

# 'Bronies' explores the men who adore My Little Pony

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Whitney Matheson , USA TODAY 3:51 p.m. EDT September 12, 2013



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By now many of us are aware of "Bronies," or grown men who watch the Hub animated series *My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic* (<http://www.hubworld.com/my-little-pony/shows/friendship-is-magic>). While I've mentioned the phenomenon before, I must confess I've never met a self-identifying Brony — which made me all the more curious to watch a feature-length movie about them.

The other night I spent an evening transfixed by *Bronies: The Extremely Unexpected Adult Fans of My Little Pony* (<http://bronydoc.com>). Directed by **Laurent Malaquais**, the documentary takes a serious look at dudes who can't get enough of the pretty Ponies, and what it is about the series that appeals to them.

A few things I learned:

- 1. Brony-ism refers to fans of the new Pony series, not the '80s stuff.** The Bronies in the movie only really go crazy for *Friendship Is Magic*, which premiered on The Hub in 2010. If you're not familiar with it, [its Wikipedia page](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My_Little_Pony:_Friendship_Is_Magic) ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My\\_Little\\_Pony:\\_Friendship\\_Is\\_Magic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My_Little_Pony:_Friendship_Is_Magic)) is massive.
- 2. Bronies come in all ages and ethnicities.** The film spotlights a few Bronies from around the world, including a sweet-sounding young man whose Pony fandom upsets his father; a guy in the South who has been attacked because of his passion for Ponies; and a British man with Asperger's syndrome who says *My Little Pony* has helped develop his social skills.
- 3. The series' cast and creators embrace Bronies.** Voice actors **John de Lancie** (love him) and **Tara Strong** happily attend the annual [BronyCon](http://www.bronycon.org/) (<http://www.bronycon.org/>) and are even listed as executive producers of the documentary. Series creator **Lauren Faust** disapproves of any Brony haters, saying it's important for adult men to be encouraged to be caring, emotional people.
- 4. Grown women love Ponies, too.** The BronyCon footage shows plenty of Pony-loving ladies in the mix. Of course, they don't attract nearly the amount of coverage as the guys ...
- 5. Bronies are a talented bunch.** The film shows several Pony super-fans who make music about the show, create figures and costumes resembling the characters, organize charity drives for fans in need ... and on and on. While it's hard not to raise an eyebrow at the idea of grown-up, educated men who worship a TV series aimed at young girls, after a while one realizes these guys aren't much different than crazed fans of *Star Wars* or *Harry Potter* or *Buffy* or fill-in-the-blank.



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Bronies aren't out to hurt anyone, they just wanna get their geek on in the kindhearted, pastel land of Equestria. After hearing their stories, I say bless 'em (and the horses they rode in on).

*Bronies* is available for sale on DVD and digital download, and Friday it becomes available on demand via Amazon Instant, Xbox and PlayStation. (In the coming weeks, look for it on iTunes, Hulu and other portals.)