

Popslash and Bandom Appendix: Sources

Fanfictional Representation

In stories, the lives of *NSync members are controlled by omnipresent representatives of mass media corporations.

- "Don't Believe Everything You Breathe", by Lise and Kel
The deal was that the [MTV] camera crews would leave at midnight, every day, always, no matter what. It's a carved-out illusion of privacy, but Justin clings to it anyway. [...] Jive makes him let the cameras stay while he's being told he has to put some of the weight back on or they're going to have to re-fit all his clothes. [...] A fancy-ass marketing consultant firm out of New York is running the promo. They get to tell the crew to take a hike whenever they want. Justin and the publicist [preparing him for an interview the next day] all alone in a nice big room and it'd almost be quiet pleasant alone time except for her voice.
<http://www.doyourthing.org/lise/pop/breathe.htm>

One story ironically acknowledges this trope with a magic-realist twist, in which press coverage of *NSync begins to affect its members' true personalities.

- "Becoming", by Kaneko
"Oh my God, we're being controlled by the media!" Chris said. "We're voodoo dolls! We're zombies! We're zombie puppets."
<http://www.juppy.org/santa/stories.php?ForAuthorID=5&Year=2003>

By comparison, Fall Out Boy's handlers are far less effective-- their publicists compete with the musicians' own DIY, online public relations.

- "A Stitch Away From Making it (A Scar Away From Falling Apart)", by Femme
Joe turned back to Patrick. "Look, the label's been holding them off and you know it. There's only so much Karen [their publicist] can do with canned statements--"
"Hey, I blogged about it," Pete snapped. "Twice."
<http://femmequixotic.livejournal.com/276577.html>

Official Music Videos

Fall Out Boy Videos

This vampire-movie pastiche ends with the underclass-coded heroic vampire Pete Wentz realizing that the force of law-- the police, supposedly cleaning up from the vampire street battle that has just taken place-- is exactly as corrupt as the upper-class-coded vampires he has been fighting against. The fantasy of Fall Out Boy's activities as independent (even resistant) of institutional control extends beyond their supernatural-fighting heroism: via

cellphones and cameras, the members of the band collect video of the scenes around them which seem to automatically remix itself into the footage of a music video for the very song.

- "A Little Less Sixteen Candles, A Little More 'Touch Me'" (2006)

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=Y-VifE8EK8w>

Another video characterizing the musicians as underdogs, this video is set at a high-school dance. The synchronized dance Wentz leads his friends in at the video's conclusion here seems to symbolize spontaneous creativity and a victory for the powerless (compare with *NSync's "Bye Bye Bye").

- "Dance, Dance" (2006)

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=uREsEjJItqw>

Expressing ambivalence towards the figure of the producer by means of literal dehumanization, this video casts Fall Out Boy's producers, managers, and crew as manipulative chimpanzees whom the band members instantly resent and finally rebel against.

- "Thnks fr th Mmrs" (2007)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xWHf_vYZzQ8

***NSync Videos**

Featuring the members of *NSync dangling from marionette strings, every move decided by a somewhat sinister puppeteer, this video seems to point out their synchronized dancing as a symbol of their control by more powerful forces. Although the puppeteer literally cuts each member loose at different points in the song, and they run away from her in fantasy sequence after fantasy sequence, and the song's titular command of departure is directly addressed to her, after every seeming escape the video returns the band members to their marionette positions. The video's final shot is of the members hanging from their strings.

- "Bye Bye Bye" (1999)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JoJqID-wJY>

This video portrays the members of *NSync as action figures for sale in an anonymous chain toy store. Literally mass-produced toy commodities, they vie enthusiastically for a shopper's attention.

- "It's Gonna Be Me" (2001)

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=BtHadAigayc>

Mainstream Journalistic Accounts

Mainstream music news offers a producer-controlled origin story for *NSync, although Rolling Stone's account conveys less paranoia than fanfiction's, carefully noting that the members of *NSync grew creative control as their careers matured.

- "True Tales of the Pop Life", by Rolling Stone

In the beginning, 'Nsync were completely under the control of their manager and their record label. [Chris says,] "Our first album was [...] about satisfying a lot of different people 'cause we were puppets. We were doing what the record company thought sounded good or looked good, or sounded safe." They have since parted

ways with both the manager and the label. [...] Now they're very involved in determining the minutiae of their sound and image.

http://www.rollingstone.com/artists/nsync/articles/story/5937985/true_tales_of_the_pop_life

- *"NSYNC: Biography" from The New Rolling Stone Album Guide*
The video for "It's Gonna Be Me" ushered in a newly self-conscious phase, with our tykes insisting they were no longer just puppets, they were self-conscious, rebellious puppets!

<http://www.rollingstone.com/artists/nsync/biography>

Even as *NSync's members grew in power, however, they maintained a sense of responsibility to a professionally produced image-- the difference their rising autonomy seems to have made is simply that now they are their own professional producers.

