

I don't think y'all know how much I've hemmed and hawed over this episode. How much thinking I've put into it, with false starts and attempts at navigating our path, only to scrap every idea I wrote down. Today we're talking about the dark side of fandom.

And frankly, I feel pretty conflicted with this topic.

Maybe it's because I still feel conflicted with fandom as a whole?

Like, I joke that the full title of this podcast should be In Defense of Fandom, or How I learned to stop fearing and embrace the cringe. (A little Strangelove reference in there for you fellow nerds)

Buuuuuuuuuuut..... Have I actually embraced the cringe? Am I truly, totally comfortable in this space? That's a complicated question, that has at least two answers.

[laughs] Ok, I don't mean yes and no. Or, I do? What I mean is the discomfort around fandom and SPN family is different flavors and levels when comparing how outside friends react to it versus interactions with those within the fandom.

And what's viewed as a "problem" worth focusing on is totally different between those two groups.

I've been a long time fan for lots of books and movies and tv series. But I never really stepped into the fandom space. First, because I was an otaku in rural Texas and there weren't enough likeminded kids at my school to geek out over FullMetal Alchemist with me in person. Our internet dial up was painfully slow and online forums made me leery.

Then, as I grew up I had other interests and didn't have the money to go to conventions or go all-out on cosplay. I was content to text my little brother about our shared geek interests and maybe watch a few too many youtube videos about them and call it a day.

So while I was definitely a fan, I didn't feel part of a fandom community. I don't know the magic sauce, but something changed when I got into Supernatural. I tend to blame the covid pandemic for breaking my brain, but it could be a myriad of other things.

Finally finishing school and getting a job with disposable income? Check!  
Losing my grad school community as folks moved away & having too much free time on my hands? Check!

Discovering I wasn't alone and there was a flourishing SPN Family community? Check!

I'm not sure that's the complete recipe, but there you have it. So as someone with only one foot in fandom, I still understand the complaints lobbed at fandom in general, and SPN fans specifically.

As we journey into the dark side of fandom, I'm going to do my best to navigate the rough terrain and provide what I hope is a fair assessment. The first leg will cover the complaints coming from outside. And in the second half, we'll hear the calls coming from inside the house.

Let's get rolling.

[music break]

Kaitlyn Tiffany [read by Anna Funk]

Because of their role in promoting and financially supporting the artists they love, ~~these~~ fans have maintained a creator's hand throughout those artists' careers, treating them as collaborative projects. They take responsibility for every setback and share in the thrill of every success.

When I was reading *Everything I Need, I Get from You* by Kaitlyn Tiffany, this particular quote really stuck with me. Probably because it's a distillation of a complaint I've heard a lot before.

Namely, from my close friends who aren't in fandom. Let me introduce you to them. This is Chris Scott:

**Chris Scott**

just fandoms feeling like they own, own it, own the property that they love so much. It's like but you don't, the person who created it does.

And Cassie Scott:

**Cassie Scott**

I would never say that something that I'm a fan of is like part of my identity. Like I'm just more like, oh, I am a fan or like I enjoy like movies or I enjoy like music

Of all my very nerdy friends, these two are the ones who most consistently reference films and shows and music with a truly deep appreciation for the art. While still being utter snobs about the fans of that art.

### **Cassie Scott**

I feel like anytime I've met someone that like says that they're a rabid fan of I don't know, I tend to like I am have always like a little like, eyebrow like, like what what kind of fan are you? I think like, I get a little nervous because like, I am more wary of like the more kind of like crazed fans.

In fact, they don't consider themselves fans at all! It's not that they don't enjoy shows or enjoy doing deep dives on things like the costuming and set design for a particularly well-made piece of media. In fact, Cassie joined me for San Diego Comic Con and Chris knows more about the similarities and differences between the comics and television version of *The Boys* than anyone I know. I'd argue that they are, by definition, *fans*.

They just don't relate at all to the version of fandom that is so convinced that it's the one true way to view and appreciate a show.

### **Chris Scott**

I think with fandoms there is an inherent feeling of ownership. I, as a fan, have some kind of ownership of this. It is mine, it is important to me, those types of feelings. I don't feel ownership over anyone else's creative output. I don't feel like I should have a say in it. I don't feel like I should. They should not be doing anything to please me as an audience member, the only person that artists needs to please at the end of the day is themselves because they're the artist. I'm not.

### **Cassie Scott**

I feel like I have so much respect for the people that are actually like writing and creating and making the thing that like to think that I would know better than them. It's just so crazy.

