(my name)

(professor's name)

ENC 1101

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<p align="center">A beginner's guide to /mlp</p>

I: Introduction

On 4chan, few boards are more infamous than /mlp/. The board /mlp/ is a place where people can go to anonymously discuss the show "My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic." Members of the "Brony" fandom, which is made up of the adult fans of the show, visit /mlp/ to discuss the show and share fan art and fanfiction.

What makes /mlp/ so infamous are the people that use it. In "Straight from the Horse's Mouth: A Case Study on the Adult Male Fans of My Little Pony," Kaitlyn Elizabeth Schimpf explains how the vast majority of /mlp/ users are sexually attracted to the My Little Pony characters. The posters on /mlp/—as well as the rest of 4chan—call /mlp/ users "horsefuckers." Please note that the name is intended to be sarcastic, and that few, if any, /mlp/ users would engage in sexual acts with an animal given the chance.

II: Greentext

> Il9yPPXi1cE 10/16/20(Fri)01:59:37 No.36009628 ∨ >>36009631 #
>
> >>36009623 #
> >You reach down and pat her on the head.
> "You'll have fun! Now lay down and put your front legs behind your back."
> >She looks away from you.
> >A deep blush is forming on her face.
> "I'm waiting."
> >She moves slowly.
> >Agonizingly slowly.
> >You've half a mind to start slapping her rump for stalling things out.
> >But you don't want to push your luck.
> >You're just happy that she's obeying.
> >Finally, she's lying face down ass up with her front hooves gently touching each other just above her tail's dock.
> >"Is this acceptable?"
> "Spread your hind legs too."
> >"But- yes, master."
> >You walk around behind her to find the fur about her inner thighs is nice and slick.
> >You reach down with a finger and brush against her pubis.
> >Her clitoris convulses subtly as she whimpers.
> >She squirms a little as you fasten the spreader bar, but offers no real resistance.
> >You're pleased to see her lying before you, helpless and exposed.
> >Ready. But not exactly eager.
> >You blindfold her and place a few cushions under her ribs.
> "Okay. That about does it. I'll see you tomorrow."
> >"Wait, you're LEAVING?"
> >You're pretty sure you'd implied that.
> "Yeah. It'd just be weird if I stayed."
> >"But then, who's coming?"
> "You. And lots of ponies."
> >"But, but what if they hurt me?"
> "They would quickly regret it."
> >"But, but-"
> "I know everypony that's coming here tonight. None of them will be allowed in unless they swear to abide by my rules."
> >"But if they don't?"
> >Oh boy.

What you just read is a form of storytelling exclusive to 4chan called a "greentext." Placing a ">" symbol at the beginning of a line will make the text in the line green, which is intended to be used for quoting other posts, but it is often used more creatively. Greentexts are usually told in first or second person. Each sentence begins on a new line, and all lines except speaker dialogue is made green.

One thing that makes greentexts on /mlp/ different than the rest of 4chan is the subject of them. Outside of /mlp/, greentexts are usually relatively short and made to tell others about a personal experience. Greentexts from /mlp/ are almost always fanfiction and sometimes pornographic. The specific post I shared is part of a much larger greentext hundreds of lines long. Greentexts are also much more prevalent on /mlp/ than on other

4chan boards. This is because of two factors I have identified. The first reason is because the brony fandom is very creative. You can find a plethora of fan music, fanart, and—most relevantly—fanfiction created by bronies. The second reason why greentexts are so common on /mlp/ is that pornographic images are not allowed, but pornographic stories are.
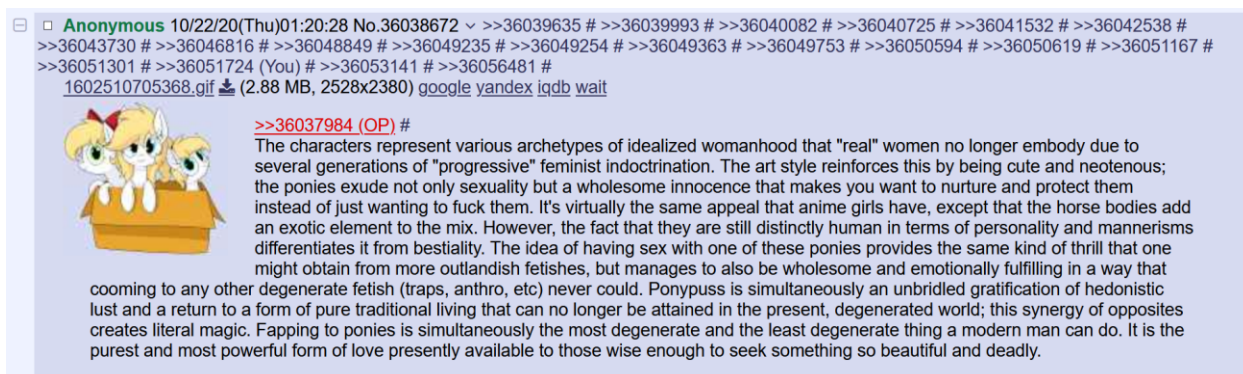
III: (You)

