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‘Jade’s Back, and This Time she’s Famous’: Narratives of Celebrity in the *Celebrity Big Brother* ‘Race’ Row

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ABSTRACT

*Prior to the *Celebrity Big Brother* ‘race’ row in 2007, British Reality TV star, Jade Goody, was recurrently held up as emblematic of the ‘democratisation’ of celebrity. Yet this controversy gives us cause to question a narrative of populist democracy where the circulation of celebrity status is concerned. This article explores the construction of Jade’s image before, during and after the row, examining how it offers a unique insight into the relationship between Reality TV, celebrity and discourses of selfhood in contemporary culture - especially as these are mapped across the categories of gender and class. Indeed, Jade’s representational journey points to some of the cultural tensions which surround the fascination with Reality TV stars. They are often required to demonstrate the retention of an essential ‘working-class glitz beneath the glamour’ (Biressi and Nunn 2005, p. 146), while (like many ‘essential’ identities), this core can also be cast in negative terms – as the ‘real’ identity which must be (re)assumed if social order is to prevail.*

KEYWORDS

Celebrity - ‘Democratisation’ - Class - Gender - Selfhood

INTRODUCTION

The race row attached to *Celebrity Big Brother* (2007) (hereafter *CBB*) ultimately turned 1 out to be a problem for Channel Four (the broadcaster faced stern criticism and the events ignited debate about its present and future remit), a problem for the *Big Brother* franchise (the 2008 version of *Celebrity Big Brother* was cancelled) and certainly a problem for Jade Goody. It was also a problem for the critics, scholars, viewers and broadcasters who had vocally insisted that Reality TV offers us essentially no insight into society and culture at all – principally because popular factual programming is often positioned as emblematic of television’s declining relationship with the public sphere. Yet as Jonathan Gray observes, this incident ‘opened up the public sphere to active and much-needed discussion of racial tensions that had long bubbled underneath the veneer of British society’ (Gray 2008, p. 128). Nevertheless, in the busy circuits of media comment which followed the row, one of the most interesting strands of debate focused on its contested social significance. Peter Bazalgette, Creative Director of Endemol Entertainment, argued that the programme had ‘done more than anything for a decade to force us to examine our prejudicial attitudes’ (Bazalgette 2007). And yet, in the ‘quality’ press in particular, there was also a highly vocal emphasis on how the events should never have made the headlines *at all* (Riddell 2007). Here, the significance of ‘real’ politics was countpoised to the vapidness of a simulated television spectacle, media hype, and *especially* the apparently meaningless presence of celebrity culture.

Yet star and celebrity studies has long since conceptualised fame as a site of political and 2 cultural struggle, dramatising prevailing ideological currents, tensions and aspirations at any one time (Dyer 1979; Marshall 1997; Turner 2004). This article explores the construction of Jade’s image before, during and after the *CBB* row, examining how it offers a unique insight into the relationship between Reality TV, celebrity and discourses

of selfhood in contemporary culture - especially as these are mapped across the categories of gender and class. Given that scarcely a day goes by without the media discussing the 'state' and future of modern fame, the *CBB* scandal was not unique in causing a multitude of media networks to reflect on the role, significance and apparent ills of modern celebrity culture ('If we make people famous for nothing [like Jade] this is how they will behave') (Lorraine Kelly, speaking on *LK Today*, ITV1, 16 January, 2007). But it undoubtedly became a privileged and concentrated site for this process, and Jade Goody, previously held up in Britain as epitomising the transformation of celebrity culture and the very concept of modern fame, found herself at the eye of the storm.

THE SCANDAL – SETTING THE SCENE

The chain of events which unfolded around the 2007 series of *CBB* involved a record 3 number of viewer complaints to Ofcom, a diplomatic row, a police investigation, an extraordinary swell of media debate, and the public downfall of celebrity Jade Goody. Goody's trajectory prior to her entry into the *CBB* house is examined in more detail below, but when she joined the celebrity version of the show in 2007, frictions between Goody and fellow housemate Bollywood star Shilpa Shetty, as well as between Shetty and other members of the house - including Jade's mother and boyfriend, and model Danielle Lloyd and ex-pop star Jo O'Meara - were rapidly apparent. This at first appeared to circle around a vague and unarticulated sense of Shilpa's 'difference' from the vocal dominance of the white, working-class women in the house, but comments quickly took on both racial undertones and overtones. Jade's mother appeared unable (or unwilling) to pronounce Shilpa's name correctly ('Shupa, Sherpa, or whatever your name is'), and when Jackie was later evicted by a public vote she called Shetty 'the Indian' in her interview - after previously asking the star if she 'lived in a shack'. In other instances, and drawing on racial codings of physical appearance and food, Danielle made fun of Shilpa for bleaching her facial hair and asked her if she 'wanted to be white', whilst Jo made a comment about Indian people being skinny because 'they do not cook food properly'. After a heated row over Shilpa's (apparently 'incorrect') cooking of a chicken dinner, Danielle insisted that she didn't 'want Shilpa touching ... [her] food', whilst rounding off her assertion with the suggestion that the star should 'fuck off home'. Despite Shilpa's status as an Indian national, this comment in particular was read as explicitly drawing on a discourse of anti-immigration racism in Britain (Rahman 2008, p. 141).

Jade had certainly engaged in a heated and vitriolic row with Shilpa which many viewers 4 and commentators justifiably perceived as bullying. But it wasn't until *Big Brother* raised the question of racism with Jade in the diary room, a step not taken until a media storm - of which the housemates were totally unaware - had surrounded the programme, that Jade's comments could be interpreted as explicitly pivoting on a racist tone. Although later apologising to Shilpa in the house, Jade referred to her as 'Shilpa Pappadom' and 'Shilpa Fuckawala'. Jade and Shilpa were both nominated for eviction that week, and Jade was evicted with an overwhelming majority of the public vote (and was then sequestered into hiding by the show's producers). In a stern eviction interview with host Davina McCall, Jade was shown the national and international impact of the show's narrative. Whilst tabloid and 'quality' press, as well as a range of television programmes (from news, to magazine shows to *Question Time*) had all dissected the events in the British context, stories about the mistreatment of Shetty had also appeared in Indian newspapers and on television news. Indian news footage depicted protests against Jade, the burning of effigies of the *Big Brother* producers, and questions were put to the British Prime Minister-in-waiting, Gordon Brown about the show (and its reflection on British/Indian relations) whilst he was touring India in his capacity as finance minister.