And once again, I really need to stress that this couple, for all their complaints, are fans of things to a, frankly, extremely nerdy degree!

### **Chris Scott**

I have a reproduction of Indiana Jones this jacket that I wear, like, but it's subtle. It's a modified, like, bomber jacket. Like, if you didn't know it's an Indiana Jones jacket, you're not looking for like the tell-tale markers. You just think it's another bomber jacket. So it's the subtlety, you

know, is one thing I do enjoy, like, I am a fan of things. I am just incredibly turned off by fandoms.

When I first started getting into Supernatural, I had already heard Chris and Cassie make these complaints before. And I do think they're right that some fandoms can get so wrapped up in what they think *\*should\** have happened in a scene or *\*should\** be the ending that some fans end up spewing a lot of hate online toward actors or creators involved with the project.

I think the most obvious example to point to here is the hate and backlash we've seen from 'fans' of Star Wars. Especially the latest trilogy, which included new stories and a more diverse cast than the previous series. Actors like John Boyega were relentlessly attacked online, and actors who had intersectional identities like Kelly Marie Tran were especially targeted. This harassment got to the point that she quit all social media in 2018 to protect her mental health! All this by 'fans' who saw the series as invalidating their interpretations and not meeting their expectations for the newest entries in the Star Wars universe.

Researcher Shawn Taylor, who you met in the first episode of this series, explains this phenomenon rather succinctly.

### **Shawn Taylor**

When it becomes this point, where if I am, if I don't like your fandom up now you think I don't like you. That becomes problematic. It's like, a weird kind of transference gets, like super odd.

So when we have fans who feel ownership over a property, and make that their entire identity, we see these toxic experiences come out. It can be as minimal as kevetching on a reddit thread about a series and as serious as making death threats against an actor or writer that a fan doesn't like.

I do think this is a problem in a lot of fandom community spaces. And as Shawn explains, part of that might come from our 'underdog mentality.' It was so uncool to be a nerd or a geek for so long! To want to talk about the latest Spiderman story arc or get excited for the voice casting for a new animated Batman film.

But, to put it bluntly, we aren't the underdogs any more.

### **Shawn Taylor**

Thing is, now that Geekdom fandom is no longer marginalized. It's the center now, like, we are no longer the outcast, we are the ones driving many aspects of culture and commerce. And we stop acting like we're still marginalized. Because it's really ridiculous.

[music break start here]

I do agree with Chris and Cassie and Shawn, that when feelings of ownership and identity become all encompassing, it leads a lot of normal seeming people to do some pretty awful things.

HOWEVER, I would like to point out that this is a problem with fandoms broadly speaking. There's nothing special about the SPN Family, as far as I can tell, that has a unique issue with identity and ownership.

Have I seen examples of people making SPN Family their entire identity to their detriment? Yeah, I think so. Do I think that's the entire fandom? No, definitely not.

[music break end here]

Another complaint I heard from Cassie and Chris, especially when I was working on episode 2 on writing, was that writing fanfiction was essentially lazy.

### **Chris Scott**

Doing fanfiction, doing things like that. It's just playing on easy mode. Like you have this world already built in you're just playing with other people's toys and you're in the sandbox.

Now here is an argument I strongly disagree with! I don't think there's anything wrong with learning to write fanfiction. Plus, I've seen so many authors develop their prose, learn better narrative techniques, and build unique friendships with readers and editors alike through fanfiction.

Chris was particularly peeved when I mentioned stories set in AUs, in alternate universes. Why couldn't the authors just fully commit to the world they were building and try to get it published as a standalone novel?

It's a fair question, but an easy answer: Not every writer is writing in hopes of landing a book deal. Fanfiction writers especially are writing for fun. Having an agent and getting published and making money are not required for someone to be a "real writer."

A passion doesn't need to become a career or slog of extra work for it to have value. And at least as a fanfic writer, you have a somewhat built in audience who will actually read your work.

I spent a summer writing about science for a news outlet and I think I maybe got 2? messages from readers about the things I reported on? So I get the desire and enjoyment out of writing for an audience that will actually engage.

For what it's worth, Chris and Cassie clearly don't hate my deep dive into fandom that much, because Chris is the one who has been writing and performing the music for this podcast.

[song break?]

Before we return to some voices you've heard in previous episodes, I want to address one concern that spans both fandom and those outside that world:

### **Cassie Scott**

The parasocial relationships are like, really? Like, that is very scary to me.

