

The X Factor: 'The (disposable) winning ticket' and the illusion of Enlightenment.

This year thousands sang for their lives but last week just thirty two made it through and the judges found out which category they'd be mentoring. This weekend...the X Factor goes global...Who will survive?

- The X Factor (b): 0mins

'Fortune will not smile on all - just on the one who draws the winning ticket or, rather, the one designed to do so by a higher power - usually the entertainment industry itself, which presents itself as ceaselessly in search of talent'

- Adorno and Horkheimer 1944: 57

The X Factor, now an annual television phenomenon, presents itself as a meritocratic search for a star. Complaints about the claustrophobic sensation the show emits due to its sheer ubiquity are now part and parcel to its impact on contemporary British life. While some dismiss the process as 'cleverly disguising market research as entertainment' (Till 2010: 100), the genesis of this study was sparked from the tension between the opening titles of this year's 'Judges Houses' episode of the most recent series of *The X Factor* and Adorno and Horkheimer's (1944) 'The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception', quoted above. To be sure, it is the intention of this paper to engage with *The X Factor* on a level that considers how its constituent parts allude to the utopian metanarrative of Enlightenment.

The X Factor is an amalgam of the talent show, music television programme and reality television show. Combining elements of *Opportunity Knocks*, *Top Of The Pops* and *Big Brother* all at once. The reality television (as the much younger sibling), provides a renewed vigor to the tired talent show and the palpably inauthentic mimed performances on *Top Of The Pops*;

'it was like walking in the television...Everybody mimed,
which made it even more unreal and dream-like'

(Alex James from Blur in Inglis 2010: 117).

It was perhaps an inevitable union as the media converged to become a magnification of Adorno and Horkheimer's lament that 'the whole world is passed through the filter of the culture industry' (Adorno and Horkheimer [1944] 2005: 45).

Let us start then with the notion of meritocracy, taking a central premise of the show that it is almost entirely centred around the the audience. Moving forward I will explore the notion of Enlightenment whilst making reference to the medias' ability to instill a sense of ritual in its audience. There is a deliberate use of secular and sacred language here considering the universal themes of all faiths or beliefs systems to be utopic. Throughout the paper I use the first of two Judges' Houses episodes from the 2011 series of The X Factor as a case study. The final section here is a more detailed study of the use of music in the show to subliminally categorise both contestant and artist in the supposed search of a winning ticket holder.

'Kelly - You deserve it all'

(The X Factor b 1hr 28min 58 secs)

Central to the broad appeal of The X Factor is the democracy that it claims to allow its audience to exercise by simply voting for their favourite singer. While the case study of Judges' Houses is the last stage before the contestants face an actual public vote, this provides a different kind of drama, a fatalistic stage where only the judges, acting as higher god like authority figures have the power to choose. The self styled proffering of an open competition, an all encompassing platform-for-all makes for compulsive viewing. It is important to note too that the programme comes with a narrative that it is specifically tailored for those whose voices are ordinarily unheard both in the cultural industry and the political sphere. That The X Factor adopts the stereotypically British mentality of rooting for the underdog.

'The ethos...revolves around unrestricted, non-discriminatory access to opportunities, represented as democratisation of life chances for those who audition'

(Redden 2008: 139).

And yet, no matter how fervently it is peddled, democracy and meritocracy do not suggest an innately diverse or classless holder of the winning ticket. It is exactly for this reason that it is perhaps more accurate to suggest that The X Factor is not so much a podium to express the contestants creative talents but a place that reaffirms the dominant ideologies of both the cultural and political spheres. 'Talent TV represents working class life as something to be escaped from rather than something that can be developed' (Redden 2008: 141). The apparently level playing field of The X Factor's search for a star takes a somewhat sinister turn; the Marxist notion of the

perpetually exploited proletariat not only watching the subordination take place but actively participating and engaging in it. As Peters notes 'It is not simply that people are duped: they are active agents in their own duping' (Peters 2003: 64). Cohen provides historical reasoning for this when he notes that '...the adolescent consumer is also an active agent in creating modes of expression which reflect his cultural experience' (Cohen 2002:150). In other words then, The X Factor reflects out a commodified system of beliefs for the consumer to identify with. As each part is commodified it becomes detached from the individual, from the creator of the work and in turn becomes imbued with a sense of mysticism and intangibility serving to reassert the divide between 'chorus and leader' as Adorno and Horkheimer (1944) would call it. From an Adornian perspective this process, of reification is central to the illusion of Enlightenment.