In the UK, the conflict was often attributed to the intersection of class and race and 5 sometimes, it was even seen as emerging *more* from a class clash than a racial one. While this arguably obfuscated the extent to which racism often functions in indirect and complex ways - attached to other discourses and wider inequalities in the context of the 'everyday' - it is of course something of a fallacy to try and distinguish between these

spheres. This was actually most visibly played out in the media response to Jade's actions. As Radha S. Hegde observes, identifying racism as the unfortunate 'consequence of class was [an]... argument used to rationalize Goody's behaviour' (Hegde 2007, p. 454). But it also became quickly apparent that the articulation of classism and sexism were more 'acceptable' than racism to many British commentators. Attention has since been drawn to the discourses of misogyny and apparently 'socially sanctioned sexism' evoked by the scandal (Zacharias and Arthurs 2007, p. 452). On *Question Time*, Edwina Currie quite shockingly counterpoised the 'beautiful lady' Shilpa to the three 'slags', who were simply 'witches with a capital "B"'. But less attention has been focused on how discourses of fame and celebrity were woven into this cultural tapestry. Work in celebrity studies has been slow to recognise the increasingly overt gendering of judgements about fame which, as the term 'fame whore' suggests, are often inextricably related to discourses of class. Female celebrities are not only foregrounded as personifying the apparent crisis of value where modern celebrity is concerned ('famous for being famous'), but they have also become a highly visible site upon which images of 'acceptable/unacceptable' femininity are debated and policed (Negra and Holmes 2008). Although, as elaborated below, Jade had assumed a certain level of cultural capital as a 'new' form of modern celebrity, it is not difficult to see that hierarchical perceptions of *fame* also structured the semiotic and social contrasts drawn between Jade and Shilpa. For example, the contrast between Jade's 'vulgar' familiarity and Shilpa's 'civility?', 'dignity' and 'poise' (Zacharias and Arthurs 2007, p. 451), slipped easily onto existing cultural hierarchies of television and film fame which, despite the media specificities of fame becoming more blurred, still retain a certain currency. Indeed, it is notable that Momin Rahman's analysis of the scandal notes how the dislike of Shetty 'seemed to be developed mainly on class grounds at first, but this was intimately combined with her *genuine celebrity status* as a Bollywood star [my emphasis]' (Rahman 2008, p. 141) – despite the fact that Shetty was not especially well-known in Britain at all. Thus, my intention here is not to deny the centrality of race within this framework (which was ostensibly presented as being at the core of the furore), but it is to tease out how discourses of class and gender remained central to its cultural circulation – especially when viewed through the prism of celebrity.

"I THINK I HAVE A GOOD CHARISMA", SHE ANSWERS': NARRATIVES OF FAME IN REALITY TV

Jade Goody shot to fame when she appeared as a contestant in the 2002 (UK) series of *Big Brother*. Loud, brash, 'dim', 'vulgar' and bitchy, the then 21 year-old dental nurse from South London received changeable media coverage, and she was the subject of tabloid attacks on her weight, physical appearance, and lack of education. The press took delight in reprinting 'Jade-isms', or comments which appeared to reveal her extraordinary lack of intelligence. Yet toward the end of the series there emerged a popular support for Goody. Tabloids battled for exclusive rights to her 'story', and while her fame remained controversial (did she 'deserve' it?), she was reclaimed by popular magazines as a 'national treasure' (Biressi and Nunn 2005, p. 150). Jade went on to become Britain's first reality TV millionaire (she was estimated to be worth £2 million by the time she entered *CBB*), with a best-selling perfume, biography and two fitness DVDs under her belt. But Jade seems to attract knee-jerk reactions where discussions of celebrity are concerned, and little has been done to examine her media construction in detail. This process in turn demands a wider reflection on the discursive construction of Reality TV fame. 6

It has long been argued that a specificity of television fame is the blurring of the line between on and off-screen persona - the 'two become very much entangled, so that the performer's image is equated with that of the on-screen role' (Ellis 1982, p. 106). The discourses of selfhood in *Big Brother*, as well as the programme's surrounding media coverage, invariably approve this idea of a unified self. Especially in terms of winning contestants, there is a pull toward validating those that (appear to) have been 'true' to themselves. In other words, from the vantage point of reflexive models of selfhood (in which the modern subject is seen to 'swim in a sea of uncertainty') (Bauman, cited in Adams 2007, p. 13), we appear to value people who demonstrate a clear sense of 7

ontological security in an uncertain world (Giddens 1991). As Rachel Dubrofsky has explored, Reality TV has dramatised a particular set of discourses surrounding the therapeutic: while traditional models of the therapeutic 'assume a desire to change the self alongside the imperative to affirm or accept the self' (Dubrofsky 2007, p. 266), Reality TV articulates the therapeutic through the idea of 'affirming a consistent (unchanged) self across disparate social spaces, verified by surveillance' (266). In this regard, while contributing to wider conceptions of the therapeutic's retreat from the 'social', Dubrofsky argues that these discourses perform what is ultimately a hegemonic function: we are instructed to be content with 'who we are' and the state 'of the world around [us]' (268).

But it is also worth noting here that this idea of the unified, consistent self has long since been approved of within star discourse. If we take as given that stars and celebrities play out conceptions of personhood and individualism at any one time (Dyer 1986, p. 9), Richard Dyer reminds us how the appearance of sincerity and authenticity are two qualities which have been 'greatly prized' in stars – not least of all because they suggest a person who bears witness to 'the continuousness of [the self]' (Dyer 1979, p. 11). If this seems to point us toward a combination of the 'old' and the 'new' where constructions of both selfhood and fame are concerned, then it may be a more useful starting point than the often simplistic emphasis on a sudden, radical shift in contemporary celebrity.

Joshua Gamson's work is important in this respect. After studying celebrity discourse in popular magazines, Gamson demonstrates how two key explanations of fame are engaged in a form of cultural struggle. On the one hand, there are meritocratic, 'mystifying' myths of fame which emphasise the 'unique', 'innate' nature of the talented, inner self. On the other hand, there are discourses of manufacture (hype, publicity, exposure). Since the post-war period, a number of economic and cultural shifts mean have enabled the manufacture-of-fame narrative to be 'greatly amplified... It has become a 'serious contender in explaining celebrity' (Gamson 1994, p. 44). Yet older narratives of fame are not rendered redundant, and the two explanations jostle for cultural legitimacy in the same space. In fact, Gamson suggests that by the late twentieth century, it was possible to discern strategies intended to cope with the increasing disjuncture between the two claims-to-fame narratives (which may pose a threat to the economic enterprise of celebrity). He points toward the increased emphasis on the apparent exposure of the fame-making process, the construction of an ironic, mocking perspective on celebrity culture, and the increased emphasis on the power of the audience.