A parasocial relationship, for those who haven't heard the term, is the psychological phenomenon of a one-sided relationship between two people. It's when an audience member feels a sense of personal closeness with an actor or performer or even athlete. When you read enough stories about the personal lives of celebrities or watch enough confessional-style videos on youtube, it's easy to feel a level of closeness with that other person — even if you've never met them.

Heck, I've felt the parasocial pull with certain podcasts that I listen to, where the voices coming through my headphones feel like old friends.

For all I know, some of you listeners might feel a parasocial connection to me. [pensive] Man, I guess I never really thought about that.....

[give a beat]

Anyways, I'm not saying that parasocial relationships are always bad. It really is only considered a problem when a person prioritizes these relationships over real relationships in their lives. Or when people stop engaging with the world around them, feeling progressively more lonely as they fixate on a one-sided relationship with a public figure.

This relationship becomes a problem when people fall for the illusion of intimacy, usually through repeated exposure to media stories that portray them in a positive light and feeling like the celebrity is sharing in an open and truthful manner. The more honest or 'real' a celebrity appears, the easier it seems to be to slip into these parasocial relationships.

And, well, Supernatural conventions do feel a bit like a perfect breeding ground for this phenomena.

### **Cassie Scott**

Supernatural does kind of toe the line because like they have all these like events, and they're meeting all the guys which honestly is like a testament to like, they must have the most incredible media training because like those guys, anything negative has never been said about them. They have the most squeaky clean records. So either they're just like, perfect media. Like, yeah, like training or they're like they're just the most squeaky clean guys.

In this case, Cassie was specifically talking about Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles.

### **Cassie Scott**

From Texas, not a scandal between them. Like they are, just must be the most wonderful human beings, I guess.

Which, hey! I take offense to the Texas comment! There are plenty of great people from Texas — like me! [laughs]

But I do hear her concern here. Right now there are 8 conventions for 2023 in different U.S. cities. That means fans have nearly monthly opportunities to see the Supernatural cast in person. And to get their autographs, take staged, occasionally couple-y photos, and ask them questions during panels. This definitely builds a sense of closeness that I don't think matches how the cast feels about those individual fans.

Granted, I haven't spoken to any cast members about this. [stage whisper] My DMs on Twitter are open if any cast folks are listening and want to share [end whisper].

But I did see a recent social media post by Misha Collins, sharing an episode of the podcast *The Happiness Lab* which covered the happiness of being a fan. In his post, Misha said "I have, at times, felt a little weird about fan conventions. It's strange being put on that pedestal and

meeting strangers who feel like they know you. But this podcast made me understand and appreciate fandom in a new light.”

I’m glad Misha doesn’t think we’re all a bunch of crazies for wanting to have him sign our fanart or take photos with us as Castiel, but I also understand the trepidation.

With as long as official SPN conventions have been going on — since 2007 — I do think the cast recognize some of the most frequent audience members and can build a rapport. But it reminds me more of the relationship you have with a favorite bartender at your neighborhood watering hole. You know each other's' names and they might even remember your usual order, but that doesn’t make you friends.

So I’ll concede this point to Chris and Cassie. Parasocial relationships are common in fandom, and I think the SPN Family is somewhat especially susceptible to this pitfall. I’ve heard whispers within SPN Family, warning each other about known stalkers in the fandom and have seen fans surreptitiously point out added security at conventions, indicating a fan may have fallen too far into the parasocial trap.

[music break]

Ok, for a podcast about fandom, I think we’ve heard enough from outsiders! This whole first season is about the SPN family after all, so let’s get back on track.

When conducting all my interviews with fellow fans to put together this podcast, I always made sure to ask about the “dark side.” What were some of the problems or issues that they faced within the SPN Family?

And just like any extended family, there are spats and there are comments that get taken out of context and create a level of internal drama. But what I want to focus on here, I can categorize into three main buckets: shipping wars, a sense of character-ownership, and what I’ll broadly call, internet problems.

I think all three of these are somewhat intertwined, but it helps to separate them out. And starting with shipping wars I do think helps set some of the tone for the disagreements and toxic elements within the SPN Family.



As a quick refresher, shipping is a term that refers to wishing for or pretending that two characters in a series are in a relationship. I first brought this up in episode two on writing, when we covered how much of fanfiction can be categorized into these ships.

In many fandoms, there is some disagreement between shippers and anti-shippers but that doesn't seem to be the prevailing problem of Supernatural.

