**Cultural Reflections Project 5: Impressions of Sweden Memes**

A meme is an element of popular culture that gets propagated or takes on a life of its own. Memes can be signs (RELAX t-shirts from the 1980s), fashion trends (Member’s Only jackets from the 1980s, backwards baseball caps), popular quotes from movies (“Luke, I am your father!”), and most commonly imagery that goes viral through social media including still images (the Raleigh snowpocalypse on Glenwood Avenue) and videos (that drugged-up kid whose father filmed him in the back seat of the car after a trip to the dentist).



An understandable meme can be difficult to create, as they usually assume someone understands the visual reference point. They can be lost in translation across cultures, places, races, ages, etc., if a viewer has never seen the source image in any context. If you’re on Facebook, you’ve probably seen these Willy Wonka and Reagan memes, and understand the usual connotation is patronization and deception.

 

Or you may have seen these memes from Game of Thrones and The Matrix that help to convey frustration and mind-blowing situations respectively:

 

**The Assignment**

Your goal for this assignment is to prepare three Sweden-themed memes (or other country you’ve visited on this trip) that illustrate your growing understanding of different facets of another culture, and then share the images with the class on our group Padlet wall. This assignment requires you to convey at least three things you have learned about another culture during your time abroad.

Step 1, Write\*: Think about three cultural concepts you want to convey, and write some sample text for each. You must be brief, as only small amounts of text will fit over most images.

Step 2, Select Images\*: Think about images that would help you convey each of your cultural thoughts, something from popular culture ideally, that have the same “feeling” you are going after (e.g., adoration, coolness, deep thought, geeky, creepy). You are welcome to use American images, but if you have become aware of Swedish popular culture images, please use those instead. Go to https://imgflip.com/memegenerator/ and search for an image or upload your own image.

\*Note: It may be easier to swap steps 1 and 2 above (i.e., looking at some of the images in Meme Generator may remind you of a cultural experience or understanding in Sweden).

Step 3, Text Over Image: With an image selected or uploaded, enter your top and bottom text, and click the “Generate” button. Right-click on the image and save a copy to your computer.

Step 4, Add to Padlet: With your image downloaded, go to Padlet and add your image to our class wall at: https://padlet.com/kevin\_oliver/gctym6mblv2m

Step 5, Explain Yourself: Include two things in your Padlet description... your name so we know who shared which memes, and descriptive text explaining why you chose a specific image or text for your cultural concept so your meme doesn’t get lost in translation.