Brief Report: An Investigation of Parasocial Relationships and Political Orientation

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Recent survey research established a connection between political orientation and celebrity worship, a phenomenon characterized in part by a parasocial or one-sided nature of a connection to an individual. Specifically, researchers found that increased levels of celebrity worship were associated with greater conservatism. The aim of the present study was to expand upon these findings by further examining the relationship between political orientation and parasocial relationships. We predicted that increased levels of conservatism would be positively correlated with higher levels of parasocial relationships. Analyses did not support our hypotheses. Rather, for those individuals who indicated having a favorite politician, commitment to parasocial relationships was largely associated with greater liberal orientation. We found no significant relationships between commitment to parasocial relationships and political orientation for those participants who did not indicate having a favorite politician. Implications of these results are discussed.

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