

WHAT'S POPPIN': IMPACT OF MEME CULTURE IN SOCIETY

A look at the positive and negative effects of memes and their influence on today's societal lifestyle

by Caridad Valle

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Memes have become apart of our everyday culture, and though they may seem like the most idiotic nonsense to some, the reality is that they shape our popular cul-

ture. Society has used memes to help expose real world problems such as racism, political injustice, and current social problems.

In an internet based society, memes can help connect people through humorous approaches, but they are also a double-edged sword. Memes hold a tremendous amount of power as they influence a large amount of today's youth. Sometimes there is an occasional meme that, instead of spreading social awareness, ends up spreading something hateful. While some might argue that memes are all said in good fun and humor, they still influ-

ence perception. Memes are intended for good fun, but every once in a while get crossed with something homophobic or racist.

Memes also have a huge effect on the English language. During the early 2000s when technology had begun to advance, people feared that text would have a negative influence on the youth. Memes have a huge contribution on today's slang and use in day-to-day life. And again, as it can be used in a light-hearted, humorous way, it does affect the younger generations speech and dialogue. Recent findings have shown

that in the 1960s and 1970s, children were far more literate than today's children.

Even though at times it may seem that our obsession with memes is toxic for our society, they bring to table something that society did not have before. Memes manage to be a pure form of expression that generates ideas and conversation. They manage to draw attention to corruption, injustice, and economic equality which teens used to ignore. There are now people all over the world who see a meme and get an idea of something that is socially relevant in a more tolerable, hu-

morous manner. And although memes can definitely mislead an individual with false information, misinformation isn't something that is new to society. In this day and age there are so many circuits of misinformation from the news to the people who run countries.

Memes are just like everything in excess, dangerous. If there are kids who spend several hours a day talking about memes, there is a serious problem. However, in small, fun amounts, memes do help shape our culture. They give society a different lense to look at issues and popular culture. It's part of free speech and gives opportunity to learn and inform the public on things they weren't aware of before.

Behind the Schemes in Hollywood

Recent sexual assaults cases in the movie industry

by Giselle Garcia

Photo Editor

After the countless sexual assault allegations against film producer Harvey Weinstein were made public, several other victims of sexual harassment/assault conducted by some of

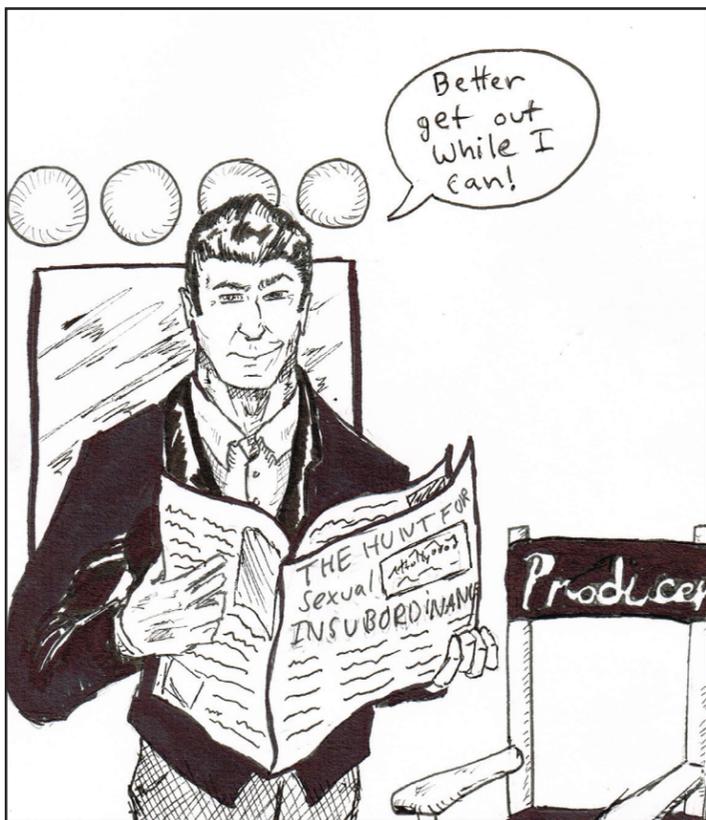
sources to easily make anyone he knew a star. According to the New York Times article, women who have not been harassed by Weinstein still acknowledged the fact they saw him as "a boss who gave them valuable opportunities at a young age." Many of the victims were young women,

15 other men came out reporting that Spacey had done the same with them and even had cases dealing with attempted rape. Spacey addressed the allegations by releasing a statement explaining, "I'm beyond horrified to hear his story. I honestly do not remember the encounter...But if I did behave then as he describes, I owe him the sincerest apology for what would have been deeply inappropriate drunken behavior."

Spacey ended his statement by coming out as gay. Many people felt sympathy for him because of his sexual orientation and some even justified his actions due to it. However, others did not allow his explanation and sexual orientation to be an excuse for what he did. Former fan of Spacey Alejandro Barron argues, "It's totally fine that Kevin Spacey is a gay man, but it seemed like he just want to drive the attention onto that so the allegations won't be the biggest news."

