

# CONFESSIONS OF OUR CELEBRITY OBSESSIONS

This morning, I woke up, got dressed and went to breakfast. I had a bagel and a cup of coffee, walked to class with my roommate, and went to the gym for an hour. For dinner I had—

...Oh wait, you don't care?

I'm not surprised. I don't think anyone, not even my mom, would want to know the intimate details of my day because, honestly, they're boring. Yet, when Justin Bieber (@justinbieber) tweets, "Time for the workout," he gets retweeted 38,849 times. Enough people to populate a small city thought Justin's comment was worth being shared. Why? What is so special about Justin Bieber that his daily life is so worthy of our attention? Why do we follow celebrities and exclaim over their most mundane and tedious actions?

Celebrities lead lives that us "mortals" can only dream of. They star in movies with multi-million dollar budgets, buy extravagant mansions and walk red carpets in lavish ball gowns made exclusively for them by the world's top designers. Admiring those aspects of an A-Lister's life is understandable; who wouldn't want that kind of existence? Unfortunately, our society's current preoccupation with celebrities goes beyond simple admiration.

We obsess over celebrities. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of magazines and websites solely dedicated to following celebrities' every move. *Us Weekly*, *People*, and *OK!* magazines, TMZ and E! News—the list goes on and on.

With the invention of social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, we can follow a celebrity's every move. If they stop tweeting, there are paparazzi to photograph them, just so fans don't lose track of their idol for a single second. It's a little creepy. If someone with a camera followed me around and took pictures of me all day, I'd call the police. For celebri-

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ties like Liam Hemsworth or Selena Gomez, it's just another day in the life of a celebrity.

I understand watching celebrities on the red carpet and admiring their elegant clothing. I have no problem watching a movie three times in a row just because my favorite actor is in it. That's healthy, harmless fun. But when I see pictures of celebrities with their families in the park, trying to have a fun family day, I just don't understand. Celebrities are people. They want a day off just like the rest of us.

Besides the invasion of privacy, our obsession with celebrities has negative consequences for our society as a whole. Pop culture revolves around celebrities. Our favorite authors, actors and artists are regarded with awe and raised to a status the rest of us can only dream of reaching. Celebrity obsession starts at a young age. Impressionable children base their moral standards on celebrity behavior. When those same celebrities mess up and make bad choices, as humans are known to do from time to time, their mistakes are broadcast to the world and mimicked by the children (even adults) who worship them. When stars like Lindsay Lohan go to prison, what are children learning?

Celebrity idolization may have started innocently enough, but over the last two decades it has exploded into an extremely lucrative industry that will do anything necessary to get a good picture or a juicy story. This industry is bad for everyone—celebrities and their fans—and it will only get worse.

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ENGLISH

