

There came a time where fandom and fan culture and “stanning” moved from a deep, dark secret to a socially acceptable hobby. I remember this turn coming in 2020, peak quarantine and COVID. I think there were a lot of variables that came together to allow this. First, so many of us were back in our childhood bedrooms, surrounded by our former interests. The tenth anniversary of One Direction drew in high levels of interest, Harry Potter TikTok brought fan fiction back into mainstream conversations, and all of a sudden, it was okay to be a fan. Brittany Broski spoke openly and regularly about her status as a fan of so many things and was praised for it. It was fine to have silly niche tee shirts and stickers, watch edits and POVs online, and you did not have to hide it. It heals a younger version of myself to know this. To her, I am still a fangirl. It is a badge I wear with pride.