

[00:00:01.030] - Nathan

Hello, hello. Welcome to Nonsense and Noise --a Contest. Wow. Holy shit. A podcast about the queer pop culture and media experience.

[00:00:09.970] - Nathan

I'm your host Nathan Kato, and I can't fucking talk. It's been a hot second since recorded a podcast episode. Date of recording is January 23 and I'm so sorry about just fully dropping off the radar for all of January with the Pod. It's been a rough reentry for me just to get back into things after the holiday break. Work has been incredibly busy for me.

[00:00:35.060] - Nathan

I work at a biotech company and I'm a project manager and I talk to the FDA for a living. Not all the time, but a substantial amount of work that I do like ends up going to the FDA. So I actually was interacting with the FDA a couple of weeks ago and I've been just like running around like a chicken with my head cut off. So yeah, that's like work has been eating my life and I've been trying to maintain sanity by just trying to enjoy other hobbies on the side and everything. So I just haven't been able to actually put together a Pod episode and then also I've got two guests lined up for a couple of episodes and just scheduling and stuff is difficult.

[00:01:14.430] - Nathan

One of the episodes is going to be the last episode actually in the Boys Love series talking about a movie, another movie on Netflix. And then the other episode is going to be with one of my friends and we're going to talk about Encanto, which is a wonderful, wonderful Disney movie. So yeah, that's kind of what we have to look forward to. But yeah, I've been busy with work and trying to just maintain levels of sanity and stuff and getting shitty sleep, truly. I know technically I'm supposed to be averaging about 8 hours of sleep and whatever and I think my average is about like five to six, which is not good.

[00:01:51.000] - Nathan

So basically I just want to know who sleep is and where he lives because I want to hang out and be friends. That'd be really fucking nice. And it's also super cold in New York City. A lot of the weather these past few weeks has been below freezing, 32 Fahrenheit for those in the States and for those outside below zero degrees Celsius. So like, for example, earlier this week it was like maybe 17 degrees Fahrenheit outside and then with wind chill it was like close to ten.

[00:02:20.520] - Nathan

So that has not been really fun to navigate because I'm fine with the cold. I don't mind the cold. However, I would like the cold more if there was snow to make it worth it. And there's no snow to make it worth it. So it's just like I have to walk outside in a really heavy winter jacket and everything and that's fine.

[00:02:42.300] - Nathan

I just want snow. We got snow once and it was a suitable amount, but I don't know, I'd like more that'd be cool. But yeah, it's cold as hell and I just want snow to make it worth it.

[00:02:54.440] - Nathan

That's it. That's probably like the third time I've said it, but I want the snow. So yeah, that's how I am, how I've been and why we're getting an episode so late. Hopefully I'll get another episode knocked out early February because I'm taking a few days off early February for my birthday so I can relax and enjoy myself. So maybe I will get around to recording an episode then.

[00:03:17.240] - Nathan

But yeah. So as you all know, this show is not sponsored by anybody. It's fully independent. I am running this myself and the best way to help support the show is through Patreon. And if you help support the Patreon in any way, you get a shout out on the show.

[00:03:34.920] - Nathan

So it's been a while since we've had any new Patreons sign on board, but over the winter break we picked up a new one. So welcome. Da'Shawn Warner, thank you so much for your donation to the Patreon and for your support. I've gotten lots of feedback and praise and everything for all the past content and stuff, so I'm really glad to hear that you like it and enjoy it. So yeah, if you are wanting a shout out of your own, please go to the Nonsense and Noise Patreon and please feel free to drop a donation if you like what you hear! Now moving into pop culture and life updates and stuff, stuff that's happened since the December episode.

[00:04:11.940] - Nathan

So I know most of the time I keep things pretty light, but I did want to make a bit of time to talk about Michelle Go. This is the Asian American woman who was killed in New York City about two weeks ago. Someone pushed her onto the tracks in front of a subway train and she died. And this unfortunately continues to be part of the anti-Asian American hate crimes and everything that happened. It doesn't matter the race of whoever did this, it's really, the root of it is white supremacy and just a lot of anti-Asian sentiment. And it's really hard to take and just kind of see this happen. As an Asian American person in the United States, I'm not going to have the same level of connection to this event as Asian American

women. But it's just really tough to see this. And it's upsetting because I think anti-Asian sentiments, just like anti-Black sentiment is built very heavily into a lot of how American society works.

[00:05:24.390] - Nathan

If you think about it, there's a lot of it in terms of beauty standards. There's also a lot of it in terms of just like how we even interact with China. There's just such a heavily anti Chinese sentiment. Like even before COVID, a lot of the news coverage has always been like, China is suspicious. We should really be aware of what they're doing.

[00:05:47.560] - Nathan

And basically, if there's a villain in any show, or whatever. It's either China or Russia. And I obviously can't speak to anti Russian sentiment in the United States. But anti Asian stuff, it keeps going. And it's really upsetting to kind of have to face off against anti-Asian hate and anti-Asian sentiment would just "stop Asian hate," because that slogan is actually pretty weak.