'the moments of sensual pleasure in the idea, the voice, the instrument are made into fetishes and torn away from any functions which would give them meaning'

(Adorno in Paddison 1996: 87-88)

It could be argued that in fetishising its products The X Factor merely serves only as commodified parable. But The X Factor serves as meeting place for millions in the UK, the overarching narrative of Enlightenment providing a sense of unity and spirit.

The secret of many a good story lies in 'a narrative structure...[that] requires that people are changed in the end' (Redden 2008: 129). Tell such a story via reality television and we see a parable of transformation, where it may as well be one of us, the viewing audience, who eventually becomes Enlightened. The process of Enlightenment, the universal desire to do better and to *be* better, both individually and collectively, is defined as 'a belief in progress toward a better form of society...' (Paddison 1996: 27). For the purposes of study here, Enlightenment is not to be pitched at odds with religion. In fact, while Enlightenment is used to describe our universal desire, I will contend that we go about attaining it by borrowing customs and ceremonies of (Christian) religious protocol. The character of this momentum then, is our starting point here.

The overarching metanarrative of The X Factor is the quest for Enlightenment. More specifically, that the winner will escape the working class humdrum to prove to the watching audience that dreams do indeed come true. This is not unique to The X Factor per se, Richard Dyer suggests that the 'central thrust' to entertainment as a whole is utopianism. He says we tend to think about utopia in terms of our emotional response to it, that we wonder 'what utopia would feel like rather than how it would be organised' (Dyer 2002: 20). Each X Factor contestants' sub-

Emily Baker

narrative helps to become part of this bigger picture, the story unfolding each week and is wholly dependent on the level of engagement with the audience at home. In ‘Entertainment and Utopia’, Dyer analyses various musicals from the perspective that ‘they [might be] a continuation of the utopian tradition in western thought. He includes examples of some Western films and also includes television news reporting to suggest ‘wider application’. Taking this as an invitation to apply it elsewhere, the table below is a copy of the one employed by Dyer. I have chosen to focus on the opening sequence of the case study as it provides a concentrated blast of the impending action. It is, almost to the second, the first two minutes that we watch (The X Factor b: 0m)

Energy (Capacity to act vigorously; human power, activity, potential)	Abundance (Conquest of scarcity; having enough to spare without sense of poverty of others; enjoyment of sensuous material reality)	Intensity (Experiencing of emotion directly, fully, unambiguously, ‘authentically’, without holding back)	Transparency (A quality of relationships - between represented characters (e.g true love) between performer and audience (‘sincerity’))	Community (Togetherness, sense of belonging, network of phatic relationships (i.e those in which communication is for its own sake rather than for its message))
Speed of image edits. (15 quickly spliced together in the first 2 seconds!). Sound effects and music merge into cacophony of noise, resulting in fanfare.	‘Judges’ Houses’ presented as the ‘fertile land’ and the contestants as representatives of the audience, enjoying the experience.	Shaky camera technique combined with fast zoom to direct the level of audience response. Half way through the accompanying music is the menacing ‘Carmina Burana’ by Carl Orff.	Both judges and contestants appearing to be on a roller coaster of emotion. The judges’ additional role as mentor (and latterly as gate keeper) is introduced.	The world rendered as a global village’. Large crowds serve to be representative of the viewing audience.

(Dyer 2002: 22)

This introductory sequence is indicative of what is to follow by watching The X Factor for the next hour and a half. At best a polished, fly on the wall account of ‘the nation’s biggest platform for emerging talent...to find a global superstar’ (Fincham and Barlow : ITV1) and at worst it fuses three tired television genres together to tout formulaic second rate pop from an ailing music industry. Adorno would surely have added The X Factor to the list of Hollywood and Tin Pan Alley as ‘dream factories’ (Adorno in Storey 2009: 73). All three are in the business of selling wishes, hopes and promises of a better future; all three under the umbrella of ‘a culture industry endlessly [cheating] its consumers out of what it endlessly promises’ (Adorno & Horkheimer 1944: 52).

