The dialectical nature of Social Networking

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Masters in Philosophy at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

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May, 2015
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 1: Adorno and Horkheimer's critique of the Enlightenment and Progress</strong></td>
<td>12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1. What is the Enlightenment and what does it mean for humanity?</td>
<td>12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1. What is Adorno and Horkheimer's position regarding the Enlightenment and the progress of society?</td>
<td>14.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.2. An alternative view of the Enlightenment and its progressive attributes according to Adorno and Horkheimer</td>
<td>16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.3. How do Adorno and Horkheimer arrive at their critical perspective of the Enlightenment and its emancipatory ideals?</td>
<td>21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3. Attempting to understand Adorno and Horkheimer's &quot;Self-destruction of the Enlightenment&quot;</td>
<td>26.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.1. Adorno and Horkheimer's views regarding the &quot;Enlightenment of Odysseus&quot;</td>
<td>27.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.2. What modern, &quot;Enlightened&quot; rationality means for Adorno and Horkheimer</td>
<td>29.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.3. How do Adorno and Horkheimer perceive and understand the supposed technical progress of modern society?</td>
<td>32.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.4. What are the implications of living in a society dominated by a techno-scientific rationality?</td>
<td>35.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 2: The Culture Industry - an indictment of modern society's failure to liberate its citizens?

2.1. What is the rationale guiding Adorno and Horkheimer's Culture Industry thesis? 43.

2.2. What is the Culture Industry and how do Adorno and Horkheimer arrive at their conceptualisation of it? 46.

2.3. How does "pseudo-culture" manage to manifest itself within the modern world and what ideological function does it serve within the late capitalist society? 50.

2.4. What does the Culture Industry mean for the individual living in the modern world? 58.

2.5. Is Adorno and Horkheimer's Culture Industry thesis relevant and applicable to contemporary society? 67.

Chapter 3: Consuming life - why more may actually be less 74.

3.1. What is "consumption" and what role does it play within the "society of consumers"? 74.

3.2. Does a consumerist rationale lead to the objectification of individuals and the fragility of human bonds within contemporary society? 80.

3.3. What role does technology play within the society of consumers? 83.

3.4. How is social networking technology affecting the nature and perception of interpersonal relationships within the modern world? 97.

3.5. Concluding remarks regarding Bauman's society of consumers and the potentially undermining role that social networking technology plays therein 108.
Chapter 4: Social Networking - a modern extension of the Surveillance state? 111.

4.1. Attempting to gauge the notion of online surveillance from a critical perspective 113.

4.2. How to conceptualise the notions of discipline and surveillance within a Foucauldian paradigm 116.

4.3. What does the Panopticon mean for Foucault in terms of the disciplinary practices in the modern world? 118.

4.4. Can Foucault's insights into the panoptic schema be effectively applied to the realm of social networking and online surveillance? 122.

4.5. Critically gauging the marketing surveillance practices taking place on social networking sites 127.

4.6. Can Web 2.0 surveillance be regarded as a dominating and coercive practice? 132.

4.7. Concluding remarks regarding the surveillance practices taking place on social networking platforms 140.

Conclusion 143.

Reference List 155.
Tethered

Vacant minds and Frail bodies abound

In a Digitalized land where the hallowed Beep resounds,

What is left for the promising young mind to do?

Eternal slumber is the call for me and you.

So full of Promise, so full of Life,

Yet in the Technological gallows hangs the Strife

Of Modernised man enthralled by ubiquitous guise,

In a prearranged world where most no longer care to be wise..

Imposing on us all the one "True Mould",

There is little place left for the critic to be Bold;

In an Insatiable Storm where the Beep acts as a Beacon,

There is no longer much that stands in the line of reason...

This is the whisper of a corporeal phantom seeking solace in a digital age,

The will "To Be" lingers - Rage, Rage, Rage

Beep.

Sleep..

Atrophy...

Die
Abstract: The dialectical nature of Social Networking

Key Words:

Social Networking; Enlightenment; Progress; Technology; Techno-scientific rationality; Culture Industry; Consumerism; Surveillance; Commodification; Manipulation; Exploitation

Abstract:

This study aims to provide a critical assessment of social networking sites along with the underlying form of rationality propelling such technological innovations. The hypothesis of this study is rooted in the firm conviction that while social networking sites can be regarded as impressive technological achievements, and while there are certainly an array of benefits that can be associated with them, they nevertheless can be perceived as a hegemonic force which surreptitiously undermines the autonomy and freedom of the modern individual. In order to corroborate and augment such an assertion, this study relies primarily on the critical works of Adorno and Horkheimer (1997); Bauman (2003; 2007 & 2013) and Foucault (1977) in order to both investigate and critically evaluate the everyday assumptions typically associated with a technologically enlightened society, techno-scientific rationality and the recent emergence of technological tools such as social networking services. Based upon the findings that have emerged throughout the course of this investigation, it becomes clear to see that there is indeed a dialectical tension inherent to the nature of the various social networking technologies as they currently operate within the 21st century. Such a discovery is primarily based upon the fact that while social networking technologies do inherently possess emancipatory potentialities for the modern individual, they have nevertheless failed to actualise such potentialities due to the following reasons: 1) Social networking technologies have managed to propagate and entrench a powerful sentiment of technological determinism within modern society along with a highly corrosive form of instrumentalized rationality to which all individuals are now required to acquiesce; 2) Such technologies are paradoxically abrogating the possibility of meaningful interpersonal contiguity due to the fact they have managed to commodify the technological culture associated with a digital form of interaction/communication along with the individual making use of such technologies; and 3) In their current format, social networking services are allowing for the objectification, manipulation and exploitation of the online subject to take place in order to pursue and promote an instrumentalized strategy of marketing surveillance and capital accumulation.
Introduction

Is there a dialectical tension inherent to Social Networking? In other words: Can Social Networking be regarded as a hegemonic force within modern society thereby undermining the freedom and autonomy of the individual? It is the intention of this study to answer this question. The introduction highlights why this particular question is of paramount importance for the individual living within the technologically driven society of the 21st century, along with the fact as to why it is so imperative that an investigation of this nature be undertaken in a timeous fashion. The hypothesis of this particular investigation is rooted in the firm conviction that while social networking sites can indeed be regarded as impressive technological achievements within the 21st century, and while there are certainly an array of benefits that can be associated with the utilization of such services, they nevertheless can be regarded as a hegemonic force which surreptitiously undermines the autonomy and freedom of individuals living within the modern world. In order to extrapolate upon such an area of inquiry, the introduction will also aim to elucidate the various theorists, and their critical works, that will be utilized in order to undertake an investigation of this nature and why it is that their works can be regarded as being of paramount importance in order to elucidate the different dimensions pertaining to the dialectical nature of social networking.

According to Vallor (2012: 1), the internet has become an increasingly important and central aspect within the "social life of human beings around the globe" primarily due to the recent emergence of, popularity and enthusiasm displayed towards "social networking technologies" such as "Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and LinkedIn" (to name but a few). In accordance with this, Collin et al. (2011: 8) indicate that the use of social networking services (SNS) – such as Facebook.com and Twitter.com – has become an increasingly accepted and integral part of everyday life giving rise to what can, in many ways, be referred to as a cultural shift (Clark & Roberts, 2010: 507) pertaining to the manner in which individuals now communicate and socialize with one another in the 21st century. According to Collin et al. (2011: 11), such a shift has manifested itself within modern society primarily due to the fact that social networking services have effectively managed to revolutionize and diversify the manner in which individuals are now able to "present themselves"; communicate with those around them; and maintain/promote their interpersonal relationships.
In light of what has been mentioned above, Boyd & Ellison (in Collin et al. 2011: 8) indicate that social networking services, and the social media platforms with which they are inherently associated, can fundamentally be understood and defined as:

Web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

Based upon what it is that social networking services essentially entail and what it is that their novel communicative features encompass, Collin et al. (2011: 12-20) go on to assert that there are a number of significant benefits and progressive attributes that one can associate with the use and embrace of social networking services including: the delivery of educational outcomes; the promotion, facilitation and strengthening of supportive and meaningful relationships; cultural enrichment; identity formation; the encouragement of a "sense of belonging" for the individual (to a wider "virtual community") and; the enhancement of one's self-esteem and self-efficacy. In accordance with these positive and progressive aspects pertaining to the usage of social networking services, Ellison et al. (2007: 1143) indicate that from both an intra-personal perspective and an inter-personal perspective, social networking sites such as Facebook, Friendster and MySpace can be regarded as liberating and emancipatory technologies as they are now allowing individuals, across the globe, to "present themselves" in an array of "interesting" an "exciting" ways whilst also providing them with "exciting opportunities" to "articulate their interests" with others in their "social networks" in both an intimate and sincere fashion.

Ellison et al. (2007: 1143) elaborate upon this particular pointer by indicating that a great deal of the effectiveness and inherent value contained within these social networking services can be attributed to the fact that they are axiomatically designed and structured in a particularly pragmatic and utilitarian fashion so as to accommodate and complement the different aspects/features that can be correlated with the highly mobile and multifaceted nature of life within the 21st century. Thus, when considering and evaluating the pragmatic underpinnings connected with the different social networking services currently available online, Ellison et al. (2007: 1143) indicate that one will easily be able to identify and locate an array of SNSs that deal exclusively with "work-related contexts" (e.g., LinkedIn.com); "romantic relationship initiation" (the original goal of Friendster.com); "music" or "politics" (e.g., MySpace.com); and
even those designed to allow one to communicate and interact with other individuals belonging to the same (or similar) cohort - the "original incarnation" of Facebook.com was actually designed for individuals within the "college population".

When viewed from this particular perspective, social networking services seem to be nothing less than a modern day technological triumph, a revolutionary innovation with regard to the communicative practices of individuals in the 21st century and thus, a true testament to the progressive and evolutionary attributes that one can associate with an enlightened and edified society that takes pride in the promotion, utilization and advancement of technological tools and innovations in order to liberate and emancipate the individual residing within the modern world. However, on a cautionary note, Vallor (2012: 185) indicates that as the "wave of online socializing spreads" across the globe, scholars from an array of disciplines are currently attempting to come to terms with the tremendous amount of change that has occurred with regard to the communicative and socialising practices of individuals in the 21st century in order to "analyze, understand and predict the social and ethical consequences of these emerging changes". According to Vallor (2012: 185), such academic pursuits can therefore be said to have been initiated - across a range of disciplines - in order to ultimately ascertain whether or not these SNSs can truly be regarded as the benevolent, liberating and emancipatory technologies that their proponents so eagerly claim them to be - or, if there is something more questionable to the situation than initially meets the eye.

In direct contrast to the fairly grandiose and benign claims espoused by the proponents and acolytes of the various social networking services currently available, Jackson (2009: 13) indicates that life within the modern, technologically driven, society of the 21st century is becoming "increasingly multilayered, mutable and virtual". As a direct result of the modern mobile-communicative devices which are currently available, along with the growing ubiquity of the internet and the sophisticated technology that supports and propels these revolutionary platforms, Jackson (2009: 13) affirmatively asserts that one can now successfully contact "millions of people across the globe with the greatest of ease", however, Jackson (2009: 13) also maintains that there is a growing - and disturbing - tendency amongst the denizens of the modern world to now connect and communicate with even their most "intimate friends and family" via the aid of "instant messaging" and "virtual visits" which are continuously punctuated by an incessant stream of "beeps", "pings" and an invasive and overwhelming sense of "multitasking". Based upon such a paradoxical set of activities that can be associated with modern day communicative practices, Jackson (2009: 13) goes on to assert that amid the
"glittering promise" of our "new technologies" and the "wondrous potential" of our "scientific gains", society seems to be "nurturing a culture of social diffusion, intellectual fragmentation [and] sensory detachment" [my emphasis] and that, in this "new world", something is horribly "amiss".

Jackson (2009: 16) elaborates upon this rather intriguing - and unsettling - assertion by indicating that as a direct result of the modern individual's immersion within the digital worlds that have been created through the various social networking sites - and other related modern day communicative technologies - currently available, people now seem to be "plunging into a culture of mistrust and skimming", whereby there is an increasingly "dehumanizing merging between man [sic] and machine" [my emphasis] that is starting to evince itself and take hold of the socialising and interactive components of contemporary culture. This then leads Jackson (2009: 16) to enquire as to whether or not such a situation can be affirmatively defined as "progress" due to the fact that, according to Jackson's critical understanding of the situation at hand, the modern individual is actually "slipping towards a time of ignorance" that is "paradoxically born amid an abundance of information and connectivity". While Jackson (2009: 21) is quick to assert that one "cannot blame technology for society's ills", she nevertheless maintains that it is imperative for the individual to understand that modern technologies - such as social networking services - "must not be used blindly" and as a result of this, Jackson (2013: 21) maintains that we therefore need to think very critically about how it is that we want to conceptualise and define the notion of progress within the 21st century.

In a similar vein of critical thought, Turkle (2011: xiv) indicates that as computer technologies, virtual worlds and modern-day communicative devices have progressed, advanced and colonised society over the last 30 years, people now seem "more determined than ever to give human qualities to objects" and are becoming increasingly inclined "to treat each other as things". Thus, in accordance with what Jackson (2009: 16) has mentioned, Turkle (2011: 14) argues that as denizens of the 21st century, we are now indeed more "connected" than any other period in human history, whereby we can easily and effectively communicate with scores of individuals from across the entire globe, and yet, even though such an incredible technological feat has been effectively actualised within our particular epoch, Turkle (2011: 14) maintains that we also find ourselves at an incredibly disturbing and worrying point in modern history due to the fact that individuals are now starting to feel "more alone" than ever before. Such a paradoxical and seemingly contradictory set of existential conditions then forces Turkle (2011: 19) - like Jackson (2009) - to raise the crucial question as to whether or not the various
liberating and emancipatory technologies that we currently have at our disposal, and so readily seem to embrace (including social networking platforms), really do "serve our human purpose?".

