

My Little Pony Isn't Just for Little Girls Anymore

By Erika Hada

Abstract

The latest reboot of the My Little Pony franchise (My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic) has been called one of the best so far by critics thanks to interesting characters, well written story lines, and good voice acting not often seen in girls' cartoons. These characteristics attracted a large fandom. The fandom's demographics are especially interesting. A very significant portion of the fandom is young adult males (known as Bronies) usually around college age, not the target audience at all and yet they are some of the most devoted fans. This paper analyses lyrics from some of the music created by these fans. These songs show that these fans are resisting and redefining what it means to be male within their subculture. The songs mentioned are from popular musicians within the fandom and their popularity is indicative of the ideals valued by the community. Their songs are about being emotionally vulnerable and being unafraid to ask for help when one needs it. The rather feminine nature of the show and the unorthodox fandom is resisting the traditional views on males constructed by hegemonic ideals, as laid out by Dr. Mike Donaldson, namely the idea that they must be aggressively independent and unfeeling. According to Dr. Donaldson, a professor of media & communication at the University of Wollongong in Australia who specializes in the study of masculinity, hegemonic masculinity deals with the ideas that a man must be tough and further the subordination of women. Bronies embrace the (nearly) all female cast as well rounded characters and as role models.



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