It is vital to the narrative of The X Factor that the audience believes that it is the generator of the talent it consumes each year. Furthermore it is crucial to this notion that being part of that community ensures the maintenance of a progression toward Enlightenment. Simon Cowell (academic, not the producer of the show!) suggests that shows like The X Factor tell the tale of

Emily Baker

‘extraordinary journeys, one to the very end, while the majority return to the generalised public from which they emerged’ (Cowell in Redden 2008: 133). This is important as it illustrates Adorno and Horkheimer’s theory that the industry presents the ‘fortunate’ winner, the holder of the ticket, as walking among us and being transformed by powerful figures in the music industry. In turn, the industry reaffirms to the audience that they are incapable of seeing that special intangible quality of ‘stardom’. The marketing and believability of the ‘dream factory’ is central to the perpetuation of both the patriarchal capitalist and hegemonic dominance of *The X Factor* discussed here previously.

Returning to the case study of ‘Judges’ Houses’ is useful here, more specifically the competition for the home audience which features at 30mins 20secs (*The X Factor* (b)). As mentioned earlier here, ‘Judges’ Houses’ does not give the home audience the opportunity to vote for their favourite singers. Instead, the programme makers provide a competition for a ‘lucky viewer’ to experience ‘*The X Factor* dream’ with three friends. The tried and tested aesthetic is employed here with stage lights acting as search lights, playing against a backdrop of ominous choral music. The same subliminal sound effects are used as the competition details are unfurled by the overtly dramatic voice over. The competition acts as a real life sip of the land of milk and honey; a ‘temporary answer to the inadequacies of the society which is being escaped from through entertainment’ (Dyer 2002: 25). Cash prizes and out of this world experiences are so extraordinary that as a standalone offer, the competition feels somewhat overwhelming. The audience does not need to be the competition winner to gain a sense of what collective utopian Enlightenment feels like. Although the hope is that the premium rate phone number is a small price to pay for a temporary backdrop of aspirational modernist clean lines, serene infinity swimming pools, wide open panoramic mountain ranges and waves lapping at white sands. These are considered to be universal desires, a chance to worship at the ‘cathedral of higher gratification’ (Adorno and Horkheimer 1944: 56)

The established ritual of Saturday night television automatically placed *The X Factor* at the heart of British collective consciousness. The media text providing a shared social reality in the pursuit of Enlightenment. Carey uses the example of the newspaper to demonstrate this as being;

‘...less [about] sending or gaining information and more like attending a mass: a situation in which nothing new is learned but in which a particular view of the world is portrayed and confirmed.’

(Carey[1989] 2002: 40)

It is not just that the newspaper inspires a commonality among its readers, but that by reading and being part of that community, their shared social reality becomes a validated and sacred space. In other words, the spiritual element of *The X Factor* acknowledges that while the process of the pursuit of utopian Enlightenment is entertaining, there is gravity and a seriousness to it. In terms of ritual, *The X Factor* organises the audience in preparation for the act of a kind of religious consumption, a 'Pop Culture Communion'. To take the metaphor of the Christian act of worship is useful here as it helps in contextualising not only the setting of the 'cathedral' but the role of the audience inside, also the development of the contestant and the function of the judges too.

For most, the view from the pews as part of the gathered congregation is sufficient. To act as voyeur is to live vicariously through the contestants on screen;

'The female starlet is supposed to symbolize the secretary, though in a way which makes her seem predestined, unlike the real secretary, to wear the evening gown'

(Adorno and Horkheimer 1944: 57).

