

Marxist tradition. However, it fully concurs with Marx's (1964: 113) foundational proposition that: 'Conscious life activity distinguishes man immediately from animal life activity . . . in creating a world of objects, by his practical activity, in his work upon inorganic nature, man proves himself as a conscious species being' (emphasis in the original). Like Marx, I hold that the products of this conscious activity have the power to become estranged from man's control and to stand above him, and dominate him, as an alien presence.<sup>3</sup> In the mode of pop music production some aspects of technology and music corporations may certainly be said to play this role. However, the rational, sensuous engagement with nature and society that brings about this adverse state of affairs is also the means through which alien domination can be exposed and elucidated. Creativity is at the centre of pop, as pop has become central to ordinary culture.

# Part I

## The Field

# 1

## The Field of Pop Music Study

Musicology is defined as 'the branch of knowledge that deals with music as a subject of study rather than as a skill or performing art'.<sup>1</sup> It is a long-established, lively field that has generated many enduring traditions and insights about the organization and effects of music. Nonetheless, from the standpoint of sociology and media, communication and cultural studies, it is like studying a fish without water. For music is not just a combination of notes and silence, it is a social and cultural phenomenon inscribed with the flourishes of particular histories, types of creativity, cultures and emotions. It has the capacity to delineate the form and repertoire of emotions, provide sonic pick-me-ups for reflection, action and practice and create a sense of belonging between strangers (DeNora 2000: 110-11; Miller 2008: 47). As the structuralist anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1979, 1981) tells us, music is a medium of communication, like myth, via which, at its most imposing, we have the sensation that everything momentarily 'fits'.

Despite the impressive and hugely informative work of ethnomusicologists like Martin Stokes (1997) and Steve Feld and Charles Keil (1994), which creatively uses the anthropological tradition to study music, musicology falls short of adequately embracing the industrial, social, political, economic and cultural dimensions of music. It does not consider the business of what music can do for you in urban-industrial society, regardless of your education, aptitude or powers of appreciation: which is to say, music that works on the gut, or the solar plexus, not the head.

That there is a deep emotional response to music is scarcely in doubt. The Musica Humana research project in Denmark, which commenced in 1998, has well-documented findings on the connection between specially designed music environments and remedial care for cardiac patients, pain treatment, stress management, post-operative treatment, neo-natal and psychiatric care. Some of the findings are dramatic. For example, the project cites ward experience that maintains that the prescription of tranquillizers and painkillers can be reduced by 50% if patients wake up after an operation with 'soft music' in their headphones (<http://www.musicahumana.org>; see also DeNora 2000: 71-2, 151-2).<sup>2</sup>

Recognition of the therapeutic and narrative power of music has culminated in its application as an adjunct of management in a variety of organizational settings.



For example, in the 1930s managers at IBM introduced a corporate songbook designed to produce a musical repertoire that was intended to achieve strong identification with company values. The IBM songbook was designed to frame social relations in the company in a positive light, reinforce collective hierarchy, promote the work ethic and shape the distribution of emotional labour in the workforce. According to El-Sawad and Korczynski (2007: 95), the songbook functioned as a managerial 'disciplinary device'.<sup>3</sup> Radano (1989) makes similar claims in analysing the use of muzak in consumer service environments. That is, music is an organizational method of controlling mobility, motivation and social reaction. There are many other examples of the application of music in the workplace to increase job satisfaction, productivity and consumer management (Jones and Schumacher 1992; Oakes 2000; Corbett 2003).

Some perspectives claim an elemental, transhuman connection between music and emotional reflexes. For example, Pythagoras is usually credited with the *musica universalis* hypothesis: that is, the proposition that the movement of the celestial bodies (the sun, the moon and planets) corresponds to a harmonic order which, in turn, influences our thoughts, feelings and actions. We refer to this hypothesis more commonly today as 'the music of the spheres': that is, the belief that there is a pre-determined correspondence between the movement of the heavens and the transactions of earth-bound animate forms. Its significance for us in this book is that it suggests that from ancient times, music has been associated with an elemental cosmic and healing presence.

The traditional analysis of pop music explores the production, exchange and consumption of pop music as a source of subcultural identity. Pop and rock are examined as the focus of subcultural style, embodiment and belonging. Transparent feedback loops between music and subcultures have been unearthed and sifted (Bennett 1999, 2001). Members of mod, rocker, progressive, punk, post-punk, new romantic, grunge, house, electronica, rap, hip hop, bhangra and other pop subcultures are defined by what they listen to and how they dress, and their musical taste operates as a distinctive 'poetics' for everyday life (Bachelard 1964).<sup>4</sup>

Today, networking, de-differentiation and deterritorialization have modified the character of production, exchange and consumption of pop music (Castells 1996, 1997, 1998; David and Kirkhope 2004; Kusek and Leonhard 2005; David 2010). Synthesizers, sampling and MIDI (musical instrument-digital interface) systems destabilize traditional models of musical competence, credibility and relevance. It is no longer necessary to be a trained or self-taught musician to be taken seriously. With no more than basic computer skills you can compose and perform, using the Garageband function on your Apple laptop or a turntable and amplifier system for scratching.

In addition, the digital revolution has transformed the orthodox model of recorded music retail distribution. Downloading is now the default mechanism for obtaining recorded music. Thompson (2009) cites research by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) which estimates that nineteen out of every twenty downloads are illegal. The rise in legal downloads has not plugged the hole produced by unauthorized downloading and the contraction in CD sales. The latest IFPI data reports that, between 2004 and 2009, despite an increase of 940% in authorized digital sales, total music sales fell by 30% to \$15.8 billion (IFPI 2010).

Even allowing for the industry's exaggeration of the threat, it would be unwise to dismiss lightly the challenge of illegal downloading. The interface between the web, the laptop and the mobile phone has utterly changed the music business.

Time was when pop music media networks were constructed around national or pirate pop music radio stations and key brands in the music press like *Rolling Stone*, *Crawdaddy!*, *Creem*, *Frenzy*, *Sounds*, *Melody Maker* and *NME*. These formed the central media hubs, producing and exchanging information about established performers, tour dates, reviews and thought pieces on dominant, emerging and residual music genres. Streaming, ripping, MTV, blogging sites and illegal downloading have transformed orthodox models of media exchange, browsing and listening. Multi-media platforms are now the key conduits of data about pop music. Fans must be equally conversant with the changing platforms (servers and browsers) of media exchange as with the musical texts produced by artists.

