European Journal of Cultural Studies

Mediated class-ifications : Representations of class and culture in contemporary British television

David Morley

The online version of this article can be found at:

Published by:

⑤SAGE

Additional services and information for *European Journal of Cultural Studies* can be found at:

Email Alerts: http://ecs.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts

Subscriptions: http://ecs.sagepub.com/subscriptions

Reprints: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav

Permissions: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav

Citations: http://ecs.sagepub.com/content/12/4/487.refs.html

>> Version of Record - Oct 19, 2009

What is This?

Mediated class-ifications

Representations of class and culture in contemporary British television

David Morley

Goldsmiths College, University of London

ABSTRACT   This article takes, as its point of departure, recent debates about the representation of working-class life, especially the lives of the 'feckless poor', on reality television in the UK. These issues are contextualized by reference to a set of wider-ranging historical debates about: a) the category of class as a mode of social determination (and as an explanatory model); b) the relations of language, class and culture in educational sociology and in community publishing; and, c) in relation to classical Marxism's theorization of both the 'respectable' working class and the lumpen proletariat. The article concludes with a consideration of debates about the representation of the working class in the contemporary British TV drama series *Shameless*.

KEYWORDS   *class, class consciousness, culture, individualism, language, lumpen proletariat, reality television, representation*

Introduction

In recent years, the terminology of class has gradually been deleted from media and cultural studies, partly, it would seem, in response to post-structuralist critiques of 'reductionism' and 'essentialism' in the use of social categories as explanatory devices in cultural analysis. Nonetheless, in the UK, there has been a sustained engagement with the question of class on the part of a small minority of scholars (Medhurst, 2000; Munt, 2000; Skeggs, 1997, 2004), and some recent work focusing on the representation of class on popular/reality television is now returning the topic to the contemporary agenda (Biressi and Nunn, 2005, 2008; Skeggs et al., 2008; Wood and Skeggs, 2008). I shall take that latter body of work as a key focus in an attempt to relate contemporary debates about representation in popular television to a broader set of historical and theoretical questions concerning class, culture, lifestyle, language and politics.

The pun in my title about 'class-ification' points in two directions. In the first place, it is concerned with what happens when a particular set

ARTICLE

of individuals is classified, by others, as 'belonging together' in some way (whether analytically or evaluatively), such as when their lifestyles are classified as pathological. Second, it is concerned with the consequences of individuals categorizing themselves – or, indeed, failing (or refusing) to do so – as members of a particular class. I have always had an ambivalent relation towards Raymond Williams's famous contention that, 'there are no masses, only ways of talking about other people as masses'. If we substitute 'classes' for 'masses' in that sentence, I think that there are sometimes very good reasons for speaking of people as members of classes. This is especially so because, contrary to the claims of Ulrich Beck's theories of 'individualization' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002), classes are still very powerful social institutions. Certainly, in the UK, all the evidence points to the fact that rates of intergenerational mobility are at best stable, if not decreasing and, thus, class position at birth is still a very powerful predictor of a person's likely social status in adult life.[1]

Television audiences, working-class cultures and the (Marxist) dog that stopped barking

If working-class people have been increasingly visible on British television screens in recent years, this is mainly because the increasingly popular genre of reality television features them heavily. Nowadays, we are often told, that genre is central to the future of TV itself. However, here as elsewhere, we must also bear in mind Lynn Spigel's injunction to the effect that the more we speak of futurology, the more we need to put matters in historical perspective (Spigel, 2004). The question, of course, is *how* to do that and, more specifically, to *which* 'general' histories the phenomenon of reality television belongs – and to which aspects of reality television those histories are most relevant. In light of these considerations, my aim here is to place that genre (which I take to involve not only a particular mode of programming, but also to be characterized by its tendency to give representation to particular categories of persons) in the context of several different histories. My hope is that this longer term perspective, while relativizing the contemporary focus, will, by the same token, serve to clarify the broader political significance of what might otherwise merely seem like specialist debates concerning one particular (if popular) TV genre.

The first historical context, and one familiar to most readers of this journal, concerns debates about 'class essentialism' in media audience research. The second concerns earlier debates in educational sociology about class, language, power and cultural deprivation (see Bernstein, 1971; Rosen, 1972) and their implications for the continuing work of organizations such as the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers (see Morley and Worpole, 1982; Worpole, 2008). That particular debate may have valuable light to throw on contemporary critiques of the representation (and possible exploitation) of working-class people on

488

reality television. One issue that I wish to highlight concerns the fact that those critiques necessarily depend for their force on an implicit, but very rarely explicated, position as to what *would* constitute a good, desirable or adequate mode of representation of working-class people. There is also the further question of who would be qualified to decide that issue – only the people represented themselves? Those of a similar class background? Their political 'representatives'? Some particular body of 'experts'? Here, if only in a preliminary way, I want to try to place back on the agenda some of these thorny issues, many of which have their roots in earlier debates.

The third history concerns Marxist theories of class and, in particular, Marx's own formulations concerning the problematic (and in his view 'dangerous') category of the 'lumpen proletariat'. Here my interest is in tracing the relations between these issues and contemporary debates about the representation of the 'underclass' of Britain's 'chav nation' on reality television (hereafter RT). I suggest that if we view RT through this prism, some quite uncanny parallels (and transpositions) between Marx's commentaries on the pathological 'degeneracy' of the lumpen proletariat and the 'disciplinary' discourses criticizing the 'unhealthy' lifestyles of the 'undeserving poor' on contemporary TV can be brought into focus. In this connection, I also want to raise some issues concerning the limitations of the predominantly Foucauldian approaches (focusing on issues of 'governmentality' and the production of specific forms of subjectivity) which currently provide the vocabulary of the main form of critique of RT. Many of these critiques take their lead from Nicholas Rose's influential writing on governmentality and, thus, focus on the role of RT in inculcating, among its audience, a particular form of 'entrepreneurial subjectivity' (Rose, 1989). There would seem to be two main problems here, both of which have, thus far, largely escaped critical attention.

The first problem concerns the limitations of the functionalism that is built into this kind of Foucauldian terminology.[2] In many respects, it is hard to see the difference between a model that presumes the automatic success of a particular form of 'governmentality' in producing a particular mode of subjectivity ('the entrepreneurial self') and Talcott Parsons's long-discredited theories of the automatic effects of 'socialization' in re-producing the particular types of individuals 'required' for the successful functioning of a given social system (Parsons, 1964). The same problem also mars the cruder forms of Marxist theorizations that assume the successful imposition of dominant ideologies. There is no conceptual space in any of these models for any autonomy of response (critical or otherwise) on the part of the people who consume (or are 'interpellated' or 'subjected' by) these discourses, which are then simply presumed to have automatic effects. The further problem is that some contemporary commentators seem to write as if they imagine that it would be possible to produce some (value-free?) form of discourse, which did *not* attempt to shape subjectivity at all (see Fish, 1989). To this extent, it is unclear

489

whether theirs is a utopian objection to the shaping of subjectivity per se or to the production of the particular form of subjectivity which RT is seen to cultivate.