Contrary to the auspicious assertions which emphatically attest to social networking's revolutionary ability to both promote and support the development of intimacy, trust, social capital, cultural enrichment and intra/inter-personal satisfaction, Turkle (2011: 168) argues that not only does the increasingly "connected" and tethered nature of life within the 21st century encourage the modern individual to treat those that they meet online "the same way they treat objects" - with dispatch, indifference and haste; but, Turkle (2011: 168) is also of the opinion that such practices increase the possibility of people actually coming to view "themselves as objects" as well, thus demoting all individuals residing within the digital world of social networking into the nether realms of objectification. This then causes Turkle (2011: 157) to assert that as a direct result of modern society's increasing digital connectivity, people are beginning to feel "increasingly insecure, lonely and isolated" [my emphasis]. Turkle (2011: 255) then goes on to indicate that one also needs to be acutely aware of the fact that the various social networking technologies currently available in the modern world have not been axiomatically constructed with the aim of liberating individuals by allowing them to connect with each other with a greater sense of ease and freedom, but rather, that sites such as Facebook and Google utilize all of the data provided by their users for an instrumentalized pursuit of "commercial" gain i.e. they will vigilantly surveil the online usage and habits of the "wired-up consumer" in order to further the economic interests of those parties who have constructed and have an investment in these technologies. Yet again, Turkle (2011: 157) asserts that such a situation forces one to consider whether or not such isolating and instrumentalized practices can really be defined as progress.

According to Turkle's (2011: 243) analysis of the matter at hand, the antagonistic character and dialectical dimensions that appear to be inherent to the nature of modern mobile communication technologies - including social networking services - highlights the imperative need for an "amended narrative of technology", whereby the "Triumphantism Narrative" - which is currently being so widely embraced and propagated throughout society - needs to be confronted and countered with a "Realistic one" in order to critically elucidate "technology's true effects on us" whilst also remaining impartial enough so as to describe the situation at hand in an accurate and honest fashion. What this therefore implies, according to Turkle's (2011: 243) critical interpretation, is that such an amended narrative should fundamentally be
aimed at elucidating the various "possibilities" and "benefits" associated with the "culture of connectivity", as well as possessing the critical insight and distance required in order to effectively gauge the "problems and distortions" which can be associated with the "tethered self". Such a sentiment is both supported and augmented by Vallor (2011: 186) who indicates that one might ask why an individual should concern themselves with technologies like Facebook and MySpace and the likely effects of which might seem "trivial" in comparison with the "life-and-death" implications of other "contemporary moral issues" that command the "lion's share" of philosophers' attention, such as "abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment and genetic engineering". However, Vallor (2011: 186) goes on to indicate that one can also argue that "pervasive technologies" - such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter - possess the innate ability to "modify" our most "basic modes" of "social interaction and bonding", and as a result of this, it is these technologies that:

\[
\textit{have the potential to influence our moral lives and character more deeply than many of the ethical dilemmas that currently preoccupy us} \text{ [my emphasis].}
\]

Based upon this, both Turkle (2011: 293) and Jackson (2009: 21) indicate that a critical narrative of such "pervasive technologies" is incredibly important and urgently required within our technologically driven epoch, as it is innately skeptical about blindly acquiescing to the presumed "linear progress" typically associated with the various technological mediums that have been introduced into society along with their ostensible benefits and advancements. As a result, Turkle (2011: 293) argues that a critical narrative of this nature should essentially be aimed at encouraging a sense of "humility" when being confronted with technological breakthroughs; whilst also promoting an open and critical discourse about how it is that society can effectively address the various challenges and issues emerging within the fields of both science and technology. It is therefore in this direction that we now need to turn our attention in order to establish whether or not social networking services can indeed be regarded as liberating and edifying technologies for the individual living within the 21st century, or, if there is something more inimical, opaque and undermining lurking beneath the veneer of what Turkle (2011: 242) refers to as the sentiment of triumphalism that is currently permeating throughout the various discourses associated with these new technologies.

In order to effectively achieve this particular outcome, the reader will initially be introduced in chapter one to the critical works of Adorno and Horkheimer as delineated within their seminal text titled \textit{Dialectic of Enlightenment} (1997: 1944). Within this highly critical text, Adorno and
Horkheimer (1997) attempt to critique the supposed developments and progressions of the "Enlightenment" throughout the course of Western history and its insatiable/inexorable reliance on scientific and technological paraphernalia, along with the highly instrumentalized and objectifying form of rationality that has been adopted within modern society. These critical insights will therefore essentially aim at describing why the so called "Enlightenment" of modern society has failed to live up to its emancipatory promises, how it is that the various technological innovations of the 20th century have only resulted in more barbarism and why one therefore needs to be highly critical and wary of notions such as progress and development when considering the various technological tools, apparatuses and rationality that accompany such concepts.

Once this particular objective has been effectively actualised, Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) attempt to transpose their critical assessment and critique of the Enlightenment into the cultural realm of society within the 20th century will then, in chapter two, be introduced and extrapolated upon. Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) attempt to elucidate such an assessment and critique of modern culture through their "Culture Industry" thesis, via the aid of what Adorno refers to as "immanent critique" - as opposed to "transcendental critique" - which essentially attempts to assess and judge the world not from some external viewpoint, but against the promises culture itself has made about the possible transformation and improvement of the world (Thomson, 2006: 16).

Such an avenue of exploration will prove to be useful in terms of the particular outcomes of this investigation due to the fact that their assessment of modern culture fundamentally aims at highlighting how it is that the actual working, living and recreational conditions within modern society - which they believe to be inherently guided by a highly instrumentalized and purposive sense of rationality, along with an acute and inexorable sentiment of technological determinism - actually contain very little emancipatory and liberating qualities. As we shall see, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are ultimately of this opinion primarily due to the fact that from their perspective, the existential and ontological conditions within contemporary culture are axiomatically guided by a desire to compel and instill a condition of conformism, objectification, ignorance and isolation within the individual living in such a context - with modern technology, in many ways, spearheading and augmenting such an undermining process.

Based upon such an avenue of exploration, it will be highlighted how it is that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) - like Turkle (2011) and Jackson (2009) - are incredibly critical and wary of
modern culture and its associated technological paraphernalia due to the fact that they are unequivocally of the opinion that such modern technologies possess the innate potential to serve a dominating and hegemonic function within society. Such an analysis can then be regarded as being incredibly pertinent with regard to the aims of this investigation - which is focused on exploring the dialectical nature of social networking - due to the fact that it pragmatically attempts to highlight the dialectical nature of modern technological devices along with the dubious form of rationality which has become imbricated with such devices. The critical nature of Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) fairly expansive investigation will then serve as the overarching interpretative theoretical framework guiding this particular investigation from where we can begin to gauge the supposed emancipatory qualities and benign attributes of an enlightened society that has become increasingly dependent upon an ever growing number of technological devices and innovations in order to both understand the world and address any potential threat or problem that may emerge therein.

Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critique of the enlightened world and the progressive qualities that are typically associated with a highly technologized form of modernity and rationality will then, in chapter three, be supplemented and augmented by the critical works of Zygmunt Bauman (2003; 2007 & 2013) who aims a great deal of his focus on the nature and existential underpinnings of modern society which he considers to be "in serious trouble" (Lyon, 2010: 328). Bauman (2003; 2007 & 2013) is essentially of this opinion due to the fact that, like Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), he too believes that modern society now finds itself indubitably rooted within an unbridled enlightened framework, whereby an inexorable sentiment of "consumerism" coupled with the hegemonic nature of the market forces - driven by the imperatives of technological determinism and instrumental reason - have lead to the creation of a repressive and objectifying social order in which all individuals of modern society are now trapped (Lyon, 2010: 328).

As will be evinced throughout certain aspects of this investigation, Bauman (2003; 2007 & 2013) fundamentally attempts to highlight how it is that within modern society - or what he refers to as the "society of consumers" - the market economy, along with its endless array of novel commodities and the technological paraphernalia (including social networking technologies) with which it is associated, have essentially arrived at a position whereby they are now able to dictate the nature of social and interpersonal relations whilst also possessing the ability to demote individuals living within such a society to mere objects whereby they - the individual - get utilized and manipulated as tools by the very system that promises them (but
fails to deliver) gratification. What is therefore of particular import with regard to the proposed area of inquiry is the fact that, according to Bauman's (2003; 2007 & 2013) critical insights, social networking services seem to play an instrumental role in propagating the domination wielded by modern society over the individual and it is therefore in this regard that such a perspective will definitely aid the outcomes of this investigation which essentially aims to discover whether or not social networking services possess the innate ability to function as a hegemonic force that ultimately undermines the autonomy of the individual. Such an avenue of exploration will then also attempt to bring many of the critical and central themes of Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) analysis, contained within *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, into the realm of the 21st century.

Finally, in chapter four, Bauman's (2003; 2007 & 2013) critique of modern society will then be supplemented with the critical works of Michel Foucault (1977), as delineated within *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison*, in which he attempts to elucidate how it is that many of the enlightened forms of technology found within modern society can be utilized as tools aimed at undermining the freedom, liberty and autonomy of the modern individual - for an array of instrumentalized and myopic objectives. Of particular import with regard to this investigation is Foucault's (1977) critical insight regarding the underlying logic propelling Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon which can be regarded as an enlightened technological edifice that was introduced to society within the 19th century in order to promote an overriding sense of discipline and control via the aid of perpetual surveillance (Jackson, 2009:130 & Farinosi, 2011: 63). As will be delineated, Foucault (1977) ultimately believes that Bentham's Panopticon serves as a blueprint for the architecture of the "surveillance state" which spans across all facets of social life in order to ultimately impress and impose an obligatory sentiment of conformity, control and docility upon the individual living within the modern world. Utilising such a critical analysis of Bentham's Panopticon, and what it means to live in the surveillance state, we will then attempt to investigate the various implications of Foucault's (1977) critical analysis in order to gauge what it means to live in a society whereby the technological tools that we utilize in order to make our lives easier and more efficient - with a particular focus on social networking services - may actually possess the ability to act as surveillance tools, thereby giving external parties a great deal of power to exploit and manipulate the individuals making use of such technologies, thus undermining the autonomy and freedom of the individual living within the modern world.

Based upon what has been mentioned above, it is therefore the intention of this investigation to utilize the critical insights and theoretical frameworks as delineated by the various theorists
mentioned above in order to provide a puissant and idiosyncratic critique of the ideals of the Enlightenment, techno-scientific rationality and consumerism as they have manifested themselves within both the 20th and 21st centuries. It is also these theorists that will provide this investigation with the necessary impetus and theoretical background from where one can begin to construct the amended narrative of technology, to which Turkle (2011: 243) has previously referred, in the hope of discovering whether or not there is indeed a dialectical tension inherent to the nature of social networking and as such, this will then constitute the responsive framework that will be utilized in order to address the problem statement as it appears within this particular study.
Chapter 1: Adorno and Horkheimer's critique of the Enlightenment and Progress

In order to answer the question as to whether or not there is a dialectical tension inherent to social networking, this chapter will initially aim to investigate the Enlightenment’s emancipatory promises. Once this particular objective has been effectively actualised, Adorno and Horkheimer's position regarding the Enlightenment and the progress of society will be discussed – their alternative view as well as how they arrived at their perspectives. An attempt will then be made to understand Adorno and Horkheimer's so called "Self-destruction of the Enlightenment" and the implications of living in a society dominated by a techno-scientific rationality.

1.1. What is the Enlightenment and what does it mean for humanity?

According to Fagan (2005), the Enlightenment is characteristically thought of as a historical period, spanning the 17th and 18th Centuries, embodying the emancipatory ideals of modernity. As such, the Enlightenment intellectuals - ranging from Descartes through to Kant - were united by a "common vision" in which a "genuinely human social and political order" was to be achieved through the dissolution of previously oppressive, unenlightened, institutions. In essence, the establishment of the Enlightenment’s ideals was to be accomplished primarily by creating the conditions in which individuals could be "free to exercise their own reason", liberated from the dictates of "rationally indefensible" doctrine and "superstitious" dogma. As Bacon (in Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997: 5) indicates:

...the true end, scope, or office of knowledge [in an enlightened world], which I have set down to consist not in any plausible, delectable, reverend or admired discourse, or any satisfactory arguments, but in effecting and working, and in discovery of particulars not revealed before, for the better endowment and help of man's [sic] life.

The venerable means for establishing and maintaining this new enlightened order was unanimously perceived - among the enlightened intellectuals - as being attained through the use and implementation of humankind's highest cognitive faculty: "reason" (Fagan, 2005). This rather sanguine and noble sentiment, which broadly highlights what the emancipatory, progressive and liberating ideals of the Enlightenment entail, is echoed by Immanuel Kant in his What is Enlightenment? essay, whereby he describes the process of Enlightenment as "the human being's emergence from his self-incurred minority" and as such, he therefore called on
his readers to "have the courage" to use their own understanding (or reason) "without direction from another" (Kant, 1996: 17 in Dryden, 2010 ). What Kant was essentially arguing for, in accordance with the rationality of enlightened thinking, was rather than letting the principles by which we make decisions be determined by our political leaders, pastors, or society, he called upon the "will" - which was to be guided by reason - to determine its guiding principles for itself, thus, instead of being obedient to an externally imposed law or religious precept, one should be obedient to "one's own self-imposed law" (Dryden, 2010). Based upon such an understanding, the proponents of the Enlightenment maintained that they had managed to identify the means for achieving "human sovereignty" over a world which was typically conceived of as the "manifestation of some higher, divine authority". What this therefore seems to imply is that the Enlightenment can be conceptualised as a fairly modern overarching doctrine or epistemological paradigm which aimed to extirpate any form of "mythology" or "animism" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 5) from an individual's understanding and comprehension of the world and an approach that "embodies the promise of human beings finally taking individual and collective control over the destiny of the species" (Fagan, 2005) - a destiny that would, supposedly, be inextricably intertwined with the ideals of freedom, autonomy, emancipation and progress.

Based upon this brief account of what the school of enlightened thinkers advocated and what its liberating precepts entail, one could presumably surmise that as a direct result of the Enlightenment and an unbridled use of reason (one that has been freed from the shackles of mythology and superstition), society and its inhabitants would have inevitably managed to move forwards, in an inexorably progressive trajectory by incrementally improving upon the ignorant and unenlightened position in which they had once found themselves towards a more rational, reasonable and enlightened one.

Countering such a supposition, Hohendahl (2013: 242) indicates that within contemporary political and philosophical discourse, the concept of "progress" within modern, enlightened society has a rather "peculiar status": on the one hand it is "completely taken for granted", in that there is merely a "general expectation that social conditions ought to improve" - as the guardians and proponents of enlightened thought would advocate - and on the other, there is a "lack of serious and sustained reflection" in public discourse about what it means to "talk about progress". Such a claim is augmented and accentuated by the concerns and issues raised by both Jackson (2009) and Turkle (2011) who critically question whether or not the highly
technologized and enlightened world of the 21st century - in which people have become increasingly reliant upon a vast array of technological paraphernalia in order to operate and function - is really serving and aiding our human purpose and whether or not such a dependency and fixation with technological devices can really be defined as progress for humankind. In accordance with this, Adorno highlights the importance of scrutinising the notion of progress and the Enlightenment within contemporary society and modern discourse when he states (in Thomson, 2006: 127):

as soon as the possibility of progress is assumed directly, progress is betrayed by being turned into another lie in the triumph of domination.

