

Terrible Fans and How to Spot Them



The faces that spawn the worst fans in the world.

SHUPROVO ARKO

Since the advent of social networking sites like Twitter and Tumblr, being a fan of an artist has never been the same. Gone are the days where you could simply put on a Metallica t-shirt to show your loyalty to the band. Nowadays you have to change your cover photo, retweet everything they post and update gifs on your Tumblr every hour. At least that's what some people do. And while they might believe that they're being "true fans," some of their handiwork might even be detrimental to the artist and other fans. Here are some things that most bad fans do:

Twitter Wars

It's a well-publicised fact that celebrities sometimes act like children and argue over the internet, sometimes going as far as encouraging their fanbases to attack each other. But what is clearly wrong with Twitter is when fans get into absolutely heated arguments over who they think is "better." They might believe spewing insults and swearing at anonymous people shows support, but in reality it's just showing what hateful fans the artist has.

Oversaturation

So you've recently fallen in love with Supernatural and now all you want to do is tell everyone how much you love it. Coming out of your room after binge-watching 6 seasons in 4 days, you start recommending it to every single person for every situation possible. Action show? Supernatural. Comedy? Supernatural is funny sometimes. Period-Drama? Well Supernatural had time travelling once. Now every time a person shows

an interest in the show, they get treated with the bad memory of you flooding their News Feed with pictures of shirtless Jensen Ackles every day and decide against watching it.

Refusing Change

Most super-fans have their own ideal image of their favourite artist and they cling onto it so tightly that even a minor alteration causes them to go absolutely hysterical. Granted that major change is sometimes hard to digest, but fans need to remember that artists are people themselves and not corporate robots (at least most of them aren't). Who'd want to be stuck doing the same thing for the rest of their lives? They could want to broaden their horizons as artists and it would be seriously discouraging if their fans reject every step they make outside their comfort zone.

Blind Fandom

It takes a big man to admit that his favourite artist might not be the best artist ever. However awesome the artist/team of your choice is, they have all had a couple of stinkers and off-seasons. And while any sane person recognises their shortcomings, some fans blatantly ignore the bad things or even worse, try to explain it away as genius beyond comprehension of others. A dud's a dud, man. Get over it.

Being an Elitist

There's nothing worse than a smug know-it-all. Imagine that you like listening to a band's music and have heard most of their more popular songs, so much so that you'd call yourself a big fan. Now you meet a person who likes the same band and right in the middle of the conversation he says "Dude, you've never heard the top-secret unplugged session the band did in their friend's basement twenty years ago? How do you even call yourself a fan?" Never be that guy. Seriously. Don't.

LITERATURE

The Fine Line between Plagiarism and Influence

RAFEE SHAAMS

Kaavya Viswanathan's novel, "How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, And Got a Life" is a prime example of plagiarism. And no matter how much the author talks about it being "completely unintentional and unconscious," 40 passages from the books of authors such as Megan McCafferty, Meg Cabot, and Salman Rushdie don't insert themselves. This was conscious.

There is a fine line between plagiarism and inspiration: plagiarism is when you deliberately copy someone else's stuff and take credit for it, while influence is when you read another work, get inspired by it and work out something of your own – something that would have little resemblance with the source material.

Yann Martel's "Life of Pi" was subject to plagiarism allegations when he'd readily admitted that he had taken inspiration from Brazilian writer Moacyr Scliar's novel, "Max and the Cats", where a Jewish child by the name of Max gets stranded in the ocean with a jaguar while trying to flee Nazis. Martel said that he had only read a review of the novel and liked the premise so much, he decided to use it.

When asked if that wasn't intellectual theft, he responded saying that his own novel and Scliar's were different; while his book was about "religion, faith, and imagination," Scliar's book was more in line with holocaust literature.

Portions of The Lord of the Rings were said to have been plagiarized by Tolkien from Richard Wagner's opera cycle "The Ring of the Nibelung". Tolkien said he was merely inspired by it.

Similarly, the late Terry Pratchett was often asked if he got the idea for his school for wizards in the Discworld series (Unseen University) from J. K. Rowling's Hogwarts. Unseen University predates Hogwarts so Pratchett once joked that he used a time machine to steal the idea.

I don't think it is stealing if the writer uses the premise in his own unique way and gives it a voice that is authentic. Ian McEwan's novel "Atonement" was alleged to be plagiarized from Lucilla Andrews. McEwan refuted that claim. Even Thomas Pynchon, the world's most reclusive author, broke his silence and wrote an open letter supporting McEwan. He said, "Writers are naturally drawn, chimpanzee-like, to the colour and the music of this English idiom we are blessed to have inherited. When given the choice we will usually try to use the more vivid and tuneful among its words."

So we can see that this influence business is a regular thing in writing. However, unintelligent copy-pasting, as was the case for Viswanathan's, is theft, and should be discouraged.



Yann Martel was accused of stealing the idea for "Life of Pi" from Moacyr Scliar.