Reality TV: the story so far …

If RT is increasingly central to the schedules of popular television, and if one of the things it does is to melodramatize all 'fates' as ultimately a matter of individual responsibility, while obscuring the structural factors that still largely determine them, then it is clearly a vital site of research.[3] This is especially so if we are to understand just how neoliberal economic discourses are nowadays being made no more – or less – than 'common sense', and, as we know, the construction of common sense (and its limits) is the critical aspect of any hegemonic process.

As is now well established, RT is evidently central to the 'moral economy' of our period, in which particular types of persons, families and lifestyles are presented as worthy of emulation, while others are devalued and classified as pathological or dysfunctional. In this connection, Nick Couldry (2008) suggests that every system of cruelty requires its own theatre. If RT is best seen as one of the specific theatrical forms through which the system of neoliberalism dramatizes its own requirements on individuals (principally, to seek biographical solutions to structural contradictions), then, as he notes, this is no historically peculiar development, but is best seen as part of a long series of such transformations. As E.P. Thompson pointed out long ago, 'every shift in economic organisation requires new disciplines, new incentives and a new human nature' (Thompson, 1967: 57). I shall return later to this historical point, as it somewhat relativizes the specificity of our contemporary concerns with neoliberal market capitalism's production of an 'entrepreneurial' form of subjectivity.

In the recent period, both Couldry (2008) and Christine Geraghty (2006) have made rather unfashionably 'Lukacsian' arguments that one of the reasons why melodrama and RT have been increasingly central to the media in the recent period is precisely because these genres have a particular 'fit' with the highly individualized structures of neoliberalism. Implicit in both of their analyses (although only Couldry refers to it directly and then only in passing) is the concept of *ideology*, a term not much used these days. Perhaps ideology is now simply seen as a 'bad object' from which contemporary commentators are anxious to distance themselves. But it is one that it is hard to ignore when reading commentaries on RT, as most of them are at least as much concerned with what the discourses of RT hide as with what they reveal, which is, after all, the classic function of ideology, so far as Marx himself was concerned.[4]

A central plank in the critique of RT concerns the 'psychologization' and 'individualization' of responsibility for personal and familial fates. The key issue here is the way in which this discourse obscures the structural

490

conditions which, despite neoliberalism's 'narratives of choice', continue to generate unequal life chances for those doing the choosing. In this process of 'causality transference', in which individuals are called to account for failures that are often beyond their control, structural factors (such as class) disappear (see Palmer, 2004). Following on from the 'expert' forensic identification of the many faults in working-class homes and lifestyles, there is, therefore, a great deal of work to be done on the relevant bodies and families if conformity to approved middle-class standards is to be achieved. Evidently, if it is assumed that poverty is simply a result of 'bad choices', out of which individuals can be 'retrained' by expert advice and 'useful tips', all that remains is the successful implementation of television as a new pedagogic medium of governmentality, which will promulgate an appropriate new cultural imaginary. In this enterprise, the 'bad citizens' will be identified, shamed and then reformed (or, at least, they can perform a valuable function by providing a negative point of reference against which the 'good' can then measure their success; see Biressi and Nunn, 2005, 2008).

The new declensions of class

By these means, we are told, RT offers a voyeuristic set of 'spectacles of shame' involving the display and exposure of the inadequacies of 'trashy' people and their lifestyles in the form of an entertainment genre. As Anita Biressi and Heather Nunn put it, the question here is, 'at whose cost these images are circulated [in this] new declension of class' (2008: 15), with its focus on the unhealthy bodies, vulgar tastes and dysfunctional lifestyles of the 'unruly poor'. As they rightly note, this is an imagery that can be traced back to the historical tradition of Hogarth's representations of the underclass of an earlier period, and one that can also usefully be compared to some of the crueller forms of comedic representation of the 'feckless'/incompetent poor which are currently so popular on contemporary British TV.

In all of this, class differences manifest themselves in a variety of ways. Thus, the research of Beverley Skeggs, Helen Wood and Nancy Thumin addresses class differences at both the material and symbolic levels, in relation both to the television set as a symbolic object and to the discourses that it articulates. Here, it may be useful to further explore comparative perspectives on the extent to which these class differences are (or are not) replicated in other cultures. Certainly, to take one possible dimension of comparison, work on middle-class attitudes to television in Scandinavia (see Alasuutari, 1999) shows that there, too, shame is often expressed about watching 'mere entertainment', while the watching of national news is often regarded as one of the key responsibilities of a 'good citizen'. In relation to middle-class attitudes to the TV set itself, Skeggs et al.'s findings (2008) can be seen to resonate strongly with both those concerning middle-class embarrassment about being 'caught' watching television in the USA

491

in the 1950s and with historical work on the different modes of hiding – or display – of television sets among middle-class and working-class families in Latin America (see Leal, 1990; Spigel, 1992). However, we do need to attend closely to the variable symbolic significance of particular communication technologies in different contexts and periods. In this respect, Nunn and Biressi offer a useful 'update' when they observe that it would be the absence of a widescreen television these days, rather than simply the absence of a television set per se, which would be the relevant index of 'respectability' (Nunn and Biressi, forthcoming).

For anyone concerned with differential class-based patterns of the interpretation of television, the evidence of Skeggs et al.'s respondents' invocation of specifically working-class values, as a way of undermining the dominant middle-class discourses of RT and their 'expert' representatives, is particularly striking in extending our understanding of the repertoire of what might, in an earlier terminology, have been called oppositional decodings (Skeggs et al., 2008). However, rather than simply being seen in isolation, as they note, these issues clearly need to be linked back to older traditions of articulation of those values, such as those of the Victorian music hall, which still provide a crucial and formative part of the repertoire of the working-class cultures on which contemporary responses to the media draw (see Clayton, 2008; Medhurst, 2007: Ch. 5; Palmer, 1974; Vicinus, 1974).

Histories of class and representation

Let me now try to set these specific and contemporary concerns with RT in a variety of historical contexts.

