



# 12 Paparazzi

## 1 Synopsis

In this video, we meet a celebrity photographer named Keith Sykes. The interview begins with Keith talking about some of the famous people he has photographed, including Robin Williams and Cindy Crawford. He then goes on to explain the origins of the word *paparazzi*, how the *paparazzi* began in Europe, and why photographers began taking pictures of celebrities. He describes how photographers can earn a lot more money for pictures that portray celebrities negatively. He reveals how, after the death of Lady Diana, he decided that the *paparazzi* business had gone bad and had become motivated by money. He describes an experiment that he went on to do in the town of North Hampton in which he took pictures of everyday people on the street without their permission. He found that most people did not like their privacy being invaded in this way.

**Length of video:** 4:17 min

## 2 Target Language

**Grammar:** unreal conditionals

**Vocabulary:** the media, *paparazzi*, celebrities

**Language Points:** *show up, well-meaning, Do you mind if ...?*

## 3 Procedural Notes

### A Before you watch

**1 In groups.** Elicit examples of different types of media (radio, television, newspapers, the Internet, and magazines). Give students a few minutes to brainstorm a list of famous people in groups. Then, invite them to call out some names. Talk about what each person is famous for.

**2 In groups.** Explain or elicit that the *paparazzi* are photographers who follow famous people or *celebrities* in order to take photographs of them to then sell to newspapers and magazines. These photos are often bad or embarrassing for the celebrity. Point out that this term is Italian, and that the singular is *paparazzo*. Have students discuss the questions in their groups. Then, nominate one or two groups to share their answers with the rest of the class and ask if anyone has anything to add.

**Possible answers:** **1** They often wait outside famous people's homes or follow them down the street as they go about their daily lives. They also wait at the entrance to parties and special events. Sometimes paparazzi hide and spy on famous people while they are on vacation. **2** People want to know more about the private lives of celebrities. They also like to see that famous people don't always look perfect or act perfectly: they can also look bad and do bad or stupid things, just like "normal" people. **3** Students' own answers.

### B While you watch

**1 Individuals.** Write the following words on the board and pre-teach them:

*sawhorse* (n.) – a wooden structure used to support wood for sawing

*award show* (n.) – a special event at which people are given prizes

*benefit show* (n.) – a special event organized to make money for charity

*pest* (n.) – someone who keeps annoying you

*faction* (n.) – a small group within a larger group, consisting of people with different opinions from the rest

*wild* (adj.) – exciting and enjoyable

Give students a minute or so to read the six questions and answer options. Then, play the video from the beginning to the point where Keith says *the celebrities' wild lives* [up to 02:19]. If students don't manage to answer all of the questions the first time, play the video segment again. Then, have students compare their answers in pairs, discussing any differences. Finally, check answers as a class.

**Answer key:** 1 b 2 a 3 c 4 a 5 c 6 b

**2 As a class.** Have students do the matching exercise. Then, have them compare their answers in pairs. Play the video again to check answers.

**Answer key:** 1 c 2 a 3 b 4 e 5 d



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## C After you watch

**In pairs.** Make sure students understand that they have to imagine they are going to do an interview similar to the one they have just seen on the video. They can imagine they are going to meet Keith Sykes or another photographer. Give them five to ten minutes to prepare a minimum of five interesting questions. Then, tell pairs to decide who is the journalist and who is the photographer, and to practice role-playing the interview. If necessary, prompt them to write questions about the people they have photographed, the places, if they like their job, etc.

**As a class.** Invite some pairs to present their role-play to the rest of the class.

## D Language Points

**Individuals.** Give students a couple of minutes to complete the exercise individually, and then have them compare answers in pairs, discussing any differences.

**As a class.** Check answers as a class. For question 1, say more sentences, e.g., *The party started at 9:30 p.m., but he didn't show up until after 11:00.; Maria didn't show up for class today. Maybe she's sick.* For question 2, explain that *Do you mind ...?* is used in spoken English to ask permission to do something. It is more polite than *Can I ...?* Say some more sentences, e.g., *Do you mind if I sit here?; Do you mind if I use your dictionary?* For question 3, explain that *well-meaning* means "wanting to have a good effect, but sometimes making things worse." Explain that the prefix *well-* can be used to form other compound adjectives like *well-matched* (describes two people or things that are suitable for each other) and *well-paid* (describes someone who receives a good salary).

