The CelebYouth project

ESRC-funded 2012-14 qualitative interdisciplinary project, exploring the role of celebrity in young people’s classed and gendered aspirations.

Kim Allen (Manchester Metropolitan University)
Laura Harvey (University of Surrey)
Heather Mendick and Aisha Ahmad (Brunel University)
Twitter, ‘recreational nastiness’ and schadenfreude

E-bile

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(Jane, 2012: pp.2-3)
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(Jane, 2012: pp.2-3)
KATIE PRICE

BUSINESS WOMAN.
MODEL.
MOTHER.
SUN NEWSPAPER COLUMNIST.
AUTHOR.

Katie
Hey @NICKIMINAJ remember when you were black?
Celebrity lives as disgusting and inauthentic

Kim: You use the word fake. What do you mean?
Kirsty: Not their-selves. ... Literally not themselves, like some of their body parts just aren’t real. [all laugh] (Manchester, Year 10)

Mike: You could fit all the real parts of Nicki Minaj into ... a drawer approximately that big. She’s just like the biggest fakest walking talking Barbie, and also she tries to be Lady Gaga which annoys me. Um. She’s just, she’s just, argh, if I saw her I would actually hit her. With a brick. [laughter] I would probably knock one of her facial features out. ... I wonder if she does feel like rubber, it would be great, you can bounce her. [laughter] Roll her down a hill. Who wouldn’t want to do that? [laughter] (South West, Year 10, female)
Schadenfreude and celebrity hating

Laura: Why do you find her [Kim Kardashian] funny?
Teresa: Because it’s like she doesn’t, her life isn’t really. She doesn’t do anything worthwhile apart from be a socialite, and I’m not even sure if that’s like a proper career, but it’s just- she’s quite funny to watch, because she’s so materialistic. So it’s amusing.

(South West, year 10)

Laura: So you’d rather meet someone you disliked?
Shane: Probably.
Rick: Just so I can abuse them.
Shane: Yeah ... You know, like it’s like when people say erm [pause] you know, it’s like they’ve got such a big ego, you just want to take them down a couple of pegs. That’s why ... Just because they think so highly of themselves, and they haven’t really done anything so.

(London, year 12)
Celebrity Schadenfreude and Inequality

Schadenfreude as a ‘trans-affective process of resentment’

Individuals have a ‘desire for equality but [are] unable to think of anything other than levelling through humiliation’ (Cross and Littler, 2010: 397)