Reality TV is in many ways paradigmatic of this framework. Audience power has been consistently woven into the construction of Reality TV fame ('you decide!'), and this is demonstrated by Jade's persona. *The Sun* bluntly describes how 'many pitied her upbringing [and] ... we helped her out of the ghetto' (Parsons 2007). But in Gamson's paradigm, the emphasis on audience power is only useful because it mediates *between* the two narratives of fame - staving off the threat posed by the visibility of the publicity machine. Despite the common dismissal of Reality TV as 'the epitome of the fabricated celebrity' (Turner 2004, p. 60), this idea of a contradictory struggle between fame narratives remains germane.

On the one hand, Reality TV would seem to be the most visible example of the manufacture-of-fame narrative. The emphasis on manufacture has attended the popular discussion of Reality TV, and with respect to Jade Goody, Tom Mole justifiably observes how she is not simply 'famous for being famous'? (referring to Daniel Boorstin's (1971) classic description of celebrity): she is 'famous for *having been made* famous [original emphasis]' (Mole 2004). Yet manufacture as an explanation for fame jostles for space with more traditional narratives of celebrity. While Reality pop shows, such as *Pop Idol* and *X-Factor*, may be the paradigmatic examples here (they stress packaging and promotion alongside hard work and 'star quality') (Holmes 2006a), *Big Brother* still conforms to this framework. The programme not only promotes traditional models of self-

hood (which ultimately appear to reject a postmodern emphasis on the fragmented, performative self), but 'mystifying myths' of fame structure its wider circulation. When it comes to Jade, this is contradictorily suggested by PR guru, Max Clifford when he explains how 'Jade has that *magic formula* that proves you don't have to be talented to be a star [my emphasis]' (Jeffries 2006), and in recalling Jade's first audition for *Big Brother*, Executive Producer Phil Edgar-Jones describes how 'she sort of had something – a little bit of an x-factor' (quoted in *You Can't Fire Me... I'm Famous*, BBC1 31 July, 2007).

Just before Jade went on *Celebrity Stars in Their Eyes* (2006) (she 'became' Dolly Parton 12 and won), she was also interviewed by *The Guardian*:

Jade Goody undeniably has something, and it has kept her in the public eye long after many thought she would be past her sell-by date. What is it? 'I think I have a good charisma,'? she answers. 'I think it comes across that I've never had any chances in my life. I know I'm famous for nothing. I'm not like Samuel L. Jackson, who went to stage school before he became famous. I'm not like some kid who practises the violin for years'. Goody has capitalised successfully on that charisma, part of which is founded on her putatively charming ignorance. She thought that a ferret was a bird, abscess a green French drink, that Pistachio painted the Mona Lisa, that there was a part of England called East Angular, that Parada was a fashion designer and that there's a language called Portuguese (Jeffries 2006).

Although the article refers to her special 'something', the mystifying emphasis on 13 charisma comes from Jade herself. But Jade's reference to her upbringing also demonstrates how her persona draws on aspects of the success myth (Dyer 1979). While the emphasis on talent and hard work may have become more residual discourses, the significance of class mobility ('anyone can make it') could not be clearer – and this narrative has a long history in the construction of pop, film and sports stars (see Biressi and Nunn, 2005: 145). As Jade's fellow housemate P.J Ellis from *Big Brother 3* later confirmed: 'It's the perfect story. She got herself a celebrity boyfriend [then Jeff Brazier] and a baby. She's left us Z-listers behind' (Braachi, 2007). In playing out the possibilities of self-transformation through social mobility, Jade is/ was deeply *useful* to the celebrity system, and to constructions of individualism and opportunity in democratic capitalism more widely.

JADE'S LIFE IS JUST GOODY: MOVING ON FROM *BIG BROTHER*

Jade became emblematic of what Biressi and Nunn coin the 'socially mobile media-ocracy' 14 (2005, p. 146): a group of celebrities who 'make it big', but who have little connection with traditional structures of influence, such as inheritance, education and training. The popular appeal of such figures resides precisely in their disconnection from these structures, together with a 'consumer lifestyle which the media privileges and foregrounds' (p. 145). As such, after Jade emerged from the *Big Brother* house in 2002 - crossing the boundary from 'ordinary' to 'media' world (Couldry 2000) - we saw the 're-education of Miss Goody' (Biressi and Nunn 2005, p. 150). Whilst Jade was in the house, *The Sun* famously christened her 'the pig' ('YOU have the power to roast her... She doesn't deserve to win the £70,000 prize and you can help stop her getting her trotters on it') (Newton 2002). Pictures of Jade yawning were placed next to images of Miss Piggy from *The Muppets*, and there was a clear emphasis on Jade's 'excessive' corporeality. As Biressi and Nunn observe, in bringing together misogyny and class prejudice, Jade was "'marked" negatively as working-class by her body [and] her voice...' (2005, p. 149). She was also seen as 'bibulous, excessive, overweight and getting fatter as the series progressed' (ibid), and as Beverley Skeggs (2003) argues, there is a long history of working-class women being associated with discourses of corporeal excess. Thus, part of Jade's 're-education' involved a physical (corporeal) change. She changed her hair from blonde to brunette, had it cut into a sleek bob, and lost three stone: a shift also exploited by, and linked to, her association with two best-selling fitness DVDs. The visual transformation of Jade was striking, and whether true or not, it was later claimed that she was confused with Liz Hurley at a film premiere when sporting a long bronze gown

(quoted in *You Can't Fire Me... I'm Famous*, BBC1 31 July, 2007). In this regard, while certainly required to retain her 'core'? characteristics, Jade is celebrated for emerging as a reflexive individual, a veritable entrepreneur of the self who has created a successful project (Giddens 1991).

