

**MUSIC INDUSTRIES AND CULTURE**

**Section 301**

**Professor Daniel Makagon**

# **The Evolution of Fan Culture**

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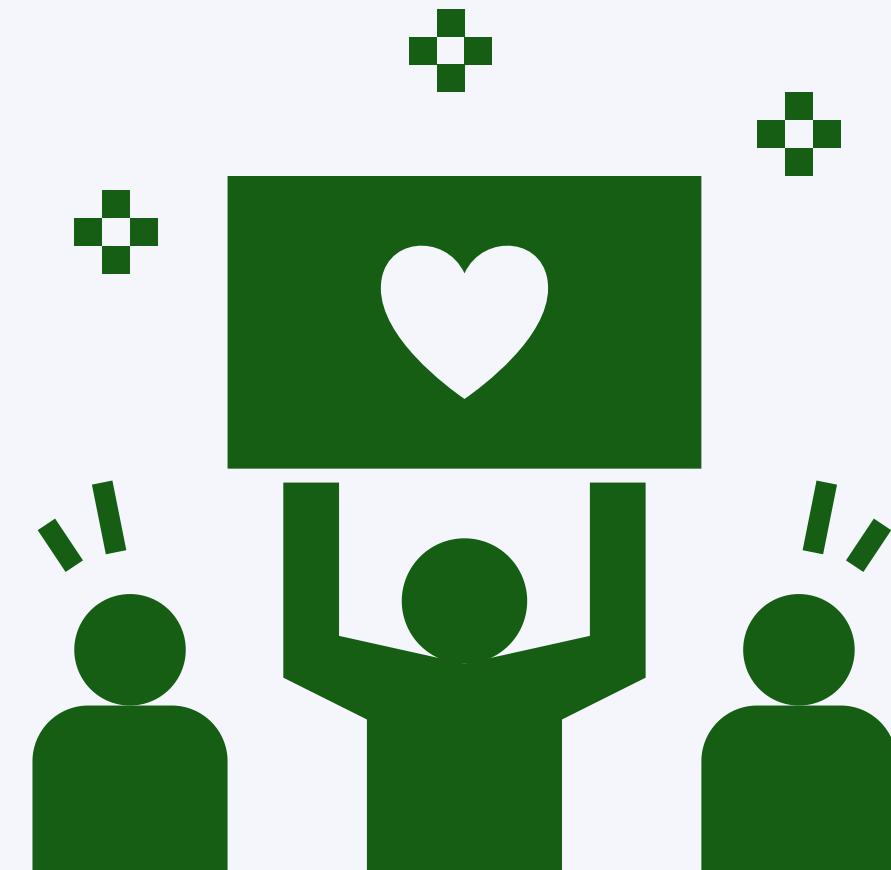
# ASSERTION:

Music fans have historically played a significant role in shaping the cultural landscape, from influencing trends to challenging industry norms.



# ORIGINS OF THE FAN

- The origin of the word fan is unclear, but it likely comes from “fanatic.”
- Etymological evidence suggests that “fandom” (as a concept) was around long before the invention of the term “fan.” (Jenkins, 2017)
- Cavicchi identified 3 characteristics:
  - A sustained interest in sensation
  - An emphasis on celebrity and selfhood
  - Contested the expected limits of consumption



# Evolution of fan culture

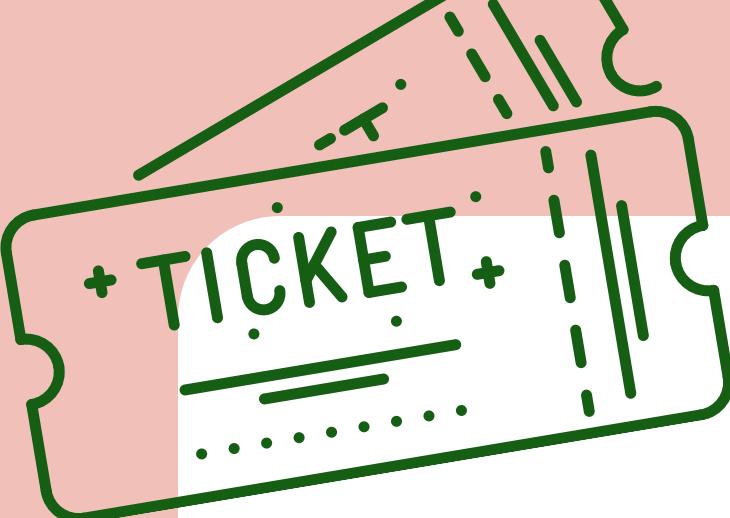
- **Then:** Screaming at concerts, reading magazines
- **Now:** Coordinating Twitter trends, streaming parties, TikTok dances, shared vocabulary
- **Still:** Emotional connection and identity shaping

