

You're Not Deep, You're Just Sexist

Online communities of cinephiles are often some of the most diverse and interesting groups to associate with, yet, if you are immersed in Letterboxd (a popular film reviewing site) or film school culture, you are bound to encounter the not-so-elusive “filmbro.” Usually the heterosexual white male with a sense of “dark humor” (a.k.a. making blatantly offensive jokes), a surface level knowledge of cinema, and deeply rooted misogynistic beliefs, a filmbro is often found operating without an ounce of self-awareness. While it is fairly easy to spot one of them, there are a few simple ways to verify if the guy who cornered you at a party to tell you how *Joker* (2019) should have won best picture is a filmbro or simply your run-of-the-mill pretentious asshole.

The first step is simple. Ask the subject what their favorite films are. Filmbros often emphasize the excellence of their favorite “hidden gems” such as *Pulp Fiction* (1994) or *The Dark Knight* (2008). They like the plot of *Fight Club* (1999), and will either express surprise or vehemently deny it if you bring up the fact that the film is a satirical commentary on masculinity. Essentially, a filmbro loves violent action films or “deep” and “obscure” movies with bad lighting and poorly written female characters. Bonus points if they refer to the genius of their patron saint, Quentin Tarantino.

Importantly, take extra care to not fall into a social trap and accidentally get stuck in a one-on-one conversation with a filmbro about what a “film nerd” they are. Filmbros have the capability to monologue for hours about shallow observations they made of *American Psycho* (2000).

The biggest indicator to classifying a filmbro is to listen to his opinions about women in film. Pay extra attention to if he references Ramona Flowers from *Scott Pilgrim Vs. the World* (2010) or Clementine Kruczynski from *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004), two classic manic pixie dream girl tropes. Film bros often identify their idea of an ideal mate as the “I’m-not-like-other-girls” girl: brightly colored hair or clothing, fiercely “cool” and “independent” (extra points if she skateboards or roller skates as a form of primary transportation), doesn’t care too much for makeup, and of course, doesn’t pass the Bechdel test.

As for literal women directors, film bros oftentimes disregard any notable film created by women. *The Virgin Suicides* (1999)? *Lady Bird* (2017)? *The Edge of Seventeen* (2016)? *The Skate Kitchen* (2018)? Never heard of them. Furthermore, they probably have no knowledge of foreign films either, aside from the fact that they may have heard of *Parasite* (2019) because it won best picture at the 2020 Oscars. Anything in the genre of animation is out of the question.

Make sure that whatever you do, do not tell a filmbro that the films they like are misogynistic or non inclusive. This will only enrage and antagonize him. It’s likely that you will get yelled at, and coerced into a debate about how your opinions are wrong and that the fact he likes *Kill Bill* (2003) proves that he’s not sexist.

Ultimately, film bros are a prime example of sexism, racism, plain ignorance, and lack of self-awareness in Hollywood. From my personal experience as a girl in communities which discuss film, surrounding yourself with other women who you can have open and honest discussions with about the masculine-dominated industry makes the entire experience much more enjoyable and worthwhile. Slowly, we are seeing a change and push for inclusion in the

industry. For the time being though, if you see a filmbro, run the other direction and whatever you do, do NOT make eye-contact.