- continued from "True Tales of the Pop Life"

This is the 'NSync work ethic: 'NSync get onstage on time every night, do their job with a smile. They offer a very safe star-fan relationship. Their music and videos are free of obscenity, their public personae are free of profanity. You get the sense that they'll never be arrested for anything.

Their wholesomeness, professionalism and origin as a puppetlike boy band lead many people to conclude that their personalities are like their image [...]. Truth is, they're a little more complex than [this] suggests, even if they don't always show it in public.

Corresponding to their less squeaky-clean public personas, the members of Fall Out Boy have a much less obedient public relationship to their own management.

- "Fall Out Boy", by Rolling Stone

The band also regularly indulges in its own version of Jackass. The most notorious incident involved its tour manager eating banana cream pie out of the drum tech's behind, a stunt Wentz arranged by offering to pay the tour manager's phone bill for a month.

http://www.rollingstone.com/news/story/6487748/fall_out_boy

Bands like Fall Out Boy have established a presence via new-media marketing and digital technology, so aggressively that traditional music-business metrics are being revised.

- "Fall Out Boy : Who's Really #1? iTunes, MySpace Throwing Music Charts For A Loop" by Country Music Television

[A]round that same time [as the Nielsen SoundScan ratings showed their lowest two weeks ever], the new Fall Out Boy album, Infinity on High, leaked online and was one of the most eagerly discussed, traded and sought-after new LPs in recent memory ... even though it wasn't showing up on any album charts. [...] "The problem is people used to only experience music through retail, radio and MTV--those were the three ways they got music. Now there are umpteen ways to experience it, and no one has taken the energy to merge all of them yet." When that happens, [Jay Frank] said, [...] for the first time in contemporary pop history, fans will have a serious ability to impact where their favorite bands land on the charts.

http://www.cmt.com/artists/news/1551241/01312007/fall_out_boy.jhtml

The band's integration with Web 2.0 technology extends from corporate distribution to personal PR, as members use social networking sites to keep directly in touch with fans.

- "The Boys With the Car-Crash Hearts" by Rolling Stone

Wentz [...] is a new, more accessible breed of rock star, keeping in close contact with an Internet tribe of lost boys. (And girls. Lots of girls.) On his band's Web site, he regularly answers their questions: "Pete! My dog died yesterday of cancer. Has this ever happened to you?"

http://www.rollingstone.com/news/coverstory/fall_out_boy_the_boys_with_the_car_crash_hearts

Fall Out Boy's online distribution, cultivation of personal connection with fans, and self-directed administrative style are factors intimately interrelated in their success.

- "HotStar: Fall Out Boy", by PollStar

[T]his band is fueled by the interconnection of Internet-savvy kids. The pop-punk/emo FOB tours constantly, but its popularity was generated the same way Jason Mraz and OAR found much of their initial fan bases: through high-speed [internet] connections. [...] The band wasn't getting picked up by the major labels or even the indies, so Fall Out Boy began selling its music online. [...]

Meanwhile, the kids in cyberspace created their own street team. Some were even skipping school to get the word out. [... The bassist said,] "You couldn't have made this street team. You couldn't have written a marketing plan like this if you tried. ... We weren't at the wheel, really. We were, kind of, but all these kids were doing it on their own and steering its destiny."

<http://www.pollstar.com/news/viewhotstar.pl?Artist=FALBOY>

"Normal Fans", "Factual Information", Fan Constructions of Factual Information

This introduction to *NSync fandom prepares both "factual" information about the group's public history and an overview of standard fan characterizations of the group members and popular fanfiction tropes and romantic pairings.

- "*NSYNC Fandom Primer (basic)", by Shine

*Gossip and speculation abounds, of course, but actual factual private knowledge of the guys, based on personal experiences or anecdotes, is often considered not relevant [sic] to the fandom or used in fanfiction. We're writing about the public images of *NSYNC, not the actual people themselves.*

<http://www.squidge.org/%7Eetheforest/owlet/nsync.html>

A similar introduction to Fall Out Boy fandom deliberately connects the musicians in their roles as characters in fanfiction, their roles in public relations for their bands, and their private lives.

- "Bandom overview (image heavy)", by iamtheenemy

The biggest BNF [Big Name Fan] in the Pete/Patrick community is Pete Wentz. That guy loves the SHIT out of Patrick, and seems to get a kick out of stirring up

rumors. The place you see this the most is online, in his various blogs and web sites. [...]

[Panic! at the Disco member] Ryan [Ross], in the early days, was a bit of an internet stalker. [...]

Brandon [Urie] is currently single, but has been previously linked to scene queens Audrey Kitching and Lana Jade (which I'll talk about later). Both girls have insinuated that he was somewhat less than straight, but I personally don't trust anything said by angry ex-girlfriends in general. [...]