**In pairs.** If you have time, have students look in their dictionaries and find other compound adjectives using *well-*. Tell them to choose two or three of them and write their own sentences. Then, nominate different pairs to come up to the board, write one of their adjectives with *well-*, explain its meaning, and read aloud their sentence for the class.

**Answer key:** 1 b 2 a 3 a

## E Your Viewpoint

**In groups.** Nominate different students to read aloud the questions, and make sure everyone understands them. Elicit the meaning of *stranger* (someone you don't know) and *encourage* (make someone more likely to do something). Then, have students discuss their ideas in groups of three or four.

**As a class.** Discuss students' answers. For question 1, nominate a few students to tell the class how the people in their group would react in this situation. For questions 2 and 3, ask students who agree to raise their hands. Nominate some of these students to explain why. Then, repeat the procedure for students who do not agree. Encourage a class discussion for question 3.

### Possible answers:

1 Students' own answers.

2 By buying newspapers and magazines, people are indirectly paying the photographers to take pictures of celebrities. They are also creating a demand for more and better pictures. If people didn't buy these newspapers and magazines, there would be no demand for these pictures and so no money in it for *paparazzi*.

3 Thanks to *paparazzi*, some celebrities are always in the news and have become even richer and more famous. If *paparazzi* didn't take pictures, it would be much harder to become internationally famous.



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## 4 Video Script

**Keith:** I saw Robin Williams come to the patio. I made the run, jumped a couple sawhorses, climbed up a stairway, got in front of him, and said, "Robin, do you mind if I take a picture?" He goes, "After all that, how could I stop you?"

**Presenter:** Keith Sykes has a long career in journalism, photography, and communications.

**Keith:** I've taken pictures of a lot of celebrities. Cindy Crawford. I've taken her picture a few times and I think it's impossible to take a bad picture of her. James Garner. I've photographed famous politicians. I stood in the same position for two hours to get this picture. Photographing these people is an exciting thing for me. When I moved to Los Angeles in 1979, to become editor of a weekly newspaper out there, I was really excited when I started getting these invitations to come to this award show, or this benefit show. I was showing up at all these events and seeing people that I had seen on the screen and it was really a magical moment for me. The word *paparazzi* means "the pests" in Italian. Fellini dubbed a character who played a pesky photographer in *La Dolce Vita* "paparazzo." The roots of *paparazzi* photography were in Europe after World War II. The countries were all subject to many political factions who were deciding what direction their countries would go. This created awesome political rivalries. And photographers would cover political events, knowing that they would probably turn into violent protests and they'd get newsworthy pictures and be able to sell them. Now at the same time, more and more celebrities were going to the

Mediterranean, to Monte Carlo, and these photographers, who had started as political photographers, took pictures of the celebrities and those celebrities' wild lives. There are financial rewards. If I got a photograph of Jennifer Aniston and Brad Pitt holding hands, then I'd be paid maybe \$10,000. If I shot Jennifer and Brad throwing drinks at each other, I would get \$50,000. How much a photograph is worth is often determined by how negative it portrays that celebrity. When Princess Diana died, I started thinking. I had realized that the business had gone bad, that it was being motivated by money, that it was creating not artists, or even well-meaning photographers who wanted to pursue this craft, but rather, really bounty hunters. I decided to use the small college town of North Hampton and go up there every Saturday night, and I put on the full uniform, photo, vests, and press IDs, and I would lurk in doorways and follow people and jump out in front of them and take their picture. I, you know, walked up with my camera behind me and then just pulled it out and shot it with the flash. We wanted to know what it felt like, as an everyday person, how do you like the idea that someone can take pictures of you on the street? And almost universally, people feel you shouldn't have the right to invade their privacy. I think, as consumers of the media, we at least have to look at ourselves occasionally and evaluate what it is we're consuming. Because whatever we're consuming, we're encouraging to spread.