[00:06:17.850] - Nathan

It doesn't really make people question their own points of view like Black Lives Matter, because Black Lives Matter is a successful slogan, because it has made people who are actually against that upset because we know that this slogan is saying that Black Lives Matter, they do not matter more than others. They do not matter less than others. Black Lives Matter, period. That's it. And saying Stop Asian hate is just such a tame and just honestly flaccid sort of slogan because it's just saying don't hate Asian people.

[00:06:57.220] - Nathan

And the average person who is anti-Asian is going to say, oh, yeah, I don't hate Asian people. I just think this, right? And that itself continues to perpetuate anti Asian sentiments. And I've been really thinking about this long and hard for how to best come up with a slogan that actually gets what we want across and also makes people a little uncomfortable and by people, I mean people who have anti Asian sentiment. So instead of stop Asian hate, I've started saying, at least on Twitter, Asians are important, or AAPI are important.

[00:07:30.210] - Nathan

Both slogans, I think, are equally powerful. I've heard from people who have spoken with Pacific Islanders that Pacific Islanders are not Asian. They are their own sort of group, just the way that they are native people. And they're native to those Pacific Islands, and they're not quite the same as Asian American. And right now it's just sort of this umbrella term that is used for government purposes.

[00:08:05.210] - Nathan

But in any case, just to be more inclusive at this point in time, AAPI are important. That is the slogan that I've been using. I encourage you to use that as well, just because it has more teeth. We're not saying that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are more important than anybody, but we are saying that we are important. Asian American and Pacific Islander life is important.

[00:08:28.270] - Nathan

And it's worth acknowledging and considering. So that is the heavy update. And Michelle Go, rest in peace. I really hope her family is doing okay, that she's able to get some accountability. And I don't know what justice would look like just because justice isn't having someone be punished for this crime necessarily.

[00:08:49.930] - Nathan

That's accountability. Justice would be, how do we make sure that this doesn't happen ever again? And I think I've seen some conversations on Twitter saying like, oh, it'd be cool to have glass doors or something in front of the subway tracks. I think some Asian--er, not Asian American countries, hello? Asian countries, have that just as like a safety measure. And I think that'd be really cool.

[00:09:11.560] - Nathan

It'd be really cool to actually modernize the New York subways but yeah, that's something. So I really hope that we're able to find justice and we're able to have accountability for Michelle Go passing. Okay, so that was the heavy piece of news. I guess the other slightly heavy piece of news is Betty White passed before the end of the year, last year. And it was just really sad because she was almost to her 100th birthday.

[00:09:36.480] - Nathan

Also kind of funny comedic timing because, hey, I'm about to turn 100. And several magazines posted about like, oh, Betty White is turning 100. And she's just like, peace out, which honestly, power move. Great. So that's kind of funny.

[00:09:51.290] - Nathan

But also RIP Betty White. I would personally love to trade the Queen of England for Betty White. So that way Betty could actually celebrate her hundredth birthday. I think that would have been really cool. The Queen of England has done nothing.

[00:10:03.310] - Nathan

She's a racist. Her family is racist. The institution is racist. Let's just sacrifice the Queen of England and bring back Betty for White for maybe a couple of weeks.

[00:10:12.450] - Nathan

That'd be cool. So that's the other piece of world news. So then movies and everything there is the movie Belle. It's an anime movie that's kind of like Beauty and the Beast, but set in like a Metaverse. I've heard that it's kind of like a spiritual successor to the Digimon movie, which is interesting.

[00:10:29.550] - Nathan

So I think I'm interested in watching I don't know where I'm going to watch it, but I'm interested in watching it. So there's that. That opened on January 14, so that's almost two weeks ago. And Moon Knight, that's not a movie. Moon Knight is a TV show that is coming to Disney Plus. It is in the MCU featuring Oscar Isaac as the titular Moon Knight. And in the research that I've done, that character actually is living with dissociative identity disorder, which is really cool to have that representation. And also at the same time, I'm quite nervous to see how that's portrayed in the media because dissociative identity disorder has not had a really good sensitive handling. I think it would be really cool to have media written by somebody with DID or like, have somebody heavily consult with a group of people who live with DID to actually make a piece of media that speaks authentically to their experience. Because a lot of the pop culture sort of relationship with DID is very much just like, oh, they were a murderer in their whatever personality.

[00:11:39.320] - Nathan

But then their other personality doesn't know that. And it's just like a tired trope and really offensive trope, too, to just have this sort of perpetuated. Mentally ill people are unwell and they are dangerous. And it's just boring. It's boring. It's overused.

[00:11:57.750] - Nathan

And I would like to see an actual story that features someone with the DID and that is like authentic and actually speaks to that experience and living with it similar to the blade... the blade! The Game Hellblade, because that game Ninja Theory, which is the studio. They actually consulted very heavily with a bunch of people who live with psychosis and schizophrenia and who actually hear voices and see things differently, and they made that part of the game mechanics, and that was really cool. So I think it'd be awesome to actually see that. But all that to say we'll see how Moon Knight is. I'm nervous.