1. Classes among the media audience

In the context of debates about the problem of 'class' in audience studies, it is now often taken for granted that the attempt to make connections between social position and modalities of media consumption is ipso facto a 'reductionist' waste of time. Nonetheless, as I have argued elsewhere, class analysis need not be premised on any such simple 'arithmetic' of *direct* determination, in which audience responses to media materials would be seen as automatically determined by their class position (Althusser, 1972; Laclau, 1977; Morley, 1992). Rather, what needs to be explored is how structural position, across a range of dimensions (including, but not restricted to class), might set parameters to the acquisition of different cultural codes, the possession of which may then inflect the decoding process in systematically different ways (see Kim, 2004, for a critical review of debates on class and decoding).

In a period in which we are sometimes told that class itself is now no more than a 'zombie' category (see Beck, 2008), these issues obviously acquire a heightened pertinence. To my mind, the question is less the

ontological issue of whether classes still *exist*, but rather the question of how a category such as class might be deployed in our analyses – at what level of abstraction, for what purposes and in relation to which theories of causation. Clearly, *any* sociological category, be it class, gender, 'race' or ethnicity, can be deployed in a zombie-like manner. This is the main force of the poststucturalist critique of essentialism: hence the important critiques by scholars such as Ien Ang and Joke Hermes (1991) and Ramaswami Harindrath (2005) of work that short-circuits the analytical task in hand by variously attempting to explain audience responses to media material as if they were a direct result of people being 'prisoners' of racial, ethnic or gendered categories (see also Butler, 1990).

It is in this context that we should consider Harindrath's critique of much contemporary audience research for failing to 'offer sufficiently complex explanations of *how* socio-cultural factors influence audience expectations' (2005: 3; emphasis added). His main concern is with how categories of 'race' and ethnicity have been deployed in audience studies. In particular, he is critical of the way in which, in their now canonical study of differential audience decodings of *Dallas*, Tamar Liebes and Elihu Katz (1991) relied on what Harindrath calls a 'monolithic conception of ethnicity … constituted by race … [which] determines audience decodings' (2005: 5). As he notes, this approach 'privileging cultural difference as an immutable … [and] … essential category' collapses 'race' into culture and naturalizes social differences, as if these factors had an automatically defining effect on identity and behaviour.

This is a model in which, rather than ethnicity displaying any degree of mutability in social life, it is reduced to the status of a fixed pseudo-biological category of automatic 'belonging', with seemingly inevitable effects. Clearly, in conceptual terms, such an approach shares all the disadvantages of the simplest forms of Marxist political arithmetic and, as an analytical device, is far too crude to offer much effective purchase on sociocultural life. However, it evidently does not follow that we should abandon the use of categories of 'race' and/or ethnicity altogether. Rather, the challenge is to develop more nuanced and flexible versions of such categories, as evidenced in the work of Stuart Hall on 'new ethnicities' (1988) or Paul Gilroy on the new forms of cultural racism (2004). Thus, as Kevin Robins and Asu Aksoy (2001) argue in relation to the Turkish migrants whose media consumption they studied, we need to be sensitive to the multiple dimensions of people's (ethnic and other) identities and not presume that any one of them is necessarily dominant in all situations. This approach has perhaps been most effectively developed in Gerd Bauman's work (1996) on how people draw on different registers of ethnic, racial, national, religious (and other) dimensions of their identities in different contexts and on the situational determinations of which dimension they are likely to feel is most relevant in which context.

493

However, if these analytical categories must be used judiciously, we also need to pay attention to the very high price of not using them at all for fear of the charge of essentialism or reductionism – that way lies what used to be called 'methodological individualism'. Thus, in relation to the status of gender as an explanatory factor in media research, critics such as Ang and Hermes (1991) are quite right to argue that we cannot presume a priori that in any particular instance of media consumption, gender will necessarily be the determining factor. However, to refuse to hypothesize at all as to which factors are most likely to have which sorts of consequences, in which situations, would be to abandon any form of social analysis, which ultimately depends on the use of categorizations, in order to abstract from the details, and thus reveal supra-individual patterns. While categorizations are reductive by their very nature, the point lies in deciding *which* type of categorization devices to use, however provisionally, in analyzing which types of material. Otherwise, we are left floating in an endless play of contextual specificity and infinite difference in which, by refusing to make any generalizations at all, we disempower our own analyses.

In the context of debates about self-reflexivity in anthropology, Clifford Geertz (1988) has written of the disabling effects of the dangers of what he calls the 'hermeneutics of suspicion'. I would suggest that in recent years, we have witnessed a comparable phenomenon in relation to the 'pervasive nervousness' about the use of categories such as class in social analysis. Curiously, in this context, we find a striking homology between the work of contemporary media theorists, who are reluctant to mobilize the concept of class as an explanatory variable for fear of charges of essentialism, and the discourses of RT itself, which routinely ignore structural factors and rely on individualized 'voluntarist' discourses of willpower, passion and effort as the key determinants of individual success or failure.

2. Language, class and the 'cultural deprivation' debates

The second history I want to invoke concerns the contemporary resonance of the work of Basil Bernstein (1971) and Pierre Bourdieu (1984), who both addressed the role of the class structure in systematically distributing different and unequal forms of cultural capital and linguistic competence. While Bourdieu's work has received a significant amount of attention in the UK in recent years, (despite the difficulties of transposing his findings from the French to the British context), that of Bernstein has been rather neglected, and it is on his work that I wish to focus here.

To recap, Bernstein's interest was in explaining the systematic failure of working-class children in British schools, and his explanation, crudely put, was that these children lacked the skills of abstract reasoning that the education system rewarded; and that this was reflected in their ability to speak only what he called a '*restricted*' linguistic code, which allowed of only limited powers of abstraction. This initial 'lack', he argued, was the result of

494

the more authoritarian forms of socialization characteristic of working-class families.

Unsurprisingly, Bernstein's work rapidly came under fire from those who felt that it was quite inappropriate to make value judgements about the relative worth of speech systems, and the cultures that they symbolize, without reference to their imbrication in structures of power. Scholars such as Harold Rosen (1972) argued that Bernstein's approach was based on the presumption of some kind of 'cultural deficit' among the working class. In a similar spirit, Nell Keddie (1973) pointed out that the problem with any theory of 'cultural deprivation' was that no group can be deprived of its own culture. From this point of view, working-class culture (or black culture; see Labov, 1973, 2006) was argued to be every bit as valuable as the culture of the middle classes, and educational failure on the part of working-class or black children was explained by the disjunction between their culture and the predominantly middle-class/white culture of the schools they attended.