The audience is witness to the incremental transition of the ordinary to the extraordinary position of being symbolic of other utopic things. The notion of being 'predestined' here serves to reinforce the perception that the culture industry is the only authority with the ability to identify the potential swagger of the star lost in and among the ordinary. Couldry (2003) explores 'ordinariness' and contends that it has a 'double significance' in that;

" 'ordinariness' confirms the 'reality' of what is shown...and that 'ordinariness' is the status from which the contestants compete to escape into another ritually distinct category, celebrity"

(Couldry 2003: 107)

What is interesting here are the conditions under which the competition takes place. The notion that 'ordinariness' is not something that can be improved or developed but will be ritualistically and publicly shunned. Redden (2008) has added to the debate, contending that what is actually meant by 'ordinariness' here is working class life. While this again serves to reaffirm the dominant ideologies of the culture industry (also reaching further afield into the political sphere too) it also amounts to the contestants ostensibly going about the business of 'emerging'; so the scene is to be set for the

Emily Baker

performance stage too. The 'Judges' Houses' serve an allegorical function to the plot and associated narratives of The X Factor by embodying the perfection we expect in Utopia and from Enlightenment, it is everything we pray for;

'when a man thinks of perfection...he thinks of a world permanently without strife, poverty, constraint, stultifying labour, irrational authority, sensual deprivation...peace, abundance, leisure, equality, consonance of men and their environment.'

(Kateb in Dyer 2002: 25)

In a sense then, there is a duality to the allegory of the house. On the one hand it provides 'The Wow Factor' to the ordinary audience at home, their wonder vocalised by the contestants on screen; on the other it presents that this perfection is, by its very nature the 'ordinary' setting for the glamorous culture industry. This is made clear by how entirely unfazed the judges appear to be by the change of location.

'Tulisa - You're not here to stand around looking cute, I wanna find some stars here'

(The X Factor b: 0mins 30 secs)

As a consequence the culture industry is painted as a neutral playing field on which to discover the talent. The implication here being that while this 'perfect' setting might well be a potential holiday destination for ordinary people, but that these are the 'Judges' Houses' and as such they feel comfortable working there (thereby hinting at *even more* glamorous destinations elsewhere). Adorno and Horkheimer (1944) would be likely to contend that the Judges' Houses stage is where the construction of the industry itself becomes the most clear. Where the monopoly makes 'no attempt to conceal the structure' (Adorno and Horkheimer 1944: 42) that the intangible 'X' holds more power than the singing and performing talent of each performer. The performance space itself has shifted, the real and constructed becoming blurred. The backstage, or rather the contestants' backstory, their real lives becomes the sub-narrative to be personalised, nurtured and carefully introduced to the audience at home. As a consequence, the Enlightenment metanarrative comes under scrutiny at its nub, the point of a kind of rite of passage. To a state of liminality.

Focus on this journey can be found elsewhere, most recently Brown, Hackley and Tiwsakul (in press). The report comes from a marketing perspective. At times I feel they place too much

Emily Baker

emphasis on and seem to believe in, 'Simon Cowell...the trickster figure' their main point of discussion is how the The X Factor's production companies are unwittingly marketing a liminal process.

'Turner (1969) suggested that liminality is a time and/ or place in which normal social structures and actions can be reversed and subverted. It acts not only as a playful counterpoint to everyday norms but also as a site at which the values and practices of the surrounding social structures can be brought into relief.'

(Brown, Hackley and Tiwsakul (in press): 12)

In other words, that by their very nature as a space away from their homes, surrounded by the trappings and perks that extraordinary wealth brings; Judges' Houses acts as a state of purgatory for the contestants. The judges holding a liminal checklist, passing judgment on who is deemed worthy of passing through the gates to the 'live shows'.

Part of that decision will be based on how malleable each contestant is as they start to shape up into the kinds of symbolic characters discussed earlier. This is a point of subtle transition as each 'individual sacrifices his individuality to the totality' (Paddinson 1996: 87). To be sure, the more universal the contestants personal narrative, the more assured their future in the competition is. As the narrative receives more airtime, so their transition to celebrity is underway. Levine (1992) unravels Turner's term further, describing 'liminality' as;

'...a position of structural outsiderhood and inferiority. To be liminal is to be vulnerable, without the protection of role or office. At the same time, liminality implies potency, the capacity to become more than one has been.'

