**My Little Pony Reawakens Hope in Many**

Shoutbox: The world just became, about, 20% better.

If you spend less than ten minutes watching a news station, you would quickly see that the world isn’t in the best shape it could be: Warring countries, senseless murder, corruption and fraud throughout various governments. Some people turn to religion to seek comfort during these times. Others may find it within their friends and families. Yet recently, many turn to something that would leave people in disbelief: *My Little Pony Friendship is Magic.*

Spreading across the world by storm, *My Little Pony Friendship Is Magic* has started a revolution of sorts in recent years. It has inspired people, both young and old, to make the world a happier place by adopting the adage of kindness and tolerance that the show promotes. Reaching out to the world through charity is a very common trend amongst fans. Starting back in November 2011, a fund pool known as The Humble Brony Bundle has raised a total of $21,307 (as of February 13. 2012) that was, and still is, divided between organizations such as the American Red Cross and Child’s Play (a service that provides video games to ill children in hospitals). “Operation: Sharing Kindness” is an initiative started back in December 2011 that started as a toy drive and monetary donation group for Toys for Tots during the holiday season. However, it has evolved from a simple toy drive to a more established group with current funds raised at $2,130 (as of February 29. 2012) with a goal of $5,000. It now donates to Toys for Tots as well as Doctors Without Borders, an international humanitarian organization that assists people whose lives are threatened by violence or catastrophe. On the more creative side, the charity organization known as Bronies for Good have started a musical initiative named “Smile! Charity Album.” This project, as the name implies, is a twenty-two track music album created by fans of *My Little Pony* in an effort to raise funds for the Children’s Cancer Association. It operates on a “download-by-donation” basis; to get it, one must contribute some amount to the cause. This album almost reflects the diversity of the fans themselves; it brings together all types of music styles from the hard-and-fast tempo electronica and rock to the more relaxing styles of jazz and acoustic.

Now, how can a show for little girls do all of this? Moreover, why are men even watching it in the first place? Bronies, the term for both male and female fans of *My Little Pony,* are the ones responsible for these works. What started as a small group on the Internet quickly evolved into a multinational phenomenon. With members ranging from ages 12 to 35, the brony fandom at large is a community that believes the world can be better if one tries to make it so. For some, the show brings back a sense of nostalgia for the imaginative world of their youth; some are drawn to it based solely on the high quality animation and music that goes into the show. Others, it keeps alive the hope that things in the world can change for the best. And, some just enjoy watching cute colorful ponies going on adventures for twenty-two minutes every Saturday morning. Nevertheless, it is truly amazing how a simple television program can bring together prolific minds to make a change for the better in the world.

Overall, *My Little Pony Friendship is Magic* has completely gone beyond what a cartoon is. Never before has something like a television show, for children no less, sparked such inspiration and kindness throughout the world. Between bronies transcending typical male stereotypes and the drive they have to improve the lives of others, *My Little Pony Friendship is Magic* has lit a needed candle in this world.