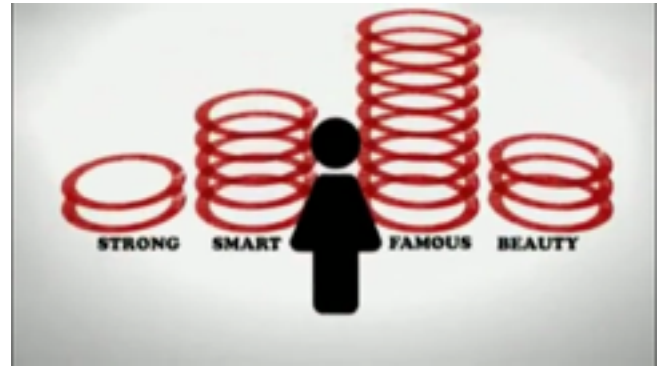
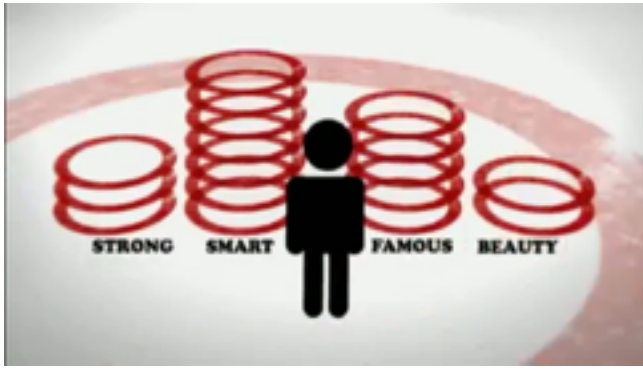


FAME AND CELEBRITY



THE FAME SURVEY...

As part of my research for Fame Junkies, I teamed up with several academics and conducted a survey of some 650 teenagers in the Rochester, New York area. The survey yielded some interesting and disturbing findings on how teens think about fame. Some highlights are included below:

OVERVIEW:

- [1] I'd rather be famous than smart...
 - [2] Jennifer Lopez is more popular than Jesus...
 - [3] Forget being president of Harvard – Make me a celebrity personal assistant...
 - [4] Black kids are more desperate for fame...
 - [5] Teens who watch TV and read “glam mags” want and expect fame the most...
 - [6] Heavy TV-watchers are especially likely to believe fame will improve their lives...
 - [7] Lonely and depressed kids hope that fame will solve their problems...
 - [8] Lonely kids are also more likely to follow the lives of celebrities...
 - [9] Lonely kids prefer 50 Cent and Paris Hilton to Jesus...
 - [10] Kids believe that celebrities deserve their fame...
- from Jake Halpern's “Fame Junkies” website (jakehalpern.com)

Which of these findings surprise you?

Which of these findings do you disagree with?

Which of these findings do you agree with?

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The documentary “Starsuckers” is all about the desire for fame in our society. The film makes a number of important points and uses examples to support their arguments along the way.

For each section of the documentary, (i) write down what the main argument being made is, (ii) one supporting example, and finally, (iii) write a short reflection (a couple of sentences) about your reaction to what is being said. (Some possible questions to reflect on: *Do you agree with what is being said? Do you think it is accurate? Do you think that what is being said reflects what you or people you know believe?*)

LESSON ONE: START THEM YOUNG

LESSON TWO: KEEP THEM HOOKED

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LESSON THREE: HARD WIRED URGES

LESSON FOUR: GATHERING INFORMATION

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LESSON FIVE: CREATING NEWS

LESSON SIX: THE GREAT ILLUSION - TAKING POWER

Once completed, your final assignment is to complete a one page reflection on the ideas presented in the film on the topic of fame and celebrity, discussing whether our 'celebrity' culture and our desire for fame is as harmful as is suggested in the documentary. You can either write the reflection in your own way, or use the question prompts found on the next page. The answers will later be recorded to include in a larger podcast.

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REFLECTION PROMPT QUESTIONS

Have you ever had a dream of being famous? If so, for what? Sports? Music? Television? Politics? How young were you when you thought about being famous for something?

Do you think that most people dream about being famous? What do you think they hope to gain from being famous?

What role do you think the media plays in encouraging us to seek out a dream of being famous?

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