

Breaking Mayberry Statement

Right at the top: Black Lives Matter, black anger, black joy, black grief matters. Breaking Mayberry supports ALL forms of protesting for the rights of people who have been systemically oppressed for centuries, and we're not here to hear any other arguments.

Breaking Mayberry is a show about a show about cops. Plain and simple. And even though we are primarily a comedy podcast and no one is coming to us for expert socio-political commentary (god I hope not), we have always been interested in exploring how "classic tv" influences the ideas of its audience – and that includes ideas around police and policing.

Most people have no idea what being a law enforcement officer actually entails, just like most people don't know what being a doctor or lawyer is like. The main place we get our concepts about these jobs is from popular culture, TV and movies, etc., because people really aren't good at distinguishing fact from fiction. So by allowing pro-cop narratives to dominate popular culture for decades, Hollywood has unintentionally (or maybe intentionally) shaped the public's view of these roles into something that does not represent reality. They have normalized and manufactured consent for systems and institutions which are increasingly obviously racist and brutal.

Maybe the Andy Griffith show isn't as sensationalist or paranoia-filled as its contemporary Dragnet, or the modern equivalent, Law and Order. But it is still a show – an intensely popular and influential one – that frequently built narratives around "proper policing." It is a show where, as we have pointed out numerous times, police regularly abuse their power for their personal gain or entertainment. And in some not-insignificant way, it normalized that in the minds of the audience.

For example: When Sheriff Andy Taylor under-reports his crime rate, we scream about it because we know on some level that in real life, under-reporting of white perpetrators and over-policing of black neighborhoods leads to racist statistics and perpetuates the dehumanizing of communities. In real life, you don't just get to let yourself in and out of jail whenever you want.

We have never shied away from this, but we also need to be abundantly clear that we are aware of it and will continue to call it out in even more detail as the show goes on. We also recognize our role here as a stupid, silly podcast that people listen to for escape. But as we frequently say about the Andy Griffith Show itself, **escapism without responsibility is denial**. And we will not be a denialist podcast.

Here's what you can expect from us from here on: We will continue to make jokes, we will continue to mock regressive ideals when we see them, and we will continue to explore the impact of these ideals on the greater populace. We will increase our amplification efforts, we will make more attempts to bring voices other than our own to the conversation - especially the voices of black and other minority commentators.

We will make attempts to be educational as well as entertaining. And we will stop saying “yeah, that was bad but whatever” as we do ratings. Our criticism will be more complete and unforgiving.

Breaking Mayberry walks a fine line between meaningless escape and topical satire, we are aware of this. This is a time to be critical of our ideals, to assess where our attitudes come from. We want to continue to explore these topics, and we want to continue to make an entertaining show for all of you.

If you're not out on the front lines, we encourage you to [donate to funds that help support black lives and communities of color.](#)

-Marty and Dan