In the course of all of this the place of pop music in the social classification of popular culture has changed. Lévi-Strauss (1979, 1981) pontificated somewhat on the comparison between music in modern society and myth in pre-modern society. He maintained that the structural function of music is to ignite neural links that mere written representations and speech cannot match. In deterritorialized, commodified network society it is difficult for claims of this order to carry water. The function of music may still include achieving neural links that make meaning possible. But the commercial motives behind popular music, the panoramic array of settings in which it is exchanged and the social and psychological uses which consumers make of it preclude the idea of a universal structure. The production, exchange and consumption of popular music is a question of human agency and interpretation, rather than a matter of a universal mechanical link between genetic feedback loops.

The proliferation of new technologies of communication has elicited the phenomenon of social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter and MySpace in which pop music is the soundtrack rather than the foreground of social practice. Web-based applications such as iLike and Last.fm allow users to exchange musical preferences and make 'public statements about who they are, what they want to be, and how they want others to perceive them' (Rentfrow et al. 2009: 329). Here, music is an accessory of lifestyle architecture. It is one of many codes, not necessarily the privileged one, that represent who you are and what you do.

These various processes have resulted in clear and transparent social effects. Pop music subcultures require face-to-face engagement and the recognition of exclusivity. They were solidified and re-solidified by responding to the music in record stores, college hops, clubs and concert arenas. The rave and club culture scenes demonstrate that pop music still operates to make and remake collective identity for some sections of the market (Thornton 1995; Jackson 2004).

At the same time, networking, deterritorialization and the miniaturization of recording and playback systems have changed the rules of the game. The immense and relentless volume of consumer commodities and commodified experience has eroded the taste hierarchies upon which traditional subcultures are based. The pop audience still encompasses subcultures that relate to music as a mark of distinction (Bourdieu 1984, 1993), but it also includes silo cultures of accumulation, in which



music is used to provide a sense of grounding and security in the perfect storm of high commodity culture (Condry 2006).

New, mobile, weightless modes of consumption threaten to dilute the basis for collective organization and action upon which subcultural life is based. Old theories of social life referred to the alienation of workers and the immiseration of consumers (Marx 1864; Marcuse 1964). In the ubiquitous consumer culture, notions of alienation and immiseration have weaker torque. It is trickier to invoke the experience of injustice, inequality and exclusion as the basis for collective agitation and action when they are primarily mediated through the headphones of an iPod or the pixel content of a Blu-ray system.

### The Study of Pop and Cultural Biography

The social and cultural study of popular music may be defined as the analysis of the social and cultural production, distribution and consumption of sequenced notes, usually words and intervals of silence. This encompasses the performance, recording and representation of music. What is at issue is not merely the organization of notes, words and silences, but the composers behind this arranged sequence, the musicians who perform it, the commercial impresarios, their life stories, the social and cultural networks in which they are embedded, the music corporations that sponsor and manage the financial exchange and representation of music, the technologies that facilitate new routes of musical expression, networks of musical consumption and the audiences for whom music is experienced, *inter alia*, as a source of pleasure, emotional release, comfort, abandonment, ecstasy, background noise, distraction, social inclusion and exclusion.

Nor is this all. The study of popular music is also obliged to examine the class structure in which composers, performers, managers and audiences are located and related questions of power pertaining to divisions of gender, race, ethnicity, subculture, nation, technology and religion.

From this standpoint, popular music is first and foremost a type of communication involving bargaining and transaction around types of narrative belonging through which performers and audiences recognize and communicate information and develop means by which to represent it. When this information takes the form of cultural biography it carries maximal emotional voltage.

By the term *cultural biography* I mean the 'structures of feeling' and identification with a cultural representative (star) and concomitant repertoire that form the basis of social recognition and markers of collective memory. That popular music has the power to mobilize these feelings is widely recognized. Simon Frith (1996: 272) comments that music 'both articulates and offers the immediate experience of collective identity'. His focus on the question of aesthetics carries with it the assumption that rhythm, metre, timbre, tone and lyrics of pop are assimilated into people's bodies and practices in strikingly intense ways. Among culturally induced experiences, music is one of the most penetrating and communicable. This presupposes a close link between music and personal and collective emotions. Following on, David Hesmondhalgh (2007: 517) remarks that one of the most important characteristics of popular music is *expressiveness*, that is, the ability to externalize and reflect emotions.

Elsewhere, I (Rojek 2004) submitted that Frank Sinatra's biography provides a cultural biography of his times. The appeal of Sinatra transcended divisions of class, race, gender and nation. As such his career and music can be said to externalize, in ways that possess collective recognition and memory, the transpersonal experience of the times. His music was an adjunct of the transpersonal experience of romance, individual striving, courage, recreation, ageing, entitlement and rights. In this sense it is legitimate to refer to his life and music as providing a cultural biography of the era.

Sinatra is hardly singular in this respect. For a variety of reasons having to do with the revolution in mass communications technology, the miniaturization of reproductive/playback devices that make access ubiquitous, the rise of youth culture incomes and much else besides, pop music attained a significantly higher profile in the late twentieth century. As such, the lives and music of stars like Elvis Presley, Marvin Gaye, Bob Dylan, Paul Simon, James Brown, Jim Morrison, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, David Bowie, Joni Mitchell, Madonna, Kurt Cobain, Bob Marley, Neil Young, Michael Jackson, 50 Cent, Jay-Z, 2Pac and many others operate as lightning rods channelling much wider questions of culture, economy, politics and society.

Technically speaking, two meanings of the term 'cultural biography' must be distinguished. Firstly, popular music has the power to characterize an historical moment and the dominant, emergent and residual political, social and cultural sentiments of the time.<sup>5</sup> This is because, to an unusually powerful degree, popular music communicates emotional voltage. Just as there are epochs of history, there is also epochal music. 'Psychedelia', 'progressive', 'punk', 'post-punk', 'grunge', 'rap', 'garage', 'techno', 'house', 'jungle', 'trance', 'microhouse' and 'bhangra' condense a complex brew of meanings having to do with aesthetics, politics, economics, race, ethnicity, subculture, generational cohesion, power and difference. Music is the means of communicating belonging that has the capacity to override economic, political, social and cultural divisions. But what it signifies is a matter of *reflexive* engagement at the level of both producers and recipients. By the term 'reflexive', I mean the awareness of interpreting or expressing social and economic forces and aesthetic codes.