### **Dani**

But I believe that a lot of people are afraid to admit they're multi shipper. And that's because unfortunately, there is a little bit of hate surrounding different ships. And this is not just in the Supernatural fandom, it's every fandom, you know, Supernatural fandom tends to be a little more aggressive with some of their main ships.

Dani, also known as LOTRSPN fangirl on Twitter, has been in fandoms for much of her life. And she's definitely seen the fights that can arise from fans who only like one ship and try to shut down other fans with different ships.

### **Dani**

And I will say, my first issues started with the Wincest groups finding out that I didn't hate Castiel or Misha. And I was like, Well, why? Why do I have to hate them to also like J-Two or Wincest, I don't get it. And I got a lot of flack for that.

Ok I have to explain some jargon here for the uninitiated. Wincest is..... Exactly what it sounds like. It's the romantic pairing of Sam and Dean Winchester together. J-Two is the same idea but refers to the actors who play these characters, Jared and Jensen.

And the reason Wincest or J-Two proponents might hate actor Misha Collins or his character Castiel is because the most popular SPN ship is Destiel, or Dean and Cas as a couple.

So I'm not gonna lie, the Wincest thing is not for me. But I get that these are fictional characters, and I'm not gonna dictate what people should or shouldn't fantasize about.

But the problem does arise for me when fans who take their ship so far that they foster a dislike or even hatred for both Castiel and Misha.

And sometimes this hate can get turned toward fans who either ship Destiel or even those who are multi-shippers and can imagine lots of different characters paired off together.

As Dani explains happened to her,

**Dani**

And actually, like, kind of ostracized from the J2-Wincest side. And so I was like, well, eff this I'm gonna go to destiel then. So then I made a bigger group of friends over on the Destiel side. And that's kind of where I'm at now. I have a lot of really great wincest, friends. A lot of them I have now since kind of convinced to not, like, hate Castiel or Misha. I'm like, why are we hating anyone? Like if you don't, like, want to read it, just don't read it.

So shipping wars between different \*fictional\* characters ends up creating real world strife. And can make it hard for casual fans to want to join SPN Family. Being asked to pick sides in a meaningless fandom debate — that probably isn't for everyone in the first place — as soon as you join the online fan realm sounds exhausting and stressful!

And in some ways, it can end up impacting one of the best parts of being a fan.

If being a fan means getting to express your full identity or parts of your identity that you don't usually get to share, seeing online flame wars between portions of the SPN Family can limit your enjoyment of the show itself, ships or no ships.

**Dani**

I think a lot of people find their circle and don't talk about the other ships they enjoy. Because I have quite a few people that will reach out to me and be like, 'so on the downlow, I also liked that ship. Do you have any suggestions?' And I'm like, yeah, here's some fics. So I wish that it was less taboo to be a multi shipper. A lot of people are like, Yay, pro shipping, you can ship whatever you want. Not as many people practice what they preach.

And I think the attitudes around shipping represent a core issue of something Chris and Cassie did point out — fans feeling ownership over the characters of Supernatural.

It's great when you identify with the characters! Who doesn't want to be smart like Sam or rebellious like Claire or sophisticated like Rowena?

But liking a character or identifying with them doesn't mean you own that character. Or that your interpretations of them are gospel.

Take what happened to Carrying Wayward podcaster, Marie.

## **Marie**

We encountered a lot of homophobia. The second that we started to talk about Dean as a queer character. And immediately from there, I think like, it's sort of put us in the quote, unquote, Destiel fandom in the Destiel camp, if you would like to talk about it that way. And so we were kind of left alone from there, like we blocked very strategically, a few accounts on Twitter and Tiktok. And then from there, it got better. But I mean, we did get like a death threat, which was absolutely mind boggling to me. It was a few days before the Christmas holiday a few a couple last year, actually. Just for saying that a fictional character is queer.

You might remember her voice from episode 4 on audio. In Marie's and my conversation, we had talked about how the way the character of Dean is written often comes across as a closeted queer, perhaps bisexual character.

And there's even hints of evidence for this, for instance show creator Eric Kripke has said he created Dean based on Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*. Dean Winchester being based on Dean Moriarty, who was in turn based on the real life Neal Cassady who had several sexual relationships with other men.

But regardless of whether Kripke explicitly intended to make the character of Dean Winchester queer, getting a death threat simply for saying so is an outsized reaction. One that you only really see happen when people feel like a character is 'theirs' and that any conflicting interpretations are a threat.

