**Memes As A Symbol Of Communication of Political Resistance**

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|  |  | **ABSTRACT**  |  |
| **Article history**ReceivedRevised Accepted |  | Memes as political consumerism restructure communication positions in society, discouraging traditional forms of political communication and causing ideological allegiances to erode more deeply. The study used qualitative design to explain forms of political resistance using memes as a means of communicating. The method used is a critical analysis of the contents of Grand Kien's book Communicating with Memes Consequences in Post-truth Civilization. Results generally explain that Grant Kien's book Communicating with Memes Consequences in Post-truth Civilization provides a balanced analysis of the purpose of memes, identity politics and communication reconstruction in the post-truthera. In the early chapter Grant Kien gives an assumption about the communication chaos posted on social media called Digital Steamworks. In his writing, Kien said that memes on social media as a political tool as well as a tool to corner the position of the media and society. The political styles highlighted on social media are increasingly operating as a focus for post-truth lifestyle choices rooted in identity politics. Political deconstruction became a conservative choice, favoring a more eclectic, fluid and specific form of political recognition. Meanwhile, memes tend to be a means to reproduce political messages across a narrower spectrum. The conclusion of the study is that memes, which were originally a common form of communication message, shifted into a tool of political propaganda.   |  |
| **Keywords**CivilizationMeme CommunicationPoliticSocial TransformationSocial Media |  |

# Introduction

**Fantasies that were far-fetched for fifteen years ago, changed the situation Communication and giving rise to hypotheticals over the past decade so that the change becomes an acceptable phenomenon and is considered normal in the world of hyper-mediation. However, this phenomenon is a new thing in the study of media effects. A conspiracy of some technical advances, socio-cultural activities, and philosophical theoretical statements in our daily lives. It allows everyone in the global communications network to become the object of viral media. Individuals and personal lives are not the only things affected in this situation. Instead, the same system would give rise to the conditions of the global media that are subject to it.**

**Therefore, it is not surprising that questions arise regarding the nature of political 'self', including questions about awareness of using memes for political performance. It should be noted that differences in communication culture should be based on contextual sources and ideas. Memes as a form of self-representation in everyday life involve a number of different roles, ranging from those that interact with general and special directions. So that a change in political style can project a person's political persona. Part of memes are a form of choice that relies on a sharp design in conveying a message.**

**Kien sharpens human profiling through meme channels as a necessary reaction to media visibility requirements that tend to frame political action only as a sociological issue. Of course, we cannot understand political processes and arrangements through memes and social actions alone, but the identity projected by communication becomes the main object to be aware of. Memes provide popular perceptions and judgments of issues and forces lurking behind unvisable boundaries.**

**Through memes, communication can be represented as part of an ambition centered on popular political organizations. Through Kien's view, Meme tries to articulate social media as a different common sense and it is important to make an assessment of human civilization in the digital age. The subject in this book is a meme as a personality shaper that lies behind the charms of the times.**

**Literature Review**

In general, communication means conveying information with certain media to those in need and appreciating the process of delivering messages. (Morton Deutsch, Peter T. Coleman, 2016)

In analyzing Grend Kien's book, researchers focused on the science of semiotics and hypersemiotics with the aim of finding analytical acumen. For this reason, it is necessary for the author to convey the understanding of semiotics and hypersemiotics as a basis for going deeper into more substantial areas. Communication semiotics examines signs or signals in the broader context of communication by involving various elements of communication (Yasraf Amir Piliang, 2012). Hypersemiotics is a tendency beyond conventional semiotics that operates in a culture in which lies, falsehoods, all, superficiality, imanesi or subjectivity, games, superlativity are celebrated as their main purpose. In contrast, truth, authenticity, depth, transcendence and metaphysics are rejected as barriers to creativity and cultural productivity (Yasraf Amir Piliang, 2012).

To strengthen the researcher's analysis, it is necessary to allude to Sasusure's view of language, in a study written by Benny H. Hoed, language is interpreted as a system of signs. (Benny H. Hoed, 2014).

# Method

**The research method used is critical discourse analysis. Discourse is a series of related sentences, connecting one proposition with another proposition, forming a unity, so that a harmonious meaning is formed between the sentences; Second, the most complete and highest or greatest unity of language above a sentence or clause with continuous coherence and cohesion and being able to have a real beginning and end, delivered orally or in writing**. (Eriyanto, 2001).

