doing it. Technology is becoming crucial to learning environments and in this day and age, students have a right to be able to look up their grade at any time. If I spend a week and a half on a paper, I want to be able to see my grade on blackboard the moment it's done being graded. Professors only have jobs because there are students that want to to learn, so they shouldn't gripe about spending the time to input a grade into blackboard. Yeah, we get that some of you have an upwards of 100 students, but if the students are paying two grand a semester to get a quality education, then grades on blackboard should be a priority for professors. It would take professors MAYBE an extra hour of their time. During such times of technological advancements, this should become a requirement of professors as to serve the student needs.

Announcements

Like Magic the Gathering?

How about just gathering? Or magic?

No matter whether you like video games, board games, card games or just like hanging out with fellow geeks and nerds, join CCC's Gaming Guild on **Tuesday and Thursday at 12:50 in the ABC Room (M234)**

SENATORS NEEDED

Want to make a difference on campus?
Have an interest in student government?

Join Student Senate!

To find out more information, stop in M103A downstairs in the commons or email the Speaker of the Senate, Carolyn Jones at cjones38@corning-cc.edu.

Have an interest in filmmaking? Writing? Editing? All of the above? Join PERSPECTV! We are a student based, student run variety tv show on campus and we would love your perspective. We meet every Wednesday in the studio past the library at 3:00pm.

PERSPECTV

Contact cccperspectv@gmail.com for more information.

Chaplain Cynthia Hale Miv.

Office hours: Wednesdays and Fridays from 12:00-3:00 P.M.

Telephone: (607) 962-9413 Email: chale3@corning-cc.edu

The Commons Lower Level Room 135 (turn right at the game room)

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE RELIGIOUS TO TALK WITH THE CHAPLAIN. The chaplain is here to offer you general support and confidential conversation or your needs. Religious spiritual direction and prayer will be offered at your request.



JOIN US FOR THE FREE, FIRST-ANNUAL

PROM 2.0

dance, eat, chill

March 8, 2018
Triangle Lounge
7:00 - 9:00 PM

**Come proudly as you are & bring whomever you want!
DJ, refreshments, & photographer will be provided**

**Formal prom attire is encouraged (think dresses or ties),
but not necessary. Wear what you feel comfortable in!**

Please RSVP by completing the "Prom 2.0 RSVP" form on MyCCC or in your email

This event is sponsored by Student Services, HR, & the Diversity Council



The "F" Word

AUTHOR: HANNAH MASE

Students are truly what keep this campus thriving, so when one decides to take on a big project to make an impact, I love to be the one to help shine a light on it. I had the pleasure of interviewing CCC Student, Grace Truth, about an upcoming project she has in the works with Dr. Christine Atkins for Women's History Month. It's about the F word! But saying this one won't make your mother wash your mouth out with soap. The F word that we're talking about today is **Feminism**, here's Grace to tell us more.

So Grace, tell us a little more about this project.

Dr. Atkins and I are working on an event for Women's History Month. What I've been doing for this event is a little project I thought would be super interesting to do. We decided it would be interesting to ask students what they think the word feminism means, and what the feelings are that they associate with the word. So I'm going to classes and interviewing students and if they want, I'll take their picture with their definition. When I have gathered all this information and materials, I want to do either a an exhibit on feminism for women's history month, or create a board of all the responses for the actual event.

That sounds fantastic. What inspired you for this project?

Well... I like to think I come a family of activists and most definitely feminists, and in my family, they call me the "Extreme" feminist. Which I always found funny. Like what does that mean?! Haha. Growing up, I was always incredibly fascinated by activism. Some of my greatest heroes are Rosa Parks, Maya Angelou, Virginia Woolf, Sojourner Truth, and Cecil Richards. Women that defied all odds, and have done amazing things for people of all colors, genders and backgrounds. In doing this project, I hope that I can add in some small way to the world wide movement of equality. I hope I make those women proud.

So you're having an event for the "F" word, right?

Yes! It's going to be March 22nd, 12:15-1:30, in the Triangle Lounge. We're still ironing out the details, but we're for sure going to have a round table of women, from different backgrounds answering questions about feminism: what it means to them, what struggles they have dealt with as women, etc. There's also going to be free lunch so that's pretty cool too. I also want to make a side note. If a person that reads this doesn't see themselves as a feminist, or

This event sounds fantastic, count me there! Finally, I have to ask: what is YOUR definition of feminism?

By definition Feminism means advocacy of women's rights, but it's so much more. It's freedom, it's hope, it's new beginnings.

Feminism is not just for women. Feminists are not women that hate men. We simply want to be recognized as equal, and to be given the same opportunities. In the ideal world, we would not need words like feminism, because in an ideal world, we would all be seen as human beings, we would all have the same rights to our bodies, our minds, and our actions, In an ideal world. We would be equal. Sadly, this is not an ideal world. And that is why we must keep fighting.



Coming Your Way: *The Five Methods of Murder*

AUTHOR: ZACH SWASTA

Back in 2012, I made a video that I for years have passed off to everyone as my first film. That video was called *The Adventures of Steve and Ray*, starring Andrew Fish (writer of Nancy, Clifford Bradshaw in *Cabaret*), and Logan Sirois. The video was done on the cheap, with a budget of probably \$10. No audio equipment, no tripod, all natural lighting, and on a camera that just wouldn't focus. This was shot when I was a High School Freshman at Horseheads in 2012, and released when I was a Sophomore in 2013. Although it was by no means worthy of a film festival on any level, it still got praise from anyone who had seen it, particularly the teachers for the cinematography (angles and whatnot). Ever since then, I had shown this to people and said "this is my best work", even though I had been wanting to make a new video ever since. I never did, because plain and simple, I didn't have ideas. Things have changed, and my latest project is finally here.