## **Marie**

I really thought that in the year 2020, we were kind of past that. And yet, like a lot of the rhetoric that I saw in, that in the supernatural fandom, was kind of the same as what I had seen, well, 15 years prior, frankly. And so that was a shock to me, because it was kind of like, kind of a wake up call that, like, maybe I was part of circles that were much more progressive than I thought. Because clearly, like, like I said, we got a death threat because we said the Dean is queer.

Marie's experience was the most intense example I heard of this, but not the only one. Sadly, she wasn't even the only online death threat I heard about in my interviews.

And I do assume this intense sense of ownership over characters has always been an issue in fandoms, well beyond Supernatural. I also suspect this problem is escalated by the fact that so much of fandom life occurs online.

Sure, folks can make friends within a fandom that they may see in person with some regularity. But a lot of these relationships are maintained through digital interactions.

And I think we all know what a garbage-fire places like Twitter and [sigh] TikTok have become, worsening over the past years.

And this brings me to the third complaint I heard within fandom that I'll just call, general internet misbehavior. This includes everything from gossiping behind other fans' backs to bombarding them with negative messages to even trying to dox them or have their online accounts revoked.

### **Lizlee**

There's no nuance on Twitter. You know, it's very black and white. And it's very, like, so it's, yeah, it's a 'tread carefully' kind of 'verse.

As Lizlee, from episode 3 on art, puts it, the internet seems to strip our ability to see context. And our ability to not immediately blow up when we see something we don't agree with.

### **Lizlee**

There's there's a lot of people that could benefit from saying, This is not worth my energy. And it's taken me a long time to get to that point.

But of course, that's easier to say after a few experiences getting burned or watching others fall too deeply into the internet blackhole.

The number of times I've seen third-hand tweets of fans referencing drama within the twitter SPN family is more than I can count in the few years I've witnessed the online fandom. Most of the time, I don't even know who started the drama or what the base accusation or attack was.

I end up seeing cryptic, snide remarks with no sense from where it all arose.

In fact, I met a fan who told me they've been at a convention having a lovely time, just to log into twitter and see an online explosion about something that supposedly happened at the convention. They'd literally been there in the room where the supposed slight had occurred, and had NO idea how the internet storm had been spun up.

Something about most interactions online seem to cut that all-important context out.

I really like the way Scout, from episode 3 on art, describes it.

### **Scout**

you create these big monsters in your head and then you're like, Okay, that's a 47 year old woman that's just angry. She goes home and she's upset she gets on Twitter and she hates kids. And so that's, that's what I sort of learned.

There's always going to be haters, there's always going to be online trolls, and that's just as true in fan communities as it is anywhere else.

### **Scout**

it's just like any other place, especially supernatural, it's just like any other place, there's always going to be an anonymous person that wants your head on a spike, like, just it. Especially if you have traction, anything, people are just like, they're just sharpshooters looking up at the sky. And they're like, if anything if I see anything, so I mean, I've had I've had a couple of run ins with negativity.

I even spoke with one creator who said they became the internet's "villain of the day" when they recounted a less than super positive experience they had with a cast member. It was seriously a small potatoes complaint, but certain corners of the fandom rose up in fury and got their Etsy shop shut down for a while.

Eventually it all blew over, and thankfully they weren't totally dependent on their Etsy income. Otherwise, the damage could have been much more long-lasting.

And LITERALLY as I write this, I see that another SPN fan has been banned on TikTok in a coordinated takedown attempt because other fans don't like their work. I won't name names, but I can almost guarantee that if you're in the fandom, you might have several thoughts on who this could be.

My point is that this general internet phenomenon can do real damage.

And while it might be comforting to pretend that this is just all the fault of Twitter or TikTok, it's not a behavior limited to those platforms by any means.

More visual-oriented platforms breed their own forms of bad behavior, usually centered on image stealing, Jen told me.

### **Jen (Wayward Girl Photog)**

Well, probably the big one that the photographers have are people taking our pictures, which I have different photographers pictures on my phone. But posting it without the watermark, or cropping out the watermarks or editing.

some of us are a little bit more obnoxious with our watermarks. Because there's a reason

In general, people *\*should\** be better about crediting artists, especially when re-sharing images they worked so hard on.

It gets even more toxic when you see folks lifting images by photographers or artists and then trying to sell merchandise using those images that they straight-up stole. I've heard of more than a few instances of this within SPN fandom, but I sadly know this also happens in realms far outside fandom.