# Results and Discussion

For the first time, Kien gives a look at how the power of the media is deliberately set to give birth to our naïve behavior about self-awareness and lifestyle on social media. The next perspective is communication in the era of modern civilization such as the use of social media into an increasing gap with regard to ourselves and the sentimental nature of society. The characteristics of social media in modern civilization according to Kien must consider personalities 'from the outside' and link human behavior to some of the hidden sources of personality behind the controversial rapid rise of social media. The communication symbols kien offers aim to control human actions in their various social activities. The reality referred to as hypersemiotics is clearly visible on page four of *memeplex* which means the system in which *memes*  are launched and allegedly as a miraculous emergence in the world of communication (Grant Kien, 2019).

As a variant of behaviorism, memes find context in human behavior that can be publicly observed as the basis for looking at human actions. Memes are also considered as a determinant of style that can explain the message that wants to be conveyed as a form of political resistance at that time. The power of the media makes meme positions act actively but also passively, meaning human personality is considered a black box that will be useless in our efforts to explain and predict human behavior and human personality. Memes as a means of communication have undergone a shift in meaning into a tool of political resistance. The focus of Kien's interests is to explain the meme infrastructure as a code or symbol that can be played by the wider community. Kien uses the characterization of human behavior as a measuring tool to determine the position of memes in social society. Kien's conception of a person's style would be a kind of substitute or model of an individual's personality.

 In Kien's notes on page six, described the function of social media as a tool to change human personality, Kien gives the following views; (1) The power of mass media in the hands of the audience creates channels for cybernetic feedback in media equipment or machines. (2) Longstanding social problems and oppression can be recreated and repackaged in a new media format. (3) Social media distribution can lead to very fast exponential spread (aka "going viral"), thus some new things can be considered urgent and important. (4) The audience creates their own virtual world, curated itself with the aim of choosing individual tastes and beliefs. (5) Overreactions in the form of digital moral panic and *techno panics* cause the media effect to be disproportionate. (6) Critical thinking and rationality are scorched by trying to play around and deal with the intelligent postmodern. (7) The solipsistic virtual community is unwilling to communicate with others on important issues, perpetuate falsehoods within themselves and reject new information from the outside.

Researchers tried to find alternative thoughts from other figures about point number six, it is true that the concept of rationality will be scorched due to human nature. Because humans are Homoludens or humans are creatures who play. Because the type of game is different than usual, it could be that the rationality will be scorched and even lost without a trace (Jonathan A. Smith, 2011). On the other hand, politics is considered a freedom in deciphering opinions on social media. In his book Kien, politics is regarded as a human act to achieve a goal that can be seen by the public. The politics of using memes is a style for presenting information by mixing subjectivism in the conception of human behavior. In the Channel journal *John Fiske's Semiotic Analysis in The Spotlight Film provides* a view similar to Kien's analysis, Muetia says that freedom of the press has become one of the most discussed topics in practical question. (Meutia Sabarini, 2021). The press on social media as a contemporary act triggered Kien to produce another category of social media called ethical imperatives that are consequences that occur due to the emergence of memes not only touch one or two elements, but can touch all aspects of human life, because this is a new communication format and we still have a lot to learn about it.

What individuals always rely on to understand each other's behavior is a form of revolutionary action on social media, because behavior always presents unscientific actions and *superficiality.* Admittedly, memes have a deep and different meaning as a form of communication of resistance. What's being fought? What is resisted is human behavior to achieve the goal of not paying attention to the rules of communication. In a more fundamental sense, memes are being used as a political propaganda tool to carry out global restructuring. So to speak using memes must touch more substantial territory, so that the message conveyed is not biased. (Matt Applegate; Jamie Cohen, 2017).

**History of Memes**

The way we use memes in popular culture and media studies may mislead us into thinking that they are a phenomenon limited to the internet. This is simply not true. The spread of the word meme into various discourses has removed the original term. Evolutionary biologists such as Richard Dawkins invented the term meme in the 1970s to signify what he called a *unit of organic culture,* self-replicating, and growing. In addition, the term meme originally was to explain how "selfish" genes can make choices and explain cultural resilience as an aspect of biological life. To qualify as a meme, individual entities must be able to replicate, but not only that, individuals can also reproduce precise copies of the makeup of society. In addition to self-replication (i.e., containing all the information or instructions needed to make copies of itself), it must be able to translate the circumstances, situations and conditions of the changing society in which it lives. (Grant Kien, 2019).