[00:12:37.710] - Nathan

I hope that the representation in its entirety is great and good. Oscar Isaac is a Latino actor, so that's already a win. But yeah, I just hope that the DID is handled in an appropriate manner. So that's movies and TV. As far as video games. Oh boy. I might get this episode out before Legends Arceus drops.

[00:13:01.700] - Nathan

I might not. But Legends Arceus is dropping this Friday, January 28 I'm excited. I'm going to stream it. I pre ordered it. It is an open world Pokemon game and I'm just so stoked. Pokemon has needed a refresh for a long time.

[00:13:19.820] - Nathan

I think the last mainline Pokemon game that I actually enjoyed was probably Sun and Moon. Sword and Shield, in my opinion, was kind of a disappointment. I could do a whole series on Pokemon, so I'm not going to go too much further into that. But yeah, I'm excited for Legends Arceus, dropping this Friday, January 28. Life Is Strange Remastered is dropping February 1. That is a wonderful, wonderful game for queer stories and everything, as well as talking about just how superpowers don't necessarily solve all your problems.

[00:13:50.970] - Nathan

I personally think Life Is Strange Two is a more compelling story than Life Is Strange One. I haven't actually finished Life Is Strange Two, but yeah, Life Is Strange One is still good. So that Remastered collection is dropping February 1. Dying Light 2 is coming out February 4, that is a zombie game. I just have this on here for pop culture, and I'm not looking forward to this particularly, just because I'm not really a big fan of horror and zombie games. So that is all the pop culture updates and everything for now. As usual, this is not exhaustive. This is just kind of like stuff that I've seen ping around my radar, and that's just kind of to just talk about at least what's going on in the zeitgeist. So I'm going to take a brief break and then we'll be back with the main content.

[00:14:37.850] - Nathan

All right. And we are back from the break.

[00:14:40.450] - Nathan

I hope everybody was able to drink some water, get hydrated. I certainly am hydrated and ready to talk at all of you all. So the main topic for this week is continuing in the Boys Love series. We are covering The Untamed. That's the Netflix version of the original title of Modao Zushi, which translates roughly to the Master of the Demonic Path.

[00:15:08.460] - Nathan

This is also known, as I said, the Untamed on Netflix, or ChenQingLing. And this is a danmei novel adapted into both the anime and a live action based on a novel by the same name by Mo Xiang Tong Xiu, who's the person who also wrote Tianguan Cifu, which is Heaven's Official Blessing. So basically just kind of a quick overall synopsis. This is the story of Wei Wuxian and Lang Wangji as they meet and they try to solve a murder mystery that has dramatically affected Wei Wuxian's life. And yes, it's an interesting overall interesting story.

[00:15:47.000] - Nathan

I think it's much better put together than Tianguan Cifu, which is why I was so confused when I watched Heaven's Official Blessing and was just very confused as to why that story just seemed all over the place. So, yeah, that's kind of just like an overview. Once again, this is kind of set in the same sort of genre as Heaven's Official Blessing. This is wuxia or the xianxia genre. So there's magic and these are like noble heroes and they're going out to perform noble deeds and the government kind of interferes very minimally with them.

[00:16:25.110] - Nathan

So that's sort of like the backdrop of this. There are five major clans in this show. They all coexist peacefully. And then there's this one clan that tries to take over the rest of the clans, the Wen clan. And the Wen clan has two different branches.

[00:16:43.390] - Nathan

There's the main family, and then there's the Qishan Wen clan, and that group is more or less pacifist. Instead of learning swordsmanship and cultivation, they are more focused on medicine and everything. So technically speaking, there's more like six clans, but in name only, there are five major clans. So that's sort of like the world of the Untamed. And this series, as I said, I watched the live action on or maybe I didn't say this before, but I watched the live action on Netflix, and the series is 50 episodes long.

[00:17:20.930] - Nathan

And just in case you're interested in getting into it, the narrative structure is kind of weird. The first two episodes kind of opens sort of halfway through the story, and then it stays in sort of like present day or I guess it starts at point A, goes to 16 years in the future from point A, which we will call present time. And then it stays there for about like two episodes, and then it shoots back 16 years, back into the past, back to point A for 30 episodes of flashback. And then the rest of this... By the time, you basically have to sit through 30 episodes of lore and history of the characters that sort of give you the background of

everybody and show why the characters are the way they are now in the present day. It's all necessary, but the structure is just weird.

[00:18:10.950] - Nathan

So, yeah, you have your two episodes of intro, you have your 30 episodes of flashback, and then the rest of the series, which at this point is 18 episodes, is just solving the present day murder mystery and more or less clearing Wei Wuxian's name. And so it's wow, I said that weird. Wei Wuxian's name. So it's a weird structure. I think I personally would have liked to start with like okay, let's kind of do it. I think it would have worked chronologically but yeah, this is the way that the author chose to do it in the way that it is done in the live action.