[music starts to play]

I know this isn't a full accounting of every slight and disagreement and truly destructive act committed by someone within the Supernatural fandom. And I realize I haven't been here long enough to see the full context, including what went on during the early years, when culture as whole may have been less tolerant and inclusive in general.

When it comes to this 'internet misbehavior', I like to think of what Scout told me.

### **Scout**

That's what people like to forget about family, is that when you go to a family reunion, there's always like, someone you just don't want to see. But you're like, Oh, I hope that they don't talk to me.

A lot of negative internet interactions can be avoided in SPN Family by just not interacting with that family member. Don't hold grudges, don't try to dox people or get their accounts taken down. Just block and move on.

It doesn't work for everything, sure. However, it could help cut 90% of the online BS, in my opinion.

But, I know the three negative aspects I focused on here don't account for all the problems in SPN fandom. I also know I'm missing out on a whole category around accessibility issues, which

become especially relevant with in-person events like conventions or centering accessibility with image captions. As fan and disabled activist Valerie told me,

### **Valerie**

A huge problem that this fandom has is it's very ableist and not maliciously, I think. You know, I've spoken with this in a few different places before. But we consider ourselves a very progressive fandom, I think, because it's predominantly women or non men, in like making up the masses are predominantly queer, we're predominantly neurodivergent, or disabled in some way, shape, or form. So we're like, well, we must be progressive, because we have all of these multiple marginalized identities. But at the same time, we're still like a bunch of white people for the most part. And that's a problem that not a lot of people examine. And even though a lot of people are neurodivergent, and they are disabled, they still have like that internalized ableism to kind of work through.

This is a huge category that I'm actually saving in my back pocket for a future season of the podcast. But I wanted to make sure that I at least recognized the issue and gave it voice here.

So when I take full stock of SPN Family and some of the darksides within the fandom, I ask each one three core questions.

Is the problem I'm hearing about, really a problem?

Is the problem unique to fandoms?

And is it unique to the SPN family?

Based on what we've heard today, I say yes, there are some real problems. And many of these problems aren't unique to fandom. See: people being trolls online.

But some of these are unique to fandom, like feeling ownership over characters and causing fights over ships. And some even represent a particular risk to SPN fandom, like unhealthy parasocial relationships. Mostly because while parasocial relationships can happen anywhere, repeated exposure at cons make this waaaaay more likely.

But I don't think these are struggles we can't overcome.

Even my anti-fandom-but-secretly-fans friends have some nice things to say about the SPN family.

### **Chris Scott**

I will give the Supernatural fandom credit and that they seem to be not the worst of the bunch. They're not Harry Styles fans. Know Star Wars or Star Wars Star Wars is so bad. Star Wars is so bad that it almost goes without saying.

They've both actually listened to every episode in this podcast so far, and have taken my points on community, creativity, and collaboration to heart.

### **Cassie Scott**

I am absolutely not here to dictate the way people can enjoy stuff. And like, the... Yeah, I would say that all our complaints are actually outside of all the positives that you've said.

Granted, I think they hope fandom just opens doors to even more new interests, rather than being the end-all-be-all.

### **Chris Scott**

Supernatural fans, and fandom in general, like it's getting people to like, listen to like, free. I'm okay with that. Like I'm like yes [it] introduces a few more people to like the searing guitar licks of Paul Kossoff and the strong backbeat of Simon Kirk, I'm okay with that.

[music]

Thanks for sticking with me through the SPN darkside episode. As I said, this was a challenging one to create, but I think we need an honest accounting of fandom. I promise the next episode of our road trip, we'll have smoother pavement.

And if you think I mis-represented something or missed an important aspect, well my Twitter DMs are open. Just remember to be civil, would ya?

Before the credits, I wanted to make a quick reminder that you can support the show by rating and reviewing it on Apple Podcasts. Your review goes a long way in helping other listeners discover the show and I would be eternally grateful!

[outro music continues]

Editorial support was provided by Dr. Anna Funk. Anna was also the voice reading Kaitlyn Tiffany's excerpt from *Everything I Need, I Get From You*.

Music was composed and performed by Chris Scott.



Cover art was designed by Liz.

Thanks to Meg, Rupert Gayes, Dani, and Marissa for supporting the show through ko-fi.

*In Defense of Fandom* was made possible through an unhealthy obsession, and your support via ko-fi. If you're not already supporting the show and you'd like to, you can find a link in the show notes to our ko-fi. Your support is deeply appreciated.