Rosen's other principal line of argument (which, in many ways, pre-figured much contemporary poststructuralism) was that Bernstein used class as too simple an explanatory device, in so far as he ignored the many *varieties* of working-class speech, whether derived from regional, occupational or institutional subcultures – the question of what differentiates the language of Liverpool dockers from Durham miners or Coventry car workers (Rosen, 1972). Of course, in the UK today, the terminology of that sentence is rather shocking, referring, as it does, to what are now only mythological categories of labour, given the subsequent decimation of these industries. Nonetheless, Rosen's point of principle remains, and his critique of generalized 'cultural deprivation' theory helped to generate projects such as the 'People's Autobiography of Hackney', led by Ken Worpole at Centerprise in East London. The Centerprise self-published *Working Lives* series was premised on the notion that different categories of working-class people not only had their own stories to tell, but also the linguistic skills to articulate them in distinctive ways.

However, even if working-class stories were now told by working-class people in these projects, the activists organizing them were still often middle class themselves (at least by virtue of education), and relations of power were evidently still in play. As such, they potentially fell victim to the Foucauldian injunction against the presumption of 'representing' others and the importance of everyone 'speaking for themselves'. The difficulty with that injunction is that it logically entails an endless regression and, sociologically speaking, if only members of category X can speak for that category, the categories themselves have a rapid (and sometimes astonishing) capacity to fragment into ever-smaller subdivisions. This is a road at the end of which, evidently, one can only arrive at a world of separate accounts of micro-collectivities of experiential or cultural solipsism.

495

Clearly, this is complex territory. In recent years, oddly enough, the methodological accompaniment to the theoretical critique of class essentialism has sometimes been the presumption that only members of the working class (or, in another variant, only academics of working-class origin) could or should speak to (or research) that 'sovereign' experience. Against this position, one could point, for one obvious counterexample, to the extraordinary success achieved by Charles Parker in his early 'Radio Ballads' (see Cox, 2008) in interviewing working-class people and getting them to articulate their experience, despite possessing the undisguised voice and manners of the public school-educated, ex-submarine commander that he was. This consideration might even suggest that perhaps, in methodological (and, indeed, political) terms, contra the presumptions of the cultural solipsists, what matters more than whether you are of a different social or cultural category from your interviewees is how you inhabit that difference.

Nonetheless, there remains the further difficulty that although much of the work stimulated by organizations such as the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers has been extremely valuable in telling the stories of previously invisible lives and offering space to long-ignored cultural perspectives (Morley and Worpole, 1986), there is still a problem of form. By far the easiest way in which to get working-class people to articulate their experience is in the form of autobiography, which is, by its nature, an individualizing and, to that extent, decollectivizing – if not depoliticizing – form. With this in mind, the Centerprise project has carefully taken the title of the 'People's Autobiography of Hackney', but its constituent units were still accounts of individual lives.

It is in this context that we might best understand Diana Adlam and Angie Salfield's (1980) spirited defence of Bernstein against his libertarian critics. Simply put, they argue that, politically appealing as Rosen's critique might be in 'defending' working-class culture, it nonetheless tended to encourage an ultimately disabling form of cultural relativism, which denied the fact that some forms of language do indeed enable more complex conceptual procedures than others.

One might very well be sympathetic to Rosen's critique of Bernstein, insofar as the latter clearly fails to address the many ways in which the linguistic competences which schools are concerned to develop are often entangled in dominant cultural forms that make them less accessible to working-class (or non-white) children (see Labov, 1973, 2006). However, a simplistic defence of working-class culture – for its authenticity, autonomy and spontaneity – still runs into the problem that this culture also has limitations, not least from a political, as much as an educational, perspective.

In many respects, Bernstein's position can thus be seen to be supported by that of Marx (see Morley, 1974). There is certainly a close parallel between what Bernstein says about the limits of the restricted linguistic code of

the working classes and what Marx (and Lenin) say about the limitations of 'spontaneous' forms of political consciousness. Their critiques focus on the incapacity of the constituent sections of the working classes to achieve class consciousness by abstracting themselves from their local situation sufficiently to see that they actually have interests in common with people who, in superficial terms, seem quite different from themselves – who do different jobs, speak with other accents, derive from other ethnicities and worship other deities (or none at all). In each case, the conceptual difficulty is that of the limitations of *concrete* modes of thinking, if they are not accompanied by the ability to abstract: to transfer principles and to distinguish superordinate levels of categorization. In short, this is the ability to classify both oneself and others into categories and, in Marx's terms, to recognize oneself, where appropriate, as a member of a class.

In all of this, it is important to note the extent to which linguistic, conceptual and political issues are intertwined. To take a literary parallel, the Scottish novelist James Kellman characteristically expresses the power struggles present in his novels through the registers of the language used by his characters. Thus, he steadfastly refuses to abide by the convention according to which 'dialect' forms of regional or working-class speech are normally only used for dialogue, while the metadiscourse of authorial narration is exclusively reserved for the grammar and vocabulary of standard English. As Ken Worpole notes in his insightful discussion of Kellman's work, when these relations are reversed (by the truly radical device of using a dialect and regional accent in the metanarrative of a text, as a 'frame' around a voice speaking in 'received pronunciation'), we see immediately how very deep-seated these conventions are (Worpole, 2008: 31).

However, Kellman's commitment to the accurate representation of his working-class characters' inner consciousness and 'voices' is not without its own problems, as Michel Faber noted in her review of his latest novel *Kieron Smith, Boy* (2008). There are unavoidable difficulties arising from the author's determination to paint an 'authentic' picture of a complex and troubled world, from the point of view of a working-class child with a very restricted vocabulary, speaking in his own voice. This is, not least, because given the linguistic and conceptual limitations of his perspective, the child has only a very narrow and superficial understanding of the world around him, and thus, in the end, Kellman can only (if faithfully) represent the character's inability to give any clear and coherent analysis of what is happening to him. However, these are not 'merely' questions of literary style, for, as Volosinov (1973) argues, it is in the forms of language that consciousness takes shape – and limitations of language thus entail limitations of consciousness – whether of class or any other structural dimension of social life.

In his later years, Derrida had some very interesting things to say about the ways in which, despite its widespread disavowal after the fall of the USSR, western social theory is still haunted by the ghost of Marxism

497

(Derrida, 2006). In the context of these comments, let me turn lastly to another historical context, this time concerning the parallels (and disjunctions) between some of the very critical things that Marx had to say about the ghostly 'ancestors' of the people we now see on RT and the terminologies with which their descendants are now derided for their inadequacies.

