Threatening and otherwise inappropriate letters to Hollywood celebrities

In this paper, the authors examine the characteristics of threatening and otherwise inappropriate letters sent to Hollywood celebrities. Such communications, known colloquially as “nut mail,” “hate mail,” obscene letters, and threat letters, are received by the famous in enormous volume. We studied approximately 1800 such letters to entertainment celebrities from 214 subjects, who averaged 8 letters apiece. We quote excerpts from these letters, describe objects enclosed with them, and provide quantitative data on such variables as the form, appearance, volume, and duration of such letters; the subject’s perceived relationship to the celebrity; the thematic content of the letters; and the messages and threats they communicate. Comparisons between 107 subjects who pursued encounters with the celebrities and 107 who did not revealed 15 factors associated with such pursuit. Contrary to expectation, the presence or absence of threats was not associated with pursuit behavior.
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