(Levine 1992: 49)

The idea of the rite of passage or of liminality is useful when examining the dramatic devices employed at Judges' Houses. The holder of the 'winning ticket' has a series of clearly carved hoops to jump through here. But what are the instruments of change that are employed here and what happens to the winning ticket holder in the no man's land?

Firstly, let us consider the use of language. Often clichéd and mawkish, the emphasis at judges houses provides a clear heaven/ hell narrative;

‘Carolynne: I’ve been trying to make it as a singer for most of my life and I’ve never got past the last hurdle. And...I’m here, the biggest thing I’ve ever done, it’s all or nothing again, I’m either going to be dropped or I’m going to be elevated and it’s going to be my time.

(The X Factor b: 57mins 15secs)

Carolynne recognises the extraordinary situation could be the transformative catalyst she has been yearning for, peddling the now well known ‘it’s too late for me’ narrative for the over 26’s category. The tension of the capitalist myth of ‘making it’ (Redden 2008: 138) is held to ransom by the winning tickets’ fatalistic notion of fortune. Secondly, the adherence to or breaking of conventional modes of behaviour. Hooper (2007) applies this theory to popular music in general;

‘...popular music must perform two, superficially contradictory, functions: on the one hand, it must not...challenge convention; and yet on the other hand, it must be distracting enough that people will continue to listen to it and appear sufficiently ‘different’ from that which has gone before..’

(Hooper 2007: 94)

But it is just as relevant to the contestants conduct at Judges’ Houses too. The dichotomy between appearing bland and entirely without character contrasted with giving the impression of being wildly out of control and alienating the viewing public;

‘ Kitty - I’m a very controversial performer...I wanted to shake things up a bit...I didn’t want to just stand on stage and sing, I like to do things that haven’t been done before...I like to push boundaries, create controversy...

Louis - So Kitty what would it mean to you to get through to the live shows?

Kitty - Absolutely everything...give me a shot.

Louis - You convince us.

* Kitty performs ‘Beautiful Disaster’ by Kelly Clarkson

Louis - Thank you Kitty, are you happy? It’s all done.

* Kitty kicks off her shoes. Louis stares open mouthed as she jumps into the swimming pool fully clothed.
(The X Factor, b: 1h 02mins 53secs)

An Adornian critique of Kitty's performance would scream that this is a textbook example of both Pseudo-individuality, 'glamourising style over the real inner content' (Gendron 1986: 21) and Part-interchangeability in that Kitty intentionally mimics and holds in esteem the performance style of Lady Gaga (The X Factor, c). This connection is made clearer as Gaga's song 'Born This Way' is used to accompany the action, standardising and contextualising Kitty's behaviour. The power that non-diegetic holds over each characters sub-narrative is in itself extraordinary and something I will be returning to later. Thirdly, the judges newly appropriated roles as both category mentor and industry gatekeeper generates a greater depth to their function in the show;

' Charlie - They believe in me so much, I don't even believe in myself..
(The X Factor, b: 1h 28mins 50secs)

The duality of the role is intrinsic to the flow of the drama with each judge having to display virtual bipolarity as they undertake an internal good cop/ bad cop routine. They do this under the guise of being representative of and authentic to the larger music industry, as Fairchild notes 'the music industry, [is] embodied [by] the steadying hands of the judges resting on the tiller' (Fairchild, C 2007: 372). Lastly, Joseph's audition encapsulates the definition of liminality that Levine (1992) outlines earlier. Most significant here is The X Factor's apparent claims of potency;

'Joseph - If i was to get through the judges house stage my life would totally change, I'd be able to move out of Moss Side, be able to move my family into a nicer place and maybe have children one day.
(The X Factor, b: 57mins 51secs)

There is an assumption here that the audience will recognise the political significance of Moss Side 'becoming a by-word for gun violence during the 1980's and 90's' (Manchester Evening News 2007).

