**Podcast Research Brief**

Source 1

Kircaburun, Kagan, et al. “Uses and Gratifications of Problematic Social Media Use Among University Students: A Simultaneous Examination of the Big Five of Personality Traits, Social Media Platforms, and Social Media Use Motives.” *SpringerLink*, Springer US, 15 May 2018, link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11469-018-9940-6.

Quotes:

1. The present study focused on the seven different gratifications for social media use and their relationship problematic social media use (PSMU): (i) maintaining existing relationships, (ii) meeting new people and socializing, (iii) expressing or presenting more popular self, (iv) passing time, (v) entertainment, (vi) as a task management tool, and (vii) informational and educational use motives.
2. The findings offer empirical evidence for uses and gratifications theory because the findings demonstrated that (i) different personality traits predict different motives, (ii) different motives predict preference of different platforms, and (iii) different individual differences such as personality, preference of platform, and specific use motives predict PSMU.

Questions:

1. Do memes contribute to the adverse effects of problematic social media use or do they hinder it? That is, do memes serve as more of a creative outlet that help us get away from problems that typically persist on social media platforms?
2. Which of the several branches of gratifications do memes fulfill the most?

Source 2

Silvestri, Lisa. “Memes in Digital Culture, by Limor Schifman.” Popular Communication, vol. 12, no. 3, July 2014, pp. 198–200. EBSCOhost, doi:10.1080/15405702.2014.929378.

Quotes:

1. … “digital culture,” or what she describes as a relatively new “arena of bottom-up expression” that blends “pop culture, politics, and participation in unexpected ways”. For Schifman, the Internet meme is the most useful concept to understand current cultural trends because it epitomizes the essence of Web 2.0 interactivity.
2. In many ways, the contemporary meme is a symptom of digital culture’s new attention economy. Internet memes involving Chuck Norris, double rainbows, or the Harlem Shake momentarily capture our interest before disappearing into digital oblivion

Questions:

1. Have memes only furthered our decreasing attention span? Why or why not?
2. Could memes be considered the best source of cultural knowledge, when compared to other media sources available on the web?

Source 3

Scardina, Ciro. “Through the Lens of Popular Culture: Why Memes and Teaching Are Well Suited.” *Teacher Librarian*, vol. 45, no. 2, Dec. 2017, pp. 13–16. *EBSCOhost*, auth.lib.unc.edu/ezproxy\_auth.php?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lih&AN=127006156&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Quotes:

1. Philippe (2013) offers two categories, “Important” and “Fluff.” In the “Important” category are politics, religion, and social and cultural values and beliefs. “Fluff” comprises viral videos, unimportant bits, and worthless blather—basically, all the stuff that is consumed by the billions. Most of the items that fall into “Fluff” would be categorized as pop culture, but in Philippe’s view, we as a people spend a lot of time focusing on these “Important” issues that divide us.
2. Americans also suffer from information overload. According to Eric Schmidt, every 2 days we create as much information as we did from the dawn of civilization until 2003…People can only process so much before saturation occurs, and we react favorably to formats that we recognize and that bring us joy. The meme is just that.

Questions:

1. Would you agree that memes that fall into the “Important” category seem to be those of upmost interest to us? Why would this be the case?
2. How does the information overload we experience daily impact our brains or lifestyle?

Source 4

Blackmore, Susan. “Memes Shape Brains Shape Memes.” *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, vol. 31, no. 5, 2008, pp. 513–513., doi:10.1017/S0140525X08005037.

Quotes:

1. I have argued that memes might have killed us off because of the burden they put on brain size, development, and energy use.
2. “The survival and preservation of certain favored words in the struggle for existence is natural selection” (Darwin 1874,p. 91). My reading of Darwin is that he thought languages and organisms were similar because they both evolve by the processes of selection and modification with descent.

Questions:

1. Do memes really affect us negatively or are there positive aspects of memes that are often overlooked (such as creativity and critical thinking skills)?
2. How do memes represent the evolution of our means of communicating over time?

Source 5

Atran, Scott. “The Trouble with Memes.” *Walter De Gruyter, Inc*, 5 Mar. 2001, link-springer-com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/article/10.1007%2Fs12110-001-1003-0

Quotes:

1. We are increasingly witness to a rapid and global spread of anonymous electronic messages that many of us would prefer to do without yet cannot seem to avoid.
2. There is no true imitation without replication, and no true replication without imitation. The key point about imitation is not that it triggers or elicits or produces or reproduces information. Rather, it both causes replication as well as provides the information to be replicated.

Questions:

1. Would you agree with the first statement? If so, how can we combat this or is there no hope of doing so?
2. There is no doubt that relatability dictates the replication and spread of a meme, but are there boundaries that constrain the sharing of certain memes?