Such a statement seems to indicate that Adorno's understanding of what the notion of progress within an enlightened world entails differs fundamentally from those accounts that posit a "developmental schema" according to which human history is considered as "progressively proceeding through separate stages of cognitively classifying and apprehending reality" (Fagan, 2005). It is in this regard that we must now turn our attention primarily to the seminal and critical works of Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 1944), as delineated in Dialectic of Enlightenment, in order to identify and expand upon their polemics directed towards a blind faith in the Enlightenment and the enveloping embrace of progress, along with the various technological innovations and advancements with which it is typically associated.

1.2.1. What is Adorno and Horkheimer's position regarding the Enlightenment and the progress of society?

In stark contrast to the idealistic and somewhat utopian portrayal of the various beneficial and emancipatory outcomes of enlightened thought and the sacrosanct position held by an incorruptible and progressive form of modern rationality, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 3) indicate in the introduction of Dialectic of Enlightenment that:

[i]n the most general sense of progressive thought, the Enlightenment has always aimed at liberating men [sic] from fear and establishing their sovereignty yet the fully enlightened earth radiates disaster triumphant [my emphasis].

Such a statement is clearly critical and antipathetic towards the conventional accounts of the Enlightenment and what its beneficial outcomes for humankind entail. According to Zuidervaart (2011), what such a dark and damming introductory statement highlights, is that within their
investigation of the Enlightenment, both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) essentially aim to
discover how it is that:

the progress of modern science and medicine and industry promise to liberate people
from ignorance, disease, and brutal, mind-numbing work, yet help create a world where
people willingly swallow fascist ideology, knowingly practice deliberate genocide, and
energetically develop lethal weapons of mass destruction?

Thomson (2006: 3) reinforces this assertion when he states that what both Adorno and
Horkheimer seek to interrogate within *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is the "incapacity of reason to
account for the evident failings of [modern] social life". Such a sombre and critical sentiment
then clearly indicates that, contrary to the general perception of what the supposed benefits
associated with enlightened thought entail, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) refused to endorse
such a wholly optimistic reading of the benevolent and progressive effects of the
Enlightenment and the rationalization of society - along with the various technological
breakthroughs that have accompanied such a process (Fagan, 2005). The question that
therefore needs to be raised at this particular juncture is: Why is it that both Adorno and
Horkheimer (1997) make such a powerful and damning introductory statement regarding the
emancipatory ideals of the Enlightenment, progress and the sacrosanct position that is
currently associated with the modern conception of reason; and how is it that they go about
substantiating such antagonistic and critical claims? Once we have managed to attain a firm
understanding of these matters and the critiques with which they are associated, we will then
be able to apply and extend Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critique directly into the
technologically driven - and presumably progressive - societies of the 20th and 21st century as
it is these very societies that seem to have blindly embraced the "Triumphalist" narrative of
technology (Turkle, 2011: 242) that is indubitably associated with a modern and enlightened
form of rationality (Morozov, 2012: 289). Such an orientation and approach will then allow one
to ascertain whether or not their views can shed some light on why it is that contemporary
society is currently so fixated with utilizing technology in nearly every facet of their lives - by
identifying and extrapolating upon the underlying form of rationality driving such a process -
and the potential dangers that may be associated with such an approach.
1.2.2. An alternative view of the Enlightenment and its progressive attributes according to Adorno and Horkheimer

According to Fagan (2005), when considering Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) understanding and critique of the Enlightenment and the progressive qualities typically associated with enlightened thought or reason, it is important to take note of the fact that both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) do not conceive of the Enlightenment as "confined to a distinct historical period" as most historians and scholars would claim. Zuidervaart (2011) supplements this assertion by indicating that although they tend to cite Francis Bacon as a leading spokesman for an enlightened world, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) do not think that "modern science" and "scientism" are the "sole culprits" that have led to the creation of an enlightened and rationalized, yet highly "disastrous" and "destructive" world. According to their understanding of what the Enlightenment entails, the tendency of rational progression to become irrational regression arises much earlier. Jarvis (1998: 24) augments this claim when he indicates that:

Adorno and Horkheimer do not use the term 'enlightenment' primarily to designate a historical period ranging from Descartes to Kant. Instead they use it to refer to a series of related intellectual and practical operations which are presented as demythologizing, secularizing or disenchanting some mythical, religious or magical representation of the world.

Thus, from the outstet of their critique, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) extend their understanding of the Enlightenment to refer to a mode of "apprehending reality found in the writings of classical Greek philosophers, such as Parmenides, to 20th century positivists such as Bertrand Russell" (Fagan, 2005) as well as ancient "Hebrew scriptures" (Zuidervaart, 2011). According to Fagan (2005), if one is to scrutinize these texts in a chronological order, one will invariably discover that these accounts typically describe the "inexorable cognitive ascent of humanity" as originating in "myth", proceeding to "religion", and culminating in "secular, scientific reasoning". According to this particular reading, the "scientific worldview" ushered in by the Enlightenment is seen as effecting a "radical intellectual [and technological] break" from that which went before. Such a "break" is also perceived as being a beneficial and progressive milestone for humankind whereby the "old powers...of metaphysics" and "superstition" would finally be overcome and mastered "without any illusion of ruling or inherent powers" due to the fact that such "primitive" beliefs were being progressively replaced by a highly rationalized,
scientific and technological form of rationality that operates purely on "facts" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 6).

Based upon this, it is reasonable to assert that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) expand the scope of their investigation to encompass an extensively larger portion of the history of Western civilization than typical historical accounts of the period commonly referred to as the "Enlightenment", and it is in this regard that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: xi) indicate within the introduction of Dialectic of Enlightenment that they had set themselves nothing less than the discovery of why mankind [sic], instead of entering into a truly human condition [throughout the course of Western history], is sinking into a new kind of barbarism.

Due to the sheer scope and magnitude of their idiosyncratic investigation, Villa (2007: 4) indicates that Dialectic of Enlightenment can be regarded as more of a "genealogy" in the Nietzschean sense, rather than an empirical or analytical overview of one particular period in history, whereby both authors seek to elucidate how the "progressive formation" of the "rational subject" - that is, the liberation of the "thinking subject from myth" towards a "techno-scientific" understanding of the world - sets the pattern for an "endlessly repeated sequence of self-denial, self-violence, and self-sacrifice". Such a claim is augmented by Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997: 7) assertion that the roots of the Enlightenment originate in the "primordial struggle for self-preservation" whereby the faculty of reason within the individual "separates itself from the mythic powers of a primitive, animistic world" and begins to attach itself to a more "scientific and technological form of rationality" which provides enlightened thinkers with the "schema of the calculability of the world" - as epitomised and expressed within the modern positivistic tradition (Villa, 2007: 5).

According to Villa (2007: 5), from the perspective of both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), it is this painful, "identity-forming struggle" against an overwhelming, bewildering and inexplicable natural world that creates, from the very beginning, an internal link between "reason and domination" whilst also leading to a situation whereby the faculty of reason imbricates itself with the notion power. Such an assertion, which is clearly aversive towards conventional accounts which expound upon what the liberating and emancipatory aspects of the Enlightenment's aims and outcomes are supposed to entail, is explicated within one of the Dialectic of Enlightenment's most famous thesis which asserts that "scientific Enlightenment rationality, as it dominates nature, inevitably dominates humanity, which is also nature" (Villa,
2007: 5). Thomson (2006: 28) reinforces this rather dubious and damning claim by indicating that at the heart of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, lies the assertion that, over the course of Western history, the notion of "rationality", in seeking to overcome "irrational understandings" of the world, turns itself into an "irrational form of domination" due to the fact that modern society's relentless pursuit "for certainty, for absolutes, for fixed foundations or for security" (which are currently claimed to reside within the realm of techno-science), are themselves "violent and destructive forces" which have invariably led to the atrocities which manifested themselves in the twentieth century (Thomson, 2006: 5).

According to Villa (2007: 5) such an assertion is made both evident and all the more striking when one is to take into consideration the fact that for Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), the recent history of the 20th Century merely verified this harrowing fact in the most horrific manner imaginable as "Auschwitz confirmed their fears about reason's complicity with power and destruction", or as Zuidervaart (2011) indicates, from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, the Nazi death camps are not an "aberration" or an anomalous occurrence in the course of a "progressive history", but rather a powerful indication "that something fundamental has gone wrong with the modern West". Viewed from this particular perspective, enlightened reason finds itself entangled in "blind domination" not by chance or an unfortunate concatenation of historical circumstances - but by something inherent to the process of the Enlightenment itself. Such an assertion therefore clearly highlights just how skeptical and critical both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are about blindly accepting the supposedly liberating and progressive ideals that many have come to associate with the Enlightenment and the scientific-technological form of rationality with which it has become correlated.

Based upon this, Villa (2007: 17) indicates that *Dialectic of Enlightenment* manages to take the critique of reason, progress and the Enlightenment to "previously unimagined depths" as it is "conceptual, modern rationality" which finds itself in the "dock", due to the fact that its "impure origins" in the "struggle for self-preservation" irrevocably shape conceptual rationality so that it might "serve as an effective tool of domination of nature, of other men [sic], and of the self". Regarding this particular matter, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 11) note that the possibility of "realistic world domination" - which includes all elements of nature: human and the natural world alike - corresponds directly to the system of a "more skilled science" that finds itself completely reliant upon, and supportive of, a technological determination of the world due to the fact that:
The more the process of self-preservation is effected..., the more it requires self-alienation of the individuals who must model their body and soul according to the technical apparatus of modern society [my emphasis] (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 30).

It is in this regard that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: xi) indicate that "not only the pursuit, but the [modern] meaning of science has become problematical" as both authors believe that "on the road to modern science, men [sic] renounce any claim to meaning" (1997: 5).

In order to clarify and elaborate upon such a claim, Bauman and Lyon (2013: 85) indicate that as the scientific and "technical ambitions" of modernity came to dominate over contemporary society, they possessed the innate ability to "silence the voice of conscience and compassion" due to the fact that such ambitions overlooked and negated any consideration of ethics and morality within their sphere of operation and influence - a situation which Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 7) refers to as "adiaphorization" whereby "systems and processes become split off from any consideration to morality". What Bauman and Lyon (2013: 85) essentially argue - in direct accordance with both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) - is that the "instrumentality" of our modern "techno-scientific" rationality "no longer guides us to adjust means to ends but allows our ends to be determined by available means". This then implies that, as a direct result of the scientific and instrumentalized form of rationality that reason has come to assume within the modern, enlightened world, we now select things for doing "just because the technology for doing so has been developed" - whilst overlooking the crucial questions as to whether or not they are inherently right or just. On an incredibly dubious note, Bauman and Lyon (2013: 85) indicate that when the principle of "we can do it, so we will do it" rules our choices, we reach a point at which "moral responsibility for human deeds and their inhuman effects can neither be authoritatively posited nor effectively executed". Preempting such a sombre and harrowing assertion, Adorno (in Thomson, 2006: 127) states:

[No universal history leads from savagery to humanitarianism, but there is one leading from the slingshot to the megaton bomb.

Such a damning assertion regarding the underlying ideals and impetus which drives modern rationality is primarily founded upon Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997: 4) conviction that enlightened thought, as it currently manifests itself in the modern world, is explicitly "instrumentalized to dominate" both "nature and men", and while they readily acknowledge that "social freedom is inseparable from enlightened thought" they are nevertheless under the impression that the social institutions into which the modern ideals of enlightened thought
were woven "contained the seeds of reversal that are universally apparent today" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: xiii).

Such a contrasted statement therefore places both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) in a rather ambiguous and antagonistic position with regard to the Enlightenment and modern rationality along with its emancipatory and progressive precepts: on the one hand they readily admit that an enlightened form of thought, based upon and guided by reason, is essential to achieving and maintaining a sense of freedom and autonomy for the individual within society (a view similar to that of Kant's and the other enlightened thinkers of the 17th and 18th centuries as explicated above), and on the other hand, they are nevertheless incredibly critical and skeptical of how it is that the ideals of conceptual rationality currently manifest themselves in society, as it is these very ideals that seem to bring humankind into a destructive state of bondage, subjugation and domination.

In order to expound upon Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) ambivalent, yet damning position towards the - modern - precepts of the Enlightenment, Villa (2007: 6) indicates how one needs to be aware of the fact that within *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) present an overview and critique of enlightened thought which takes up and furthers certain aspects of Max Weber's thesis about the centuries-long process of the "formalization of reason" along with the complete "rationalization of society". In addition to this, Villa (2007: 6) indicates that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) then attempt to extend Weber's thesis backward - by means of Nietzsche, de Sade and Freud - in time to reveal the "genetic link" between "reason, sacrifice and total domination". In so doing, both authors then endeavor to illuminate how it is that "reason reverts to barbarism" (Villa, 2007: 8) by methodically indicating how, over the course of Western history, reason slowly started to divorce itself from various ontological, metaphysical and normative matters with which it was once concerned and began tethering itself inextricably to a new form of scientific and technological rationality. This form of rationality has, according to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), indubitably led to an amplification and accentuation of the levels of domination and subjugation which can be found within modern society due to the deterministic, reductionist and instrumentalized tendencies which are inherent to such a form of rationality.

We will therefore now turn our attention towards this particular area of their critique, as it is this particular avenue of their investigation that will essentially allow us to understand and appreciate how it is that, contrary to what the promises of a highly technologized and
scientifically orientated society articulate for the modern individual, there is nevertheless a
dubious and detrimental aspect to living in a world completely engulfed by technological
paraphernalia and an epistemological paradigm that is completely dominated by a technoscientific form of rationality. Such a critique will also allow one to appreciate the fact that even
though the realm of social networking emerged many years after Adorno and Horkheimer had
formulated their critique of contemporary society, technology and the rationality guiding both
its development and growth, the society of the 21st century is still, in many ways, firmly rooted
within the ideals and rationality of modern Enlightenment and thus, open to an array of critical
questions and concerns raised by both Adorno and Horkheimer.