Secondly, besides this, certain pop stars are sometimes elevated to the status of idols representing particular issues relating to wider social formations such as generation, ethnicity, class, gender, nation or subculture (Stevenson 2006). In doing so, they humanize abstract social textures, economic forces and political values. Their biographies, therefore, are not just a matter of the facts relating to their personal life trajectory. Additionally, they embrace and interact with the allegorical and metaphorical interpenetration of these trajectories with the wider 'poetics' of time and place (Bachelard 1964; Straw 1991).

One might say that Elvis Presley and, to a lesser degree, Buddy Holly, Bill Haley, Eddie Cochran, Gene Vincent and Little Richard embodied the surging social, political and spiritual values of the rock and roll generation of the 1950s. Through their iconic status they crystallized a specific poetic moment that possessed cultural meaning that was, so to speak, 'surplus' to the music they produced. Bob Dylan, The Rolling Stones, The Beach Boys, The Doors, The Byrds, The Who and The Beatles acted in this way for progressive thought and the permissive society



in the 1960s; Marc Bolan and David Bowie were the leaders of the 'glam rock' era; Johnny Rotten, Joey Ramone, Debbie Harry, Siouxsie Sioux and Joe Strummer were the faces of punk; Bob Geldof and Bono were symbols of Live Aid in the 1980s and 1990s; Marvin Gaye, Bob Marley, Brenda Fassie and Miriam Makeba ('Mama Afrika') represented black consciousness and post-colonialism; Kurt Cobain personified 'Generation X'; Lebo Mathosa was the icon of the post-apartheid age in South Africa; and Coldplay provide the insignia for post-9/11 preoccupations and sensibilities. In this sense cultural biography is individualized in the career of the pop celebrity.

Cultural biography does not come out of nothing. The construction of a pop music idol involves a complex network of agents, including managers, promoters, agents, media personnel, record corporations, fan clubs and much else besides. Generally, commercial interests are integral to these processes. Thus, glam rock, punk, post-punk, garage, electronica and other modern pop music genres must be considered in terms of a combination between artistic imperatives and commercial logic. The tension between the two is a thorny issue in the pop music industry. Some pop music impresarios, such as Simon Cowell (2003), insist that artistic communication is impossible without micro-business management. But this raises a set of separate questions about who is behind the processes of representation, the nature of the objectives involved and the potential conflict of interest between artistic imperatives and commercial logic. Pop music is not born. It is *made*. This is why the book concentrates upon the intersection between production, exchange and consumption as the foundation of analysis.

### The Limits of Musicology

It is an error to propose that musicology is indifferent to the influences of anthropology, sociology and cultural, media and communication studies. For example, the sub-discipline of ethnomusicology uses methods of ethnography, fieldwork and social anthropology to investigate the production and personal and group effects of music (Feld and Keil 1994; Stokes 1997). Nonetheless, the dominant approach examines music as an autonomous artistic form with immanent meanings that are privileged over popular cultural and social factors (Shepherd and Wicke 1997). For orthodox musicologists, the ideal form resides in the European tradition of classical music. By comparison, the study of popular urban-industrial social and cultural factors and their relationships to the production, exchange and consumption of popular music is confined to the margins.

Sociologists of music, radical musicologists and students of culture, media and communication challenge the power structure of orthodox musicology. Philip Tagg (1987) advances three reasons why the traditional tools of musicology developed in relation to Western music of the classical period are unable to provide an adequate perspective for the study of popular music:

(1) *Pop audience*. Unlike classical music, which is composed for sponsors and a selective chamber or concert hall audience, pop music aims at mass distribution to heterogeneous, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic groups of listeners. The pop

song is typically short and direct in its expression of emotion and information. It requires of the listener no previous knowledge or training. The metre and the beat are often organized around urban-industrial rhythms to produce consonant physical and mental responses in both performers and listeners.

Huge claims have been made for the effect of music. The phenomenologist Alfred Schutz (1982) holds that music combines the sense of spacelessness with attention to rhythm and, therefore, time. Because of this, echoing the view of the Ancient Greeks, Schutz (1982: 192–3) claims consonance between music and our 'inner duration'. That is, it is the cultural form that most closely captures our inner life.

Yet popular music also clearly reflects what is external, easily accessible or downright common among composers, performers and audiences. Thus, urban-industrial experience, including politics, economics and culture, is central to the production, exchange and consumption of pop music. Some writers submit that there is a direct causal link between industrial mechanics and musical metre and rhythm. For example, the Futurists studied the interaction between music and the chromatic-diatonic system associated with the machine age. According to the composer Luigi Russolo (1986: 20), writing in 1913, ancient life is 'all silence'. 'Noise' is 'born in the nineteenth century'. This is a rhetorical statement. Russolo is well aware that nature comes with noise (the sound of waves crashing on a beach, the wind through the trees, the twitter of birds, the roar of the lion). His claim for proposing the nineteenth century as the 'birth' of modern music is that the noises produced in the machine age created unprecedented sonic intensity. As one of the first experimental composers, he invented a series of *intonarumori* (or noise machines). Their purpose was to mechanically produce all of the sounds played by the traditional orchestra. This constitutes perhaps the first attempt to present music as an analogue of machine noise. As such, one can trace linkages with contemporary metal, goth and industrial music forms.

More recently, Paul Willis (1978) has claimed that there is a homology between urban-industrial subcultures, embodiment and musical genres.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the lifestyle and types of embodiment of motorbike gangs go with traditional and turbo-charged rock, whereas the hippie lifestyle connects up with progressive music. The same might be said about rave cultures and electronic dance music, acid house and techno.

Leaving aside the rights and wrongs of these forms of analysis for the moment, one might propose that the making and meaning of pop music are bound up with urban-industrial forms of life, and especially subcultural formations (Bennett 2001, 2008).

The audience for pop requires no schooling, no immersion in salon culture or elite circles. Pop is brazen in seeking immediate reactions to the organization of notes, words and silences. The salient knowledge required to appreciate it can be readily gleaned from the ordinary channels of mass communications. Developing a perspective on the history and structure of these forms is not something upon which orthodox musicology has placed a high premium.

(2) *Pop composition*. Typically, composers of classical music are trained in the written production and communication of musical scores. By contrast, pop



composers and performers are often self-taught and produce and exchange music in non-written form.

Through accumulation, pop music has developed traditions to which composers and performers self-consciously refer. Still, the form remains based in the exchange of unvarnished emotion, plain speaking and immediate impact.