Jade's association with quite literally selling a successful self was also cemented by the 15 reality series *Jade's Salon* (which tracked Jade setting up and running her own beauty salon), while the later format *Jade's PA* (the process of finding Jade a personal assistant), displayed her elevated status, with scores of 'reality' hopefuls queuing up to be selected by Jade. But aside from her many appearances on chat shows and magazine programmes, Jade's television work, while acknowledging her new-found celebrity status, has remained within the reality vein, close to the contours of her original platform. (Aside from the two series listed above, her career biography includes *Just Jade*, *The Farm*, *Celebrity Diving School*, and *Celebrity Wife Swap*). Because Reality formats, at the level of selfhood seek to elide the distinction between 'on-television' and 'not-on-television' (Turner 2004, p.160), an emphasis on continuity is key. So Jade's perfume 'Shhhhhh!' might be emblematic of 'Brand Goody' (quoted in *You Can't Fire Me... I'm Famous*, BBC1 8 July, 2007), but it sells because, like Jade, it is 'accessible and down to earth' (Braachi 2007). One journalist commented how 'her guilelessness is her fortune: in a world of spin, her seeming innocence is a unique selling point' (Jeffries 2006). When asked if she was 'strategically deploying her ignorance', her 'trademark honesty' prompts the simple reply 'Don't know what that means' (ibid). In fact, these core elements of her persona – down to earth, forthright and 'real' - were already evident in her construction by the time she exited the original *Big Brother* house. As the live final loomed, *The Sun* and other tabloid papers switched to display popular support for Jade, and in the list of 'good reasons' to vote for her, the discourses above are all apparent (Smith 2002).

FROM MEDIA-OCRACY TO ARISTOCRACY: A CLASS ACT?

One viewer commented during the *CBB* row that celebrity Reality shows showcase 16 celebrities "'off the leash" as regards to their advisors and agents' (Riddell 2007). In jostling for space with other forms of media representation, celebrity Reality shows pivot on the promise of giving extended access to celebrities in the 'raw', apparently outside of their usual media roles (Holmes 2006b). But if trading this access for intense visibility is a potentially risky exchange for the celebrity themselves, *Big Brother* was not really taking any risks where the re-employment of Jade was concerned. Unlike the reality pop shows, the *Big Brother* franchise has no direct economic investment in the contestants once they leave the house. Jade was re-exploited by the producers of *Big Brother* when she was asked to return to the house for *CBB*. But far from displaying what Turner sees as the homologous interests of Reality shows and their participants (the 'objectives of both are structurally accommodated from the start') (Turner 2004, p. 54), the *CBB* row displayed the conflicting investments which structure the relationship between a celebrity, the celebrity producer, and the surrounding entertainment industries. The producers of *CBB* were often accused of relishing the unfolding controversy while (in PR terms), Jade and her allies effectively hung themselves. This perspective cast Jade as a victim of an excessively commercialised television market, and *Big Brother* psychologist Lynda Papadopolous describes how the format 'made [Jade]..., like Frankenstein, and then it chewed her up and spat her out' (quoted in *You Can't Fire Me... I'm Famous*, BBC1 31 July, 2007).

At the same time, inviting Jade back into the house was also very much in keeping with 17 the self-reflexive nature of *CBB* where discourses of celebrity are concerned. In the previous year's programme, Chantelle Houghton, a Paris Hilton look-alike from Essex, was required to assume the identity of a celebrity, posing as a singer from a fictitious girl band called Kandy Floss ('with a K'). She successfully fooled her housemates and went on to emerge as the winner. The 2007 series of *CBB* continued this acute interest in playing with hierarchies of fame as object of interest in its own right. In other words, *why* someone is famous, and *how* they achieved their fame, is perceived as a variable, much like class, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality and age, in the producers' bid to cast a diverse

range of characters. Aside from Bollywood star Shilpa Shetty, Jo O' Meara (from the now-defunct pop group S Club 7), and Danielle Lloyd (model and girlfriend of retired footballer Teddy Sheringham), Jade's fellow housemates included Jermaine Jackson, Leo Sayer, film director Ken Russell, actor Dirk Benedict, comedienne Cleo Rocco, and 'H' from the ex-pop group Steps. In surveying the cast, one of *CBB*'s ancillary shows, *Celebrity Big Brother's Big Brain* (E4/C4, 2006-7), explicitly acknowledged the existence of fame hierarchies, and more significantly, their ability to create conflict and tension. One of the programme's resident psychologists, Judi James, distinguished between three routes to fame as demonstrated by the housemates. There is fame 'By Talent' (Leo Sayer, Jo, Shilpa Shetty and Cleo), fame 'By Proxy' (association) (Jade's family, Danielle Lloyd), and fame 'By Imitation'. Although the explicitly negative, cheap and even duplicitous connotations of this term do not receive elaboration, this is apparently Jade's category, and she is predictably and bluntly described as 'famous for being famous'- emblematic of the modern age (*Celebrity Big Brother's Big Brain* C4, 8 January, 2007).

The framework offered by *Big Brain* sits alongside Chris Rojek's taxonomy of fame as 18 outlined in his book *Celebrity*. Rojek distinguishes between 'Achieved' fame (based on merit and 'talent'), 'Ascribed' fame (born into) and 'Attributed' fame (someone simply made visible by the media) (Rojek 2001). In this respect, while it is true that 'sexuality, race, and other markers of cultural difference have become just like any other marketing tool to define brand presence and identity [in Reality TV]' (Gies 2007, p. 457), it is clear that *CBB* understands fame in the same way. But as the discussion on *Big Brain* suggests, the concept of fame hierarchies is also dramatised explicitly by the programme itself – although usually in contradictory ways. On one level, *CBB* very much recognises and foregrounds fame as an intrinsically hierarchical phenomenon (i.e. the 'joke' of putting 'old school' 'prima donna' Leo Sayer in with 'modern' celebrity Jade) (as described in *Celebrity Big Brother's Little Brother*, C4, 11 January, 2007). At the same time, and unlike the journalists/ viewers who responded to the Jade/ Shilpa scandal, it couldn't care less about these hierarchies, and by throwing everyone in together, it rather disregards meritocratic perceptions of fame. We can add to this the fact that *Big Brother* has its own internal hierarchies which shore up its status as a celebrity producer. So while *Celebrity Big Brother's Big Brain* may refer to Jade's fame as low grade 'Imitation', the psychologist also solicits us to 'look at her in there, she is the queen...', going on to note, and that 'makes [some of the other housemates]... as mad as hell'. This status was also explicitly confirmed by the Executive Producer, Phil Edgar-Jones when he described Jade's entry into *CBB* as 'the queen of *Big Brother* returning to her house' (*You Can't Fire Me... I'm Famous*, BBC1, 31 July 2007).

