

Bronies: The Extremely Unexpected Adult Fans of My Little Pony Directed by Laurent Malaquais

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By Mike Sauve

6 It is increasingly difficult to stand out as a capital-N Nerd. In the '90s all you had to do was show an affinity for *Star Trek: Deep Space 9*, but shows like *The Big Bang Theory* have commodified nerddom and now the barbarians are at the gates. As a grown-ass man, to stand out as a nerd in 2014, you need to embrace, fetishize, and in some cases even sexualize a cartoon intended for toddlers called *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*.

Director Laurent Malaquais seems to have used every single moment he filmed. While not particularly well-made, if you're unfamiliar with the world of Bronies, this will be an eye opener. The biggest downside is that it plays like an infomercial for *MLP*, fawning over its creator and voice talent. Another issue is it practically paints Bronies as being on par with the civil or gay rights movements. There's talk of "expressing your enjoyment of this show in a non-judgmental environment" and a lot of Bronies who don't take kindly to denigration of their culture.

Much of the film is about the Bronies' rejection of masculine gender roles in favour of little girl-style kindness. They enjoy a show intended for infants because of its positivity, rejecting today's pervasive irony in favour of simple messages of kindness and decency. However, the film positions Bronies as searching for sincerity in an irony-poisoned hellworld, forgetting that sincerity exists in all kinds of art, and not just in a cartoon full of big-eyed, pre-pubescent ponies.

Highlights include a young man with Asperger's coming out of his shell at a Bronie convention, artists making legitimately great art inspired by *MLP*, and quotes like, "As soon as ponies came into my life I was like wow I just don't want the day to end."

A father who disapproves of his teenage son's pony worship is referred to as "conservative" at least five times, and though he seems more baffled than downright intolerant, he's unmistakably vilified by film.

And yet, the film does not address the subsection of the culture that aggressively sexualizes *MLP*. A visit to Reddit or 4chan will

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reveal photos of plush ponies with makeshift orifices cut into them, subject matter which, in a more level documentary, might have gotten at least a little screen time.

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COMMENTS



Jamie Bertrand

JANUARY 17, 2014

Wow, you obviously don't get it. A show that has creatures similar to tribbles (parasprites), the actor play that plays Q playing a similar character, an episode involving cloning, an episode involving time travel, references to great movies such as star wars, the big lebowski, a very hidden cameo of a pony version of slenderman, and yet you call this a toddler show???

Maybe you should actually do some research about the show before you try to make an uninformed opinion about something. And wow, a small percentage sexualize something. I did some research and there are grown men who have done that for others shows such as family guy, the flintstones, superheros ect. I dont agree with any of it but using that as a point against MLP fans is stupid. The father is conservative. This is the 21st century. You know where we as a society realize that a boy liking the colour pink doesn't make him gay or a girl liking hockey doesn't make her a lesbian (not that there is anything wrong with that) Both me and my 5 year old son love the show and we both and my wife sit together and watch the new episodes together as a family. My son learns great lessons in life and my wife and I enjoy the jokes aimed at older audiences. So before you make your uninformed assumptions about MLP and its fans maybe you should actually sit and watch some seasons of the show.

START CONVERSATION



Daniel Duncan

JANUARY 17, 2014

Hay everyone! Just thought I'd remind all of you out there that the person who wrote this review is entitled to their own opinions. Not everybody sees the world the same way you do. So for anyone about to post a scathing comment, remember: love and tolerate!

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