In 'Television/ Sound', Altman (1986) applies Raymond Williams' notion of 'flow' to the function of sound on television. Altman maintains that this is important as people often have televisions playing as noise in the background of their lives. The study itself picks apart how sound

Emily Baker

provides plot, auditory cues to the action or italicises important action on screen. This is useful here if we are to consider a more detailed case study on how the foregrounding of certain musics is used to great narrative effect on *The X Factor*. Frith notes that music is used on television to;

‘aestheticise the reality we see...to ground what we see, to tie a moment to a familiar song...[and thirdly] as an ironic commentary on what is seen, to distance viewers from the action and make them feel more knowing’

(Frith 2007: 188)

Diachronically speaking then, we have been groomed to understand how music works with moving image. This knowledge is exploited by the producers of *The X Factor* as it helps to categorise and shape the contestants; as a consequence commodifying and shaping the audience watching at home. To underline this point, take for example the diegetic use of music in the treatment of the contestant Marcus Collins at *Judges Houses* (*The X Factor* b: 1hr 19m48secs). The switch from non-diegetic (background music) to diegetic (where Marcus performs a song) is an incredibly short seven seconds. The non-diegetic music here is the backing track of ‘Tears Dry On Their Own’ (Ashford, Simpson and Winehouse [1966] 2006) made famous and co-written by Amy Winehouse. The song itself was a reinterpretation of ‘Ain’t No Mountain High Enough’ by Ashford & Simpson, so in terms of diegesis interpretation what we learn is that Marcus is influenced by the Soul genre. By providing the Winehouse version, *The X Factor* gently attempts to craft Marcus as a credible and contemporary artist, while the nostalgia of the 60’s hit still rings through. Marcus, we learn from this, has broad appeal. The action cuts to Marcus’s first audition, the lighting altered and darkened to suggest a shift back in time (when he appears more ordinary) and he sings ‘Signed, Sealed, Delivered’ (Garrett, Hardaway, Wonder, Wright: 1970) to reassert his position in the competition as a soul singer. The action cuts back to an interview to camera, the music switches to the background, playing the chorus section of ‘Tears Dry On Their Own’ as if the cut away had not happened. Guest judge Robbie Williams comments;

‘His name’s Marcus, I like him. I remember him from the show he’s got a nice soul voice hasn’t he?’

(*The X Factor* b: 1hr 20m 43secs)

Thereby reinforcing the categorisation of Marcus as part of a genre category and associated subculture. His audition piece is ‘One Big Family’ (Mcnamara and Mcnamara: 1977), although the version Marcus performs is a reinterpretation by the band Templecloud. While the Mcnamara

Emily Baker

brothers' composition was originally written for a rock band, Templecloud's rather unsurprisingly sits further into the soul genre. It is of further interest that this version was flung into public view when it was used to advertise the most corporate suppliers of soul food, a Kentucky Fried Chicken advert in May 2011, more significant still when we consider that KFC is part of Pepsico Inc who had signed a \$60million deal with The X Factor;

"X Factor" is "set up in a way that's not purely about the music industry or a talent competition. It's designed to be part of a broader cultural experience," says Frank Cooper, chief consumer engagement officer at PepsiCo."

(Chozick 2011)

But it is too reductive to dismiss The X Factor as 'cleverly disguising market research as entertainment' (Till 2010: 100) and while it is certainly a story with an unapologetic economic origination, the programmes 'rags to riches' narrative does seem to successfully bottle up a collective sense of national hope. The lack of development of the culture industry since the one alluded to by Adorno and Horkheimer suggests a kind of cultural stasis but again, this feels too simplified. In blending together various television formats The X Factor found a new way of presenting an archaic narrative that provides a cathartic release for the viewing audience. Perhaps the illusion of Enlightenment and the notion of the winning ticket as being disposable rests at the feet of the contestants. As representative of the public body, they receive none of the estimated £100 million advertising revenue generated by The X Factor (Brown, Hackley, Tiwasakul (in press)), instead receiving a record deal. The 'winning ticket' certainly brings celebrity (though it cannot guarantee for how long), it might bring a hint of Enlightenment (though perhaps this can never be attained) but what it definitely brings is the hallowed recording contract (a bank loan to be repaid to the culture industry). Perhaps this is the 'Mass Deception' that Adorno and Horkheimer (1944) meant?