3. Bad citizens, the unruly poor and the lumpen proletariat

In the first place, it is worth noting that the criteria by which Marx distinguishes the 'lumpen' category from the 'proletariat proper' are strikingly similar to those used on RT to distinguish between the unruly/undisciplined poor and the 'respectable' members of society. Marx was every bit as disparaging as RT can be in his characterizations of the people in this problematic category – the 'contemptible and irrational mob' who are to be strictly differentiated from the 'respectable masses'. Thus, he variously describes them as, 'the slum proletariat … the outcast, degenerate and submerged elements of the population … the passive putrefaction of the lowest strata of the old society … the human refuse of all classes … swindlers, confidence tricksters, rag and bone merchants, vagabonds, gamblers, criminals, prostitutes and tricksters'. It is thus clear that, for Marx, the term lumpen proletariat is a moral category rather than simply an analytic or economic one, and, rather like RT, he was perfectly happy to use judgemental language to describe what he considered to be wrong (and, crucially for him, politically disabling) about their lifestyles.[5]

As various people have pointed out, the 'bad guys' (and girls) in this scenario are also familiar to us from the stereotypes offered in discourses such as Charles Murray's characterization of the 'underclass' (initially developed in the US and later in the UK; Murray, 1989). When I was trawling around the net, looking at background material on these issues, I came across a website on which an American academic was trying to provide a visual mnemonic to help his students understand the difference between these categories. The one he supplied went as follows: 'if the proletarian is a handsome, muscular young athlete, with a jaunty stride, an upright posture and good teeth, the lumpen is a thin, slouchy guy with shifty eyes and a cigarette drooping from his lips'.[6] At that point, I felt as if I had already seen that bit of cross-cut editing on RT itself. Certainly, these people are then defined as having serious moral failings of various sorts. Moreover, if one dimension of the 'problem' represented by the feckless poor on RT lies in their failure to be properly productive, its complementary aspect is that represented by discussions of 'chav' culture, whose 'pathological' dispositions are displayed not so much in their failure to engage in legitimate forms of productive work, but rather in the sphere of consumption, insofar as this group is seen to consume the wrong things in the wrong way (see Hayward and Yard, 2006).

498

However, there are two key differences between Marx's perspective on these issues and that of RT: first, the definition of the problem (and what its solution would be); and, second, its causes and origins. To deal with the first of these, if the problem for RT is that the poor and variously unhappy people who it represents to us are failing to be the 'right kind' of individuals, the problem for Marx is the opposite. For him, these people's 'failure' lies in them *only* being capable of behaving as individuals, thus failing to rise above concern with their own immediate short-term interests, so as to act as a class. This is why Marx regards them as a politically unreliable (and indeed 'dangerous') group who, being 'thrown hither and thither by events', are particularly vulnerable to reactionary discourses and are effectively able to be 'bribed' by anyone who can offer them enough immediate benefit to help them survive the day.

This is also where the second contrast emerges. Unlike the discourse of RT, which holds individuals entirely accountable for their own fates, Marx is very clear that it is the conditions of existence of the lumpen proletariat, under which (by virtue of their lack of any economic alternative) they are condemned to scrabble around, attempting to survive from day to day, that make them incapable of doing anything other than follow their immediate short-term interests.

At one key point, when he is defining the various segments of the lumpen proletariat, he identifies as a particularly important group the previously 'useful', but now unemployed, who have no secure relationship to, or vested interest in, the system of production. These are, in effect, a category of individuals to whom pathos attaches by virtue of their unemployment. Here we find what is perhaps the key to his approach. For Marx, the 'degeneration' of the lumpen proletariat sets in precisely because of their 'displaced' position as an element of 'surplus population' without any regular economic function. This, he believes, is what makes them susceptible to 'agents of corruption', and the longer they stay outside the productive process, the more likely it is that they will adopt 'degenerate' attitudes.

In Marx's time, this was a marginal and relatively small category of persons who had not yet adjusted to the new system of industrial production, but might still hope one day to re-enter the proletariat proper. However, today, in the 'advanced' economies of the West, after the collapse of the manufacturing industries that used to supply manual work to the majority of the unskilled working class, this category of surplus population is more permanent in nature. To that extent, this is now the situation of a large proportion, rather than a marginal category, of what was once the 'respectable' proletariat.

However, if this transformation in the scale of the category of the unemployable constitutes a key change in the circumstances of the lower classes, there are also further difficulties to be explored concerning the

499

relations of class and culture and of the potential, in some circumstances, for cross-class alliances of surprising kinds (see Laclau, 1977 on Peronism). From Marx's point of view, the lumpen proletariat has the peculiarity of sharing some characteristics with the category of 'finance capital', and Marx analyzes various situations in which the two had become political allies (see Hayes, 1988, 1992). Manifestly, they do not share material interests in any simple sense; rather, what connects them is that they are both 'unproductive', in Marxian terms, insofar as they are both located *outside* the system of production. Indeed, at one point, Marx speaks of finance capital as the 'rebirth of the lumpen proletariat on the heights of bourgeois society'.[7]

These correspondences have a further significance. It is not only the problems of the lumpen proletariat that have moved from the margin to centre stage in the contemporary world. If, in Marx's time, finance capital was itself a merely supplementary category to that of manufacturing, nowadays we live in an era of the 'financialization' of the world economy, where finance capital itself provides the main form of economic activity (especially so in the UK since the 'boom' in the finance sector, consequent upon the deregulation of City trading in the 1980s). However, it is important to note here that however complex the structure of the financial 'derivatives' in which these markets trade, they are, in the end, still simply a 'higher' form of gambling.[8]

If we relate this feature of finance capital to the 'lottery culture' that has now become so central to mainstream British society, we can identify a central set of values that focus on the propensity of the market to distribute its favours randomly, whether in the form of wealth or celebrity. In this context, as a *Guardian* editorial put it, 'hope [now] lies in the possibility that *we* might also get caught up in these unpredictable exaltations – that *ours* might be the winning ticket, the lucky number, the jackpot, or [our children's] exceptional talent that will waft them to stardom and riches beyond their dreams' ('Richly Undeserved', *Guardian*, 13 May 2008). To this extent, any idea of a collective project to pursue the amelioration (or indeed transformation) of social conditions for all, through a 'politics of hope', is thus sidelined in favour of a fatalistic reliance on lady luck's random beneficence towards individuals, or, at best, in favour of individuals striving for their own success through their own sheer 'passion' or 'commitment', however dire their circumstances.

To put the matter in its broader context, the key issue here is not simply that of the inadequacy of the representation of the working class on RT, but rather its total inability to represent the realm of 'the social'. To that extent, these programme discourses could perhaps more simply be read as a televisual instantiation of Mrs Thatcher's credo that there is no such thing as society, only individual men and women; these discourses simply follow in the dismal tracks laid down by her radical devaluation of any sociological understanding of the world.

