RESEARCH INTO INTENSE FANDOM

Celebrity worship:

- most research has utilised the 17-item ‘Celebrity Attitude Scale’ (CAS), lower scores showing individualism, higher showing over-identification
- How common?: Maltby et al., over 1/3 of students/workers sample scored above midpoints of the 3-CAS-sub scales – later Maltby et al., 15% of 372 18-47s at e-s level, 5% at i-p, 2% at b-p
- Developmental problems: Cheung and Yue, 833 Chinese teens, ‘idol worship’ associated with lower levels of work and self-esteem – Maltby et al., worshippers worse psych. wellbeing, i-p associated with depression/anxiety
- limited benefits: Cheung and Yue also found teens that ‘worshipped’ key family members or teachers had higher self-esteem and achievement – more positive as more tangible
- negative effects: Phillips, high-profile celeb suicides followed by increased suicides in general population – Sher, high-profile, often pathological worshippers drawn to rebellious celebs, may emulate behaviours
- evolutionary explanation: natural to look up to successful people, may have been good hunters or elders for our ancestors
- Maltby et al., as religiosity scores increased CAS scores decreased

Celebrity stalking:

- persistent attempts to impose unwanted communications or contact on another person – 2 types identified:
  1. ‘Love obsession’: delusional thought patterns (maybe schizo), seemingly unable to develop normal relationships
  2. ‘Simple obsession’: distinguished by a previous personal relationship with the celeb
- Attachment style: Bartholomew and Horowitz, proposed model of adult attachment styles – ‘pre-occupied’ attachment have negative self-image and positive image of others – Meloy, ‘pre-occupied’ seek acceptance from celebs to challenge negative views of self
- Tonin, stalkers detained under ‘Mental Health Act’ significantly more evidence of insecure adult attachment styles
- laws addressing stalking have the problem of conflicting with human rights such as being in the same place as the victim – also difficult to distinguish when adoration becomes stalking?
- psychopathology: Maltby et al., measures of OCD correlated with revised measures of CAS-i-p and CAS-b-p, but not not CAS-e-s! – Cupach and Spitzberg, high b-p individuals endorsed irrational items, e.g. doing illegal favours for their fav celeb
- RWA: Roberts, low self-esteem motivated to approach others for self-validation and also more prone to celeb stalking, useful applications for police who attempt to draw psych. profile of stalker from celeb’s reports