[00:18:41.720] - Nathan

I'm not sure about the anime series but I think it's more or less the same thing where they start smack dab in the middle and then you get kind of slingshot between the two different time periods. So yeah, it was kind of jarring at first, especially since I wasn't expecting the flashback to be 30 episodes. And so I was talking to my friend who suggested me to watch this show and I was like so when does the flashback end? And she's just like what episode are you on? And I was like I think I'm like episode four or five and she was just like you have a long way to go with the flashback.

[00:19:15.950] - Nathan

So it's very weird narrative structure just for anyone who's interested in getting into it and hasn't had any like... If you don't have any warning, you're just like what is going on? I don't understand. But yeah, the story, it overall works. I just think we could have also just like gone chronologically and it would have been okay. But ultimately the plot is very well done and the story is compelling and it keeps me along for the ride.

[00:19:48.170] - Nathan

It's always very cool to see the murder mystery unfold. You have your thoughts about who could have orchestrated everything. But yeah, the plot itself is pretty good. It sort of evolves over time and everything ties together and makes more sense than Heaven's Official Blessing. Heaven's Official Blessing as I mentioned in that episode, there just seemed like there were lots of different plot threads going on and then we all of a sudden dove into this bigger adventure and then that plot thread wrapped up and it was like oh okay, I guess we're done.

[00:20:28.060] - Nathan

And yeah, I really don't understand why the plot of Heaven's Official Blessing is so weird compared to The Untamed. But that's okay because I think the Untamed... or not the Untamed, Heaven's Official Blessing. I think we're supposed to get more episodes, we're supposed to get a season two, hopefully that'll actually expand on everything and tie the story together better. But yeah, so far I really do think that The Untamed or Modao Zushi is a better story by this author.

[00:21:01.910] - Nathan

The plot was good and then also the visual effects really good. It's not the same, it's not fancy visual effects. The TV show employs a lot of practical effects as well so it's not like the most groundbreaking piece of media that you'll see in terms of visual effects. The movie that I'm going to be discussing later with another friend, not Encanto, but like the other blues-- Blues Love? Hello? The other Boys Love movie that I'll be discussing with another friend at some point that has much better visual effects like I think their budget pretty much went entirely to visual effects. The effects in Modao Zushi were good enough. And as far as stuff that I didn't really like, I don't think I have any real favorite characters from this show.

[00:21:51.950] - Nathan

The characters themselves were compelling and good and everything, but also, I don't know, I didn't feel like particular attachment to anybody. I feel like it's kind of the same way in Heaven's Official Blessing, though. I kind of liked Hua Cheng by the end, but yeah, I don't really feel any strong connection. And it might be because this is a Boys Love series and this was written not for gay men. This was written as a reminder Boys Love was written by women, for women.

[00:22:22.140] - Nathan

And it's interesting to consume media about you, but isn't for you, but I think that kind of colors... Maybe why I didn't have a favorite character. But yeah. Also the interesting thing to note with at least The Untamed. The Untamed is a live action show, and as a result, I think there was a lot more scrutiny in censorship for the queer subtext and everything.

[00:22:49.850] - Nathan

In the original story itself, I believe there is overt sexual contact between Wei Wuxian and Lan Wangji, two main characters. So it's interesting that it obviously makes sense that you can't have that, like overt queer contact in a live action show. But yeah, it was just interesting to see how much was removed. Kind of the only thing that you get out of it is like, Wei Wuxian, he, especially during the flashback, it shows his relationship with Lan Wangji, and it's very much like Lan Wangji is very serious and very stoic, and he kind of doesn't really take any bullshit. And Wei Wuxian is like very much a trickster person, very much a trickster character.

[00:23:46.110] - Nathan

And so obviously it's a lot of opposites attract and lots of just personalities clashing and they just kind of become friends through contact hours. (laughs)

[00:23:59.530] - Nathan

They're just like hanging out together, and eventually they get into so many different situations with each other that they're just like, well, I guess we're friends now to the point where they help each other when they're severely injured. I don't know, severely injured, but they help each other when they are injured and everything. So like, there's that friendship. I will say that probably the queerest moment is towards the end of the flashback arc when Wei Wuxian is starting to become the Grandmaster of Demonic Cultivation, which is the title of the series. There are a lot of people in that society that are very much against Wei Wuxian.

[00:24:40.420] - Nathan

They think he is evil, they think he's a murderer. They have all sorts of thoughts about what's actually going on, and as a result, he has a pretty crummy reputation, but in reality, he's trying to do something quite good.

[00:24:58.190] - Nathan

So as I mentioned before, the Wen Clan that started more or less like a campaign to sort of take over the kingdoms, the Wen clan has that pacifist sect, the Qishan Wen. That part of the clan did not participate in the war, but because they have that name, the Wen name, people who participated in the war and who were eventually successful in defeating the Wen clan, they saw that name and they said, you know what we can't have... You have to pay for all the suffering that you inflicted, even though these people were fully innocent. And so Wei Wuxian send steps in and says like, hey, no, I'm going to make sure that these people can live a safe and healthy life because that's what they deserve. They didn't do anything wrong.