500

Coda: representing those who are *Shameless* …

By way of a 'coda' to these considerations, let me turn to a contemporary illustration of these issues in the debates surrounding Paul Abbott's representation of today's lumpen proletariat on the fictional Chatsworth Estate in Manchester in his Channel 4 TV series *Shameless*.[9] Abbott worked for many years on the ITV soap opera *Coronation Street* and then as a producer on series such as Jimmy McGovern's *Cracker*. First shown on Channel 4 in 2004, *Shameless* has subsequently been broadcast in the US, Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Portugal, Italy and Finland.

The series centres on the chaotic lives of the members of the dysfunctional Gallagher family, nominally headed by an unemployed alcoholic father, where the children are largely left to fend for themselves on a rundown working-class estate in a feral life of borderline poverty. While their circumstances are dire, their potentially redeeming feature is the way that, despite their moments of thoughtlessness and cruelty, they stick by each other through thick and thin, bound by bonds of blood and loyalty. Many aspects of the series recreate the setting of Abbott's own childhood experience on a similar estate in Bury where, as he put it in an interview, 'chaos was the norm', alongside poverty and criminality, in a life characterized by 'deserting parents, teenage pregnancies, a lack of legitimate incomes, and the expectation of criminal sentences all round'. The situation was made tolerable, as he sees it now, by the simple fact that 'we had no idea [that] things should or could be any better'.[10]

As Jennings (2008) notes, the series refuses to centre its narrative around supposedly objective problems or issues, and the focus instead is on 'the family's determination to stay afloat together and to maintain a sense (or illusion) of agency and hope'. Abbott has said that he 'stuck by the title for its irony, because it was exactly the kind of accusation outsiders would have chucked at my family back in the Seventies' (Paul Abbott interviewed in the *Independent*, 20 December 2005).

Shameless was described by one critic as 'the series that taste forgot' and by its leading actor, David Threlfall, as '*The Simpsons* on acid' (*Independent*, 20 December 2005). It is uncomfortable viewing, in formal terms, deliberately veering between the genres of drama and sitcom, mixing melodrama and excess with darker aspects of social realism (Nelson, 2007: 45, 48), while attempting to be, in Abbott's own words, 'upsetting and funny in the same breath' (interview with Stuart Jeffries, *Guardian*, 7 February 2005). The series is also made in such a way as to be particularly uncomfortable for respectable middle-class viewers, involving them in the lives of people who they would never encounter in their own neighbourhoods and challenging conventional assumptions about what constitutes normality and morality. For Threlfall, its purpose is very serious and he describes it as 'the perfect credit crunch drama … portraying a family who are the epitome of how you get by in hard times' (*Sunday Telegraph*, 25 January 2009).

501

Many of the formal aspects of the series mentioned above have received commendation, not least its ambitious attempts to mix generic rules in a mode of presentation that veers between 'gutter surrealism', comic mayhem and black humour (Jennings, 2008; Nelson, 2007). This formal originality means that it often confounds viewers' expectations. However, a number of critics have criticized what they see as Abbott's deliberately amoral (if not exploitative) representation of the outlandish behaviour of his characters and their dysfunctional families.

Nonetheless, I would argue that *Shameless* performs a very valuable function by inverting the moralizing perspective of RT and, in effect, encouraging us to empathize with the problems of exactly the kind of 'bad subjects' who fail to adopt the self-improving modalities demanded of them for the smooth functioning of liberal market capitalism. As for the question of morality itself, the main issue raised by the series is perhaps not what attitude we should take to these characters' behaviour, but rather to the situation which pressurizes them to act as they do. The clear implication of the programme's metadiscourse is that it is not the behaviour of the characters themselves that deserves our moral opprobrium so much as the structural forces that have trapped them in their situation. In this story, the real villains are those responsible for the asset stripping of the UK manufacturing industry and the subsequent deindustrialization of whole regions, resulting in the devastation of places like the Chatsworth Estate by long-term intergenerational unemployment.

Many of the characters are presented as being 'deeply unhappy about many things, most of the time', but since 'this is a mode of being which is entirely familiar to them, there is no reason for them to dwell on or agonise over it', and the series presents their 'pragmatic fatalism' as the only sensible policy left open to them (Jennings, 2008). Thus, rather like the lumpen proletariat in Marx's analysis, being preoccupied with the short-term demands of everyday survival, the characters articulate no explicit political views and have as their main objective simply getting through the day, ideally while having a laugh on the way, if and when they can.

In the fictional world of *Shameless*, poverty, criminality and chaos are the norm, in the face of which the only attitude that makes sense is a streetwise world-weariness, accompanied by a relentless capacity for improvisatory survival schemes. Indeed, I would argue that, particularly in its first series, before the characters settled into more caricatured modalities, the most adventurous thing about *Shameless* was this straight-faced 'normalization' of what, to outsiders, might seem extraordinary (and indeed truly shocking) about life on such an estate. The crucial narrative move is the way in which that lifestyle is constituted as the unspoken premise of the series in its full, taken-for-granted, dreadful everydayness. To this extent, my own view is that the series, in its inception at least, deserves great credit for encouraging us to think in more complex ways about the representation

502

of class on television. Not least among its achievements has been that of forcing onto UK television screens a convincing representation of what life is like for many of those who still suffer, albeit largely invisible to the public eye, the full consequences of what are now 30 years of Thatcherite hegemony, despite any nominal changes of government.

As we attempt to navigate our way through these choppy waters, we clearly need to develop more incisive modes of analysis of the representation of disempowered and often vulnerable groups on television. However, if we are to offer critiques of those representations that we deem inadequate, then it also behoves us – difficult as it may be – to make explicit what exactly it is that we would regard as a good (or at least a better) form of representation and to be clear about the grounds on which our claims rest. Evidently, this will get us into deep water, in which we will not easily come to agreement, as we attempt to move beyond critique alone to the specification of the criteria for adjudicating these complex philosophical and epistemological questions. However, these are issues that we cannot afford to shy away from, if we are to be able to see not only how contemporary debates about RT fit into longer term historical perspectives on the representation of class, but also how to intervene effectively within them.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. On the statistics for low rates of social mobility in the UK, see the work of John Goldthorpe, Emeritus Professor at Nuffield College, Oxford and Visiting Professor at the Centre for Longitudinal Studies, Institute of Education, London. See also that of Jo Blanden and Stephen Machin of the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics.