You barely gain anything from posting on 4chan. There is no way to monetize posts, and since posting is done anonymously, specific posters almost never gain notoriety. If someone does gain notoriety, it will never extend to other websites. So, what drives people to post on 4chan? Well, on other websites such as Facebook or Instagram, people post things to get likes. On 4chan, the analogue to likes are "(You)s." the term (You) comes from the way replies to your post are marked. To reply to a post on 4chan, you must type ">>" followed by the post number of the post you want to reply to. (See below)
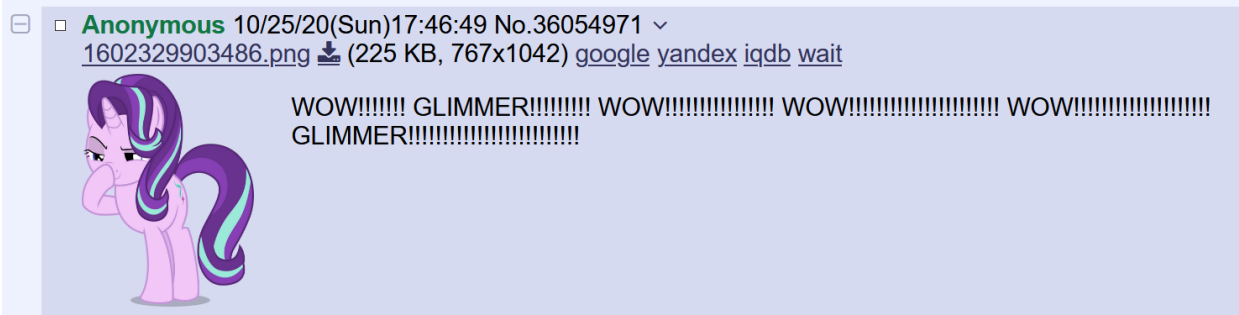

The term (You) is mostly used as a substitute for the word reply and references the dopamine rush someone gets when another person replies to their posts. When someone replies to a poster, the poster they reply to is considered to have "gotten a

(You)." Replies are important because they are the only mechanism of intercommunication between users. (You)s are highly sought after. 4chan's userbase consists mostly of social misfits, so social contact is something they desperately want. Thoughtful, well-written posts like the one shown below receive the most (You)s. These posts often spark discussions about the post, which leads even more people to see it and reply to it. The post numbers of this post's replies are found at the top of the post in dark blue. You can see that this post has gotten twenty replies when it was screenshotted.
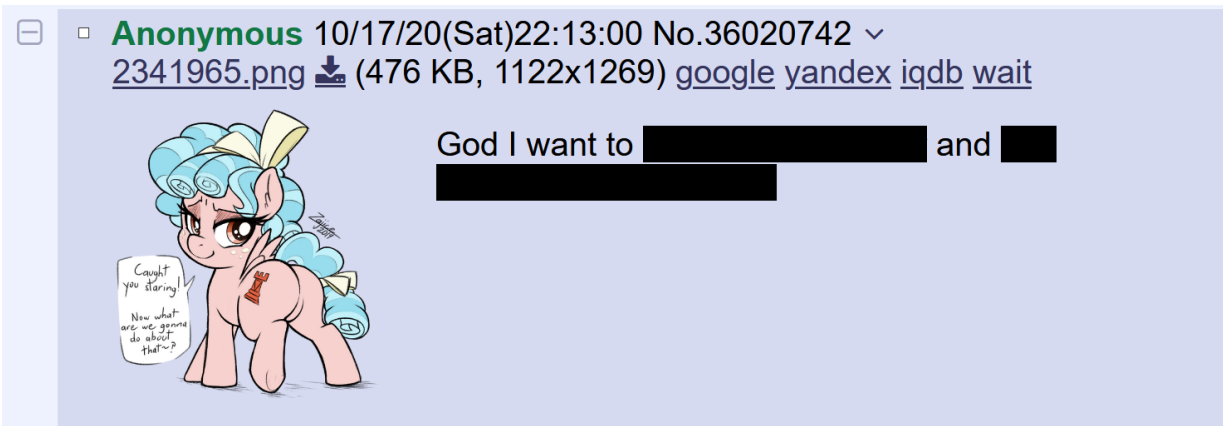

IV: Shitposting

Sometimes users knowingly create low quality posts, which is an act called "shitposting" The term "shitpost" can be used as both a verb, referring to the act of creating a low quality post, and a noun, referring to the post that is made. Below is an example of a shitpost.

Anonymous 10/25/20(Sun)17:46:49 No.36054971 ˅
1602329903486.png ⬇ (225 KB, 767x1042) google yandex iqdb wait

WOW!!!!!!! GLIMMER!!!!!!!!! WOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! WOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! WOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! GLIMMER!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

This post adds nothing of value to /mlp/. In fact, it appears to be intentionally made to offend people. An image of the character Starlight Glimmer is attached to the post. Starlight Glimmer is a very controversial character in the Brony community. Some people claim her addition to the cast was one of the worst writing decisions in the series, while others claim her addition had a positive effect on the show's writing. The latter group contains many obnoxious shitposters, which /mlp/ calls "Glimmerfags." Glimmerfags often post pictures of Starlight Glimmer in a usually successful attempt to annoy the posters on /mlp/.

People also use the term "shitpost" as a general term to describe any post that is not on topic or has seemingly no reason to exist. Take the following post for example.

Anonymous 10/17/20(Sat)22:13:00 No.36020742 ˅
2341965.png ⬇ (476 KB, 1122x1269) google yandex iqdb wait

God I want to ███████████████ and ██ ███████████████

This post makes use of 4chan's spoiler tags. By placing spoiler tags before and after a section of text, that text will not be visible unless the mouse cursor is placed over it. Spoiler tags are meant to prevent people from looking at spoilers, but this post uses spoiler tags to subvert expectations. The text that is immediately visible, combined with the attached image, is intended to give the impression that the section in spoiler tags contains lewd text. However, when the text is revealed, it actually says "God I want to tell her I forgive her and that everything will be okay." But what makes this post a shitpost? Well, you can tell that this post has no reason to exist other than to exhibit a creative use for spoiler tags. If this post were serious, it would not include spoiler tags, as there are no spoilers in the post.

V: Conclusion

By looking at its many different literary practices, you can tell that 4chan's /mlp/ is a unique discourse community. The literary practices and terminology discussed here only offer a glimpse into /mlp/'s culture.