Since these men have the money, fanbase, and other capabilities to throw their past under the rug, there is typically no justice for victims like for Dylan Farrow [the adopted daughter of film writer, director, and actor Woody Allen] who he allegedly abused sexually for years. However, the charges were dropped and Allen continues to work in the industry despite the allegations.

The sexual harassment "culture" in Hollywood with the recent occurrences inspired the hashtag "Me Too" to take over social media with over a million tweets within the first 48 hours. Numerous people are encouraging others to protest against the work of these men and make it public. By doing so, they are pushing film companies, managers, etc, to cut ties with the actors, causing those actors to lose opportunities to further their career. Without the support and platform from fans and many other aspects, these actors will eventually be out of the business, which is what many protesters want, especially if justice isn't being served.



Student Rolando Rodas cartoon depicting Hollywood producer escaping

Hollywood's biggest names have come forward and shared their stories, not only to raise awareness of sexual violence millions experience but also to show the acceptance of abuse within the Hollywood industry.

The New York Times released an article on October 5th about the experiences of eight women who accused Weinstein of sexual harassment, and the article immediately made headlines and conversations all over the media. Now, more than two months later, 57 women, including Lupita Nyong'o, Lena Headey, and Gwyneth Paltrow, have accused Weinstein of sexual misconduct which took place over the period of three decades.

As a well-known producer in the film industry, Weinstein had various connections and re-

usually in their 20s, aspiring to become someone in the industry, therefore Weinstein knew he had power over them. He was aware that those women were going to feel vulnerable and helpless as soon as he made any form of sexual behavior. It is not uncommon in the entertainment industry for someone to take advantage of their title to manipulate and hurt others. Kevin Spacey, Louis C.K., and Jeffrey Tambor are a few of the recent actors who have also been accused of rape, sexual harassment, and sexual assault.

On October 29, accusations towards Oscar-winning actor Kevin Spacey making sexual advances in 1986 with Star Trek: Discovery actor Anthony Rapp, who was at the age of 14 at the time, were released. A week later,

Continuation of Racism in Films

The paucity of races presented in entertainment

by Gabriela Arteaga

Lifestyle Editor

The lack of diversity in the Hollywood entertainment industry has been an ongoing topic of discussion, but recently critics have been more vocal over their opinions. While the film industry has advanced with the range of cultures/race being shown, surveys like the one conducted by the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at UCLA say otherwise.

The "2015 Hollywood Diversity Report" study revealed that 83% of lead actors, 82% of directors, 88% of film writers, and 94% of show creators in broadcast TV were white, while ethnic minorities, who make up nearly 40 percent of the U.S. population, received only 17 percent of the lead roles in theatrical films. While this is an improvement on the past, there's much more room for growth.

Recently, two of 2016's most anticipated films, Doctor Strange and Ghost in the Shell, had Asian characters cast to white actresses, and although studios claim that marketability plays a role in casting, movies with

the day," expressed an anonymous sophomore at Kennedy.

Another critique is that race-bending white characters into minority characters, such as Michael B. Jordan playing the role of The Human Torch in the 2015 Fantastic Four movie, is somehow seen as okay which makes people feel like there's a double standard. Asian-American screenwriter Alan Yang, during his acceptance speech for best writing in comedy series for Master of None, stated, "There's 17 million Asian-Americans in this country, and there's 17 million Italian Americans. They have The Godfather, Goodfellas, Rocky, The Sopranos. We got Long Duk Dong [character from the popular 80s movie Sixteen Candles], so we've got a long way to go." Although many feel like the white community in Hollywood isn't up for a change in diversity for films, American directors think otherwise.

American film director Craig Zobel explained his point of view on diversity in film, "There's no doubt that the film industry needs more diversity. We all know that. However, I'm a tall, blonde, white male and could sadly be considered the least diverse person possible. So, I'm concerned about sounding like I'm essentially white-mansplaining to everyone that we should all be more diverse. But I'm happy that we're opening up the discussion..."

Past movies like the movie adaptation of Cuban poet Reinaldo Areinas's memoir Before Night Falls, is considered as a white mansplaining movie according to Latino.com due to the fact that Johnny Depp played the role of Cuban Lieutenant Victor. "It irks me that Johnny Depp played the role of Cuban Lieutenant when this movie is supposed to be a biography and a Latino should be presented," expressed sophomore Eduardo Rodriguez. Although change is being made, Hollywood has a long way to go displaying pure genuine authenticity on presenting cultures/race in films and T.V. shows and to notice the importance.

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Asian leads actually have great amount of box office returns like the Rush Hour trilogy (\$850 millions), the Charlie's Angels films (\$523 million), and many more. On the other hand, some people believe that diversity in roles isn't as important as an actor's skill. "Honestly speaking, I don't mind if a white actor or actress takes the role of a character that's supposed to be African American or Hispanic. It's all about if they can act or not at the end of