1.2.3 How do Adorno and Horkheimer arrive at their critical perspective of the Enlightenment
and its emancipatory ideals?

Expanding upon this particular area of Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critique of the
Enlightenment, Villa (2007: 11) indicates how Dialectic of Enlightenment draws heavily from
Weber's lecture titled Science as a Vocation (1917) which effectively aims to highlight an
"epochal shift in the Western tradition's understanding of - and hopes for - reason itself". 
According to Weber (in Villa, 2007: 11), if one is to mark the progression of reason throughout
history - as both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) attempt to achieve within Dialectic of
Enlightenment, one will notice that the "Reason of philosophers" has been replaced by the
sociological concept of "rationalization" and by the cognate concept of the "disenchantment of
the world". From Weber's perspective, "rationalization" and "disenchantment" are intimately
tied, not only because the growth of "autonomous modern legal, bureaucratic, and economic
structures demands calculation, regularity, and predictability of outcome" but, at a deeper
level, the "historical development of reason" - from its Greek origins in the ideal of the "bios
theoretikos", to its "medieval subordination to faith", to its sloughing off of "theological and
metaphysical residue" as it crosses the threshold of modernity - can be fairly characterized as a
movement from a "substantive" or "emphatic" concept of reason - one that presumes an
internal connection not only to truth but to justice, freedom, and the good life - to an
"increasingly scientific, formal, and instrumental conception of rationality (purposive rationality
or Zweckrationalitat)" (Villa, 2007: 12).

In order to illuminate and elaborate upon such an assertion, Weber turns to the broader
Nietzschean question of "what is the value or meaning of science within the total life of
humanity?" (Villa, 2007: 12). Whilst attempting to address this matter, Weber states that "the
contrast between the past and the present is tremendous" due to the fact that in the West's distant past, Plato's *Republic* famously presented "philosophy and science" as "one and the same", an identity founded on the Greek discovery of the concept and its logic. From a Platonic paradigm, the philosopher's emergence from the cave of everyday life through a strictly conceptual dialectic enabled "true being to be grasped." This, in turn, seemed to open the way "for knowing and for teaching how to act rightly in life, and, above all, how to act as a citizen of the state" (Weber in Villa, 2007:12). Weber then asks the crucial - rhetorical - question as to "who today views science in such a manner?" that is, as containing the "key to how to live and how to act?". In an enlightened world, Weber asserts that scientific rationality hardly facilitates apprehending "true being" in all its cosmic meaningfulness, "Nor does it provide a guide to proper human conduct and the purpose of life" [my emphasis] (Villa, 2007: 12).

Weber then goes on to indicate that the discovery of the "second great tool of scientific work" (Weber in Villa, 2007: 13), the "rational experiment", enabled individuals of the Renaissance like Leonardo to think of science as a "path to true art" and (thus) to "true nature". At this particular stage in history then, art itself was raised to the rank of science. Yet - as Weber reminds his audience - the idea that "scientific intellectualism" opened the path to either "true art" or "true nature" sounds absurd to modern ears (Weber in Villa, 2007:12). In addition to this, Weber notes that with the advent of Protestantism and the idea of a "deus absconditus" (God unknowable by the human mind), the meaning of science takes "yet another turn" as it was during this particular epoch that society came to believe that it was through "scrutinizing the structure of the most humble of God's creatures", one would indeed be able to show "the way to God" - as demonstrated through the works of Hegel (Weber in Villa, 2007: 13). However, as Weber puts it in one of his most pungent and cynical passages:

God is hidden. His ways are not our ways. His thoughts are not our thoughts. In the exact sciences, however, where one could physically grasp His works, one hoped to come upon the traces of what he planned for the world. And today? Who aside from certain big children who are indeed found in the natural sciences still believes that the findings of astronomy, biology, physics, or chemistry could teach us anything about the meaning of the world? (Weber in Villa, 2007:13).

Villa (2007: 13) goes on to indicate that having dispatched with the (once influential) ideas that science opened the way to "true being", "true nature", "true art", or "true God", Weber then turns to the "bourgeois notion" that "science", as a means to master life, is actually the "way to
happiness" - which in many ways accords with the 21st century's perception of science and the Triumphantalist narrative of technology as stated by Turkle (2011: 243). Such "naive optimism", according to Weber, gives way on the "slightest interrogation" of the bourgeois idea of "happiness" and what it seems to entail, or the consideration of the "concrete possibilities" of "devastation opened up by a technologized world" - which tragically manifested themselves in many of the atrocities which occurred during the course of the twentieth century of which both Adorno and Horkheimer were well aware.

Thus, after an extensive analysis of the progression of reason throughout two thousand years of Western history and the self-undermining of science's original (Greek) pretensions, we must, Weber contends, own up to the truth of Tolstoy's observation that:

[s]cience is meaningless because it gives no answer to our question, the only question that is important for us: What shall we do and how shall we live? (Weber in Villa, 2007: 13).

According to Weber's rather thorough and critical analysis of the progression and metamorphosis of reason throughout the course of Western history, it becomes a "self-evident historical fact" that science - or Reason in its modern, scientific and technologized form - gives no answer to this profound question.

Based upon this analysis, Weber was of the firm belief that the grandiose hopes of thinkers from Plato to Bacon, Leibniz to Hegel, have all come to naught. In addition to this, it is crucial to note that, according to Weber's analysis, the "disenchantment of the world" does not stop when the world is "rid of magic and animism", but rather that reason and science themselves undergo a "relentless purging process" of superfluous "metaphysical residue". The end result of such a purgatorial process culminates in a world in which we moderns must face up to the reality that:

no facts of value exist, no cosmically inscribed laws or norms, no final purpose of the universe, history, or man - for our reason to discover (Villa, 2007: 14).

Thus, stripped of the grandiose hopes and noble sentiments of the Western philosophical tradition, "reason-science" seems, from a moral point of view, to have become utterly impotent. The very idea of an "end-constitutive" rationality and, indeed, of objectively given rational ends appears to have been abolished. However, Weber (in Villa, 2007: 14) is quick to note that at the same time:
instrumental or purposive rationality, inscribed in systematized law, bureaucratized
administration, and ever-growing technological efficiency is stronger than ever [my
emphasis].

By taking note of such a progression - or regression - in the course of reason throughout the
different historical epochs of Western history, along with their own idiosyncratic insights into
the matter, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997, xiv) indicate, in a manner redolent to that of Weber,
that "the fallen nature of modern man [sic] cannot be separated from social progress", and as
Thomson (2006: 110) indicates, from Adorno's perspective, the only "progress" that has been
made in society, if one is to critically assess the developmental trajectory of the Western world,
is the expansion of "technological means of domination over the world and humanity". From
Adorno's perspective then, "progress is exactly what history seems to refute" (Thomson, 2006:
127).

Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 31) expand upon this claim by indicating that at the various
turning points in Western civilization, from the transition to "Olympian religion up to the
Renaissance, Reformation and bourgeois atheism", whenever new nations and classes more
firmly repressed myth (which was rooted and embodied within the metaphysical or
superstitious beliefs of the past), the invariable outcome was the ever growing and totalizing
subjugation of nature - and by implication, humanity as a whole - which slowly manifested itself
as the "absolute purpose of life within and without". As Adorno (2007: 1) indicates:

[w]hat philosophy once called life, has turned into the sphere of the private and then
merely of consumption, which is dragged along as an addendum of the material
production-process, without autonomy and without its own substance.

What this particular overview and analysis regarding what the development of enlightened
thought and an enlightened world essentially entails, as one marks its progression throughout
history, is that within highly technologically developed and enlightened societies, the
constraints upon our ability to manipulate nature are typically thought of in terms of the
"development of technological, scientific knowledge": the limits of possibility are determined
not by a mythical belief in god, say, but in the "development of the technological forces
available to us" (Fagan, 2005). This way of conceiving the tangible limits to human action and
cognition therefore had first to overcome a belief that the "natural order" contained, and was
the product of, "mythical beings and entities" whose presumed existence constituted the
"ultimate form of authority" for those societies once enthralled by them. The realisation of human sovereignty therefore required the "dissolution of such beliefs" and the "disenchantment of nature". It is in this regard that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 3) write,

the program of the Enlightenment was the disenchantment of the world; the dissolution of myths and the substitution of knowledge for fancy.

Thus, as a result of the Enlightenment's totalizing and domineering tendencies (regarding its predilection towards discrediting and discarding alternative, outdated and superstitious understandings of the world), both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 31) assert that "the essence of enlightenment is...that of domination". Such a statement then clearly highlights how it is that neither Adorno nor Horkheimer are swayed by the utopian grand narratives of the rational and enlightened historians which tend to describe history as a progressive series of liberating events/sequences whereby humankind has managed to move away from an irrational state of tyrannical domination to a liberal and rational form of emancipation and cognition. It is in this vein of thought that Baghai (2007: 3) asserts that the "burning question" that both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) attempted to address within Dialectic of Enlightenment was how and why the "processes of rationalization", instead of "liberating humankind from ignorance and prejudice" and bringing about "universal freedom and happiness", had led to the "monstrosities of the 20th century"; how science and technology had become "mere instruments of domination and destruction" and, in a nutshell, "how reason had become irrational".

Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: xiii) elaborate on this rather worrying matter when they indicate that the "dilemma" that faced both of them from the outset of Dialectic of Enlightenment, was to investigate and try to understand the phenomenon which they cogently conclude as being "the self-destruction of the Enlightenment". We will therefore now turn our attention to this particular aspect of their critique as it is this area of their argument that will allow us to appreciate the fact that inherent to the modern day precepts regarding understanding, reason and the natural world, lie the destructive seeds and totalizing tendencies which threaten to place humanity into a techno-scientific state of bondage and subjugation.
1.3. Attempting to understand Adorno and Horkheimer's "Self-destruction of the Enlightenment"

Regarding this particularly dark and cynical area of Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) investigation, Habermas and Levin (1982: 13) indicate that in addition to the writings of Weber, they turn to the "really nihilistic dark writers of the bourgeoisie", foremost among them the Marquis de Sade and Nietzsche, in order to conceptualise the "self-destructive process of Enlightenment". Habermas and Levin (1982: 14) extrapolate on this assertion by indicating that according to the rationalized Western tradition that supported the development of an enlightened, scientific and technologized form of reason, "[e]nlightened thinking has been understood as both a contrast to myth and as a force opposing it". According to Habermas and Levin (1982:14), proponents of the Enlightenment maintained that enlightened thought can be regarded as a "contrast" because it "counters the authority of tradition with the non-coercive coercion of the better argument" and as an "opposing force" to the extent that it "breaks the collective spell of the mythical powers by means of individually acquired insights which gain motivational strength". It is therefore in this progressive manner that the Enlightenment was supposed to "contradict myth" and thereby "escape from its power" - thereby giving humankind a better comprehension of both the natural world and themselves.

However, as elucidated within Dialectic of Enlightenment, challenging this opposition, of which enlightened thought is so certain, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: xvi) instead propose a "thesis of secret complicity" whereby "[m]yth is already enlightenment; and enlightenment reverts to mythology". While such a statement initially appears to be rather perplexing and somewhat contradictory, Habermas and Levin (1982: 14) indicate that this thesis, which is announced in the introduction of Dialectic of Enlightenment, is subsequently substantiated by means of Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) interpretation of Homer's Odyssey. It is therefore imperative at this point of our investigation to direct our attention towards this idiosyncratic interpretation of the Homeric text due to the fact that it will hopefully elucidate how the Enlightenment has always had an inherent tendency towards the domination of nature and humankind, while also illuminating the fact that as society has progressed towards the dictates of modernity, this form of domination has only proliferated and become more destructive, disastrous and totalizing due to the fact that the Enlightenment has inextricably imbricated itself with a scientifictecnological form of rationality - a form of rationality that seems to have reached its apotheosis within the highly technologized society of the 21st century (Jackson, 2009 and Turkle, 2011).
1.3.1. Adorno and Horkheimer's views regarding the "Enlightenment of Odysseus"

According to Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997: 55) reading of the classic Homeric text, reflected in the adventures of the "cunning cast-off" Odysseus is the "primal history of a subjectivity which wrenches itself free from the mythical forces". The mythical world, as portrayed within the Odyssey, is therefore not to be perceived as the "welcoming homeland" but rather the "labyrinth from which one must escape in order to gain one's identity" (Habermas & Levin, 1982: 14). Habermas and Levin (1982) go on to assert that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, within the "primal history of subjectivity", the "primal powers" which are simultaneously "sanctified" and "out-witted" within the Odyssey already constitute a "stage of Enlightenment" as the protagonist within the epic tale, Odysseus, slowly acquires the ability to guilefully overcome the mythical forces of nature by manipulating the natural environment - and those around him - in order to suit his own purposes. However, as exemplified within Odysseus's travails, the mythic powers which he continuously seeks to overcome consistently manage to impede the striven-after Enlightenment - as exemplified by the various challenges and arduous tasks he is continuously required to overcome in order to survive - and as such, continually "prolong the ties" to the "origins" which are experienced as "captivity".

Based upon such an interpretation, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) claim that at every new stage of such Enlightenment, this process of "gaining mastery" over the mythical powers of nature inevitably brings about the "return of myth" and as a result of this, Enlightenment is said to "revert to mythology" as such a process always brings with it new mythological and superstitious forces that the individual will be required to overcome and outwit. Operating within this interpretative framework, the episodes contained within the Odyssey - according to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) - tell of danger, cunning and escape, and of the "self-imposed renunciation" through which the ego - which has learned to master danger - gains its own identity and at the same time "relinquishes the archaic unity with both inner and outer nature" [my emphasis] (Habermas & Levin, 1982: 15). Such an observation then leads Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 16) to assert that on the pathway towards Enlightenment, "[m]an [sic] imagines himself [sic] free from fear when there is no longer anything unknown" and as a result of this, "nothing at all may remain outside because the mere idea of 'outsideness' is the very source of fear".