This set the scene for the introduction of a narrative thread which dramatised Jade's 19 status within the house. Class was central here, as she was immediately positioned as 'royalty'. Jade entered the house with her boyfriend, Jack Tweed, and was then joined by her mother, Jackie Budden (usually referred to in the press as the 'one-armed lesbian' as she lost the use of her left arm after a motorcycle accident). Jade's grandparents also joined the house for one evening. In the first task, the housemates had to dress as servants while working to serve Jade, Jack and Jackie, who were not allowed to undertake any domestic tasks. Somewhat ironically, in light of subsequent events, Shilpa, Jermaine and Ken were also elected by the group to be part of 'Jade's family'.

Although Jack Tweed was essentially unknown, the idea of a famous family, or 'dynasty', 20 immediately spoke to a more archaic version of ascribed celebrity (Rojek 2001) - the least dominant form of fame in society, and the very antithesis of Jade's celebrity roots. *CBB* was thus keen to play out, at the explicit level of narrative and performance, the extent to which modern celebrity is seen as subverting older hierarchies and elite networks (in literally assuming the privileges of a by-gone aristocracy, the Goody clan even had their own coat of arms). But not all the servants were subordinate and compliant. Singer Donny Tourette jumped over the wall and left the house after refusing to serve 'those people', and Sayer was perpetually vocal about the demeaning nature of

the task, and its apparent reversal of 'proper' cultural hierarchies.

Given the constrained semiotic space in which Reality stars must operate (the need to 21 remain close to their original Reality persona), the task did not merely represent an inflammatory framework where house relations were concerned: it also represented a tricky context in which Jade – or her celebrity persona - could exist. In view of the fact that Reality TV stardom, and the claim to present 'real' or 'ordinary' identities, is often intertwined with discourses of class, Biressi and Nunn aptly observe how the Reality contestant:

[A]s he or she appears before the media audience, can be outrageous, bold, greedy, bitchy... but they cannot appear pretentious. Pretentiousness is primarily a classed charge which calls aspirant... identities to order... As Steph Lawler notes, 'pretentiousness is a charge levelled at people in whom what they *seem to be* is not (considered to be) what they are: in whom there is a gap between *being* and *seeming*' [original emphasis] (Biressi and Nunn 2005, p. 121).

If this is applied to *CBB*, it is not difficult to see that the aristocratic task put pressure on 22 the ideological discourses which structure Jade's persona. This tension was also amplified by the apparent desire to test out the relationship between Jade's pre- and post-fame selves ('roots' versus privileged lifestyle), as represented by the inclusion of Jackie. What the media cast as Jackie's poor parenting of Jade (drug abuse, physical punishment and crime), had long since been interwoven into Jade's celebrity persona, and it was widely acknowledged that the pair had a complex and difficult relationship. Jackie had become a minor celebrity in her own right, and in terms of her own physical transformation, she had undergone plastic surgery in 2006 on Living TV's *Extreme Make-over*. The transition to celebrity can certainly be conceived as a form of 'class-passing' (Foster 2005) (and the idea of female self-transformation only works *if* femininity is read as a class-based property) (Skeggs 2003, p. 100), and housemate Jermaine Jackson asserted in a conversation with Shilpa that Jade, Jackie and co. were behaving badly because were still essentially 'poor white trash'. But this making visible of the racial markers of working class celebrity in Britain (especially Reality TV celebrity), had arguably always been explicitly inscribed where Jackie was concerned. After all, we might observe that, unlike Jade, whose apparent markers of (white) working-classness focused on her 'Jade-isms' and 'loveable' stupidity, Jackie had never been allowed to 'pass'. Thus, the performative context set up in the opening week of the show was tailored to intersect with existing public knowledge of Jade's persona, while it was also designed to create a combustible cocktail of emotions and conflicts.

Jade's initial reaction to the task was one of awkwardness. She expressed dismay at the 23 news that she was not allowed to brush her own teeth, and confided in Cleo that she just 'wanted to be treated like everyone else'. In this regard, and returning us to the classed charge of pretentiousness above, it is revealing that the *Sunday Times'* Hugo Rifkind wrote a 'faux' diary in which he posed as Jade (and this was after the racism row had blown up). In the diary, Rifkind imagined Jade's class-based dialect merging with a truly monstrous celebrity ego:

The fmg what I don't get, yeah, is how come nobody else in the house realises I'm the most famous person here. What have they all done? There's Jermaine Jackson, who's only here coz of his brother, and Shrimpa, who might as well be from the Moon. If any of the others have ever done a fitness video, I ain't seen it (Rifkind 2007).

Although it would be hard to argue that arrogance had been a dominant discourse in 24 Jade's media image, she *did* tell Shilpa upon entry into the house that she had been voted 'the 25th most influential [sic] celebrity' in a magazine poll, while also confiding that 'Samuel L. Jackson even knows who I am'. This point was subsequently raised after the racism scandal when Jade appeared on the topical discussion show, *The Wright Stuff* (C5, 2000). The host, Matthew Wright, tells Jade that he feels she has changed: 'it used to be

all knockabout fun... but all of a sudden [in the *CBB*house] it was "I hang around with Kate Moss, Samuel L Jackson knows who I am"... Do you think celebrity has changed you, Jade, and maybe not changed you for the better?' (*The Wright Stuff*, C5, 23 January, 2007, found at <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=oknOd84f89o>). Given that this question is asked in the context of a debate about Jade's anti-social behaviour, there is the implicit suggestion that her fame has created a monstrous ego, as well as equally monstrous behaviour.

JADE IN FREE-FALL: FROM 'HERO TO ZERO'

But discourses of class were most apparent in the relishing of Jade's lurching from 'Hero 25 to Zero' (Hoyle and Woolcock 2007) and the machinations of this fall are illuminated by Gareth Palmer's earlier article 'The Un-dead: Life on the D-List'. Palmer questions the perceived relationship between the democratisation of celebrity and Reality TV when he argues that the media construction of Reality stars involves 'cautionary tales' about knowing 'one's place' (Palmer 2005, p. 45):

As the D-List is composed of people who have emerged from the audience it may be the 26 closest representation of the ordinary as celebrity. An analysis of how such people are treated [by the media] is therefore revealing about what the media suggest is the correct way for [people]... to behave, both as enterprising individuals and as 'ordinary' people (p. 38).

Palmer draws attention to the treatment of those who aim to 'prolong their fame', and 27 and it is understood that 'the respectable thing to do is to return "quietly" to ... [one's] roots', managing an inevitable decline with 'dignity' (p. 45).