Bibliography

- Adorno, T and Horkheimer, M ([1944] 2005) 'The Culture Industry: Enlightenment As Mass Deception' in M.G. Durham and D. Kellner, eds *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords* 2nd edn, London: Sage, pp. 41 - 72.
- Altman, R. (1986). Television/ Sound. In: Modelski, T *Studies In Entertainment*. Milwaukee: Indiana University Press. p. 39 - 55.
- Ashford, N & Simpson, V & Winhouse, A. ([1966] 2006) *Tears Dry On Their Own*. London/ Los Angeles: EMI Publishing
- Brown, S & Hackley, C & Tiwasakul R (in press) The X Factor Enigma: Simon Cowell and the Marketization of Existential Liminality , *Marketing Theory*
- Carey, J ([1989] 2002) 'A Cultural approach to Communication' in *Mcquail's Reader in Mass Communication Theory* ed. D. McQuail, London: Sage, pp. 36 - 45.
- Chozick, A. (2011) FRIDAY JOURNAL: The Judging of Simon Cowell, United States, New York, N.Y.
- Cohen, S (2002). *Folk devils and moral panics*. 3rd ed. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Couldry, N. (2003). Live 'reality' and the future of surveillance. in: *Media Rituals: A Critical Approach*. London: Routledge. p. 95 - 114.
- Dyer, R, (2002). 'Entertainment as Utopia' in *Only Entertainment*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.
- Fairchild, C, (2007). Building the Authentic Celebrity: The "Idol" Phenomenon in the Attention Economy Charles Fairchild. *Popular Music and Society*, 30:3, 355-37.
- Frith, S, (2007). *Taking Popular Music Seriously*. 1st ed. London: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.
- Garrett, L & Hardaway, L & Wonder, S & Wright, S (1970) *Signed, Sealed, Delivered (I'm Yours)*. Los Angeles: EMI Publishing
- Gendron, B. (1986). Theodor Adorno Meets The Cadillacs. In: Modelski, T *Studies In Entertainment*. Milwaukee: Indiana University Press.
- Hooper, G, (2007). "Nevermind" Nivana: A Post-Adornian Perspective. *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, Vol.38, No.1, pp 91 - 107.

Inglis, I, (2010). *Popular music and television in Britain*. London: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

ITV 1 (2012). [ONLINE] Press Release: The X Factor 2011 judging panel. Available at: <http://www.itv.com/presscentre/pressreleases/programme/pressreleases/thexfactor2011judgingpanel/default.html>. [Accessed 5 January 2012].

Levine, S.K (1992) 'Bearing Gifts to the Feast' in *Poesis*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publications, pp 43 - 61.

Manchester Evening News. (2007). History of Moss Side's gun gang culture. [ONLINE] Available at: http://menmedia.co.uk/manchestereveningnews/news/s/233750_history_of_moss_sides_gun_gang_culture. [Accessed 05 January 12].

Mcnamara, D/ Mcnamara, R (1997) *One Big Family*. London: EMI Publishing.

Paddison, M. (1996). *Adorno, Modernism and Mass Culture: Essays on Crititcal Theory and Music*. London: Kahn and Averill.

Peters, J D (2003) 'The Subtlety of Horkheimer and Adorno: Reading "The Culture Industry" in Eilhu Katz et al, eds, *Canonic Texts in Media Research: Are There Any? Should There Be? How About These?* Cambridge: Polity, pp58 - 73.

Redden, G. (2008) Making Over the Talent Show in: Palmer, G, *Exposing Lifestyle Television: The Big Reveal*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, pp 129 -145

The X Factor (a) - About the show. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://xfactor.itv.com/2011/information/about-the-x-factor/>. [Accessed 30th December 2011].

The X Factor (b), ITV1, 1st October 2011; Freemantle Media/ Talkback Thames/ Syco

The X Factor (c), Kitty Brucknell. 2012. The X Factor - Kitty Brucknell. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://xfactor.itv.com/2011/finalists/kitty-brucknell>. [Accessed 5 January 2012].

Till, R. 2010., *Pop Cult: Religion and Popular Music*. [online]. Continuum International Publishing Group. Available from: <<http://lib.myilibrary.com.ezproxy.sussex.ac.uk?ID=282193>> 8 January 2012