

# HELL NO THEY ARE NOT OBSOLETE!

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>> *Are Anime Clubs obsolete? ~Sushu*

*HELL NO THEY ARE NOT OBSOLETE!*

Sushu wrote:

- *Anime Clubs used to be how you watched the latest anime on 6th generation video tapes.*
  - *Now you just BitTorrent the latest episode and watch it in your room.*
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- *Anime Clubs used to be how you borrowed tapes to watch from their extensive library.*
  - *Now you just BitTorrent all 26 episodes, or NetFlix it, or buy it on DVD.*
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- *Anime Clubs used to be the locus and sole promoters of anime and Japanese culture.*
  - *Now, libraries are holding manga workshops, there's 100 cons a year in the US, and you can watch anime on Cartoon Network, in movie theatres, and there's a wikipedia article for melon-pan.*
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- *Anime Clubs used to be where socially awkward otaku gathered to hear news and chat.*
  - *Now you can voice your opinion on that episode of Full Metal Alchemist in blogs, forums, and ratings sites.*
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*Are anime clubs obsolete? What is it that an anime club can do that can't be done outside of an anime club? What is the new face of anime club?*

Point 1. Several of my *\*BEST FRIENDS IN THE WORLD\** I would never have met if not for anime club, thank you very much. My time at U of C would have been totally miserable without these people. As far as I'm concerned I could rest my argument there, but I will continue.

Point 2. I would never watch any anime, or any TV shows or movies, if I had to watch them alone. Watching stuff is a social activity for me. I own plenty of dvds and videos which people gave me as gifts years ago which I *\*still have never watched\**. In many cases these are programs which I probably would have enjoyed very much... but I never saw them because I never had anybody to watch them with. I have borrowed discs from the anime club library to take home and watch-- shows which I very much wanted to see -- and I *\*never watched them\** because I didn't have anybody to watch them with. Watching things alone isn't fun!

Point 3. I am a nerd, and nerds do not socialize in the way that more extroverted people socialize. Parties full of strangers who stand around sipping alcohol and eating fancy snacks and chatting, or maybe dancing to loud music, are an alien and hostile environment where I cannot survive more than a few minutes before I have a desperate need to escape and be alone. But at the same time I do have a built-in need for human contact, real human contact, which cannot be provided by posting to rec.arts.anime or whatever kind of web-based forum you kids these days like to use. The only solution, for nerds like me, is to have activities based around a common interest: the activity gives a focus and purpose and structure to the meeting, and this allows me to interact naturally, without the horrible awkwardness I get trying to start conversations about nothing in particular with people I don't know. The anime itself is almost beside the point; there just has to be a common interest there to give me something to talk about until I become friends with people.

Point 4. My interest in anime has been steadily declining for years now. I would kinda rather be playing role-playing games or something -- I would for sure be in skiffy if it was still around. But I still enjoy anime club just for the chance to meet people and to do cool stuff like Uchi-Con and THE SKIT. The skit rules.

Oh, speaking of role-playing games, online computer games are NO SUBSTITUTE for getting together with your friends around a table and rolling dice and drawing maps and talking in goofy accents and acting out fight scenes. Online computer games don't let you use your imagination or break the rules or talk in goofy accents, they don't give people the chance to infect each other with their enthusiasm, and the people you play with are obnoxious illiterate strangers. The difference between a real live in-person role playing game and World of Warcraft is analagous to the difference between a functioning anime club and a bunch of lonely people downloading from bittorrent each in their own dorm rooms.