Many journalists were bemused (irked?) when Jade did not fade from the media spotlight 28 after her initial appearance in *Big Brother*, and the level of public attention she received prior to her entry into *CBB* was far beyond the scale of 'D-List' visibility. In other words, she appeared to have superseded the discursive framework of the 'cautionary tale' which Palmer outlines. But *CBB* then provided a spectacular context for the dramatisation of this narrative. As Ros Wynne-Jones described with relish in *The Mirror*:

Dropped by an anti-bullying charity, burned as an effigy on the streets of India and cyber-bashed in the nation's chatrooms, *Jade is back where she began* in 2002 when she left the *Big Brother*house under a cloud of hate [my emphasis] (Wynne-Jones 2007).

We might note how the language and imagery differs markedly from Jade's earlier 29 construction: discourses of escape, velocity and mobility ('She's left us Z-listers behind...') are replaced with images of back-sliding, stasis and containment. But herein lies a crucial point: in terms of the logic of media representation, Jade could not simply lurch from 'Hero and Zero'. If being part of the 'media-ocracy' involves a form of 'classed cross-dressing' (Biressi and Nunn 2005, p. 152), then it seems that Jade had to be ceremoniously *divested* of her celebrity identity - before the public gaze.

If Jade's persona could previously be read through the paradigm of a successful 30 'entrepreneur' of the self, what happened to her image next demonstrates some of the major criticisms which have been levelled at reflexive models of selfhood - namely that they ignore the social structures in which such fashioning takes place, including the socially differentiated restraints on agency (ethnicity, class, gender) (see Adams 2007; Skeggs 2003). Indeed, it is a Foucauldian conception (1975) of the *regulated* self which seem more pertinent when it comes to the analysis of Jade's decline - revealing how celebrity, especially where female celebrities are concerned, has increasingly become a disciplinary regime (Negra and Holmes 2008).

Dyer argues that a star's image can be conceptualised as a structured polysemy (Dyer 31 1998, p. 63): it contains a level of semiotic play, and a range of discourses which can be organised differently depending on the context in hand. Yet during and after the

CBB racism row, there was not only a bid, by the tabloids in particular, to fix the meanings of Jade's image, but also a recontextualisation of the signs which had made up her persona. The fact that signs only have meaning in their contexts (Barthes, 1987) is clearly suggested by the re-shaping of Jade's image which, to some extent, was articulated through a system of opposites. Signs which had previously signified one thing were now re-framed as representing something totally 'Other'.

Jade had transformed her apparently poor command of English, and the media's reaction 32 to it, into a 'highly bankable asset' (Gies 2007, p. 458). Yet language was re-framed in relation to the *CBB* incident: Jade, Jo and Danielle were all positioned as the inflictors of mockery, and as Gies observes, 'one of the defining moments of the race incident was ...[the mocking of] Shilpa's English' (ibid) (in this regard we can note that the mocking of Jade's speech, as displayed by Rifkind above, is socially acceptable, while the mocking of ethnic difference is not). Equally, when Big Brother confronted Jade in the diary room about her behaviour toward Shilpa, Jade repeatedly protested that she was 'not racial' – a term picked up by the media as further signifying Jade's ignorance where the sensitive matter of racism was concerned. (It was also, quite literally, a poor command of English which initially raised the spectre of racial difference in the house. Jade's mother, Jackie, referred to Shilpa as 'Shupa, Sherpa – or whatever your name is'). Furthermore, the perfume which had signaled Jade's 'accessible' and 'down to earth nature' – a site upon which her elevated individualism and consumer capital could be reconciled with discourses of 'authenticity' – was rapidly re-framed as a potent symbol of Western imperialism. Press discourse quickly pounced on the fact that Jade's perfume was made in India. Shilpa's sister Shamita proclaimed that this made Jade a hypocrite, while *The People* reported how 'Dimwit Jade raked in £250,000 from her 14 days on [*CBB*]...T his amounts to £744 an hour – 5,314 times more than the workers at Pragati Glassworks in the industrial Gujarat region earn' (Austin and Whittingham 2007). This clearly depended on erasing the memory of Britain's colonial and imperial past, while it also glossed over the fact that, according to Zacharias and Arthurs, Shilpa signified a new, Cosmopolitan India, poised on the 'threshold of global modernity as an economic power rich in skilled labor' (2007, p. 452), a long way from those industrial workers in the Pragati glassworks.

In Gamson's (1994) warring explanations of fame, the emphasis on audience power 33 mediates between a potential disjuncture between the two stories. It goes without saying that, once the *CBB* row erupts, Jade's image no longer contains those mystifying myths of fame it once did: the pendulum has swung, as developed more below, solely toward manufacture. But given the extent to which audience power had been interwoven into the construction of her image, 'our' agency represented a more tricky discourse to navigate once the charge of Jade's racism emerged. It is true that Jade was constructed as the 'object-other', the 'stranger-enemy' who was to be violently ejected from the social body (Bose 2007). But this process, especially with respect to celebrity, also involved a kind of social self-reflection. In an otherwise vitriolic attack on Jade, Tony Parsons notes in *The Mirror* how:

You can blame Channel 4 for giving her a platform for her racism.... But we are all responsible for Jade Goody. Because she was genuinely funny when she talked about 'escape goats', and we all laughed. Jade's rank stupidity was a hoot when she thought that East Anglian was abroad (Parsons 2007).

An alternative response where the emphasis on audience power was concerned can be 34 located in heightened representations of audience control. On 'DIY' TV internet sites such as Youtube.com, and paralleling the wider recontextualisation of signifiers in Jade's image, official celebrity texts which feature Jade are re-narrativised and re-framed. The advert for her perfume 'Shhhh..!' is transformed into a racist 'ditty' '(see 'Jade Goody Perfume'? , <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4MRUbyMAYM>)' and the audio of Jade's post-eviction interview on Sky television is overlaid with pig noises (although this second example clearly undermines a simple emphasis on audience agency given that it merely replicates the construction of Jade initially fostered by the tabloid press). (See 'Big

Brother racist Jade Goody interview', <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AoykIpiirTI>).

The divesting of Jade's celebrity image was also dramatised at the level of clothes and 35 (beyond this) corporeal presence. The celebrity body has become the primary site upon which the ideological enunciation and inscription of the celebrity image takes place. Furthermore, no longer simply the province of the 'heavenly body' (Dyer 1986), the celebrity body is prodded, probed and exposed by the media in such a way that revels in the processes of corporeal fabrication itself (Holmes and Redmond, 2006, p. 123). Clearly, this fascination is also gendered, in so far as it is the shape, size and very nature of the female celebrity body which is the focus of endless media attention. This form of disciplinary power or governmentality (cf Foucault 1975), which encourages the female celebrity to undertake self-surveillance and self-normalisation, clearly also plays a visible role in fashioning the cultural norms of femininity.