The biggest ship in the My Chemical Romance fandom is Frank/Gerard. [...] They've mastered the art of the stage gay. They love each other. They love you. Frank's response to being called faggots on stage while playing a show was to grab Gerard's face mid-song and stick his tongue into Gerard's mouth. Even though they both have beautiful wives, that hasn't stopped the slash fans.

http://community.livejournal.com/crack_van/2995848.html

One fan invokes the concept of "canon"-- a fandom term for information established as factual within officially produced narrative diegesis-- to convey the sense of narrative flexibility surrounding the world of bandom musicians.

- "Bandom Primer PowerPoint Presentation", by Lalejandra
well, about 98% of this is stuff i learned through reading the fic [fanfiction] w/o any knowledge of canon AT ALL. so you will totally be prepared for fic, and in no way be prepared to, say, have a serious discussion of the mother/whore issues in almost every single panic! at the disco song. hee.

<http://octette.livejournal.com/1203841.html?thread=6260097#t6260097>

Sharing the reasons to care about a particular romantic pairing between bandom musicians, a slasher mentions the reactions of "normal" fans. This reference points out her awareness that slash-reading fans are different from mainstream fans, but that there exists a significant overlap in terms of practice-- here, speculating about homosexual relationships among band members-- that did not exist between *NSync slash fans and the mild youth that was *NSync target demographic.

- "Mikey/Pete Manifesto (Turned Primer)", by blushandrecover
[The extensively documented] relationship [between Pete Wentz and Mikey Way], whatever it is, has been debated as though it really happened. It's gone out of just slash communities into "normal" fan conversations.

http://community.livejournal.com/bandom_ships/7994.html

"Disclaimers" often accompany published fanfiction, often acknowledging several ideas: that the fanfiction uses the public personas of real people, but does not purport to be true factual; that the fans understand their internet-savvy favorite musicians might find their way to the published fiction (in the case of Pete Wentz-- whom bandom represents as not just internet-savvy but internet-obsessed-- this seems more likely); and that in that case the fans exhort the musicians to stop reading.

- "How to Be a Rock Star, by Patrick M. Stump, Aged Seventeen", by Trixie
Googling yourself can lead to nothing good. This is all completely made up. Blah blah disclaimercakes.

<http://trixiesfic.livejournal.com/471259.html>

- "woman like a man", by Cat

Disclaimer: Not true. BACK BUTTON, PETE.

<http://longtime-lurker.livejournal.com/3934.html>

Musicians do happen across some fan creations, however, and fan responses to those incidents often bring up high emotion and intense conversation. The following such conversation displays some mixed views, but what is notable is that even when two fans disagree regarding whether their favorite musicians would resent fan works created in their honor, they both reach to characterize those "real" living people as if the fans themselves had access to their subjective feelings-- even in the middle of a discussion of how persona and private subject are separate.

- "Holy Jesus Fuck, or, 'Good Call on the Stockings': An Essay on Fandom and Celebrity Interactions", by Olivia

Victoria Asher is a real person. She has a real life, and a family, and a dog, and she went to film school, and she plays in a band. And I know absolutely nothing about her. [...] I'm writing about Vicky-T the character. [...] I don't know Victoria Asher, I don't know Pete Wentz, I don't know Gerard Way. All I know is the characters they play, the celebrity images they present to their fans and the world at large. I'm writing very, very fictionalized versions of real people, in stories that are sometimes very, very fictionalized adaptations of real events. It's exactly like writing historical fiction, except that the real people the characters are based on aren't dead, and the canon is a growing, changing, ever-adapting organism. In the end, however, it's all about stories.

<http://olivia-circe.livejournal.com/186057.html>

- Comment by Eleanor Lavish, in response to Olivia's post

Bandom is different, man. There is not a single band I can think of that hasn't brought up fanfic in interviews, and not always in a derogatory way. Frank Iero thinks we're being "creative". Pete grins at us knowingly from stage when he flirts with Patrick, and Patrick's "yeah, yeah, I've read the fic" response is more fond amusement than disgust.

<http://olivia-circe.livejournal.com/186057.html?thread=970441#t970441>

- Exchange of comments between blondiusmaximus and adellyna

It made me so mad [...] that [an anonymous fan] made sure Patrick would see [a "slashy piece of art"]. He's scared of the internet anyway! It's not going to help anything. I know that [the musicians] know [about slash], but I don't want to be reminded of it. I want that separation.

... yes, exactly that. [...] Like, do people honestly just forget that the celebrities are real actual people with real actual feelings and not simply two-dimensional characters who can be stuck into a variety of situations?

Real!Patrick is not Fanfic!Patrick [...].

<http://adellyna.livejournal.com/359454.html?thread=4175390#t4175390>