[00:25:55.510] - Nathan

They were not part of this clan, you know, basically trying to break the cycle of violence. So he's trying to do that. But people very much dislike him for doing that. And then coupled with its bad reputation, there's a lot of pushback against basically his existence. So I think the queerest moment is when Wei Wuxian and Lan Wangji realize that they probably have to fight at some point.

[00:26:21.410] - Nathan

And Wei Wuxian is like, hey, I would rather you kill me and not anybody else and Lan Wangji says... Basically just doesn't kill him because they're friends. Like Wei Wuxian is his best friend. And I think that

is kind of at least for me that was the most overt queer moment of like, oh yeah, we're really good friends and I care about you and I would rather take on some level of dishonor and shame because I didn't do anything about you and let you live because Lan Wangji actually believes in what Wei Wuxian was doing. So that I think was the queerest part. The ending is fairly queer, but you also kind of have to squint with your gay eye, like really hard.

[00:27:04.010] - Nathan

You can maybe put on some glasses and some contacts. I know you don't normally do glasses and contacts together, but to be able to see the queerness, you kind of have to put both of them on. As I mentioned, this is a live action and so a lot of it had to be censored. I get it. But also I just kind of wonder how much of that was like just the fact that Boys Love is written by women for women.

[00:27:27.090] - Nathan

I wonder how much of a different story this would be if it was written by if this was a queer story written by a queer man. So that's kind of like what the story was about. It's really not my personal favorite at least. My favorite Boys Love we will cover later in a different episode. But yeah, if I didn't know about the romance going into this show, I had seen a lot of chatter and stuff about this show on Tumblr and I heard about it from a couple of friends.

[00:27:59.380] - Nathan

So if I hadn't known that this show was queer, I maybe would have been able to pick up on it, especially the whole part during their "childhood"/teenage years when Wei Wuxian and Lan Wangji are hanging out. Maybe I would have picked up on like, oh, Wei Wuxian really likes Lan Wangji, but otherwise it wasn't overt. And the main focus of the conversation. But yeah, like I said, I knew going into this that there was a romance.

[00:28:35.330] - Nathan

But if I was watching it without that information, I don't think I would have been able to put together that those two characters were originally together and in any sort of relationship until Wei Wuxian says, like, "hey, I would rather you kill me over somebody else because I want to save these people." I don't think I would have been able to tell until then. So, yeah, that's kind of the story and everything. And now, comparing the Untamed to Heaven's Official Blessing, the story is pretty different in terms of what's going on. I think there's still sort of like that murder mystery aspect that the author really likes to have, as well as, like, sort of a smaller mystery pulling the story further into a larger mystery to unravel to get to know and understand the characters.

[00:29:24.560] - Nathan

But the characters themselves are pretty different. Both Lan Wangji and Wei Wuxian are very good at what they do. Lan Wangji is basically the second heir to his clan and his older brother is the first heir. But both of them are extremely good at sword play. They're very strong cultivators, and they both use their clan's, like, signature spiritual instruments.

[00:29:58.730] - Nathan

And then also Wei Wuxian is part of the Jiang clan, and he's constantly or maybe not constantly, but at odds a lot with his foster brother Jiang Cheng, who is the actual heir to the Jiang clan. And Jiang Cheng is not insecure per se, but he basically sees Wei Wuxian as a constant competitor. His mom looks down on Wei Wuxian because Wei Wuxian is pretty much like better than Jiang Cheng at sword play and cultivation and stuff until the turning point. I'm not going to spoil that particular plot point, but Jiang Cheng feels a lot of insecurity and as a result, there's a lot of friction between him and Wei Wuxian. But all that to say, like, both Wei Wuxian and Lan Wangji are very good at what they do and they're quite adept and kind of I feel like that aspect is very much illustrated during this show, whereas with Heavens Official Blessing, it didn't really feel like the main character, the Prince, had a very strong skill set.

[00:31:09.280] - Nathan

He didn't feel like a very solidly main character, I guess, is what I'm trying to say. It was very much a story about how these characters are more or less forging their own paths and finding ways to survive and succeed with the lot that they've been dealt. Whereas I feel like Heaven's Official Blessing, at least with the Netflix cartoons, I don't really know what was going on. I had complaints about the Untamed story structure, but like, Heaven's Official Blessing, what's going on? I don't know.

[00:31:48.450] - Nathan

That show is a mess. So yeah, that's sort of like the main difference there. And I know, at least with Heaven's Official Blessing, I did find like Hua Cheng, or like the Crimson Ghost. I found his character to be a little bit more compelling and interesting in his devotion to the Prince. With Wei Wuxian's and Lan Wangji's relationship. I don't know, it was interesting.