As this article has outlined, Jade did not initially conform to this ideal. In fact, one of the 36 most re-played moments from *Big Brother* 2002 is her famous striptease, undertaken during a drunken game of truth or dare, when her 'tubby nakedness' (Gill 2007) was laid bare for all to see. In this image, her 'out of control' body signifies an absence of both sexual and physical regulation – echoing a much longer representational heritage in which the corporeality of the working-class woman is associated with a lack of discipline and self-control (Skeggs 2003, p. 102). As discussed, Jade lost weight after her first appearance in *Big Brother*, and when she entered the *CBB* house, her physical transformation was very much on display. Yet as the *CBB* row raged, we are told that:

When she eventually emerges from the double doors of the Elstree studio ... she will face accusations that her new thin self is also a lie. Claims that her svelte shape is not the result of her exercise regimes which have sold thousands of DVDs, but the product of liposuction, has outraged ... thousands of fans (Wynne-Jones, 2007).

The labour of transformation must be invisible – worn on the body as 'natural' – if it is not 37 to be read in class terms (Skeggs 2003, p. 101). In seeking to render the 'work' of femininity visible (or indeed to expose it as not 'work' at all), Wynne-Jones' quote signifies the broader desire to return Jade, at the level of discourse, to her original physical identity.

Not only does the word 'pig' make an immediate reappearance in press headlines and 38 articles, but the number of times that she is referred to as 'fat' is astonishing given the reality of the 'svelte shape' acknowledged above. This change was later made a corporeal reality in so far as popular magazines focused on reports that Jade was comfort-eating in the face of her declining career. (This appeared in several magazines, but see *Reveal*, 9-15 September, 2007, p.10). In this regard, the idea of 'disciplining' the self through bodily transformation took on rather different connotations. Jade was apparently to be (morally) 'disciplined' by being rejected – at the level of representation - from the concept of the acceptable feminine ideal. As Gwendolyn Audrey Foster reminds us, celebrity culture is a site upon which society equates mastery of the body with being rich. While in the past, fleshiness and fatness were seen as signifiers of wealth, now the 'thin body... is absolutely tied to class status' (Foster 2005, p. 67). In this regard, weight gain is imagined as a *déclassment* (p. 72). Of course, Jade's class identity had never been erased: it had remained central to her novel celebrity identity ever since she came to media attention. But given that the media interest in Jade had circled around the play between her working-class roots and new-found social mobility, her corporeal 'declassment' is no less significant.

To be sure, this contrasted with initial reports of weight loss – part of a broader emphasis 39 on Jade's fragile mental and physical state after she exited the house. In the earliest post-eviction interviews, whether on television or in popular magazines, Jade appears in dark colours (usually black and grey), head hung low, and her tear-stained face is devoid of the usual lip-gloss glamour. In these contexts, Jade is effectively required to relinquish

the privileges of a celebrity identity. As Rahman comments, the discourse of the confessional-redemption narrative in celebrity culture 'demands that the fallen celebrity remove themselves from the normal promotional mode, so the absence of payment must be iterated... to sustain the confessional authenticity: redemption comes at a price' (Rahman 2008, p. 137). This is clearly illustrated by Jade's post-eviction construction. In disavowing the discourse of commercialism which underpins any celebrity identity, it became conventional to hear that Jade wasn't being paid for the interviews, and that 'this wasn't about getting [her]... perfume back on the shelves' (Jade, quoted on *The Wright Stuff*, C5, 23 January, 2007) found at <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=oknOd84f89o>). In the intervening years between *Big Brother* and *CBB*, Jade had given birth to two sons, and in this regard, the idea of being a 'working mum' had long since been part of her persona. But in the interviews following *CBB*, motherhood becomes *primary* to Jade's identity – not the explicitly commodified discourse of the 'yummy mummy', but the emphasis on sacrifice and responsibility. As Deborah Jermyn (2008) has demonstrated in her analysis of Sarah Jessica Parker's image, motherhood is a central terrain on which the celebrity makes a claim to 'ordinariness' and 'realness', while simultaneously appearing to distance themselves from the apparently more shallow trappings of fame. Jade has a very different celebrity persona to SJP, but this same dialectic was explicitly present in her construction: 'I've not thought about the future – magazines and so on – I've only been thinking about being a good Mum to my kids' (Jade, quoted on *The Wright Stuff*, C5, 23 January, 2007 found at <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=oknOd84f89o>).

But with the mystifying myths of fame evacuated from the language of her image, Jade 40 struggles to activate a convincing claim to authenticity. In terms of the implicit or explicit rhetoric of media representation, the pendulum has swung solely toward manufacture as an explanation for fame – with the related implication that Jade is now derived from *nothing but images*. In this respect, we can read Jade's representational trajectory through a further model of selfhood: the narcissistic self (Lasch 1991). Unable to separate the self as a public performance or marketing tool from a consistent or 'core' inner self, 'in a mirror-fixated world... the centring of the ... self in something deep and stable becomes impossible' (Frosh 1991, cited in Adams 2007, p. 133). It would be an understatement to suggest that Jade's bid to apologise for her behaviour was viewed with a cynical eye. Her initial post-eviction interview with Davina McCall is even listed as 'scripted jade goody contrite interview' on Youtube.com (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPToztoDOCU>). Critics referred cynically to how Jade would be pushed through the 'celebrity transgression narrative' and then the 'celebrity redemption narrative' (Reade 2007) (involving an obligatory trip to 'The Priory' clinic) in a bid for self-renewal. Celebrity is ultimately a mode of representation, and it does not inhere in any person or thing (Marshall 1997). This fact is usually masked, to some degree, by the representational emphasis on the individual. But in Jade's case, and following *CBB*, the representational tropes of celebrity are seen as so transparent that they obliterate (consume) the individual they purport to represent. This creates a series of rather paradoxical images of Jade: she needs to utilise the language of 'the media' in order to get her 'message' (apology) across, but this very language also becomes a prison house of representation. On the one hand, this is because of the moral and political discourse which surrounded her behaviour: Jade shows an awareness that many may be critical of her being given air time or magazine space at all. But on the other, it also emerges from a recognition of the cynicism which surrounded her repentance. In this climate, Jade's very visibility is 'tainted' by discourses of self-promotion and performance. This is well captured by *heat* magazine's interview with Jade. The magazine reports how 'Jade tells us in a sombre tone... [that] she's worried about the picture for our shoot, she doesn't want people to think she is posing, or that she's asked to have her photograph taken' (3-9 February, 2007). The concept of celebrity cannot, of course, exist outside of media representation, and the actions described by *heat* would normally be an expected part of any celebrity identity.