Elaborating on this particular pointer, Villa (2007: 20) indicates that Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) interpretation of the Odyssey concentrates primarily on the "psychic archaeology of the
self" - that is, on tracing the effects of the Western self's "fear of being reabsorbed by the very natural powers" it had so recently escaped. Thus, as Odysseus's escapades demonstrate, "emergent self-identity" is perpetually under threat of dissolution by more powerful archaic, mythic forces. When confronting the Sirens, Circe, and Polyphemus (among others), Odysseus is compelled to "mimic the logic" of "acquiescent sacrifice" and it is this very mimicry that allows him to create "loopholes" and thus evade entrapment. According to Adorno and Horkheimer understanding (1997), it is by "exploiting these loopholes" that he manages to emerge intact from every threat to his selfhood's integrity as it is this mimicry which serves "to destroy these mythic powers of nature as powers". The price of Odysseus's success, however, is "ceaseless renunciation and self-denial" (Villa, 2007: 20). He overcomes the logic of mythic sacrifice - which presupposes the superiority of natural powers - through the introversion of sacrifice (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 43). According to Villa (2007: 20) the "psychic archaeology of the self" is laid out as a kind of "allegory" in the Homeric text which reveals the need to "perpetually reinscribe self-sacrifice if an enduring, self-identical subject is to be preserved" (Villa, 2007: 20). What this then seems to imply is that the Enlightenment appears to be no more than a means to achieving and sustaining an endless process of "self-preservation" at the expense of truly grasping, understanding or appreciating the "terrifying" natural world - from both an internal and external perspective.

Based upon this, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 31) indicate - in a fashion resonant of Weber - that for civilization, "pure natural existence" (animal and vegetative), has always been perceived as embodying the "absolute danger" and "existential threat to mankind [sic]"; and as society has progressed throughout the various epochs in history, "mimetic, mythic and metaphysical modes of behaviour" were taken as "superseded eras" in which humankind was able to overcome and thus dominate that which it once feared. However, as a result of this incremental and progressive process, any reversion to a former state of being "was to be feared" as this would then imply "a reversion of the self" to that "mere state of nature" from which it had estranged itself with so huge an effort. The possibility that such a regressive and recidivist situation would arise, according to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 31), "struck such terror into the self" due to the fact that it seemed to oppose and invert the very precepts of progress and edification that the Enlightenment was supposed to augur within society. As a result of such an immense "terror" of reversion or regression (which inevitably presented itself in every successive century that considered itself to be more enlightened than the one preceding it), any living reminiscence of "olden times" was "most rigorously punished and
extirpated from human consciousness" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 31). The culmination of such a process, according to both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), is the unfortunate and detrimental situation whereby "happiness and reconciliation" - the twin goals of German Romanticism and idealism - are infinitely deferred as "self-preservation destroys the very thing which is to be preserved": a self at once distinct from, yet also a part of, nature (Villa, 2007: 20). Based upon the emergence of such a situation, Adorno (in Villa, 2007: 20) concludes that Western subjectivity is founded on "primordial and repeated self-violence", and that this particular "Western ratio" emerged out of the need to "dominate nature and suppress all otherness as existential threat".

While Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are therefore of the firm belief that such a domineering and suppressive development of both humankind and the natural world is inherent to the process of Enlightenment itself (as exemplified within their reading regarding the travails of Odysseus), they are however adamant that such a divergent and degenerative unfolding of humankind's development and understanding of the natural world - and themselves - only becomes clearer, more destructive and more disastrous with the "*triumph of scientific rationality and technological civilization*" [my emphasis] (Villa, 2007: 20).

1.3.2. What modern, "Enlightened" rationality means for Adorno and Horkheimer

Based upon Adorno and Horkheimer's depiction of the true effects that the Enlightenment has had on society over the ages, the "thoroughly enlightened" world - in its contemporary and modern context - is presented as an "integrated, systematic apparatus" for "dominating nature", "coordinating men", and "extruding otherness" (Villa, 2007: 18). Enlightenment then, in Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997: 11) memorable phrase, is "mythical fear radicalized". According to Villa (2007: 18), this well-known and exceedingly bleak picture takes Weber's "meta-narrative" of the "formalization of reason" and gives it a distinctively "Nietzschean twist" due to the fact that the Enlightenment is now identified with the "disenchantment of the world", and "enlightened reason" with a specifically "corrosive form of rationality" which "relentlessly expunges everything - human, natural, or intellectual - that does not fit in with the systemic demands of the whole".

Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 36) further such a claim by indicating that this form of corrosive rationality or regression is not restricted to the individual's experience of the "sensuous world bound up with the circumambient animate", but at the same time affects the "self-dominant
intellect", which "separates itself from sensuous experience" in order to "subjugate it". The "unification of intellectual functions" by means of which domination over the senses is achieved - via the modern form of purposive or scientific rationality - then results in the "resignation of thought and to the rise in unanimity", which, according to both authors results in the "impoverishment and impairment of thought and experience". Habermas and Levin (1982: 22) indicate that for Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), the concept of "instrumental reason" was not merely meant to denounce the fact that "understanding", or "Verstand" (in the Kantian sense), had usurped the place of "reason", or "Vernunft", but at the same time to recall the fact that "purposive-rationality", which had become total in the modern technologized society, "eliminates the difference between that which claims validity and that which only serves the interests of self-preservation" and as a result of this, "[r]eason, once instrumentalized, has become assimilated to power and has thereby given up its critical power" (Habermas & Levin, 1982: 22).

Such a claim is reinforced by Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997: 5) assertion that on the "path towards modernity" - a path on which technological and scientific rationality was rapidly being embraced at the expense of all other forms of rationality - old philosophical concepts and concerns such as "[s]ubstance and quality, activity and suffering, being and existence" were abandoned as "idola theatri" (which is, according to Bacon, "a tendency towards logical fallacy or error") - because modern techno-science "could do without them". This abandonment of ontological, normative and metaphysical matters occurred primarily due to the fact that the disciples and proponents of modern rationality viewed and assessed such topics and areas of contemplation as being "memorials of elements and powers of prehistory" and thus, an area of human cognition that needed to be extirpated - a point which therefore resonates with what Weber has previously mentioned.

As such, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 6) argue that" on the road towards progress", the Enlightenment vehemently opposed all of "the old powers" of "metaphysics" and "superstition", and thus, whatever did not conform to the "rule of computation and utility" - as is currently evidenced in the new rationalized precepts of a modern, scientific reason - was "viewed with suspicion" and subsequently extirpated. The Enlightenment therefore operated on the presupposition that mathematical, and not human, properties lay behind the mystery of nature which finally reduced a "disenchartered nature" to the "technological rule", making it "less frightening, more familiar, and consequently more calculable and manipulable" (McHugh, 1993: 129). In addition to this, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 36) indicate that:
the more complicated and precise the social, economic and scientific apparatus in a society becomes, [the] more impoverished are the various experiences that it can offer the individual [my emphasis].

The overarching and enduring problem resulting from such a situation is, according to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), not simply that enlightened rationality "empties itself of content" as it "crosses the threshold of modernity" (Weber's formalization thesis); rather, it is that such rationality operates by actively "destroying all concrete determinations of reason" (Villa, 2007:19). What this essentially implies is that wherever truth retains traces of an "immanent connection" to "the just" or "the good" (which was once evident in Reason's distant past as Weber explicated), there "disenchanted reason" sees yet one more superstition to be destroyed (Villa, 2007: 19).

If one is then to reflect upon what has been delineated thus far with regard to Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) interpretation and critique of the Enlightenment's development throughout the various stages in Western society, what they essentially seem to be arguing is that as society has progressed, it has acquired the ability - via the faculty of reason - to dominate and subjugate nature in order to suit its own purposes. While such a process is an inevitable outcome of the desire and need to maintain one's sense of "self preservation", Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) nevertheless maintain that as time has elapsed and society has progressed in a more scientific and technologically oriented direction, humankind's ability to view the world as anything other than an instrumentalized entity or resource that can - and should - be shaped, moulded and dominated in order to achieve its own outcomes has dissipated. This then indicates that a distinctively purposive and instrumentalized permutation of rationality has proliferated as time has elapsed - to the detriment of humankind.

Viewed in this particular light, it becomes fairly clear that what Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) essentially seek to highlight in their critique regarding the contemporary notion of "progress" is the fact that the Enlightenment, along with its corrosive form of scientific rationality, inherently contains destructive seeds and totalizing tendencies that threaten to eradicate all traces of what is perceived as being a superstitious and metaphysical legacy and thus, by implication, all alternative ways of viewing, interpreting and criticizing the contemporary world and the reality with which humanity is currently confronted. As such, the Enlightenment - in its purposive and scientific form - can be regarded as a coercive and homogenizing force that essentially compels individuals into viewing and understanding the natural world from one particular perspective -
namely, one that that is both scientific and technological in orientation at the expense of all others. While such an approach to understanding the world may certainly have several merits - such as a growing rate of technological efficiency, instantaneous communication across the globe and advances in medical sciences that have indubitably aided humankind (Jackson, 2009: 13 and Habermas & Levin, 1982: 17) - it also, contains the seeds of destruction and domination which can lead to the creation of a society engulfed in totalitarian tendencies, despotic outlooks and heteronomous practices as exemplified by the atrocities which occurred in Nazi Germany. Regarding this particular pointer, Villa (2007: 3) notes that "however irrational the end", the extermination process which occurred during World War Two within Nazi Germany was nevertheless carried out in a "highly rationalized" and "efficient" manner, with "technically innovative" means that humankind had not yet seen until that point in history. One can therefore assert that while a purely scientific and technological paradigm may have certain merits, without a sense of restraint and regulation (which can ironically be located within the different forms of "superstitious" rationality associated with the past), the implications and consequences of such an approach can be disastrous for humanity and the emancipatory ideals of progress and the Enlightenment.

1.3.3. How do Adorno and Horkheimer perceive and understand the supposed technical progress of modern society?

Based upon what has been mentioned above, Hohendahl (2013: 244) indicates that while both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) readily admit that there was (and still is) technical progress within modern society - especially after 1600, to a large extent due to the work of the natural sciences - they clearly reject this development as:

an increasingly dangerous domination of nature by human efforts, a form of domination that ultimately equally affects the human subject as the reified object of scientific endeavors [my emphasis].

What this therefore implies is that as society has progressed in an ever more scientific and technological trajectory, individuals have become increasingly reliant and dependent on technology and science as an epistemological paradigm in order to understand both themselves and the natural world around them which ultimately gives rise to what Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) refer to as the "totally administered society" (Villa, 2007: 18). Bauman and Lyon (2013: 79) note that the task and intended outcome of such an "administered society" was to:
impose a transparent and manageable design over unruly and uncontrollable chaos: to bring the world of humans, hitherto vexingly opaque, bafflingly unpredictable and infuriatingly disobedient and oblivious to human wishes and objectives, into order.

Such "order", according to Bauman and Lyon (2013: 78), was constructed in such a way as to be "Complete, Incontestable and Unchallenged" under the "indomitable rule of reason". In addition to this, Bauman and Lyon (2013: 78) note that "order of that sort" meant, ultimately, the absence of anything "redundant" because it stood in the way of "full and undisturbed control over the human condition". Such a situation then invariably led to the creation of a "technological form of determination" (Morozov, 2012: 289), whereby technology - coupled with a scientific rationality - was viewed as the only "rational means" which one could utilize in order to gain an accurate comprehension and understanding of the world at large. Morozov (2012: 289) substantiates such a claim when he asserts that "technological determinism" - which is rooted directly in the ideals of the Enlightenment - can be defined as the belief that within modern society certain technologies are inevitably bound to produce certain social, cultural, and political effects in a progressive and incremental fashion for the benefit of humankind. According to Morozov (2012: 289), the notion of technological determinism is attractive precisely because it creates powerful scenarios, clear stories, and because it accords with the dominant experience in the West - an experience which can be most notably defined by an enthrallment and envelopment with a myriad of technological devices that all claim to be indispensible with regard to the liberation and emancipation of humankind (Graham & Marvin in Morozov, 2012: 289). However, as Bauman and Lyon (2013: 178) note, due to the fact that such a great deal of "faith" is ultimately rested in each new technology on offer for the denizen of contemporary society, any form of questioning or critique that may be directed towards them is often "viewed as sacrilege or blasphemy".

While this may ostensibly appear to be a progressive step for civilization due to the fact that society seems to have stumbled upon the definitive means for understanding the world, one that will finally allow humankind to break free from the shackles of a mythological and superstitious past in order to allow an individual to gain complete mastery and sovereignty over the natural world, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 5) indicate otherwise as they firmly believe that the attempt to fully dominate nature - via a techno-scientific form of rationality -
culminates in the institution of a social and political order over which we have lost control. It is in this regard that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 5) state that such an approach inevitably leads to an "impoverished" and incomplete form of understanding and experience for society and its denizens. Morozov (2012: 290) reinforces this assertion by indicating that technological determinism is

an intellectually impoverished, lazy way to study the past, understand the present, and predict the future

due to the fact that by adopting such a technologically deterministic stance, individuals living within modern, enlightened society are less likely to subject technology to the "full bouquet of ethical questions" that one would expect in order for the notion of "progress" to truly be understood, upheld and maintained.

Thus, from Morozov's perspective (2012: 290), what is most dangerous about succumbing to a technologically deterministic view of the world, is that it "hinders our awareness of the social and the political", presenting it as the "technological" instead. Technology therefore seems to offer humankind the solutions for all of its problems, and as Morozov (2012: 308) notes:

[m]any calls to apply technological fixes to complex social problems smack of the promotion of technology for technology's own sake resulting in a technological fetishism of an extreme variety.

Thus, as a direct result of such a narrow, myopic and intrinsically instrumentalized and technologized approach to understanding the nature of reality and the various challenges that humankind faces, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 4) argue that "all men [sic] essentially want to learn from nature [via the aid of science and technology] is how to use it" in order to "wholly dominate it and other men [sic]" - that is, according to both authors, "the only aim".

According to Fagan (2005), when nature is viewed in this particular light, its inherent value is necessarily conceived of in "primarily instrumental terms": nature is thought of as an object for, and instrument of, human will. This conception of nature necessitates drawing a distinction between this realm and those beings for whom it is an object. Thus, the instrumentalist conception of nature entails a conceptualisation of human beings as "categorically distinct entities", capable of becoming "subjects" through the "exercise of reason upon nature". It is in this regard that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997:4) state,
the concordance between the mind of man [sic] and the nature of things that he [sic] had in mind is patriarchal: the human mind, which overcomes superstition, is to hold sway over a disenchanted nature.

Nature is thereby configured as the object of human will and representation. In this way, our criteria governing the identification and pursuit of valid knowledge are grounded within a "hierarchical relationship" between human beings and nature: reason is thus instrumentalized in order to dominate over nature, and by implication, over humankind as well (Fagan, 2005). Based upon such an analysis, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 4) assert that:

[r]uthlessly, in despite of itself, the Enlightenment has extinguished any trace of its own consciousness.