[00:32:20.330] - Nathan

I think they fit sort of like the stereotype that I like in couples, which is very much like one of them is kind of g Grouch and very serious and the other one is like this playful little mischievous little shit. And I feel like those personalities tend to balance each other very well in relationships, at least like fictional relationships and whatever. So I really like those. And so Wei Wuxian and Lan Wangji very much fit that. So that was.

[00:32:53.900] - Nathan

I don't know, it was interesting to see that they have that sort of dynamic. But even so, wasn't that invested. Like I said before, the story is really what kept me going for this series. The characters themselves were like, eh, okay, I feel like this is like, just as a note, this was my intro to the Boys Love genre. I'm not like Josh and I hadn't consumed any Boys Love media during high school or anything.

[00:33:31.130] - Nathan

My introduction to queer fandom, I guess, was really just like exploring DeviantArt and reading fan fiction online and stuff. So I feel like most of the time, sure, those stories are written by women for women, but also, I don't know, I feel like that fan fiction has better tropes and handles that queer romance a little bit better sometimes than Boys Love. But yeah, this was my very first intro to Boys Love as a genre formally. So it was confusing overall. And I'm curious to see as to how the actual comic is and maybe the original story.

[00:34:23.640] - Nathan

I think that would be interesting to read. That would be very interesting to read, actually, given like, my Chinese is very rusty. I think it'd be maybe good practice. Like, yeah, I'm practicing my Chinese by reading gay fan fiction. It's fine.

[00:34:36.990] - Nathan

But yeah, this is my first formal introduction to Boys Love and on the whole it was very interesting. And I don't know, I think it's going back to this whole theme that I keep bringing up of stories written about you, but not for you. It's interesting to sort of like consume media that is like that because some of it is genuine and rings true and resonates. Obviously it's very hard to write something that is universally resonant with people of a certain group just because everybody is different. But sometimes I think tying this back to maybe if I was reading something about an Asian American person not written by an Asian American person, which there's plenty of that on TV and everything.

[00:35:28.210] - Nathan

It's very much just like you have never really met an Asian American person or in this case, like, never met a queer person and understand people's struggles and motivations. And sort of universal themes of that. I don't know. So I don't know. It's interesting to consume those stories.

[00:35:51.810] - Nathan

I think it's possible to certainly write something that is from the perspective of somebody that you don't like, of an identity that you don't share. I think it's just important to do your research and really talk with people from that identity and everything and make sure that you're honoring their experiences. And in the case that you're not, then I think it is safe to just say maybe don't do that. Not to say that the Boys Love genre as a whole is like, bad and I'm canceling it. But I think it's one thing to have all these interesting tropes where the women get fridged and everything, because a lot of the female characters in the Untamed, like, they do get fridged.

[00:36:43.490] - Nathan

Unfortunately, Jiang Cheng's sister dies, which is really sad. How she dies is very sad. Jiang Cheng's love interest dies, which is very sad. And it's very interesting because both of these women and then also Jiang Cheng's mother dies. Jiang Cheng's mother is actually pretty strong.

[00:37:03.770] - Nathan

She's a badass. She's a really cool, magical weapon that she gives him before she dies. But there's a lot of just like, okay, well, we didn't need to eliminate the women in the story. I think there's a way for a story to be about two men getting to know each other and falling in love and not having to eliminate all women rivals. It's a bad trope in Boys Love that persists.

[00:37:30.440] - Nathan

And I don't know. There are certainly stories about, you know, there are gay stories that don't involve fridging all the women's characters. Of course, the next Boys Love episode that I talk about is going to kind of staunchly contradict this because they fridge all the women. But also that particular example is a little bit different. And we'll get there when we get there.

[00:37:57.630] - Nathan

But, yeah, I don't know. I overall enjoyed The Untamed. Would I watch it again? Probably not. Would I want to explore the original media to, like, understand everything that the author wanted to sort of like put out there?

[00:38:15.620] - Nathan

Yeah, I think I would be interested. Is that like, high on my list of priorities to do? And do I feel the urge to do it? Maybe not necessarily. So, yeah, that is the Untamed.

[00:38:30.970] - Nathan

Wow. This is just like a very, very disorganized ramble. I'm so sorry. So with that, I'm going to take a break, and then we'll come back with the final segment of the show. Alright.

[00:38:43.800] - Nathan

And we're back. And so I'm starting a new final segment in addition to the close out. And I'm calling this what's your Nonsense? The title of this podcast is Nonsense and Noise. And while the two may seem very similar, the choice of title was actually kind of intentional.

[00:39:02.670] - Nathan

So Noise is obviously something that's completely unintelligible. There may be meaning in noise, but generally when it comes to, I guess maybe the more scientific interpretation of noise. There is no meaning. Noise is completely just. It doesn't hold any meaning.

[00:39:20.130] - Nathan

There's nothing valuable about it. And then coming from more of like a humanistic side, I guess nonsense is kind of subjective, right? Basically, if I'm speaking in English and there's somebody who doesn't speak English, the sounds that I'm making with my mouth, the English language, right? That is all nonsense to somebody. So basically with this show, the hope is to expand more on what may seem like nonsense for other people and help them to make sense of it.