Perhaps most damaging of all to Jade's image as a Reality star was the fact that this 41 heightened surveillance of her celebrity persona, the scrutiny of performance cues and image construction, led to the charge of a multi-faceted self, a narcissistic (post-modern)

identity which is fashioned to suit the demands of the context in hand. When Jade appears on *The Wright Stuff*, and we are shown a clip of her arguing with Shilpa in the house, one of the female guests compares the Jade on the screen with the contrite Jade in the studio and comments 'but I want to know which is the real Jade' (quoted on *The Wright Stuff*, C5, 23 January, 2007, found at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBh_Ukji0o4). Given the extent to which Reality TV stars are required to maintain a close semiotic relationship with their original on-screen persona, and the extent to which the idea of a consistent and unified identity is central to Reality TV's therapeutics of the self (Dubrofsky 2007), it may seem logical to suggest that the reaction to Jade in part pivoted on the fact that *CBB* had exposed an undesirable disjuncture between these spheres. This was very much the argument of PR guru Max Clifford when he insisted that 'the person we thought we knew was a sham – [Jade] was not that person at all' (quoted on *You Can't Fire Me... I'm Famous*, BBC1, 31 July, 2007). There may be some truth to Clifford's observation here, but the logic of this argument doesn't entirely work. Indeed, a more revealing comment is offered by *heat* (the text 'Jade's Future' is next to an image of the star being sucked down a plughole), when it comments how *CBB*:

Sounded the death knell for Jade Goody's career. As someone who built her reputation on being a loveable, ditzy 'if I can make it, anyone can' character, her constant bullying of Shilpa showed an ugly side we didn't know was there (or maybe we had just forgotten) (27 January - 2 February 2007, p. 2).

Given that *heat* had been a key producer of Jade's 'ditzy "if I can make it, anyone can" 42 image, there is a clear element of distancing here. But *heat's* reference to 'or maybe we had just forgotten' nods toward the fact that the spectre of bullying had previously been attached to Jade's persona during her first appearance in *Big Brother*. (She was accused of being the ring-leader in the bullying of the slim, model-like, Sophie Pritchard who entered *Big Brother* as a new housemate once the show had begun). Furthermore, the invocation of Jade's pre-fame persona in the popular press had explicitly emphasised her role as a bully at school (see in particular the coverage in *heat* magazine, 27 July-2 August, 2002). The implication in *heat's* description is that this behaviour (which was associated with her class upbringing, but which had not previously included charges of racism), was meant to have been contained or eradicated as part of Jade's 're-education'. In fact, when Jade appears as a subject on the BBC's *You Can't Fire Me... I'm Famous*, 6 months after the racism row erupted (this was reported as her first television work since the scandal), Piers Morgan spends much of the programme seeking to locate Jade's anti-social behaviour in her up-bringing, and especially in the unsuitable role model offered by Jade's mother. Jade's re-education had apparently not been comprehensive enough. Furthermore, it needed to continue. Although her subsequent trip to India was constructed as an educative experience arising specifically from the racism scandal, *You Can't Fire Me...* ends with Jade acknowledging that she doesn't 'regret going into the [*CBB*]... house' as it has taught her about unacceptable behaviour ('I need help') (Jade, quoted on *You Can't Fire Me... I'm Famous*, BBC1, 31 July, 2007).

CONCLUSION

The fact that celebrity can be constructed as a form of disciplinary regime (Foucault 43 1975) rather than a celebration of individual 'greatness', may well reflect much-debated shifts in modern fame. As the conventional line of thought goes, at least with regard to Reality TV, we have moved from celebrating 'greatness' and 'talent' to a fascination with the 'ordinary' (and the 'ordinary' is not always that attractive, affirming and appealing). From this perspective:

Fame is part of a Western ideal of personal freedom. Today's celebrity culture is based on rewarding self-improvement and efforts toward self-development, rather than being a consequence of hierarchical privilege and elite networks. Hence, [fame is seen as typifying]... a particular idea of personal freedom and motivation to succeed that all

should share (Evans 2005, p. 14).

But given the politically-charged nature of this self-improvement, it is difficult to agree 44 that Reality TV fame circumvents traditional systems of hierarchy and privilege. In fact, with respect to Jade's narrative, it is possible to argue that it represents a re-dramatisation of these structures in new and spectacular forms. Furthermore, 'people like' Jade have been repeatedly held up by the media as examples of an intrinsically democratised fame. Yet not only is such economic and cultural success rare, but the events of *CBB* remind us that 'celebrity remains a hierarchical and exclusive phenomenon – no matter how much it proliferates (Turner 2004, p. 84). In this regard, the study of power *within* television's 'democratisation' of the 'ordinary' will keep us on our toes, and I have foregrounded in particular discourses of class and gender here.

I have also suggested that Jade's representational trajectory can be read through various 45 conceptual constructions of contemporary selfhood – from the reflexive to the regulated. Given that studies of identity, as well as celebrity, are both concerned with questions of power, more could be done to explore the political and disciplinary relations between these spheres. There is also more to say here about how this case study discussed relates to the wider ideological and political context of Reality programming and perhaps lifestyle TV where constructions of selfhood are concerned. In fact, while a fascination with 'class passing', and the malleable concept of adopting new identities, often permeates other formats (we might think, for example, of *Faking It*(2000-, C4) or *Ladette to Lady*(2005, 2006, ITV1)), Jade's treatment suggests a less playful sensibility at work. Although the fact that Britain emerged from the *CBB* affair as a culture still profoundly marked by class divisions is hardly revelatory, Jade's representational journey points to some of the cultural and semiotic tensions which surround the still 'new' fascination with Reality TV stars. They are often required to demonstrate, and are valued for, the retention of an essential 'working-class glitz beneath the glamour' (Biressi and Nunn 2005, p. 146), while (like many 'essential' identities), this core can also be cast in negative terms – as the 'real' identity which must be (re)assumed if social order is to prevail.

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