(3) *Pop distribution.* Pop music is organized upon the principle of flexible accumulation, which makes no bones about adopting the commodity form of distribution in order to maximize market potential. The genre favours structures of harmony and lyrics that can be readily assimilated by the use of simple, direct chord progression. Practically speaking, this means that pop music generally consists of direct, simple chord sequences and lyrics that draw upon vernacular speech systems and topical issues. The simplicity of form and directness of expression are valued over adherence to the canons of classical music taste. Pop music frequently expresses raw emotions, values and other preoccupations which polite society either deflects or represses. Hence the strong associations between pop and authenticity (the telling of unpopular truths is part of this), to say nothing of the matters of political agitation, organization and practice (Grossberg 1997; Russell 1997).

### Pop and Articulation

Critics of a pure musicology approach have redefined pop music as social articulation. Stuart Hall (1996) uses the term 'articulation' to apply to the inscription of forces that, in being expressed, change the content and form in which these forces proceed. Applying this concept to the study of pop soon reveals that many songs can be said to have a dual function. For example, a song like 'Career Opportunities' (1977) by The Clash might be said to be the band's expression of the social and economic forces of 1970s unemployment, urban decay and punk resistance; but in being articulated by the group the song both draws on a shared vocabulary of cultural resources and modifies how these resources are understood, applied and practised. A pop song can inspire direct action which comes from direct experience; but it is also the product of social and cultural forces.

In addition it is a channel of cultural memory. Anderson (2004) distinguishes between the 'involuntary memory' of music (in summing up a time, a place or a group) and 'intentional memory' (in addressing a time, a place or a group for the purposes of recall or motivation). In this sense pop is at one and the same time the articulation of wider social, cultural and economic forces and a cultural tool through which social, economic and cultural contradictions or tensions are crystallized and carried forward. The concept of articulation, then, aims to acknowledge artistic creativity (in 'making' the song) and to heed the social, economic and political forces in which composition, performance and the consumption of music is situated.

A considerable literature has developed around articulation and pop. In order to facilitate comprehension, it is helpful to differentiate between three positions:

(1) *Pop music articulates identity.* Pop music is a means by which group, more particularly subcultural, identity is located and represented (Lewis 1992; Kohl 1993;

Keightley 2001). In terms of embodiment (dress, cosmetics, hairstyle), subcultural vernacular, group beliefs and lifestyle values there is a homology between pop music and social practice (Willis 1978).

(2) *Pop music articulates resistance.* Pop music exploits and develops the possibilities of resistance and opposition. Two sub-positions in the literature can be identified. The first conceptualizes resistance primarily in political terms. Pop music chips away at the system of organized inequality and manipulation and creates a space of opposition (Chambers 1985; Grossberg 1992, 1997). The second sub-position focuses on the aesthetic role of pop music. This may involve aspects of political critique, but paramount is the mobilization of an aesthetic style that jousts with aesthetic relations that are in dominance and joined to a particular regime of authoritative power (Frith 1996; Keightley 2001).

More recently, the digital revolution has combined technology and subculture with the politics of resistance. What has come to be called the Darknet refers to the aggregate of networks and technologies designed and maintained to participate freely in the anonymous exchange of copyright data (David and Kirkhope 2004: 442-3; Burkart and McCourt 2006; David 2010). Engaging with the Darknet, and appropriating elements from it, carries a cultural cachet. It is recognized as acting as an agent against the conventional order of music exchange and consumption.

(3) *Pop music articulates regulation.* Pop music reproduces organized inequality and dominant power relations by advancing compliance. On this account, pop is a type of social control. At the society-wide level, this role has been explored in relation to class inequality and oppression (Adorno 2009). But pop music has also been examined as reproducing the largely informal micro-orders of everyday life (DeNora 2000, 2003; Witkin 2003) and structured settings of work and consumption (Jones and Schumacher 1992; Korczynski 2003; El-Sawad and Korczynski 2007).

In a word, what distinguishes pop music from classical music is that the former is a strident, exuberant demotic form. It is the study of the people's music (MacDonald 2003). The form of this music is not constant, since different genres articulate historically specific conditions and concerns. When MacDonald (2003) collected the best of his published writings that constitute his small opus, he could reasonably assume that rock was the main expression of the people's music. As we shall see, the latest academic research suggests that things have moved on: rap has become the people's music, while the passion for rock now correlates with a middle-class audience (Rentfrow and Gosling 2007; Rentfrow et al. 2009).

The musical refrains and lyrical motifs through which pop operates privilege spontaneity, flexibility, heartfelt emotion and plain communication. The old distinction between composers and performers as active, and audiences as passive, has decomposed. Popular culture, de-differentiation and technology have weakened the division between producers and consumers. Through scratching, mixing and sampling techniques, the audience forages through recorded popular music and transforms recorded texts from different times and places. Increasingly, understanding the audience has ceased to be a matter of subcultural



or generational characteristics and become a more complex matter of the relationships between production, texts and contexts (Livingstone 1998).

### The Creativity Problem

This raises the difficult question of creativity, which we have already alighted upon in the discussion on reflexivity. Generally, audiences view the greatest pop stars to be supremely creative agents. Even if the intermediate roles of managers, public relations experts and the media are allowed, durable pop stardom is generally held to be a matter of unique individual talent.

This commonsense view exaggerates the autonomy of the person. This is objectionable on observational grounds. The labour of composers and performers is deeply collaborative. As agents of production they work with others, be they fellow musicians, sponsors, recording engineers and other sections of the music industry, to create music. As 'symbolic communicators' they draw on typifications of personality, narrative and predicament (Hesmondhalgh 2002). The concept of articulation should alert us to seeing that what is communicated expresses more than the creative skills of the artist. It also embraces common concerns, hopes, desires and ways of communication.

Charles Turner (2004) coins the term 'social imaginary' to refer to popular intimations, contributions and dreams of a more just, robust and inclusive society. Iconic pop stars, performers who crystallize cultural biography, are both bearers and articulators of the social imaginary. In societies in which organized religion is in steady decline, and where politics is often automatically associated with double-think and dirty dealing, pop stars have an unusually powerful connection with the social imaginary, particularly with the telling of unpopular truths (Grossberg 1997; Rhodes 2007). This is why pop superstars like Bono, Chris Martin, Jackson Browne, Peter Gabriel, Madonna and Sting have emerged as celebrity diplomats, acting without plebiscite to articulate common concerns relating to hunger, poverty, natural disasters and environmental degradation (Cooper 2008).