[00:39:53.410] - Nathan

And I know I felt this way. Specifically, I started this podcast after watching Shang-Chi and really enjoying it because I thought there were lots of little hidden gems in Shang-Chi that I thought people maybe wouldn't be able to appreciate without somebody calling them out. And I know I felt this way when consuming other pieces of Asian American media. Like, I felt that a lot with Crazy Rich Asians, which I will do a Pod episode on eventually. I have someone in mind actually who I'd like to talk to about Crazy Rich Asians, but the very iconic mahjong scene in Crazy Rich Asians... I saw Crazy Rich Asians, I think twice.

[00:40:38.320] - Nathan

And the first time by myself. And I was glad I was by myself because I was ugly crying for so much of the movie. But the second time I saw it with some coworkers and one of them was Chinese, the other two coworkers were not. And so they were like, I didn't really understand what was going on with the mahjong scene. And I was like, oh, you missed out on a very significant part of the movie.

[00:41:03.540] - Nathan

Then you missed out on the very dramatic statement that Constance Wu's character was trying to make. So that is the sort of key example of nonsense that I can think of where you're taking something in and you're just like, okay, I don't really get it. It'd be cool if someone could decode this for me. So this final segment, as I said, after all that is called what's your nonsense? Basically, I'll be asking at least for this on solo episodes it'll be just me talking about what my nonsense is for the week.

[00:41:39.010] - Nathan

But on guest episodes I'll be asking future guests like, hey, what is something? Basically the whole point of this question is like, what is something that seems like only you seem to be into, that you would like other people to get into or to discover and everything. So I'm going to start out the inaugural what's your nonsense? By, I guess just talking about Digimon. If anybody follows me on Twitter, you guys know that I talk almost nonstop about this anime.

[00:42:06.760] - Nathan

It's very formative to me. They did a reboot in 2020. There was also a movie that was released in 2021 called Last Evolution Kizuna. But I feel like at least with Digimon there's the age old debate of like, oh, did Digimon copy Pokemon? Are they the same?

[00:42:26.560] - Nathan

And my biggest gripe with that argument is that it completely misses the nuance of like both of them are kind of about growing up but in different ways. The reason why the Pokemon anime has Ash as eternally 10 is it's not necessarily about the journey of growing up as much as it is sort of like savoring the innocent exploration of childhood and everything. And that's why there's that focus of exploration and then also bonding with these creatures and everything. And so that's the main reason why I feel like Pokemon also succeeds as a video game because it's very easy to or not very easy, but it's a lot easier to commoditize. There we go.

[00:43:20.120] - Nathan

It's a lot easier to commoditize the theme of exploration and collection. It's very easy to make money off of that. Whereas Digimon, on the other hand, Digimon is a story at its heart is always a story about growing up and maturing and discovering more and more about yourself and making sometimes hard decisions. So that's the main reason why I feel like Digimon can't find success in a video game format or even like a card game format. Because if you strip the series and the media of that concept of the joy and pain of growing up, then you can't fully enjoy the series.

[00:44:07.400] - Nathan

Especially like with Adventure 01, which is the original series that premiered- that was going on back in the late 90s. A lot of the evolution that happened with the partner Digimon happened because their human partners made an important learning about themselves and they had some level of deep character growth or deep character maturation or whatever. Right? And that is important. And if you take that away, it's very hard to capture that in a video game because everyone connects to media in a different manner and to different intensities.

[00:44:49.460] - Nathan

I think it certainly is possible to capture that emotion of the pain and joy of growing up and that journey. I think some games have been able to do it like I think Hellblade did it pretty well. I think Pokemon Mystery Dungeon like Blue rescue team and Red rescue team did that well. I'm trying to think about other examples. Okami did that really well, actually.

[00:45:16.070] - Nathan

Not necessarily-- With all this, it's not necessarily like growing up and everything, but as much as just character development and watching people change around you. So it is possible. But the way that Digimon has gone about it in its games has been very much like trying to make it more or less like Pokemon where you collect the monsters and you make them evolve and stuff. And yeah, it doesn't quite have the same impact.

[00:45:44.330] - Nathan

And as a result, Digimon is never going to, in my opinion, at least eclipse Pokemon in the game world because until they make an adventure story that captures that sort of like same essence, which I think would be well done through like a visual novel because that is more blatantly narrative and there's a little bit less freedom of input from the player and so developers can control the narrative and how deep it reaches a little bit better. But yes, that's my nonsense. I really do wish more people would give Digimon a chance. And I also don't mean the English dub because for whatever reason, America doesn't seem to acknowledge anime as a legitimate art form. People don't think that anime can capture and carry deep messages.