Change, improvement and adaptation to the environment is one that is the goal of self-replication. It becomes something that can be understood by abandoning previous gene errors, creating a history of development throughout life. Memes, like our genetics, happen from time to time. In short, it should be able to evolve. According to Dawkin's definition, all language and communication are mimetic, which is generally understood by people who work with the concept of memes as cultural replicators. There are many works that attempt to describe the exact nature of the term plucking in the makeup of human biology. On the other hand, the problem of cultural reproduction is far from original in the sense of biological evolution. There is an understanding of memes biologically that Dawkins' memetic behavior seems exactly like reproduction and evolution working in a digital environment. (Grant Kien, 2019).

The interest in better understanding citing communication has emerged after the 2016 U.S. presidential election, in which social media played an important role for the first time in the success of the winner. Through memes, internet users respond to sociopolitical events with ease, some of which may not be widely recognized. Viral content is a media message that seems to exponentially jump from one site to another. (Claude Mangion, 2011).

**Immortal Misinformation**

In contrast to Foucault who views discourse as a field of all statements, sometimes as an individualization of a group of statements and sometimes as a regulative practice seen from a statement. (Michel Foucoult, 2002). The logical consequence of strumming communication is continuous misinformation and is difficult to avoid. The public has no way of removing false information from the internet once it is widespread, there is no proportionate corrective action against managed information. On the contrary, right and wrong information can coexist with each other in the digital world. The inability to translate this phenomenon has an adverse effect on an individual's life, and further encourages distrust of any information that does not conform to the worldview. We can find photos of hacked celebrities online and some other criminal acts that take place in the online world.

We can only hope without knowing when the truth of the information will return to normal. Online media provides a space called *simulacra* or imaging. In the study of semiotics, this is called hypersemiotics in which lying, falsehood, allyness, superficiality, imanence or subjectivity, play, superlativism are celebrated as its main objectives. All online insults are finally easy to find in a quick web search. The quality of the answers coming from social media cannot be said to be substantial. It doesn't even take into account the original properties of mass communication. This framework, becomes a big question about how to view a new civilization that is actually a terrible scourge in the world of communication. Searching for information online that is not credible has the potential to cause catastrophic effects of communication. Another important element of the problem also arises from time to time. For that, information and communication must be strengthened in a more substantial and equitable context. Memes as communication will be hard to believe if they still use the old ways of propaganda. (Sandrine Baudana, 2017).

Many cases occur in the meme world so the role of communication indicates the consequences to be considered. One of the more painful consequences is the emergence of hoaxes. The presence of virtual dimensions causes everyone to be able to access information without any constraints. However, many people do not realize that it actually creates a new tragedy in the world of communication. The language used by netizens does not pay attention to ethical rules, so horizontal conflict thrives. To borrow Foucault, Foucault says that words or languages are not independent, meaning that there is a dimension of order offered by Foucault as a statement that (must) be different from reality. (Michel Foucoult, 2002). We need to explain the need for a digital plan before doing digital activities, so that hate speech can be suppressed to the smallest number. Because on the internet, we can live forever, but also the consequences that must be borne (Eric S. Jenkins, 2014).

Mostgood digital activities have a process of dialectics, so that account users survive crime and data theft on the internet. Online live communication activities use memes, but at this level, it's easier for people to spread uncertain information. The symbol of political resistance sparks digital bickering, many of which are dead, but can be revived. This continues to increase with the existence of memes that can be perceived variously. (Eduardo Navas, 2013). This happens quite seamlessly on a global scale in our more contemporary conditions living with the internet. Kien said he would stop writing down strumming communication objects if the results damaged the image of the world. But Kien can't stem that, memes have emerged as a media phenomenon, how one meets in a virtual world that clearly has an influence on our lives, thoughts and cultural patterns as human beings. (Grant Kien, 2019).