By the same token, the counter-view that holds that creativity is formative of social influences such as class, race, nation, generation or subculture negates or attenuates the role of personal creativity by reducing it to a dependent variable of pre-existing, conditioning, external structures. Creativity is integral to the individual. But the individual is both a natural and a social agent. That is, the individual bears the particularities of genetic inheritance and the social specifics of time and place.

This is not a matter of splitting hairs. One might say unequivocally that, for example, Elvis Presley and Bob Dylan are both specific individuals and social-historical beings who carry iconic, global social significance. They are unique creatures and subjective manifestations of the features of society as experienced and thought, with which millions of people connect at psychological, emotional and cultural levels. Composers and performers are unique individuals and cultural reeds. This connectivity may be a matter of the eternal truths that the highest expressions of pop music are purported to convey. Or it may be that songs communicate qualities that are culturally universal. The decisive question turns upon the balance between the particularities of the agent who formally articulates

the songs and the place of the agent in the articulation of much deeper and wider social, economic and cultural forces.

### Troubadours, Society and Copyright

We can portray the nature of this problem directly by briefly considering the historical question of troubadours, society and the growth of copyright that established legal boundaries around musical creation and consumption. In traditional society, composers and musicians are regarded as folk authorities. While they draw on history and the law, the core of their power rests in knowledge and communication about the emotions among the folk and the court. Before the emergence of counselling and therapy, popular music played the function of offering what we would now call life-coaching about the emotions and self-help resources for psychological healing. Hence, popular acknowledgement of the capacity of music to communicate true and momentous feelings was born. It long predates the era of rock and roll (the 1950s) and the various types of popular music that are properly described as its progeny.

For example, Robert Briffault (1965: 119–20) shows how the medieval troubadours produced musical statements of romantic and erotic love which manipulated the conventions of court society and provided the impression of being constitutive of wider social formations that were often marginalized by the hierarchical structure of the aristocracy. According to Briffault, one important effect of this was to transform the balance of power between the sexes. Troubadour songs of romance and erotic love augmented the power of women in social and political structures that were essentially male-dominated. They boosted the standing of 'the woman's view' and enlarged the emotional sphere of romance over staple considerations of warfare, ritual obedience and subsistence. Briffault is not saying that the troubadours replaced these considerations or invented romantic popular music. Rather, his point is that the music of the troubadour articulated wider social, political and economic forces that raised the transpersonal profile of the emotional sphere and developed new forms of emotional intelligence and emotional labour.<sup>7</sup> At one and the same time, troubadour music was also the articulation of these forces. However, this latter dimension is somewhat underscored in commonsense reactions to popular music.

Troubadour songs were associated with particular agents. Between the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Guilhem de Peitieu, Bernart de Ventadorn, Graut de Borneth and Bertran de Born were known for particular songs and genres of troubadour music. An oral tradition recognized them as composers, with cultural entitlements, but it was not exactly copyright.

The close correlation that copyright law produces between specific agents of musical production and particular instances of popular music was a product of print culture and became normalized in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Copyright defines the authority of composition as the product of the author and renders it defensible by the rule of law (Goldstein 2003; Bielstein 2006). The legality of copyright increases the psychological connection between music and the personal creativity of the agent (the composer/performer). By legally presenting composition to be a matter of personal invention and ownership, it abstracts the



process of creation from cultural and material relations. Composition is defined as deriving from the personal experience and unique talent of the individual 'artist'. Inferentially, this experience is submitted and popularly understood as richer, more pure or larger than that of ordinary men and women. Thus the exceptional, unique qualities of personal artistic expression are magnified. Correspondingly, the relation between specific instances of pop music and the articulation of wider social, economic and cultural forces is obscured.

### What is a Pop Song?

The difficult issues involved here can be illustrated by asking the question: What does it mean to produce a pop song? If you ask the average man and woman this question, the probability is that they will commence by invoking the role of the composer. But this begs a number of related questions. In order for a song to become popular it must communicate with a wide audience. Musical communication depends upon several historical and social particulars that are independent of the artist. These derive from the predicament of shared social being linking composers, performers and audiences. Pop presupposes linguistic, historical and cultural conventions. Were this not the case, it would not be communicable to listeners. To be sure, creative artists seek to express this or that emotion, belief or value in a form that audiences will find compelling. However, the process of communication only succeeds because the particulars of social being are shared.

The character of the problem can be illustrated by considering the co-operative nature of composition and performance in popular music. It may be that some composers write and play for themselves. If this is the case the adjective 'pop' cannot apply to them, for the term presupposes the exchange of musical composition with a mass audience. Moreover, the process of production and exchange is typically collaborative and therefore possesses an inherently social character.

The point can be elaborated by differentiating between some salient variables of culture and society which bear directly and forcefully upon the production, exchange and distribution of popular music: harmony and convention; language, syntax and semantics; typification and transcription; and culture and genre.

#### Harmony and Convention

To make a musical statement means being conversant with accessible and communicable traditions and networks of musical notation, harmonics, metre and tonality. These traditions are hardly universal. Max Weber submitted that in the West, composition and performance are based upon the unification of rationalization of note systems with harmonization. He explained this process as the result of the distinctive rational system of musical notation developed here, the invention of Western mechanical instruments and 'the methodical conduct of life' which has its roots in the monastic tradition (Radkau 2009: 372).

Convention refers to an established set of relationships through which specific practices are articulated. Conventions of speech have been much studied by

formalists in language. The conventions of pop music typically require songs to be no more than five minutes in duration, organized around the verse-chorus, thirty-two bar form. Melodies obey standard European notation structure, deploying rhythm as an anchor, and build to a hook that is designed to be catchy and memorable. The presentation of persons and situations in pop songs generally follows commonly understood causal relationships between emotions and standard patterns of social conduct. Common roles of personhood represented in popular music are the lover, the plaintiff, the jester, the cuckold, the scold, the dreamer and the rogue. Similarly, common life-situations represented in popular song are betrayal, desire, erotic love, jilted love, vengeance, pride, greed and forgiveness.

Theodor Adorno (2009: 327) – arguably one of the most vituperative critics of pop – contends that pop, or, to use his term, 'light' music, is conditioned by the deformation of conventions. Melodic harmony and lyrical structure are determined by compositional formulas. The standardization of composition and listening mirrors the system of industrial planning and the associated 'far-reaching' division of labour that characterizes the Western mode of production (Adorno 2009: 278).

Be that as it may, composition and performance in pop cannot be correctly understood as the simple product of personal inspiration. They entail the interaction between creative individuals and a pre-existing musical and lyrical form that conditions expression. Composers, performers and audiences fundamentally depend upon this form in order to communicate musically.