[00:46:37.340] - Nathan

I think that folks who have been consuming anime for a while acknowledge that. I think that people who are consuming anime acknowledge that anime can carry that message. But I don't think that people who are localizing the anime or sometimes even voicing the anime. I don't feel like people take it that seriously. If you go back and watch Digimon, really any of them like Digimon Adventure 01, 02, Tamers, Frontier, whatever, and you compare that with the English dub, it's kind of a different tone.

[00:47:16.270] - Nathan

You've got the same material, but one of them handles it very seriously and the other one has these weird goofball jokes kind of thrown in every so often. Don't get me wrong, the material is good enough such that the themes shine through in the English dub. But watching it in the original Japanese I think is much more valuable because the series takes itself seriously. So I would highly encourage if you can watch the original Japanese dub of Digimon Adventure 01, 02 and then tri as well. Digimon Adventure Tri, which was like a short film series that ran between 2015 and I think 2017. It was five, six movies, I think?

[00:48:06.760] - Nathan

Technically like movies, but they're episodic. Digimon Adventure Tri and then Digimon Adventure Last Evolution Kizuna, which is only available I think through legitimate sources. I paid a little bit of money on itunes for it and I truly don't mind just because it was a good movie. And Last Adventure Kizuna I think was very much like Toy Story Three where it's saying goodbye to part of your childhood. But this is my main thesis is I think that Digimon treats its fan base much better than Pokemon does because Pokemon at its heart has always been oriented at kids and to be consumed by kids. Whereas Digimon I think acknowledges that hey, there are people who started with this franchise and this media back in 1999 when they were young and now it's 20 years later and this series has grown with you.

[00:49:11.280] - Nathan

And so Last Evolution Kizuna I would highly recommend watching after all the other pieces of media because you really do feel that character growth over time and it's really well done, aside from one thing that I have a major quibble with. But yeah, that is my nonsense. More people should watch Digimon and appreciate it. I think there's something in that series for everyone.

[00:49:35.350] - Nathan

All right, so with all of that, we'll move on to just reminding everybody. As I mentioned at the top, this pod is completely independent. I do not have anybody helping me. There's no special programs that I'm using. Everything that I'm doing is pretty much completely out of pocket.

[00:49:54.030] - Nathan

I'm using Audacity. That's like the fun program that I'm using. When I recorded my episode with Josh, that was actually using Discord and some of the macros to capture both of our voices. But yeah, otherwise I'm not using any fancy material. And this is all just me editing and everything.

[00:50:11.860] - Nathan

So if you like what you hear and you'd like to support me in this, the best way to do that is through Patreon. If you go to Patreon and search for Nonsense and Noise, you should be able to find the page. And of course, I will include the link to that in the actual SoundCloud file or the SoundCloud page. And the current goal with the Patreon is to actually be able to make enough such that I can move over to Spotify. Just because Noisetrade--not Noisetrade.

[00:50:47.230] - Nathan

Soundcloud isn't necessarily the best platform for podcasts. I don't think people are thinking about SoundCloud when they think about podcasts. So, yeah, I'm trying to move over to a better platform. So with Patreon, there are three different levels. Tier one will get you a shout out on the episode similar to what I did earlier at the top, tier two gets you early access to the episodes.

[00:51:14.000] - Nathan

I'm trying to release these more or less on a bi weekly basis. And so basically, when I'm done editing and transcribing the episode, you'll get access to the episode one day before it releases the general public. That is tier two. And then tier three is topic ideas, or you can suggest ideas for topics for me to go into. So, for example, Da'Shawn, who joined recently suggested the topic of going into the world of Avatar. And as per usual, I'm going to not pass up the opportunity to dunk on Avatar blue people.

[00:51:49.480] - Nathan

It is not Avatar blue people. We don't like Avatar blue people in this house. The world of Avatar, The Last Airbender and Legend of Korra is the topic. And I think that there's a lot to talk about, especially it's a piece of media generated by two white guys, and they did a really good job. And there's also I think my firm belief is I think that the Avatar universe can be turned over to Asian American creators now because the world has been established.

[00:52:20.810] - Nathan

And I don't know, I say what you will about Legend of Korra, but I tried to rewatch Legend of Korra recently, and hoo, that was hard to get through. I think I made it like four episodes, and I was like, I can't do this. But yeah, so Avatar will be another topic that I will be going into later. So yeah, that's the Patreon. If you want more of me and my nonsense you can follow me on Instagram and Twitter at kahtonotkayto that is K-A-H-T-O-N-O-T-K-A-Y-T-O. You can also find me on Twitch at the same username. I started playing Ori and the Will of the Wisps which is the sequel to Ori and the Blind Forest. It's been really fun, very pretty.

[00:53:13.560] - Nathan

I'm also probably going to be streaming Legends Arceus when I get it so you can come watch me get bullied by Pokemon for being a Digimon head they'll bully me so yeah if you want to give me a follow and look out for the Twitter notifications or just give me a follow on Twitch and turn on notifications there and then you should be able to get notifications of when I go live but I also have Twitch notifications going to my Twitter so feel free to follow me there and with that that's all. Thanks so much for joining for another episode and I'll talk to you guys later. Bye.