2. On this, see Charlotte Brunsdon's comments on the dominance of functionalist paradigms in the analysis of RT (2008: 131). Of course, other critical perspectives, some varieties of Marxism included, also lapse into functionalism. Notwithstanding his important contributions to the analysis of complex forms of determination, developed in *For Marx* (Althusser 1972), this came to be recognized as one of the key problems with Althusser's work, most especially in his crucial essay on the role of 'ideological state apparatuses' (Althusser, 1972). Indeed, the lapses into simplistic functionalism in this essay earned him the Americanized nickname 'Al T. Husser' among some of his critics. It was precisely because of these failings that, under Stuart Hall's guidance, cultural studies work at the Birmingham CCCS shifted away from Althusser towards Gramsci's more processual (and decidedly non-functional) analysis of hegemony, as always provisional and contested (Gramsci, 1974). That was

503

why Hall came later to argue that the only useful form of Marxism was one 'without guarantees'.

3. To make clear the limits of my ambitions here, I must emphasize that this essay is not concerned with RT per se, but principally with RT as a site of the representation of class on television. I am well aware that RT itself has a long and complex history, which is well beyond my remit here. In passing, I would note only that while conventionally, in the UK, that history is traced back to Paul Watson's *The Family* (1974), Brian Winston (2007) has recently argued for a much fuller historical perspective, which traces RT back to its earlier 'ancestors', such as Edgar Morin and Jean Rouch's film *Chronique d'un Ete*, shot in Paris in 1960. From another direction, this history has also now been transposed into the realms of contemporary video art. Gillian Wearing's 'Family History' exhibition (2006) reframed Watson's material by means of a retrospective interview with one of the programme's original participants, conducted by contemporary chat show host Trisha Goddard, within the context of the artist's self-reflexive commentary on her own childhood viewing of Watson's series (Wearing, 2006).

4. See John Corner's critical comments on how some of the newer frameworks of discourse analysis have 'not immediately contributed much by way of clarity and cogency' and have simply replaced the concept of ideology with a conceptual schema 'in which the political hardly figures at all' (Corner, 2004: 11).

5. These quotes are extracted variously from Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), *The Class Struggles in France* (1850) and *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852). One useful definition of the lumpen proletariat (on which I draw here) can be found in Gordon Marshall's entry under that word in the *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology* (1998). Further useful definitions of Marxist usage of the term can be found online at: www.wikipedia.org/wiki/lumpenproletariat and also at: www.encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com and at: www.experiencefestival.com/a. For a critique of Marx and Engels' perspective, see Bovenreck (1984).

6. For the source of this striking imagery, see: www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/anderson/PS168notes/00F0503a (accessed 1 July 2009). See also John Berger's striking comments on how financial markets and slums 'have one thing in common: the noise of rumour' (Berger, 1996: 7).

7. See Marx's *The Class Struggles in France 1848–1850* online at: www.Marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1850

8. This essay was originally written in the summer of 2008 before the true extent of the toxic gambling debts of Euro-American finance capital were fully known. Looking back on them now, my comments, which might have seemed a little abrasive at the time, are, in retrospect, perhaps only shocking in their mildness, given what we now know of how very badly these multi-billion-pound gambles went wrong. Evidently, it has subsequently become clear how very apt was the analogy, which some had drawn, between the reckless credit boom of the 1990s and the spectacular boom and bust of the 'South Sea bubble' investments of the early 18th century (see the comments made by Andy Dane of the Bank of England,

504

reported by Ashley Seager in 'Last 20 Years Were Like South Sea Bubble, Says Bank Official', *Guardian*, 2 July 2009).

9. The Wikipedia entry for *Shameless* provides a good production history and contextualizes the series and its ambitions in the wider history of British TV drama (see: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shameless). An alternative illustration would be the work of a writer such as Jimmy McGovern, originally a stalwart of the Liverpool branch of the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers, who later became a successful writer for Channel 4's soap opera of working-class life *Brookside* (1982) and subsequently of a series of prime-time television dramas featuring working-class characters, including *Cracker* (1993), *Hillsborough* (1996), *The Lakes* (1997–99), *Sunday* (2002) and *The Street* (2006–09).

10. Interview at: www.channel4.com/entertainment/tv/microsites/shameless

References

Adlam, D. and A. Salfield (1980) 'The Diversion of Language: A Critical Assessment of the Concept of "Linguistic Diversity"', *Screen Education* 34: 71–86.

Alasuutari, P. (ed.) (1999) *Rethinking the Media Audience*. London: Sage.

Althusser, L. (1971) *For Marx*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Althusser, L. (1972) 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in *Lenin and Philosophy*, pp. 127–86. London: New Left Books.

Ang, I. and J. Hermes (1991) 'Gender and/in Media Consumption', in J. Curran and M. Gurevitch (eds) *Mass Media and Society*, pp. 307–28. London: Edward Arnold.

Balen, M. (2002) *A Very English Deceit: The Secret History of the South Sea Bubble and the First Great Financial Scandal*. London: Fourth Estate.

Bauman, G. (1996) *Contesting Culture: Discourses of Identity in Multi-ethnic London*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Beck, U. (2008) *World at Risk*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Beck, U. and E. Beck-Gernsheim (2002) *Individualization*. London: Sage.

Berger, J. (1996) 'Rumour'. Introduction to L. Tekin *Berji Kristin: Tales From the Garbage Hills*. London: Marion Boyars.

Bernstein, B. (1971) *Class, Codes and Control*, Vol. 1. London: Paladin.

Biressi, A. and H. Nunn (2005) *Reality Television: Realism and Revelation*. London: Wallflower Press.

Biressi, A. and H. Nunn (2008) 'Bad Citizens: The Class Politics of Lifestyle Television', in G. Palmer (ed.) *Exposing Lifestyle Television*, pp. 15–24. London: Ashgate.

Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction*. London: Routledge.

Bovenkerk, F. (1984) 'The Rehabilitation of the Rabble: How and Why Marx and Engels Wrongly Depicted the Lumpenproletariat as a Reactionary Force', *Netherlands Journal of Social Science* 20(1): 13–42.

Brunsdon, C. (2008) 'Is Television Studies History?', *Cinema* 47(3): 127–37.

Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble*. London: Routledge.

Clayton, I. (2008) *Bringing it All Back Home*. Pontefract: Route Books.

Corner, J. (2004) 'Television Studies: Plural Contexts, Singular Ambitions?', *Journal of British Cinema and Television* 1(1): 6–13.

505

Couldry, N. (2008) 'Reality TV, or the Secret Theatre of Neoliberalism', in *Review of Education, Pedagogy and Cultural Studies* 30(1): 3–13.

Cox, P. (2008) *Set into Song: Ewan MacColl, Charles Parker, Peggy Seeger and the Radio Ballads.* London: Labatie Books.

Derrida, J. (2006) *Spectres of Marx.* London: Routledge.