#### Language, Syntax and Semantics

Pop combines intervals of notes and silence with lyrics. To operate in a language is to submit to its characteristic syntax and semantic distinctions. English syntax and semantics are different from those of, say, Hindi, Afrikaans or Mandarin. Composition and performance rely upon socially inherited, linguistically defined notations and conventions. The absence of these notations and conventions would result in Babel.

Creativity, then, is situated in a distinctive linguistic structure and social inheritance. It is not reductive to propose this much. Any version of individualism that is indifferent to linguistic and social conditions is of limited practical value, for it displaces the social foundations that presuppose the communication of creativity.

#### Typification and Transcription

Songs like 'In My Room' by The Beach Boys (1963) or 'Stan' by Eminem (1999) possess impact partly because they are transcriptions of social situations. As such, they draw upon typifications of emotional intelligence and emotional labour that are common in culture. In principle, everyone – in the West at least – can comprehend the sentiments of intimacy and privacy conveyed in Brian Wilson's song, just as the themes of indifference, projection and repression articulated by Eminem are commonplace. A composer may 'create' memorable characters and situations in a song. It may be that the data are copied from real life. Or that the



composer combines elements from real people and real-life situations and projects them onto an imaginative plain. Something new is added through the process of composition and performance. But it is not self-evident that what is happening can be properly described as individually 'creative', because the process depends upon typifications of character and life-circumstances and rules of language. In this sense, pop songs are activations of typifications and precedents found in real life. It goes without saying that it is not satisfactory to describe the composition of pop reductively as the simple transcription of typifications of conditions encountered in real life. Nevertheless, it is acceptable to propose that this is the basis of composition. Although the composer is an active force that makes of the data something greater than emulation and reproduction, what is happening here is not exactly 'new' in the sense of being unprecedented or unparalleled. The configuration of typifications of character and predicament, notation and form utilize common resources.

Drastic transformations are comparatively rare. In the mid- to late 1970s punk was a reaction to what might be said to be the *over-ripe* accomplishments of progressive rock, as exemplified by bands like Yes, Genesis and ELP. Punk groups like The Sex Pistols, The Clash and The Ramones exploited and adopted a 'back to basics' stance. Progressive music was denigrated for collapsing under the weight of its own pretensions. Unlike some variants of the progressive genre, punk and post-punk wanted no truck with the tradition of classical music. Punk sought to rebuild bridges with rock's roots: direct sentiments, simple chord structures and uncluttered arrangements. It ridiculed what it held to be the baroque pomposity of progressive music. Post-punk was more granular. Bands like Pere Ubu, PiL, Joy Division and Talking Heads embraced the energy and scepticism of punk, but they balanced them with a re-engagement with the art school knowingness of Roxy Music and David Bowie, the Dadaist experimentalism of Captain Beefheart and Frank Zappa and the atmospheric, ambient soundscapes of King Crimson, Soft Machine, Robert Wyatt and Brian Eno. In addition, while punk concentrated largely on a white, male, working-class agenda, post-punk developed an open, generous response to world music, especially African and Asian traditions.

What occurred here was the globalization of typifications and predicaments and the corresponding enlargement of the radius of transcription. White cultural idioms and motifs were redefined to encapsulate musical instruments, vocal styles, arrangements, stereotypes and narrative structures from the emerging and developing world. The post-punk engagement with world music re-politicized Western audiences, resulting in the stadium activism of politically engaged mainstream acts like Bob Marley, U2, Peter Gabriel, Annie Lennox, Bruce Springsteen and Sting. This was bolstered by the contribution of migrant multi-ethnic cultures into the metropolitan centres of the West, which transformed their own musical traditions through critical confrontation with the host culture and its self-image.

The transformation involved here was drastic. It became tougher for progressive music to claim relevance to popular life. Having said that, groups like Yes, Genesis and Pink Floyd survived and prospered. It might be said that they partly recast their music in response to the punk and post-punk challenge of direct, unfussy emotion. For example, Peter Gabriel's first two self-titled solo albums

(1977 and 1978) were notably more direct and simple than the rock opera format of *Foxtrot* (1972) and *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway* (1974) by his former group, Genesis.

Be that as it may, the punk and post-punk reactions were not genuine revolutions in pop music. They ran the gauntlet against traditions which were viewed as over-blown and exhausted. In doing so, they drew on pre-progressive resources built around simple chord structures and direct emotional reflexes.

### Culture and Genre

The transcription of typical personalities and predicaments in the West and the reaction of relocated migrant groups and the emerging and developing world to Western idioms and motifs reflect distinctive cultural and historical characteristics. Colin Campbell (1987: 72) holds that it is only in the modern period of Western history that people have taken it for granted that emotions spring from individuals and propel agency. Pre-modern people held emotions to be external to the individual and to intrude upon them from far away. That is, people were 'angry' or 'merry' because external influences made them so; and not because these feelings were momentarily representative or characteristic of the individual.

What does this mean for the composition and performance of contemporary popular music in relation to the past? Paul McCartney's Beatles song 'Yesterday' (1965) recounts the response of an individual to a break-up. It is often referred to as the song that has the most cover versions of all time. There are said to be eternal, universal qualities to the harmonic structure and lyrical content. Yet, if Campbell's analysis is correct, the personal introspection of emotional content, the acceptance of personal circumstances and motivation behind the break-up recounted in McCartney's song are very Western and very modern. According to Campbell (1987: 73), what might be called the introjection of emotion and connotation of emotion with motivation and agency in the modern period derive from deep-rooted, transpersonal processes. Chief among them are: (a) the rationalization of everyday life; (b) the separation of the world from the consciousness of the human observer; and (c) increasing human knowledge relating to objective, historical, social, economic and psychological causes and patterns of behaviour. It is a matter of 'a growing consciousness of the self as an object in its own right. This is revealed in the spread of words . . . such as "self conceit", "self confidence" and "self pity" which begin to appear in the English language in the 16th and 17th centuries, and became widely adopted in the 18th century' (Campbell 1987: 73). Only such a self, subject to and formed by the modern socio-economic and political processes that Campbell recounts, can 'believe in yesterday', 'when all my troubles seemed so far away'.

### Solidarity, Technology and Consumption Today

Older traditions of popular music conveyed sentiments of typical personalities, common predicaments, shared aspirations, the responsibility of common struggle and an ethos of 'we are all in it together'. Russell (1997) draws strong parallels between the music hall tradition and popular fortitude, the Empire appeal to pluck,



and the reaffirmation of class, nationalism and political solidarity. As with the troubadour tradition, this music is communicated through spatial settings (the physical space in which the performance occurs) and oral and written systems of exchange. Contemporary pop is quite different.

