

Dumb Internet memes are teh suck



ANDREW
NEWBORN

The Internet has always been a butcher shop for the English language, but it seems to be getting worse. The problem is that while misspellings, misuse, and bad grammar—not to mention intentional, ironic bad grammar—were once relegated to the sites I stayed away from, they're now seeping into the ones I actually visit.

Take YouTube, for instance: it's massively popular, and I can't help visiting it as much as everybody else. Unfortunately, comments are only minimally moderated, which means that where I used to have only a small intake of "lol"s in my daily life, I now have an overwhelming dose.

The stupidity seems to be contagious, as it's becoming increasingly difficult for me to read my favourite forums without being driven to distraction by obnoxious catchphrases. I'm not sure if there are just more of them than there used to be, but the latest generation is

definitely a lot more grating.

Where catchphrases were previously several words long, Internet memes seem to have become shorter over the years so that now single words are the catchphrases. The Internet has ruined words such as "win," "fail," and "epic." These three simple, common, useful words now make me shudder when I hear or read them.

That new movie is not "win," nor is it "made of win," and it's especially not "made of win and awesome." Your anti-Scientology protest might have been great, even incredible, but was it actually "epic?" That new game may not be very good, but it's not "fail." The first time these words were ever used in this fashion might have been entertaining, but now I wonder if anyone using them even realizes that they're doing so improperly.

It's not just bad grammar and over-use, but that the people using these words seem to think in binary, where movies, video games, and just about anything else can be described as being only the greatest or the worst thing "ever." Nothing is ever decent or okay.

Almost as grating are the cat macros or "lolcats"—pictures of animals, usually cats, doing something "cute" with some kind of ironic wording slapped across the image. These phrases either

convey what the animal is supposedly thinking or describe its action in saccharin-sweet baby talk.

If I wanted to roll my eyes at the way people talk to their pets, I'd leave my house. The Internet is a cold, dangerous place, and posting images used to be for the purpose of disgusting fellow message board readers. I'm sick of seeing your cat—bring back gaping anuses.

The only positive in the latest generation of Internet trends is surely Rick Astley. His 1987 masterwork "Never Gonna Give You Up" has been endeared to me thanks to the "rick-roll" phenomenon. I've never actually been rickroll'd—which means to trick someone into seeing the "Never Gonna Give You Up" music video—but I sure have rocked out to that song many times (including right now, as I write this). My contribution to the 5 million-plus views of the YouTube video have been voluntary and without remorse.

I think what separates "Never Gonna Give You Up" from win/fail/epic is that Astley's use of the English language isn't an attempt to revert to grammatically broken baby-talk. Where once, in an Internet from long, long ago, "all your base are belong to us" made fun of bad English, now the trend in catchphrases is to embrace it. And that, my friends, is a failure of epic proportions.

Sex not just for baby making



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The clitoris: nature's Rubik's cube. This puzzling little extension of the female form has confounded amateurs and pros alike in the bedroom. But it's a different accomplishment of this biological enigma that's the subject of this piece, and that is that it destroys any argument that claims that the sole purpose of sex is reproduction.

The reason I bring this up is the announcement of a new set of sins by the Vatican last month—and I have to admit, it's a good list to adhere to for the most part. Pollution is bad and harmful to God's green earth, so it shouldn't be tolerated, and things like the flaunting of wealth or hoarding large amounts of it shouldn't be accepted as moral either. But inevitably, the birth control issue got raised, and when it's claimed that birth control is wrong and interferes with God's intentions for sex, that's where the clitoris enters the picture.

The Catholic argument goes something like this: whether you believe that he did this by molding some clay or in a more soft-handed approach like evolution, the point is that God created us in his image. And being the omnipotent being that he is, one can assume that he'd have a complete knowledge of how these subjects were put together—which includes the female clitoris. Now, if God had truly wanted sex to be purely for procreation, why would he give women this sex organ? It serves absolutely no reproductive purpose, and sex still feels good enough for a woman (so I'm told) to encourage sex without clitoral stimulation.

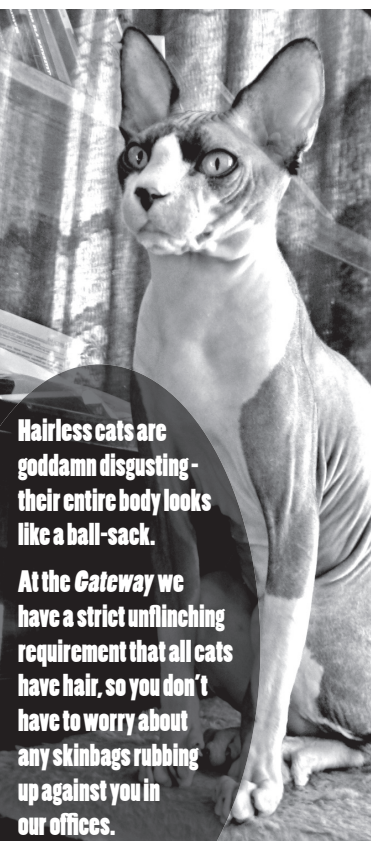
To so totally denounce birth control would mean that you would have to deny that there's some other purpose to sex other than conception. But that contradicts both simple logic as well as major tenets in Christian thought—that God is omnipotent and that he created humans.

It's not like Catholicism can't adopt this notion. It's an idea that certainly can, and certainly should, find its place within the Catholic view of sexuality. Just because sex can be enjoyed for itself doesn't mean that you can't say it should stay within the realm of marriage.

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