After five years, I now have *The Five Methods of Murder* under my belt. Five Methods is sort of an expansion of how

I did *Steve and Ray*, I.E. I utilized the "use only what you have" principal. So even though I, again, used only natural lighting and the camera audio, what I did have this time around was a much better camera, and a tripod (that didn't work too well, so I ended up holding it up the whole time). This was shot in Summer of 2017, and to be released Winter 2018.

As for a synopsis of the plot: This video follows the misadventures of Agent Mars (Annette Russo, in her first acting experience ever), an assassin for hire, whose mysterious contractor (a stock image of a silhouette man that I found on Google Images) hires her to eliminate Riley Rio (Regina George, recently seen in *She Kills Monsters* at SUNY Brockport), an evasive business woman who has been suspected of organizing a ring of narcotic Pixie Sticks. To assist her with this task, she enlists the help of local...honestly, I don't know what he his...Calix Lydecker, who comes up with "Five Murder Methods" to end her in both swift and style. Of course, these methods are extremely absurd, such as a giant pie with a bomb inside,

and driving a homeless bum insane with Country Music. Nothing could go wrong, right? There is a wide array of characters, including J-Dub, Mars' technical advisor with an accent I can't describe, Gibbler, the aforementioned crazed bum, and even an appearance by Logan and Andrew, reprising their roles as Steve and Ray.

How did I come up with this after five years of idea block? Well, the benefits of waiting meant that I was able to be exposed to new things in life; people, places, things, etc. What really inspired this project in particular were of course, the two leading ladies of the movie themselves, Annette and Regina. Two of my best friends, who to each other were best friends long before I met them, and recently have graduated from Notre Dame last year. I thought about making a video about them, for them, with the concept of them both being spies trying to kill each other, but becoming friends instead. So with that, a proposed 15 minute idea became a 45 minute venture that took 4 months of planning and shooting. Of course, there were other influences as well. A lot of the humor is mirrored from my experience in melodrama at the Old Havana Court-

house Theatre every summer, and most prominently inspired by *Ed Edd n Eddy*, my favorite show growing up and to this day.

All of this was shot on location at Thorne Street park in Horseheads, so if you happened to have been there last summer and saw a bunch weirdos running around with a camera...yep, that was us. A labor of love, and a labor of very little budget, in a time when the weather is completely unpredictable, families holding parties are given unexpected live entertainment, lawn mowers and chainsaws ring out loud, and the wind is not on your side. For those of you wanting to go into the film industry: this is called your life. But if you want to see the result of a stressed mess that turned out pretty good, be sure to catch *The Five Methods of Murder*, being screened here on campus in early March, and presented by Muse of Fire. Be sure to follow them for details.

The NFL Combine

AUTHOR: DAMION WESTLAKE

UCF standout linebacker Shaquem Griffin received attention for multiple reasons this year. He played on the only undefeated team in Division 1, the UCF Knights, who finished undefeated in the All-American Athletic Conference. They ended up defeating the SEC West Champions Auburn Tigers 34-27 in the Peach Bowl. In that game, Shaquem was named defensive MVP.

Shaquem was a two year starter at UCF and a first team All American Athletic Conference selection in both of his seasons as starter. He was also the AAC defensive player in 2016, and graduated this year. With all these accolades, one might think he would be an open and shut case for the NFL Combine; unfortunately, that is not the case because of his medical condition.

Shaquem Griffin's left hand was amputated at age 4 because of a congenital condition called amniotic band syndrome. The first step in getting drafted is getting invited to the NFL Combine, which allows you to do physical drills including the 40 yard dash (how fast

you can run 40 yards), the bench press (how many times you can bench 225 pounds) and position-oriented drills. This opportunity also allows you to talk to NFL Coaches, General Managers, and Executives and tests your academic abilities with the Wonderlic test.

Shaquem was denied the opportunity at first to attend the NFL Combine but he was finally granted his invite after many others were, including his twin brother Shaquill Griffin. Shaquill was the third round pick Cornerback from the Seattle Seahawks last year and San Francisco 49ers General Manager John Lynch.

"I feel like any other player who has the accolades that he has and everything that he's accomplished, he'd be the first person to have a combine invite," Shaquill Griffin told ESPN last week. "And you're going to tell me the reason why is because of his situation? That's not fair. I'm not sure what else he has to prove at that point. That's the reason why I stood up [for him], not just because he's my twin brother. He

"I would love to [see him at the combine]. I think he's earned it," San Francisco 49ers General Manager John Lynch said. "I think everyone's watching closely. You talk to people at UCF, and they talk about a pro-gram-changer. A guy who is obviously inspiring, but not just inspiring -- who was a big-time contributor. So if you keep checking the boxes ... and this [week] was another box for him, and I think he's accounted for himself very well."

Personally, I am rooting for this prospect and I hope he has all the chances to prove he is the player that eve-

ryone who has seen his tape and game film. He should have a strong chance of getting drafted if he performs as expected at the NFL combine.



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