The last century perfected electronic forms of exchange and distribution. The consumption of pop is now weightless, accessible at the flick of a switch or sweep of plastic, in the sense that, through computer technology, audiences have the capacity to intervene to change the recorded structure and create new sound values. Rap, hip hop, scratching and sampling are textbook examples of this phenomenon. They have produced a new balance of power between composers, performers and listeners.

Surprisingly, the phenomenology of pop – the spaces in which listening occurs and the actual experience of consumption, and its effects – is under-theorized and under-researched. It may be that contemporary pop still produces social solidarity. Although the ends may be very different from, say, the Empire tradition described by Russell (1997), it may be that contemporary pop still has the capacity to rouse collective emotions and build solidarity. The success of global pop mega-events like Live Aid (1985), Live 8 (2005) and Live Earth (2007) suggest that this is the case. Smaller political and cultural events like rallies, marches and group protests also frequently utilize live or recorded pop to enhance a sense of togetherness.

Nonetheless, over the last century, side-by-side with the exchange of contemporary pop in settings where groups assemble has been the privatization of listening experience. The development of the portable record player, the automobile sound system, the transistor radio, the Walkman, the iPod and the MP3 player has expanded the range of settings in which popular music is consumed. In the postwar period, listening to pop music in your bedroom was one of the blood-rituals required by many youth subcultures. Across the country – to be sure, across the world – countless individuals would listen in their rooms to Bob Dylan, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Doors, Joni Mitchell and The Who, not only for pleasure, but as markers of generational belonging.

Later, listening in domestic dwelling space became a generalized mechanism that not only divided kids from parents, but generational subcultures from each other. In David Bowie's Mott The Hoople song 'All the Young Dudes' (1972) the reconstructive political and lifestyle ambitions and practices of the sixties generation are ridiculed in favour of the immediate, elusive, transitory, fragmentary experience of the post-Beatles generation. The glam rocker leaves his 'brother back at home with his Beatles and his Stones', while he strikes out into the real world – not the world of peace, love, sincere emotions and authentic identities, but a media-permeated world, saturated with codes and representations, where the rising influences of feminism and post-colonialism expose the conceits and crudities of hetero-normative, male power, fixed identity and the dogma of white superiority. This generational ritual of leaving and moving on has been repeated by successive pop music generations: the adherents of punk, post-punk, grunge, rap, trance and the rest.

The transistor radio, the Walkman, the iPod and the MP3 player made access to popular music ubiquitous. Music is everywhere. Perhaps in being so, its capacity to be a focus for generational concentration and social solidarity has diminished. It

is increasingly used in conjunction with multi-media platforms, such as television, games, the web and the computer. Of course, it is still used to build identification, as with the IBM songbook. But it has a surfeit status in popular culture that makes it the background accompaniment of other forms of social activity, such as driving, walking and multi-tasking.

## Articulation and Cultural Monadism

In practical terms, how do most of us listen to popular music today? With the emergence of the car stereo-system, the Walkman and the iPod, the laptop and the automobile, listening is twinned with mobility. The transitional space of the street, the highway and public transport systems has taken over from the bedroom, the kitchen or the living room as the primary social setting for listening to music. In terms of the language used in the debate about the rise of network society, popular music has become *detrterritorialized* (Castells 1996, 1997, 1998). This is not just a matter of cultural references in pop songs no longer being confined by geographical boundaries.

The rise of the Darknet in the production, exchange and consumption of popular music means that supply and demand chains have become international, beyond the law and, for most intents and purposes, invisible. Mobility and speed are conjoined with illegal consumption to change the character of listening and accumulating. It is estimated that 800 million files are currently available through unlicensed file-sharing networks (David and Kirkhope 2004: 441; David 2010). Streaming, ripping and downloading create new forms of exchange and cultural solidarity. They also annihilate old ones.

For example, the high street record store traditionally acted as a spatial venue of commercial exchange and the affirmation of collective identity. It was here, in listening booths, or over the counter, that discussions, news and opinions about established and new music were exchanged and refined. These data and retail hubs are now going out of business as a result of the digital revolution. The exchange and consumption of popular music are becoming automatic, weightless and, hence, more privatized, mobile and invisible.

It may be that one effect of this is to make common dilemmas questions of public spectacle and private consumption, rather than common organization and collective action. To be sure, popular music sets agendas about common problems that it develops by reflecting on issues of social being. In consuming it we have the pleasurable experience of direct, positive action.

Yet if 'doing something' amounts to recognizing a common dilemma through one's headphones, or watching artists perform on television or at sports stadia, does it truly constitute a meaningful political action? A cultural monad is someone who distils wider cultural agendas and internalizes and applies them as a private, mobile unit in the form of gestural currency. Consumption occurs through a combination of multi-media platforms, including television, film, DVD, games and the web. Because the distillation of culture occurs along many fronts and through multiple media, social unity and collective focus are more elusive. In order to be regarded as credible, competent and relevant agents, cultural monads need to be well versed in popular culture. This includes knowing about the deceptions of



solidarity as well as the social and cultural potential of togetherness. In sum, the main characteristics of cultural monadism are as follows:

- 1 *Articulation*: knowledge about cultural data and associated powers of expression.
- 2 *Mobility*: an ease of movement along many layers and between many fronts of popular culture.
- 3 *Dramaturgy*: the competence and credibility to translate political, cultural and economic issues into *gestural culture*. By this term I mean a form of cultural articulation that expresses commitment and solidarity as cultural representation rather than a basis for action. So the cultural monad, unlike the activist, listens to 'Feed the World' (1984), approves of the sentiment with respect to global inequality and the complacency of the advanced industrial countries and uses it as cultural capital to achieve identification, without engaging in any form of concrete action to transform things.

Might it be that mobility, access (including unlawful access) and privacy are now the primary characteristics of the consumption of pop, so that the main consumer type is the cultural monad?

