Fall 11-2017

Bad Luck Brian

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“Bad Luck Brian”
Meme

Informant:
My name is Melissa Herrera and I am a Junior at Utah State University. Majoring in Animal, Dairy, and Veterinary Science (ADVS). I was born in Anaheim, California, but moved to Logan, Utah, when I was nine years old. Needless to say, choosing to attend USU was an easy choice. I work as a Veterinary Technician (Not Certified), and I am a member of Alpha Chi Omega, Beta Xi chapter here at USU. You will find me on my phone scrolling through Facebook, iFunny App, Instagram, Pinterest, etc.

Context:
I was first introduced many years ago (can’t entirely remember how I discovered it). However, it wasn’t until I was apart of an online forum for ENGL 3070 (Folklore and the Internet) Fall semester of 2016, where we discussed several types of memes. The goal of the discussion was to post three versions of one meme. Then reflect on how it’s typically used, what kind of attitude or commentary it holds. I messaged the person who posted the meme in the discussion, in hopes to get an interview. However, I did not receive a message back.

Bad Luck Brian is a teenage boy with braces, blonde hair seen wearing a plaid sweater vest for what one can only assume a school yearbook photo. The image is accompanied by a caption to describe different tragic and embarrassing occurrences.

“On January 23rd, 2012, the original instance of the meme was submitted to Reddit[5] by Ian Davies, a long-time friend of Kyle since elementary school, using a yearbook photograph of Kyle with the caption “Takes driving test . . . gets first DUI.” The original post received less than 5 up votes. Later that day, another macro was posted to Reddit[2] with the caption “Tries to stealthily fart in class / shits” (below right) which reached the front page of the /r/adviceanimals subreddit accumulating over 3,300 up votes in less than 2 months” (knowyourmeme.com).

Text:
The intent of this meme is to portray humor. You can’t help but feel bad for Brian, for his yearbook picture being made into a meme with such misfortune. However, after further research, I found an article about Brian. “Picture days were always fun days for me,” he explains. He went to the Village Discount Outlet thrift store to buy a plaid sweater vest. He went to the gym to line up for his photo. He rubbed his face to make it all red, squinted his eyes, puffed out his jaw and took what he thought was a pure genius photo. The principal did not agree. According to Kyle, the day the photos came out, she came up to him and said, “Picture retake day is tomorrow. You are expected to be there” (washingtonpost.com). I guess Brian wasn’t expecting his hilarious photo to become so viral. Below are additional Bad Luck Brian images.