1.3.4. What are the implications of living in a society dominated by a techno-scientific rationality?

Villa (2007: 19) extrapolates on this pointer by indicating that the "self-destruction of the enlightenment" (1997: xvi), that is, the regression of the civilization born of modern science, technology, and economics which ultimately gives way to a "new form of barbarism" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: xiv), flows from the "intrinsically dissolvent movement of an untethered, self-contained rationality" whereby "men [sic] pay for the increase of their power with alienation from that over which they exercise their power" [my emphasis] (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 9). Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 6) even go so far as to say that the Enlightenment treats its own ideas of human rights "exactly as it does the older universals": with contempt and opposition, and thus, views them as yet another metaphysical superstition that needs to be overcome and extirpated. This then implies that the individual, along with nature, within modern society is objectified and instrumentalized to become no more than a mere means to an end. A "disenchanted" notion of rationality can therefore be said to lead to barbarism because it cannot provide the criteria necessary to distinguish "civilized" from "barbaric" ends. It therefore holds that if reason cannot tell us how to live and how to act, then "civilization devolves into barbarism" (Villa, 2007: 16). From a Nietzschean perspective, what this then implies is that "[n]o values beyond power and systemic integration can survive the corrosive assault of enlightened reason's will to truth" (Villa, 2007: 19). As a program of radical disenchantment, Enlightenment therefore manages to yield what Nietzsche described as an "epistemology of nihilism":

the truth that there is no truth beyond the reality of power and the fact of domination [my emphasis] (Villa, 2007:19).

Such a regressive and harrowing situation, which appears to be riddled with domination, destruction and subjugation - of both humankind and nature - and intimately tied to a scientific and technological form of rationality, leads to what Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 21) refer to as the "inscrutable unity of society and domination" within the modern enlightened world whereby, from the individual's perspective, domination "appears to be universal" and as such, needs to be both embraced and upheld if denizens of the modern enlightened earth are to preserve their sense of identity - and dignity - due to the fact that:

[w]hoever resigns himself [sic] to life without any rational reference to self-preservation [which is currently presented to the modern individual as a techno-scientific form of determination], would according to the enlightenment regress to prehistory (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 29).

The heteronomous and deterministic situation in which the modern individual finds herself arises, according to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 28), through the "countless agencies" within contemporary, enlightened society, whereby "conventionalised modes of behaviour" are impressed upon the individual as the only "natural, respectable and rational ones". The issues of performativity and rational expectation then befall the denizen of the modern world whereby she inadvertently arrives at the situation in which she is required to define herself only as a "thing", a "static element" with "self-preservation" - which now becomes synonymous with that of technological dependency - acting as her "yardstick" to measuring her success or failure. In addition to this, such a heteronomous situation is, according to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 28), enforced by the "collective" whole which can be defined as the technological and scientifically driven society.

Elaborating on this particular pointer, Habermas and Levin (1982: 16) go on to indicate that this central idea contained within Dialectic of Enlightenment, whereby people develop their identity by learning to control external nature at the price of repressing their inner nature (which is currently accelerated and accentuated by modern society's dependence on a techno-scientific form of rationality) provides Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) with the model for a description in which the process of Enlightenment reveals its "Janus-face": In terms of world history, the human species has distanced itself ever further from its origins, through the process of Enlightenment, while still not freeing itself from those mythical origins. Thus, an almost
completely rationalized modern world only "seems to be demystified"; on it rests in fact the
curse of "demonic objectification" and "fatal isolation" [my emphasis]. Following a similar line
of thought, Fagan (2005) indicates that what Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) essentially argue is
that Enlightenment’s "reversion to mythology" amounts to the "betrayal of the emancipatory
ideals of enlightenment" [my emphasis]. For them, the "reversion to mythology" primarily
means "reverting to an unreflexive, uncritical mode of configuring and understanding reality". As such, this reversion to mythology means the creation and institution of social conditions, over which individuals come to have little perceived control and reverting to mythology therefore means a reversion to a heteronomous condition whereby "men [sic] are brought to actual conformity" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 38) due to the fact that:


[i]n their [the masses] eyes, their reduction to mere objects of the administered life, which performs every sector of modern existence represents necessity, against which they believe there is nothing they can do (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 38).

Regarding this particular pointer, Thomson (2006:14) indicates that Georg Lukács's *Theory of the Novel* was extremely influential on both Adorno and Horkheimer’s conceptualization of modern society, because within this particular work, Lukács highlights how it is that, as societal institutions and the determinate perspectives of techno-science come to play a dominant role within the lives of individuals living within contemporary society, they inevitably begin to perceive the current state of affairs as "the natural conditions" for existence without being aware of the fact that such conditions are in fact brought about by "historical factors". Lukács (in Thomson, 2006: 14) dubbed such a situation as "a world of second nature" whereby people feel that there is nothing that can be done to change the questionable, domineering or undermining aspects of modern society as these phenomena present themselves as "natural" manifestations of a progressive and enlightened world. According to Thomson (2003), such a situation inevitably results in the "reification" and "homogenization" of the individual as she is wholly subsumed by the heteronomous ideals of a greater collective i.e. modern society. The overriding result of such reification and homogenization is

the condemnation of the individual to unprecedented conformity [and] total submission
to technological imperatives over which she has no control (Baghai, 2007: 6).

What this therefore implies, according to Baghai (2007: 6), is that the domination of disenchanted nature also becomes the domination of human beings "as means" and this then
reflects the emergence of a social reality that confronts the subject as "absolute and eternal, a reality that demands total conformity". Ultimately then, the drive to dominate nature results in the establishment of a form of reasoning and a general world-view which appears to exist independently of human beings and, more to the point, is principally characterized by a "systematic indifference to human beings and their sufferings: we ultimately become mere objects of the form of reason that we have created" [my emphasis].

Based upon such an analysis, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 6) arrive at the conclusion that the "Enlightenment is totalitarian" and that as a result of this, it "behaves towards things as a dictator towards men [sic]" in which "he knows them only is so far as he can manipulate them". It is in this way that the "potentiality" of both humankind and nature "is turned toward his own ends" ultimately resulting in the "scientific object" becoming "petrified" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997:9). According to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), it is this sentiment that encapsulates the "real content" of the disenchantment of the world, whereby in its inclusive, closed, and totalitarian character, the scientific-industrial civilization born of the Enlightenment inevitably reverts to myth (Villa, 2007: 18). The Enlightenment then, as conceptualised within the modern scientific-industrial society, becomes its own "fetish" as it relentlessly expunges everything - human, natural, or intellectual - that does not acquiesce or conform with the systemic demands of the greater collective which then cogently highlights what the "destructive aspect" of progress entails (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: xiii).

On an extremely dubious note, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 31) indicate that within modern society, the "transcendental subject" is apparently abandoned as the "last reminiscence of subjectivity" and is replaced by the much smoother work of "automatic control mechanisms" - which are propelled by the ideals of a scientific and technological rationality - and by removing thought, the "very last insular instance between individual behaviour and social norm has been erased". This then leads both authors to assert that - purposive or instrumental - reason has become the mere instrument of the all-inclusive economic and scientific apparatus. Baghai (2007:5) elaborates on the implications of this claim by indicating that when it becomes "severed" from philosophy, "science is reduced to technology" whereby fundamental questions about the end and character of social life are ostensibly treated as "matters of taste" and their "actual determination by the powerful is obscured". As such, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 32) note that with the extension of the "bourgeois commodity market" (which inherently supports and promotes the ideals of a technological and purposive rationality):
the dark horizon of myth is fully illumined by the sun of calculating reason, beneath whose cold rays the seed of the new barbarism grows to fruition.

"Progress" - within a modern setting - therefore becomes "regression" whereby "insensitive liquidation of metaphysics and individuals within the social whole become a metaphysics themselves" (1997: xv). Regarding this matter, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 35) indicate that within modern society:

[a]daptation to the power of progress involves the progress of power, and each time anew brings about those degenerations which show not unsuccessful but successful progress to be its contrary...the curse of irresistible progress is [therefore] irresistible regression.

1.4. Concluding remarks regarding Adorno and Horkheimer's views of the Enlightenment and the progress of modern society

If we are now to conclude this particular area of our investigation and try to summarize and evaluate what has been mentioned thus far, it becomes apparent that within their critique of the Enlightenment and the various forms of rationality and progress that it has supposedly brought about over the ages, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) essentially aim at demonstrating the "fatally wrong turn of human history" (Hohendahl, 2013: 244). As such, Thomson (2003: 127) indicates that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) aim to counter Hegel's "history of Spirit" with a "history of technology" whereby "progress is exactly what history seems to refute". Habermas and Levin (1982: 17) suggest that such an assertion primarily rests on Adorno and Horkheimer’s (1997) conviction that, with the introduction of logical positivism, modern science has come into its own and has relinquished its "emphatic claim" to theoretical knowledge in favour of "technological exploitability" and that with the disintegration of religious and metaphysical world views, all normative moral standards are said to have lost their credibility in the face of the sole surviving authority of science.

While Habermas and Levin (1982: 18) - rightly - indicate that, upon this particular reading of the effects of the Enlightenment throughout history, one justifiably gets the feeling of "global pessimism" as Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) seem to ignore significant positive aspects associated with cultural modernity without providing any alternatives as to how one can
realistically overcome the situation of domination and subjugation that they associate with contemporary society, Habermas and Levin (1982) nevertheless maintain that Adorno and Horkheimer’s (1997) critique of a highly instrumentalized and technologized form of reasoning cogently highlights the detrimental and disastrous consequences that such a form of reasoning can hold for humanity if it is left unchecked. In accordance with this Baghai (2007: 15) indicates that while many criticisms of Adorno and Horkheimer's analysis (1997) of the Enlightenment and its subjugating effects upon society are often founded on the premise that their approach ostensibly seems to be too "simplistic and exaggerated", one needs to be aware of the fact that both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are neither "oblivious to the moment of untruth in their theory, nor negligent of empirical evidence against their claims". It is not their intention to provide an "irrefutable" set facts and statements that "speak for themselves". Instead, they try to reveal how such "facts and statements" speak as they do through a "mediation of concepts in a particular historical constellation". This, they believe, is the only way to "give voice" to what has been "silenced in facts".

It is therefore imperative to be aware of the fact that Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) radical critique, was not - and must not - be viewed as a call to give up reason for intuition or irrationality. They firmly believed that if Enlightenment was to be "rescued from its own menace" it would be through a "rational critical reflection on itself": Enlightenment had to become conscious of itself (Baghai, 2007: 2). As Villa (2007: 8) notes, both thinkers owe far too much to the "spirit of the Enlightenment", and to its "ideas of human dignity" and the "right to a domination free existence", to be classed as out-and-out "anti-modernists" or "anti-enlightenments". One must therefore realise that what both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) aim to achieve within their critique of the Enlightenment, is to expose modernity's "complicity with horror and subservience". Theirs is therefore not to be considered a "Popperian hypothesis" to be "corroborated or falsified by factual evidence", or as a theory that "stands on its own feet" (Baghai, 2007: 2), but rather, as an "interpretive framework" which "serves to inform investigation" and "generates concrete questions" relating to phenomena currently presented within contemporary society (Jay, 1973:240).

Supplementing such an assertion, Fagan (2005) notes that what Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) present within their expansive critique, and what is of paramount import with regard to this particular investigation, is the argument that the aspiration towards achieving "human sovereignty over nature" culminates in the "institutionalization of a dominant mode of reasoning" which is solely "bound to the identification and accumulation of facts" - or, as
Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 5) assert, a "factual mentality" - which then restricts the perceived value of the exercise of reason to one which is instrumental for the "domination of nature"; and which, finally, aims at the "assimilation of all of nature under a single, universalizing representational order". What their critique and insights into this matter then essentially aim to highlight is how it is that, due to the totalizing and destructive tendencies contained within a techno-scientific and instrumentalized form of reason, individuals within modern society are ultimately compelled to turn to both a scientific and technological understanding of the world in order to uphold and maintain their sense of "self-preservation" which in no way allows for a reversion or "regression" to the "outdated" and "archaic" modes of apperception which were found in the past.

What such a critique and analysis then manages to limpidly elucidate is exactly how it is that the notion of "technological determinism" was introduced into contemporary society; from where it is that such an indomitable approach has derived its seemingly inexorable impetus; and why it is that such an approach towards understanding the natural world and humankind currently wields such an immense amount of clout and influence over individuals living within contemporary society. Such observations then essentially allow one to gain a great deal of insight as to exactly why it is that contemporary society seems so fixated with technological devices and so reliant upon techno-scientific solutions when addressing contemporary issues. It also however highlights the detrimental and potentially disastrous outcomes that are associated with such a myopic and reductionist approach due to the fact that such devices and solutions often operate within a realm that is exempt from moral and ethical scrutiny, whereby any subject - whether it be from the natural vegetative world or an individual living within contemporary society - is objectified and subsequently instrumentalized to be a treated as mere means to an end.

Now that we have attained a greater understanding of Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critique of what the Enlightenment entails, along with how the notion of reason has undergone a radical metamorphosis in order to tie itself to a purely scientific, technological and instrumentalized form of determinism, we now need to turn our attention towards Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) views regarding the inner workings of contemporary society and what they refer to as the "Culture Industry". According to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), such a society is highly technologized, driven by a techno-scientific form of rationality and based upon an incessant and insatiable desire for consumption that has provided the driving force behind the creation of the "totally administered society" which has been "built on self-denial and
administrative despotism" whereby the "social machine works, but only by endlessly distorting human nature into an inhuman shape" (Villa, 2007: 22).

This particular avenue of exploration can be regarded as being of paramount importance with regard to this investigation into the dialectical nature of social networking as it is these insights that will allow one to gain a greater understanding of how it is that the modern permutation of purposive and techno-scientific rationality, along with the various technological and scientific advances/innovations that have accompanied it, has intertwined itself with the consumerist tendencies of the 20th century. As we shall see, from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, this has had an increasingly inimical effect upon the denizens of modern society due to the fact that within such a society, individuals are essentially obliged to acquiesce to the technological and consumerist dictates of the modern capitalist society and the reifying ideology with which it is associated (Villa, 2007: 22). Such a line of inquiry and critique will therefore allow us to ascertain what type of effect(s) a highly technologized and purposive approach to understanding the world has had on the individual living within such a society and how an overreliance on technological paraphernalia results in the further domination, subjugation and objectification of the individual. Such an avenue of exploration and investigation will therefore serve to act as a precursor to examining whether or not these inimical effects can be applied to society within the 21st century which can, in many ways, be described as a century in which society finds itself even more engulfed by the precepts and ideals of technological determinism and triumphalism (Turkle, 2011: 243).
Chapter 2: The Culture Industry - an indictment of modern society's failure to liberate its citizens?