Without doubt, the theme of pop music as an accessory of consumer culture producing a fake sensation of 'doing something' rather than a spur to raising collective consciousness and achieving transcendence occurs repeatedly in the literature. Adorno (2009) famously categorized the entire pop genre as bolstering conformity, social compliance and pseudo-individualism. His view of Tin Pan Alley mirrored that of his friend and sometime associate Siegfried Kracauer (1995) with respect to the Hollywood of the 1920s: it is a distraction factory. It diverts the creative, sensual energy of the masses into clichéd representations of romantic love, the politics of justice and brotherhood and leaves the fundamentals of organized inequality intact. Capitalism damages individuals. Pop elicits subconscious conditioning that provides damaged individuals with the illusion of time off and escape through music in the midst of a system that requires everyone to finally accept obedience to the rule of capitalism as fate.

Adorno's argument remains pertinent, but today it is widely criticized as too bleak and sweeping. Make no mistake, pop has the capacity to radicalize listeners. The Rock Against Racism movement that developed in the 1970s combined music with anti-racist speeches and rallies. It was politically significant in changing youth attitudes to multi-ethnic society and institutionalized racism. Live Aid, Live 8 and Live Earth exploited the global television network to raise consciousness about, respectively, Third World hunger, injustice and global pollution. Similarly, singers like Bob Dylan, John Lennon, Bob Marley, Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield, James Brown, Joe Strummer, Bruce Springsteen, Bono, Randy Newman, Jackson Browne and Billy Bragg, to name but a few at random, have an extensive back catalogue of recordings which address social and political questions.

Yet the probability is that the majority who listen to this music never attend a rally or join a political organization. Even rap and hip hop are symbolic articulations of place and social divisions rather than theme music for revolution. You can identify with the sense of metropolitan disempowerment and social injustice expressed by rap artists in Compton, or South Central, LA, from the safety of your bedroom or kitchenette in the suburbs.

In the age of universal mass communications, where pop music is ubiquitous, the political effect of radical popular music is different in kind from the political education that follows from protesting against a labour lock-out, a lynching or a case of police corruption. In being everywhere it is simultaneously nowhere. Its capacity to operate as a rallying point for solidarity or catalyst for social action cannot be assumed, because the effect of music is culturally diffused.

It may no longer be appropriate to critique pop primarily as a form of organized distraction designed to achieve compliance. If it is correct to propose that the cultural monad is the pre-eminent listening type in the West, it may be that pop supports role-play and the acting out of structural problems in capitalism that are judged, on rational grounds, to be intractable.

In this vein, Ian Condry (2006) has castigated Pierre Bourdieu's (1984, 1993) approach, which, when applied to pop, identifies music as a bearer and marker of social distinction. Instead, he points to *otaku* culture in Japan as evidence of the contemporary importance of silo culture in pop. As we shall see in more detail later (pp. 172-4), while there is no precise English synonym for *otaku*, the word is associated with home, boundaries, safety, security and obsessive interest. An *otaku* accumulates data about music, film, comics or games as an end in itself. There is no aspirational sense of transcendence or subcultural superiority. What, then, is the purpose of accumulation in this silo culture?

Acting out dilemmas of sexual inequality, racial oppression, generational difference, economic subordination and psychological abuse depends upon information. Listening to pop songs on iShuffle or your car stereo-system may provide the means to emotionally assuage and ameliorate some of the effects of these structural divisions in real life. However, the practice is fully compatible with the perpetuation of an economic, social and political system based upon organized inequality.

Pop music has been exceptionally inventive in widening the repertoire of protest songs. The rap and hip hop traditions have gone much further than the Rock Against Racism and pop consciousness movements in mobilizing the people against authority and racial injustice. Grandmaster Flash's 'The Message' (1982), and Ice-T's 'Cop Killer' (1992) deal, respectively, with overturning racial oppression and glamorizing violence against the police. Both songs, especially 'Cop Killer', were criticized for crossing the line between social criticism and racial incitement. The questions are: Have they changed racism and police corruption? Or do they operate as placebos of positive change, consumed *en masse* by cultural monads who make no political or social commitments that would affect the central levers and transmission belts of the system of organized inequality and mystification in power? This is Adorno's (2009) problem. It has not yet been resolved by empirical research or theoretical debate.

Other questions are thrown up by the study of how pop is articulated today. Why and how do genres of popular music change? Why does genre recycling occur? Are the meanings of songs universal, or culturally coded and represented? In an era in which there is no viable macro-political alternative to capitalism, is radical pop doomed to parody? What are the organizational chains between composer, performer and audience? Can one truly speak of a homology between music and embodiment? Is a textual approach to popular music preferable to



one that situates music in political economy? Or should an amalgamation of some kind be sought between the two? Does copyright over music (defined as intellectual property) have any validity in the digital age? Will illegal downloading and streaming eliminate the CD and music DVD? Is the decisive battle in the future of popular music now waged over the question of access rather than the issue of property ownership?

These questions provide the main springboards for the material presented in the rest of the book.

## 2

# The Urban-Industrial Backbeat

Pop music is fascinating to study, but difficult to write about. Three reasons stand out for this, and these concern the questions of production, exchange and consumption, the notion of 'the popular' and the issue of technology. This chapter will address each in turn.

To address the first of these areas of difficulty, today it is, in practice, impossible to separate the development of pop from the economics and technology of music production, exchange and consumption. You might say there is nothing genuinely new in this. The indie labels of the late 1970s and early 1980s, such as Stiff, Cherry Red, Chiswick and Factory, were, after all, explicitly anti-corporate and aspired to the ideal of free music. From the standpoint of the consumer, however, the results were limited because the labels retained control of the technology of production and distribution. This is quite different from today's situation with the downloading revolution. The Darknet of hand-held devices and laptops makes distribution ubiquitous and, practically speaking, detection-free. Webcasts, ripping, streaming and unauthorized file-sharing provide a serious new challenge to established distribution networks.

There are two categories of legal online distribution. The first is *downloading*, to a computer or a phone. Consumers legally purchase copyright material over the internet and pay fees to the copyright holder. Currently, the market leader is iTunes. Founded in 2003, it offers the largest catalogue of music. Other major providers include Amazon, emusic, Play.com and Napster. Recently, this legal output has been supplemented by providers offering free downloads, supported by advertising. For example, in 2008 Qtrax launched with a reputed catalogue of 25 million songs. We7.com, backed by Peter Gabriel, offers 80,000 free downloads. Both servers adapt peer-to-peer (P2P) technology developed by networks such as Gnutella and LimeWire, but claim to eradicate viruses and spoof tracks and comply with the entitlements of copyright holders.

The second category of legal online distribution is *streaming*. This is a mode of accessing copyright material. Essentially, it involves turning the internet into a radio. Songs are provided either for free or for nominal subscription and supported by advertising from companies like Burger King, Ford, H&M and Virgin