

## Gossip Gluttons: How We Fell in Love with Celebrities

David Beckham's latest hair cut; Russell Brand's latest conquest; Paris Hilton's most recent bout of bad behaviour - it's impossible to turn on the TV or open a newspaper without being bombarded by rumours, hearsay and the occasional fact about celebrities. But why do we have such a fascination with fame, to the point where we're more interested in the lives of others than our own friends and family?

Stories that would otherwise be of no interest to us seem to take on massive importance as soon as the subject matter is a pop-star or famous actor; "John Smith's New Lover" doesn't raise much interest, but substitute "John Smith" for Jennifer Aniston or George Clooney and suddenly it's a front page news story that everybody wants to read.

One of the reasons for our love affair with celebrities is that we invariably perceive their lives to be more interesting and eventful than our own. The typical 'A' list celebrity may own a private jet, several plush properties in various desirable locations around the world and have a garage full of sports cars while rubbing shoulders with other big names, and it is this so called "celebrity high life" which so many people are fascinated by and aspire to.

But there also seems to be an element of jealousy involved, and thus gossip magazines seem to revel in the misfortunes of celebrities - delighting in highlighting their bad fashion tastes, wrinkles or cosmetic surgery.

Celebrity culture manifests itself in through many forms of media; [celebrity news](#) magazines, gossip rags, tabloids, TV and radio interviews, internet forums, and of course in day-to-day conversation amongst ourselves and whilst modern communication has facilitated the propagation of gossip on a far greater and quicker scale than ever before, the culture of celebrity worship has a long history.

Thousands of years ago, fame was gained through leadership, bravery in battle, or a sporting deed. Some of the first celebrities were Greek Olympic champions, and were given the equivalent of today's red carpet treatment. TV was a long way off from being invented, but the equivalent notoriety was gained via commissioning hymns of praise to be written about them by famous poets, which would then be performed in their honour. Later in history, when theatre became the popular mass media, actors and playwrights such as Shakespeare were the vehicles for celebrity status.

A huge proportion of media is given over to the worship of celebrities, and for the foreseeable future, it seems this will continue to be the case, as our love affair with gossip shows no signs of ending any time soon.

### About the Author

Paul McIndoe is an online, freelance journalist and keen hillwalker. He lives in Scotland with his two dogs.

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