Within this particular chapter, what will essentially be illuminated is the manner in which a society, guided by the dictates of technological determinism and purposive rationality, is able to manifest itself within the modern world, and what the potential effects of such a society hold for the individual living within such a context. Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critique of the Culture Industry fundamentally indicates how it is that a society which is guided by the dictates of technological determinism and purposive rationality, under the economic imperatives of the capitalist market place, has had an inimical, stultifying and reifying effect upon the individual and the ability for mass culture to function as an edifying and emancipatory tool. It is therefore the intention of this particular chapter to elucidate how it is that technology, when adopted and utilized in an instrumentalized fashion, is able to play a key role in such a regressive process.

2.1 What is the rationale guiding Adorno and Horkheimer's Culture Industry thesis?

According to Kellner (2002: 1), while Adorno and Horkheimer are considered to be "lively figures" on the "contemporary culture scene", their thought in many ways "cuts across the grain" of emerging "postmodern orthodoxies" primarily due to the fact that their idiosyncratic assertions "clash" with the "postmodern celebration of media culture" and the more "affirmative attitude" toward contemporary culture and society that can be found in many circles. Pietilä (2005: 143) indicates that when one is to consider the motivation and impetus driving the critical works of both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), including those contained within their Culture Industry thesis, one needs to be aware of the fact that what they fundamentally aimed to pursue was an "articulated critical theory" capable of both "explaining existing society and criticizing it" in order to advance the coming of a new, and better one. It is in this regard that Kellner (2002: 8) indicates that the term "Culture Industry", as coined by Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), contains a "dialectical irony" which is "typical of the style of critical theory" they aimed to develop and foster in order to investigate and critique the dominating and subjugating form that they believe contemporary culture had managed to assume within the modern world (Pietilä, 2005: 143).

As such, Kellner (2002: 8) extrapolates upon this "dialectical irony" by indicating that "culture", as "traditionally valorized", is supposed to be "opposed to industry and expressive of individual
creativity while providing a repository of humanizing values". In the "culture industries", however, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are of the opinion that modern culture, along with the various forms of technological devices and innovations that accompany it, has come to function as a mode of "ideological domination" rather than that of "humanization or emancipation". Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: xvi) elaborate upon this particular pointer when they indicate that their thesis on the Culture Industry aims to demonstrate how it is that within contemporary society, and the cultural form that is has assumed, the Enlightenment, along with its techno-scientific form of rationality, has regressed and devolved from its once noble and venerable position - whereby it once promised to liberate humankind from ignorance and drudgery - into a dominating and suppressive form of "ideology" which finds its typical expression in the "technological demonstrations" of the "cinema", "radio" and the modern manifestation of "mass consumption" which technology has made possible.

Kellner (2002: 8) is quick to point out that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) vantage point, the Culture Industry is perceived as being the "culmination of a historical process" in which "technology and scientific organization and administration came to dominate thought and experience" [my emphasis]. As Gunster (2000: 64) reminds us, Dialectic of Enlightenment revolves around the proposition that "myth contains enlightenment, and, conversely, enlightenment (as we have known it) reverts back to myth". According to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), it is the Culture Industry of modern society that plays a key role in "introducing, extending, and enforcing this return to myth and the accompanying transformation of human thought and activity" whereby "mass culture" helps:

return humanity to a mythic state in which individuals, filled with a half-conscious terror, desperately seek integration into an omnipotent society (or "second nature") that cannot be rationally organized, only worshipfully imitated (Gunster, 2000: 64).

As such, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 78) are of the opinion that "mass culture" has become a kind of "training for life when things have gone wrong" as it prepares "a rational being for life in a world gone mad" (Gunster, 2000: 64).

Elaborating upon such an assertion, Huyssen (1975: 4) indicates that one needs to mindful of the fact that for Adorno and Horkheimer, the Culture Industry is nothing more than "one aspect of that dialectic of enlightenment" in which "technical rationality" has become the "rationality of domination" which has manifested itself within modern society and inextricably entwined
itself with the capitalistic ideals of the market place which then serves to drive and propel the economic forces of production and consumption - causing the once edifying and educational role that culture once served within society to become yet another casualty in the Enlightenment's inexorable quest for dominance in the modern world. As Kellner (2002: 1) notes:

[for Horkheimer and Adorno, in the contemporary era of World War Two, fascist death camps, and the threat of the triumph of fascist barbarism, Enlightenment had turned into its opposite [whereby] democracy had produced fascism, reason had generated unreason as instrumental rationality created military machines and death camps, and the culture industries were transforming culture from an instrument of Bildung and enlightenment into an instrument of manipulation and domination [my emphasis].

Based upon what has been mentioned above, it is clear to see that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) assume an incredibly pessimistic and critical stance concerning the form that modern culture has assumed in contemporary society. It is therefore imperative that we now turn our attention to Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critical views regarding both the Culture Industry, along with their assertions pertaining to the apparent ideology that accompanies the "pseudo-culture" of the "administered society", as it is these insights that will inevitably aid us in understanding exactly what it is that the Culture Industry entails; why it is that the denizen of the modern world needs to be incredibly wary and critical of the cultural form that has manifested itself within contemporary society; and how it is that the various forms of technological paraphernalia, along with the instrumentalized and highly technologized form of rationality accompanying them, have only resulted in the creation of a world that is more suppressive, domineering and undermining for the individual and the possibility of living an autonomous life.

In addition to this, Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) views will also prove to be invaluable in terms of the current investigation regarding the dialectical nature of social networking as they will provide one with a comprehensive platform or background from where we can gauge the existing situation in which the denizens on the 21st century find themselves - a situation most notably marked by a society that has completely immersed itself within the dictates of technological determinism, monopolized by a technological rationality and a culture that has embraced the ideals of a technologically based lifestyle (Jackson, (2009); Turkle, (2011); Morozov, (2012) and Bauman & Lyon, (2013)). This will therefore allow us to ascertain whether
or not Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) investigation can shed some light on the particular investigation at hand concerning the proliferation of social networking sites being embraced and utilized within the culture of the modern world and the potentially undermining effects that they present for the user.

2.2. What is the Culture Industry and how do Adorno and Horkheimer arrive at their conceptualisation of it?

According to Kellner (2002: 7), during their exile period from the mid-1930s through to the 1940s (due to the outbreak of World War Two), members of the "Frankfurt School" - which included both Adorno and Horkheimer - witnessed the exponential proliferation of "mass communications", "mass culture" and the rise of the "consumer society" particularly within the American context where they sought refuge. Kellner (2002: 7) goes on to indicate that it was during this particular time that both Adorno and Horkheimer managed to experience, at first-hand, the advent to "cultural power" of the "commercial broadcasting systems", President Roosevelt's "remarkable use" of radio for "political persuasion", and the ever-growing popularity of cinema during a period in which between "85,000,000 to 110,000,000, Americans paid to see the movies each week".

As such, both Adorno and Horkheimer were exposed to an array of technological feats and devices of a technological persuasion that managed to permeate throughout all levels of society at an alarming rate, and as a result, had a remarkable influence on an incredibly large section of the American population and its culture. In addition to this, it is also important to note that, from their vantage point in California during the 1940s, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) were able to experience how "business interests" came to dominate "mass culture" while also taking note of the "fascination" that the "entertainment industries" exerted within the "emerging media and consumer society" (Kellner, 2002: 7). Baghai (2007: 3) reinforces this sentiment when she asserts that:

> [t]he successful use of radio and film for... propaganda and mass mobilization raised the sensitivity of the Frankfurt School theorists to the importance of mass media which was only further heightened in their early years of exile in a Fordist America dominated by commercial advertising.

Huyssen (1975: 4) therefore indicates that it was as a result of this "cultural shock" - whereby culture itself was becoming a "product of mass production", commodified and disseminated
among the public via the technological means of the press, radio and cinema (Kellner, 1999: 7) - that ultimately led Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) to conceptualise and theorize about the dubious form that the "mass culture" of modern society which was starting to develop under the dictates of a technologically administered rationality.

As a result of their exposure to these various technologically based phenomena and the remarkable influence they managed to wield upon individuals within modern society, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) came to see what they called the "culture industries" as a central part of a "new configuration of capitalist modernity" which:

used culture, advertising, mass communications, and new forms of social control to induce consent and to reproduce the new forms of capitalist society (Kellner, 1999: 8).

Augmenting such a claim, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: xvi) indicate that within the sphere of contemporary society and popular culture, the Enlightenment consists above all in the "calculation of effectiveness and the techniques of production and distribution". Based upon this, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 121) indicate that the "technology" of the Culture Industry is actually made out to be no more than the "achievement of standardization and mass production" whereby the "need" or ability within humankind which might "resist control" of the undermining and homogenizing forces within contemporary society has already been "suppressed by the control of the individual consciousness".

Gartman (2012: 46) indicates that it is important to be aware of the fact that when Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) speak of the "technology of cultural production", they "understand this term broadly" to include "not merely the mechanical apparatus but also, and more importantly, the administrative apparatus that organizes and controls human work". This then leads them to assert that "the whole world is made to pass through the filter of culture industry" (1997: 126) so that the "might of the industrial society is lodged in men's [sic] minds" in order to mould all individuals "as a type unfailingly reproduced in every product" (1997: 127). It is in this regard that both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) perceived the "production and transmission of media spectacles" - through the means of allegedly "popular entertainment" and "information" - as "a central mechanism through which contemporary society came to dominate the individual" [my emphasis] (Kellner, 2002: 8).

In order to highlight and expand upon such an assertion, Adorno (in Thomson, 2006: 87 - 88) indicates that:
...the apparently harmless visit to the cinema to which we condemn ourselves should really be accompanied by the realization that such visits...will probably entangle us...with cumulative effect - *in the process that will transform us into what we are supposed to become and what we are making of ourselves in order to enable us to survive, and to ensure that we conform* [my emphasis].

It is in this regard that Thompson (2006: 71) indicates that what Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 120) essentially aim to "attack" within the section of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, titled "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception", is the idea that there is something "free" and "authentic" about "working-class culture" as it presents itself within the modern, enlightened world. This attack, according to Thomson (2007: 71), is primarily founded upon the fact that both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) were of the firm belief that the supposed freedoms, liberties and claims to an autonomous lifestyle offered by such a culture, along with the liberating and edifying forms of technological paraphernalia with which it was associated, could only ever be a "fantasy" as it is these very benevolent ideals and emancipatory tools which will always be determined, mediated and regulated by the Culture Industry itself - with purely economic motivations driving such a process.

What this therefore implies, according to Fagan (2005), is that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) essentially aim to elucidate how it is that the "very areas of life within which many people believe they are genuinely free" – free from the demands of work for example – actually perpetuate a condition of domination by "*denying freedom* [and] *obstructing the development of a critical consciousness*" [my emphasis]. Based upon this Fagan (2005) indicates that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critical perspective, the Culture Industry can actually be regarded as a "key integrative mechanism for binding individuals, as both consumers and producers, to modern, capitalist societies", and as such, they therefore maintained that the Culture Industry constituted a "*principal source of domination within complex, capitalist societies*" [my emphasis].

Elaborating upon this particular pointer, Adorno (in Thomson, 2006: 93) draws on the Kantian notion of "freedom", or more precisely, "autonomy" which means:

*dictating the law (nomos) by which I act for myself (autos), rather than following a rule that has come from outside, acting heteronomously.*
Thus, from a Kantian perspective, a decision that one makes that has been based on merely conforming to what is expected of her according to the customs of a particular community - in the case of the Culture Industry, such customs would be based upon the dictates of technological determinism and an instrumentalized form of reason - cannot be considered as being "free" or "autonomous" as it has been imposed upon the individual from an external source - without the individual acquiring the ability/opportunity to decide upon the matter for herself. From Adorno's (in Thomson, 2000: 83) perspective:

*Freedom means to criticise and change situations, not to confirm them by deciding within their coercive structures* [my emphasis].

Viewed in this light, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) seem to be alluding to the fact that there is a coalescence of sorts between the economic imperatives of the market place, the technological paraphernalia that has proliferated as a result of modern science's technological breakthroughs along with the techno-scientific rationality guiding such a process, that manages to produce a heteronomous cultural order to which all individuals are required to acquiesce. As such, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 147) indicate that the Culture Industry possesses the inherent tendency to make itself the embodiment of "authoritative pronouncements", and thus the "irrefutable prophet of the prevailing order" to which all individuals are required to conform.

Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 121) extrapolate upon such a claim when they assert that within the technologically mediated culture of modern society, along with its growing reliance and dependence upon technological devices and products which have been mass produced, no mention is ever made of the fact that the "basis on which technology acquires power over society" is actually wielded by the "power of those whose economic hold over society is greatest" [my emphasis]. They therefore assert that:

[a] technological rationale is the rationale of domination itself. It is the coercive nature of society alienated from itself (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 121).

Working within Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) idiosyncratic interpretation of such phenomena, Gunster (2000: 64) indicates that just like our "distant ancestors", we are once again confronted by a "mythical power" - i.e. the Culture Industry - to which "we must adapt in order to survive" and quite simply, "the only option available for adaptation is identification" [my emphasis].
In direct accordance with this line of argumentation, Heidegger (in Leitch, 2004: 210) indicates that what "typifies modern technological rationality" [along with its accompanying technological paraphernalia] is its
desire for order, control, domination, security...its frantic transformation of everything including nature and human beings into efficient machines and resources [my emphasis].

Based upon this, Baghai (2007: 12) indicates that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, it is the "same instrumentalized approach to nature" - which they critique in their investigation of the Enlightenment's progression throughout Western history - which is now applied directly within the realm of culture, with the consumer emerging as the "real loser". Baghai (2007: 7) elaborates upon this rather worrying claim by indicating that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, "mass culture" within the context of the 20th century has become completely "standardized", "fabricated", "commodified" and "imposed from above" for the "economic and political gains of the few" and, as a result of the "total commodification of culture", the very possibility of "cultural enrichment" for the individual is being "critically jeopardized". As such, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are of the opinion that while the mass produced culture of contemporary society may claim to offer an "improved society" for the individual which is based upon the ideals of freedom, liberty and emancipation, it abjectly fails to do so in reality, and it is this failure which they then term the "triumph of pseudo-culture" which they believe has become prevalent within the modern world (Thomson, 2006: 74).