Faber, M. (2008) 'This Boy's Life', *Guardian Saturday Review* (26 Apr.) http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2008/apr/26/featuresreviews. guardianreview28, accessed 1 September 2009.

Fish, S. (1989) 'The Young and the Restless', in H. Aram Veeser (ed.) *The New Historicism*, pp. 303–16. London: Routledge.

Geertz, C. (1988) *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Geraghty, C. (2006) 'Critical Vocabularies and Popular Television Drama', in J. Curran and D. Morley (eds) *Media and Cultural Theory*, pp. 221–32. London: Routledge.

Gilroy, P. (2000) *Between Camps: Nations, Cultures and the Allure of Race.* London: Allen Lane.

Gramsci, A. (1974) *The Prison Notebooks.* London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Hall, S. (1988) 'New Ethnicities', in K. Mercer (ed.) *Black Film, British Cinema.* British Film Institute/Institute of Contemporary Arts Documents No. 7, pp. 27–31. London: Institute of Contemporary Arts.

Harindranath, R. (2005) 'Ethnicity and Cultural Difference: Some Thematic and Political Issues on Global Audience Research', *Participations* 2(2) http://www.participations.org/volume%202/issue%202/2_02_ harindranath.htm, accessed 1 September 2009.

Hayes, P. (1988) 'Utopia and the Lumpenproletariat: Marx's Reasoning in the 18th Brumaire', *Review of Politics* 50(3): 445–65.

Hayes, P. (1992) *The People and the Mob.* London: Praeger.

Hayward, K. and M. Yard (2006) 'The "Chav" Phenomenon: Consumption, Media and the Construction of a New Underclass', *Crime, Media and Culture* 2(1): 9–28.

Jennings, T. (2008) '*Shameless* by Paul Abbott: Television Review'. [Accessed 8 August 2008 at: http://libcom.org/library/shameless-paul-abbott-series-1–2-channel-420034-television]

Keddie, N. (ed.) (1973) *Tinker, Tailor: The Myth of Cultural Deprivation.* Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Kellman, J. (2008) *Kieron Smith, Boy.* London: Hamish Hamilton.

Kim, S. (2004) 'Re-reading David Morley's "The Nationwide Audience"', *Cultural Studies* 18(1): 84–108.

Labov, W. (1973) 'The Logic of Non-standard English', in N. Keddie (ed.) *Tinker, Tailor: The Myth of Cultural Deprivation*, pp. 21–67. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Labov, W. (2006) *The Social Stratification of English in New York City.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Laclau, E. (1977) *Politics and Ideology.* London: New Left Books.

Leal, O. (1990) 'Popular Taste and Erudite Repertoire: The Place and Space of TV in Brazil', *Cultural Studies* 4(1): 19–29.

Liebes, T. and E. Katz (1991) *The Export of Meaning.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

506

Medhurst, A. (2000) 'If Anywhere: Class Identifications and Cultural Studies Academics', in S. Munt (ed.) *Cultural Studies and the Working Class*, pp. 19–35. London: Cassell.

Medhurst, A. (2007) *A National Joke*. London: Routledge.

Morin, E. and J. Rouch (1960) *Chronique D'un Ete*. Paris: Inter Spectacles.

Morley, D. (1974) *Reconceptualising the Media Audience*. CCCS, University of Birmingham, Occasional Paper.

Morley, D. (1992) *Television, Audiences and Cultural Studies*. London: Routledge.

Morley, D. and K. Worpole (eds) (1982) *The Republic of Letters: Working Class Writing and Local Publishing*. London: Comedia (Second edition forthcoming, 2010).

Munt, S. (ed.) (2000) *Cultural Studies and the Working Class*. London: Cassell.

Murray, C. (1989) 'The Emerging British Underclass', in R. Lister (ed.) *Charles Murray and the Underclass*, pp. 23–56. London: IEA Health and Welfare Unit.

Nelson, R. (2007) *State of Play: Contemporary 'High-end' TV Drama*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Nunn, H. and A. Biressi (forthcoming) *Reflections on the 'Undeserving Poor'*.

Palmer, G. (2004) 'The New You: Class and Transformation in Lifestyle Programming', in S. Holmes and D. Jermyn (eds) *Understanding Reality Television*, pp. 173–90. London: Routledge.

Palmer, R. (1974) *A Touch on the Times: Songs of Social Change, 1770–1914*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Parsons, T. (1964) *The Social System*. New York: Free Press.

Robins, K. and A. Aksoy (2001) 'From Spaces of Identity to Mental Spaces: Lessons from Turkish-Cypriot Cultural Experiences in Britain', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27(4): 685–711.

Rose, N. (1989) *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self*. London: Routledge.

Rosen, H. (1972) *Language and Class*. Bristol: Falling Wall Press.

Skeggs, B. (1997) *Formations of Class and Gender: Becoming Respectable*. London: Sage.

Skeggs B. (2004) *Class, Self, Culture*. London: Routledge.

Skeggs, B., H. Wood and N. Thumin (2008) 'Oh Goodness, I *Am* Watching Reality TV: How Methods Make Class in Audience Research', *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 11(1): 5–24.

Spigel, L. (1992) *Make Room for TV*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

Spigel, L. (2004) 'Introduction', in L. Spigel and J. Olsson (eds) *Television after TV*, pp. 1–40. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Thompson, E.P. (1967) 'Time, Work-discipline and Industrial Capitalism', *Past and Present* 38: 56–97.

Vicinus, M. (1974) *The Industrial Muse*. London: Croom Helm.

Volosinov, V. (1973) *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. New York: Academic Press.

Watson, P. (1974) (director) *The Family*. Broadcast on BBC.

Wearing, G. (2006) *Family History*. Birmingham: Ikon Gallery.

Winston, B. (2007) 'Rouch's "Second Legacy": *Chronique D'un Ete* as Reality TV's Totemic Ancestor', in J. Ten Brink (ed.) *Building Bridges: The Cinema of Jean Rouch*, pp. 297–311. Wallflower Press.

507

Wood, H. and B. Skeggs (2008) 'Spectacular Morality: Reality TV, Individualisation and the Re-making of the Working Class', in D. Hesmondhalgh and J. Toynbee (eds) *The Media and Social Theory*, pp. 177–91. London: Routledge.

Worpole, K. (2008) *Dockers and Detectives* (2nd edn). Nottingham: Five Leaves Publications.

Biographical note

David Morley is Professor of Communications in the Department of Media and Communications, Goldsmiths College, University of London. ADDRESS: Department of Media and Communications, Goldsmiths College, Lewisham Way, London SE14 6NW, UK. [email: d.morley@gold.ac.uk]