**Figure 1**

***Winston Churchill, the first person to be the object of a communication meme***

***(Source; Communicating with Memes Consequences in Post-truth Civilization Grant Kien page 8)***

Memes can draw the hypothesis that communication sometimes has to be delivered hyperbole. Ironically indeed, from this we can know that communication in the modern era as it is today is a lot of distortions, anomalies and falsehoods displayed. Therefore, it makes sense that the hypersemiotic theory that says semiotics is a *pseudo-science,* because something that cannot explain the truth cannot explain falsehood. In the truth there is falsehood.(Eric S. Jenkins, 2014). Likewise with memes these days, communication is no longer the social glue that helps stabilize daily routines and human relationships, communication leads more to social resistance or rather used as a tool to launch certain political systems or propaganda. (Nurudin, 2008).

To keep the conversation space alive, we are required to control the development of memes on social media, especially in the current era that is all digital. To get one essence of communication, conversations on social media must be balanced between meaning and reality and apply the principle of social balance. Intimate conversations using the mind will beautify the democratic space better, at least prevent the emergence of hoaxes. Our belief in the form and message of communication must always be maintained, although ironic statements about communication appear in a variety of conditions. Memes as a means of representation, must awaken entities and entertainment within the community group. Today, communication consolidation is the target of sarcasm to strengthen internal groups against the hostile outside world.

Overall, sarcasm seems to model *a cybernetic* scheme that assumes everyone can participate as part of the same group. However, a bad framework is presented by those who do not understand the ethics of building communication. This is as a symbol that the existence of one-sided memes is needed, it's just that society is too excessive to interpret the birth of memes. A kind of joke in digital development, because social media frames can't limit creativity (Eduardo Navas, 2013).

 On social media, people can argue anything, because in basic terms, the notion of social media is media without redaction (Jordan Schonig, 2019) Social media regulates social meaning through hierarchy, emphasizing, and downplaying aspects of information in its presentations (Limor Shifman, 2014) Each individual has the right to create his or her own message, deciding what to see until an uncertain deadline. Political resistance by those who do not understand communication will affect how we view the information circulating. Sarcasm should be framed as a serious statement. Especially by new group members who haven't obtained enough information (Braadley E Wigness, 2014). On the other hand, culture determines what kind of sarcasm is easily misunderstood as offensive and out of place. The world of digital media is an environment that is opposed to diframing information, hence there are hardly any additional cues beyond the message communicated to provide additional context. Available cues tend to depend on how to build the history of human civilization through technology and information (Shaun Gallagher, 2010).

**Forms of Memes as Political Resistance**



**Figure 2**

**Kilroy Was Here**

*Kilroy Was Here* was a popular meme during World War II. usually seen in graffiti. Its origins are still a mystery to this day, but this meme was the mastermind of the conflict in World War II. In the constellation, media memes are increasingly playing the role of rational "figures" controlling the political elite. Memes like Kilroy’s *Was Here* tend to position it as formal representative institutions such as parties and parliaments. Today's political debate is more of a game played between professionals who simultaneously deviate from the original purpose of communication. Social media memes, seen as something free without a space barrier. The public will be brought into mysterious matters. However, the existence of memes like Kilroycan be questioned as the initial conjecture of political conflict. By using memes, all sorts of meanings are justified and kept out of the reach of truth and the purity of communication messages. Supposedly, memes generate greater density of information through communication symbols. Capacity building and assessment of the flow of information must be supported by a capacity that no one should represent, communication should bring benefits to everyone, especially social media. Only in this way will the intellectual return as someone who has significance in the science of communication.

Memes like *Kilroy's Was Here* have a wealth of imagination, intuitive experience and emotional intelligence, but many people misrepresent so that communicant is not quite able to realistically judge what is being done on the political media stage. Supposedly, a wide variety of experiments were conducted to investigate cases that occur with modern relational morality, because the violence that occurs on social media does not touch us directly but touches our cognitive. In this book, Kien has tried to restore the spirit of communication to promote a form of emotional realism that allows ordinary citizens to escape their political passivity and even indifference to react adequately and competently to whatever their political representatives provide.