THEN:

# BEATLEMANIA



*“The Beatlemania era of the band’s career set a new precedent for fan culture [...]. More importantly, the focused, emphatic fan practices set into motion around the Beatles became the blueprint for how bands, performers and their fans would interact in the decades that followed. The open displays of passionate devotion – whether screaming at concerts or waiting for hours to catch a glimpse of the stars in question – became commonplace [...]. While reading teen magazines and plastering posters to one’s bedroom walls remain popular practices among teenage girls, the Internet now offers online fans sites, e-zines, social media groups, and countless other virtual spaces to congregate and express their fandom.”* – Museum of Youth Culture



## BEATLEMANIA FAN BEHAVIOR

- Concert goers screamed, attempted to get on stage, and some even fainted
- Formal fan clubs
- Merchandise: *“Fans could soon buy specially published fan magazines, posters, dolls, badges, dresses, boots, wallpaper, lunch boxes, wigs, games, gum and nearly any trinket imaginable. Girls could outfit themselves and their bedrooms entirely with Beatles-branded merchandise.”* (Feldman-Barrett, 2023)



# NOW: “STANS”

- As a noun, "stan" refers to "an extremely or excessively enthusiastic and devoted fan," (Merriam-Webster). Though, colloquially, "stan" is often used to describe any fan, regardless of dedication
- Slang term that rose to prominence in 2000 because of Eminem
- Today's use of the term is less ominous than its origin

- Emerged from internet communities (Tumblr, Twitter, now TikTok)
- Stan culture is about building identity, belonging to a community, and showing extreme loyalty which is often expressed through strategic online behaviors like hashtag campaigns and streaming parties



# STAN FAN BEHAVIOR

- Shared vocabulary → local, bias, oomf, lane, rob list, anti, mother (Gilchrist, 2023)
- Fanmade content → dances, edits, fanfiction, memes
- Streaming parties → mass listening sessions,
- Cancel/defend cycle → Fans switch from defending to canceling their favorite artists when they disappoint.

*“On stan Twitter, superfans assemble in micro-communities to express fervent love for certain celebrities. Each “faction”—of which membership which is self-appointed—hosts inside jokes and shared references with an ironclad allegiance. Incorporating diligent concentration and encyclopedic knowledge, stan culture works as a hub for the most fervent of fans, when IRL interactions can’t serve them enough.” (Chuck, 2022)*

# EXAMPLES:

**Normani**  @Normani · 7/1/18  
I have my album title y'all

**aa** @dizzydorahoe · 6/30/19  
one year... ur sick

**aa** @dizzydorahoe · 7/1/20  
two years... ur sick

**aa** @dizzydorahoe · 6/30/21  
three years... ur sick

**aa** @dizzydorahoe · 6/30/22  
four years... ur sick

**aa** @dizzydorahoe  
five years... ur sick

12:00 PM · 6/30/23 from Earth · 560K Views

**Niall Horan**  @NiallOfficial  
gonna havta ask my mother again..but i think i was born around this time of the morning..so like 8:15/ 8:30am

**SerenaaSvedka** @SerenaaSvedka  
@niallOfficial you were born at 8:04. You Missed it already.

**Niall Horan**  @NiallOfficial  
@SerenaaSvedka how do u know that

**boo** @prfctlyboo  
Follow  
NO THOUGHTS JUST TAYLOR SINGING YLM LIVE 😢

10:33 AM · 20 Feb 24 · 33 Views

**livvy (she/her)** @googledthending · 5d  
Replying to @prfctlyboo  
Jan this is your groupmate for our research project. I am reaching out to your account to tell you to do your work. We have a research defense to prepare for.

**Nicki Minaj stan**  @StanNicki... · 14h  
Thank you, I want to be cardiologist

**Nicki Minaj Access** @ACCESSMINAJ  
A what?... FAKE BARB.

\*@80hd\_ · 14h  
Replying to @ACCESSMINAJ  
@StanNickiNow and @MARAJKALI  
no girl omg a cardiologist is a damn nutritionist

**FRANKIE ME!** @MuseumGay  
Since y'all wanna be assholes for Taylor. Iron man dies in endgame

12:24 AM · 4/26/19 · Twitter for iPhone

596 Retweets 2,691 Likes

**FRANKIE ME!** @MuseumGay · 10h  
And I'm not even joking

# FROM BEATLEMANIA TO DIRECTIONERS

- Evolved from concerts to online communities
- Driven by shared language, rituals, and loyalty
- Shapes personal and group identities in the digital world



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