**Figure 3**

***Emoji*Discourse. Top left refers to the popular "Can You Not" image macro, while the top right exemplifies watching emoji discourse. The lower left emoji depicts the "Dabbing" dance meme, while the right depicts a pop culture Cyborg reference. Source: All emojis are derivatives of the public domain copyright Unicode Full Emoji List, v11.0, found in** [**https://unicode.org/emoji/charts/full-emoji-list.html.**](https://unicode.org/emoji/charts/full-emoji-list.html)

On the side of political professionals, emojis have a more rounded and varied meaning. Emojis also belong to the meme category, but are usually depicted using more sarcasm or subtle language. Emojis highlight human and the development of civilization in the world of social media as social representations that transmit between reality and innuendo. What emojis say visualizes how people's political conditions about the development of information have the capacity to assess citizens. More traditional media such as newspapers, pamphlets and radio must maintain a certain degree of separation between programs, people, and presentations. As is the case with society at large, information sensitivity and emotional expression are used to fulfill important functions of recognition and identification, introducing new forms of 'emotional democracy'.

Political trust and distrust are distributed on the basis of broader and more realistic information. In this way, auratic and heroic politics (the politics of great people, big words, and lofty ideals) can be a universalist attraction conveyed to companies. Politics according to Kien is participating in a more general culture. One of them uses memes and emojis. This is done with the aim of achieving closeness in conveying contextualization and emotionalism when communicating. The epistemology between forms of rationality and facts is clearly depicted in emojis and memes. Kien describes that the loss of a 'high' political aura tends to reduce the distance between political professionals and ordinary citizens (Grant Kien, 2019)

**Mediated Political Persona and Culture**

This is perhaps one of the earliest examples of a political situation in combining the mystical resonance of persona use with political performance. Although it includes the archaic requirements of the political elite, it should be noted that the introduction of media technology radically changed their nature. There is an established subspecialty of political studies for some time to come, namely making changes to political marketing and campaigning. Different perspectives will be the main source of managing the flow of information on social media, with regard to identity politics, this is seen to force social media into areas that are not responsible. Social media is enough to provide a framing of the condition of society, not identity politics. Kien criticized this as the main synopsis to fight the change. Deconstruction of the meaning of communication occurs at every changing age. Anonymous accounts have sprung up as an impure form of political development. Communication is about mediation and the human persona, including tracking candidate profiles in a campaign. However, Kien's main concern is to issues related to political performance in democratic culture. This activity is not getting the attention it deserves. The agenda that appears on social media is alarming enough that it cannot present the right challenges for the progress of human civilization. A growing concern is the shape of the misconstrued symbols of communication. Over time, social media wants to place the formal and broad fields as the broader social setting of public life (Azizun Kurnia Illahi, Dewanto Putra Fajar, 2020).

Here, social media is present to complement the power of society that places the majority of people as subjects, is open as a political performance and serves to secure the adequacy of information. Therefore, modern democracy requires a certain type of political persona as the focus of the political system. At the same time as its mediation requirements, social media is introducing a new level of scale and flexibility into people's performance. There are various ways to assess the consequences of this new condition, one of which is not to give distance between the interests of society and purely political purposes. However, the opportunity to commit fraud and manipulation actually comes from political parties, they try to undermine the democratic process but fail to provide positive value to society. Memes for example; It provides a comprehensive review using the theory of political representation but instead simultaneously creates a widening gap between the representative and the represented. This phenomenon being a complicated political style, memes are supposed to be present as a tool to provide an important basis of democratic culture. Such gaps, according to Kien, allow politics to widen the distinction between perspective goals and the professional political class.

Social media media media shapes the rhetoric of political mimesis, so that political conventions allow informality to continue to increase. The public feels aggrieved, so something important becomes less infused as part of the politics it is trying to articulate. It carries a strong 'secondary morality' political culture in which social media is considered or even forced to replace the written records of the press. With a variety of logical consequences to be accepted, we must begin to improve, at least in the short term that communication has no specific purpose, communication has a broad purpose that is fully recognized in writing by the community.

# Conclusion

For the first time, Kien gives a look at how the power of the media is deliberately set to give birth to our naïve behavior about self-awareness and lifestyle on social media. The way we use memes in popular culture and media studies may mislead us into thinking that they are a phenomenon limited to the internet. Many cases occur in the meme world so the role of communication indicates the consequences to be considered. Social media media media shapes the rhetoric of political mimesis, so that political conventions allow informality to continue to increase. The public feels aggrieved, so something important becomes less infused as part of the politics it is trying to articulate. It carries a strong 'secondary morality' political culture in which social media is considered or even forced to replace the written records of the press. With a variety of logical consequences to be accepted, we must begin to improve, at least in the short term that communication has no specific purpose, communication has a broad purpose that is fully recognized in writing by the community.

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