2.3. How does "pseudo-culture" manage to manifest itself within the modern world and what ideological function does it serve within the late capitalist society?

In order to expand upon this particular aspect of their investigation regarding the "pseudo-culture" of the 20th century, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) essentially argue that there are certain approaches and strategies which have been implemented and utilized by the various manufacturers of cultural commodities and broadcasters of mass media, along with the wide array of standardized products provided to the public by the entertainment industries, which are all inherently designed to promote an economy which was aimed at valorizing and normalising the prevailing social order and the ideals of perpetual consumption. Pietilä (2005: 145) expands upon this assertion by indicating that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) vantage point, the "owners of capital" have always been "in search of new opportunities for the realization of capital" and that the precepts of "mass culture" were "born" when they
recognized that capital can be "valorized" by "investing it in the production of cultural commodities" on a "mass scale" in order to "streamline the production process" in an effective and efficient manner so as to "minimize costs and maximize output" - as adopted and advocated by the likes of individuals such as Henry Ford and Fred Taylor.

Gartman (2012: 46) elaborates upon this assertion by indicating that according to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), it is the technology utilized by "cultural suppliers" which forces the "corporate mass-producers of culture" to abandon the "aesthetic diversity" of cultural artefacts that "symbolizes social differences" and to adopt "homogenized goods". Thus, on the supply side of the cultural market, the "search for profits" leads corporations to lower costs by "mechanically producing large quantities of the same products". Just as Ford was forced by the high costs of specialized machines to eliminate all car models but one - the standardized, unchanging "Model T" - so the mass producers of films, music, radio and television programs are similarly forced by production costs to focus on a few types with standardized formulas (Gartman, 2012: 46).

What this therefore implies, according to Pietilä (2005: 146), is that within the realm of contemporary culture, all of the various products which are available to the consumer become increasingly "commodified" whereby "standardization dresses the products in rigid formats" by impressing "the same stamp on everything" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 120). As such, all of the products offered by the Culture Industry are:

    ready-made clichés to be slotted in anywhere; they never do anything more than fulfill the purpose allotted to them in the overall plan -

which is to perpetuate an endless cycle of consumption (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 120). In order to maintain such a profligate process of eternal consumption, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) argue that the "likeness of products" is actually the foundation upon which are then built the "strategies that differentiate them" and envelop them with an "individual air". The notion of "Individuality" within the Culture Industry is important for both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) because it creates an impression that what is "completely reified and mediated" is actually "a sanctuary from immediacy and life" (Adorno in Pietilä, 2005: 146). The individual is therefore lulled into believing that she is enriching and edifying herself - from a cultural perspective - through the consumption of individualized and personally tailored products, whereas in reality, all she is consuming is a proliferation of prosaic and predetermined products which have merely been mass produced on an assembly line.
According to Pietilä (2005: 146) it is these strategies which have, for their part, contributed to the "development of the Culture Industry into a system that finally takes hold of everybody" - as it is seemingly able to provide and cater for everyone's needs, whatever they may be.

Extrapolating upon such a dubious assertion, Gunster (2000: 42) indicates that if one is to critically analyse the argument made by Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) regarding the various products which the Culture Industry provides for the individual of the modern world, along with the instrumentalized rationality guiding such a process, perhaps their "most striking characteristic" is that they are all basically "cut from the same mould", in what Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 120) refer to as an implacable form of "obedience" to the "rhythm of the iron system" (i.e. the administered society). It is in this regard that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 122) note that the Culture Industry actually wields a more rigid "style-determining power than ever before" as they believe that every element of mass culture "follows the same formula". Based upon such an understanding, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 129) argue that the various products of the Culture Industry are "adjusted into the limits of the established universe of discourse" by "fabricating them of ready-made pieces according to standard schemes" that create between the pieces an illusory, "prearranged harmony". Regarding this particular matter, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 144) indicate that:

[t]he stronger the positions of the culture industry become, the more summarily it can deal with consumers' needs, producing them, controlling them, disciplining them, and even withdrawing amusement: no limits are set to cultural progress of this kind [my emphasis].

According to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), this "formulaic style" does not change over time, but always remains the same and while they readily admit that this quality of "ever-sameness" does not apply to the "surface content of popular culture", which is constantly changing, they maintain that it applies to its "form", to the "structures that hold everything in place" and as such, they believe that "such techniques fail to produce a mediated, reflexive relationship between the subject and the object" [my emphasis] (Gunster, 2000: 42).

Gunster (2000: 42) expands upon this intriguing assertion by indicating that the most sustained example regarding the "sameness" of the various products offered by the Culture Industry is found in Adorno's (in Gunster, 2000: 42) "infamous remarks on jazz". According to Gunster (2000: 42), one might argue that, for Adorno, "jazz served as a kind of mythic archetype for all products of the Culture Industry" and he therefore used it to demonstrate "everything that was
regressive, affirmative, and harmful in mass culture". Based upon Adorno's critical interpretation of this new cultural product, while the content of jazz appears to constantly change (through musical devices such as syncopation and vibrato, for example), its form binds it tightly into a "repetitive pattern that simply repeats itself over and over again". Jazz is therefore particularly insidious on this count because it successfully "hides its repetitive base beneath a seemingly free style". In other words, according to Adorno (in Gunster, 2000: 42), it produces a kind of "pseudo-individuation" where its listeners are "seduced" into believing that what they are hearing and experiencing is something "unique" when in actuality, they are not. Thus, it is not simply repetition itself, but also the manner in which it is perceived and consumed by the audience that is so alarming. As such, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) argue that in order to encourage the cycle of perpetual consumption, the Culture Industry must continually "mask its repetitive formulas and fool people into believing they are getting something new" (Gunster, 2000: 43). The demands of the marketplace therefore specify that "the more things grow the same, the more they must consequently appear to be different". According to Gunster (2000: 43), this approach can be applied to all of the products that the Culture Industry provides for the consumer and it is this "unconscious" (or possibly semiconscious) internalization of repetition that is so instrumental in promoting the notion of "pseudo-individuation" and the "dissolution of critical capacities".

Based upon this, Schuetz (1989: 7) indicates that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) see two consequences of this instrumentalized, and inherently misleading, approach which has been adopted by the Culture Industry with regard to the production of cultural commodities, namely a "political one" and an "economic one". From an economic perspective, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) believe that the majority of the populace is being "transformed into a complacent consumer of trash" as such products inherently lack any form of cultural enrichment or edification due to the standardized, mass produced format that they have assumed - despite their ostensible claims of individuality and idiosyncrasy which apparently reside within each product. Adorno (in Schuetz, 1989: 7) elaborates upon this particular pointer by indicating that "[t]he less the mass discriminates, the greater the possibility of selling cultural commodities indiscriminately". Gartman (2012: 43) augments such an assertion by indicating that when culture is "interested" and "gives consumers immediate sensual pleasure", it maintains "economic inequality" by providing "a soporific, a superficial satisfaction for needs that prevents people from taking action to create a more just and equal society". From Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, this is exactly what mass culture does in modern society.
as "capitalism turns culture into another commodity" that "must make a profit on the market" (Gartman, 2012: 43). This commodification of culture therefore forces cultural producers to cater to the "largest number of consumers", who demand "substitutes for needs denied them in capitalist production", such as individuality and freedom. Thus, an interested, commodified culture "legitimates the status quo by accommodating the victims to the inequalities of capitalism" (Gartman, 2012: 43).

As a political consequence, Schuetz (1989: 7) indicates that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, the Culture Industry actually "prepares the ground for domination" through the "application of pressure and manipulation" which is "so strong and pervasive" that it can be equated with "a form of terror". Schuetz (1989: 7) expands upon such a damning assertion by indicating that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, the Culture Industry "overwhelms its victims with such an enormous machine that they feel no longer capable of resisting its message". Due to this, the denizen of the modern world loses some of her freedom to "accept or reject a cultural product" which the Culture Industry provides for her as it is now the very issues of performativity, rational expectation and a strong sense of coercion to conform which currently confronts the individual living within such a context. Gartman (2012: 44) provides additional clarity regarding this pointer by indicating that when culture becomes "just another money-making industry", there is an inevitable tendency to reduce "cultural expression" to products that offer "immediate pleasure" and "eliminate the painful reminders of repression and ugliness". The rise of monopoly capitalism concentrates power into fewer and fewer hands, thus intensifying the alienation of work and depriving people of their needs for freedom, individuality, and sociality. As a result of this, they "demand pleasure now", in the form of consumer goods that deliver "superficial, fetishized substitutes for the real satisfactions denied them by society". The freedom and individuality that monopoly capital takes away from it victims in their work lives is returned to them as "ersatz satisfactions in their leisure lives" - for a profit. As such, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: xvi) claim that there is a powerful ideological component associated within the Culture Industry and its array of "pseudo-individuated" products which ultimately "expends itself in the idolization of given existence and of the power which controls technology".

Gunster (2000: 43) goes on to indicate that another "major characteristic" of the Culture Industry which contributes to the "powerful ideology" it exerts over the individual living within modern society, according to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 126), is the "growing concordance between its products and everyday life under capitalism" whereby:
[t]he more intensely and flawlessly [the producer's] techniques duplicate empirical objects, the easier it is today for the illusion to prevail that the outside world is the straightforward continuation of that presented on the screen.... Real life is becoming indistinguishable from the movies.

According to Adorno (in Gunster, 2000: 44), reality is everywhere constructed with an "infantile mimetism" and then "photographed" and as a result of this, instead of shocking audiences (thereby awakening them to the reality of the world and the subjugated position in which they find themselves), technological advances in areas such as film and radio are deployed by the Culture Industry to "systematically reduce" and ultimately "eradicate the distance between art and life". For Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 55), this loss of distance has a novel ideological effect on the consciousness of the individual as mass culture is no longer ideological in the traditional sense of the word: its products do not misrepresent or distort the "truth" about reality as "[r]eality has become its own ideology through the spell cast by its faithful duplication" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 55).

Elaborating on what has been mentioned above, Kellner (2002: 12) indicates that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, the notions of "Entertainment" and "Culture" within the Culture Industry are intrinsically geared towards

accustoming and indoctrinating audiences into accepting existing society as natural by endlessly repeating and reproducing similar views of the world which present the existing way of life as the way of the world.

As such, the "eternal recurrence" of the same in the Culture Industry changes, they suggest, the very nature of ideology as "[i]t [now] becomes a vigorous and prearranged promulgation of the status quo" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 147). Fagan (2005) extrapolates on this particular claim by indicating that while many contemporary theorists argue that complex, capitalist societies are "fragmented" and "heterogeneous" in character, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) insist that the Culture Industry, despite the manifest diversity of cultural commodities, functions to "maintain a uniform system, to which all must conform". Marcuse (1964: 12) agrees with this critical summation when he asserts that within the culture of modern society:

a pattern of one-dimensional thought and behaviour in which ideas, aspirations and objectives that, by their content, transcend the established universe of discourse and action are either repelled or reduced to terms of this universe.
Pietilä (2005: 148) indicates that it is in this regard that Adorno and Horkheimer - along with the other members of the Frankfurt School - perceived the "ideology" that was prevalent within modern society, being disseminated to the public via the various products and technological mediums of popular culture, as being that of "false consciousness" in the Marxian sense. Pietilä (2005: 148) elaborates upon this claim by indicating that "false consciousness", from a Marxian perspective, refers to a way of "conceiving society as it appears in everyday experience". This kind of consciousness enables one to act even with success but, on the basis of it, the "individual is unable to conceive what kind of forces, which conceal themselves in appearances, make society function as it does" (Pietilä, 2005: 148). Therefore, the individual cannot recognize the seeds of change that mature within it, not to speak of promoting the change with his or her actions. As such, Adorno (in Pietilä, 2005: 148) is ultimately of the opinion that such products are "advertisements produced for the world" whereby they disseminate "a general uncritical consciousness".

Based upon such a conceptualisation of the Culture Industry, and the rigid, formulaic manner in which it operates, Kellner (2002: 9) indicates that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, the very "processes of production in the Culture Industry are modelled on factory production" whereby "everything is standardized, streamlined, coordinated, and planned down to the last detail". Citing Max Weber, Adorno (in Gartman, 2012: 46) argues that "bureaucratic corporations reduce the diversity of human tasks in order to impose abstract, standardized rules that allow centralized control". According to Gunster (2000: 43) this then "destroys the capacity of individuals to imagine anything different" and as such, the "speculative dimension of aesthetics, fantasy, and utopia is crushed". What this essentially means for Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) is that with the loss of "formal ideology", people have lost yet another tool with which to "think reflexively about their own social system". As a result of this, "immanent critique" is thereby seriously (and perhaps fatally) compromised as "reality" and "mass culture" are "locked together" in a "parasitic circle of repetition that leads to the continual strengthening of each other" (Gunster, 2000: 45).

Baghai (2007: 9) provides more insight into this perturbing situation by indicating that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, what is now being disseminated through the Culture Industry is not "culture" per se, but rather, a socialized form of "pseudo-culture" which is "detached from its conditions of existence and divested of self-determination". While Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are aware of the fact that the "rise of pseudo-culture" predates the emergence of the Culture Industry, they nevertheless maintain that the "Culture Industry plays
a significant role in its universalization" (Baghai, 2007: 9). As such, they assert that "Pseudo-Culture" reflects both the "divorce of culture from the real course of human life and its simultaneous submission to it" (Baghai, 2007: 10). Thus, according to Baghai (2007: 10), the "flickering gleam of culture", is suppressed by the "blinding ray of socialized pseudo-culture". Culture as the "expression of suffering and contradiction, cultivation of independent judgement, and search for the meaning of the good life" is thus replaced with "conformity to the dictates of social order". Now that entertainment and relaxation have become the declared purpose of production and consumption of culture, the only "use value" that made culture saleable is ultimately "annihilated in the pursuit of profit". As such, the supposedly "free dissemination of culture" by radio and television is only a function of its "total commodification" and a reflection of its "parasitic relationship to advertising" (Baghai, 2007: 10). Cultural products have therefore been forced to submit to the "cold principle of exchange" where they are no longer "also commodities, they are commodities through and through" (Adorno in Baghai, 2007: 11). Culture thus surrenders the internal logic of cultural products to the rules of the market and by implication, surrenders to efficiency at the point of production, and gives way to fascination with techniques at the point of reception. As a result of this, the Culture Industry does not simply produce the ideology of the age, rather, it speaks to the "ideological character of the age" (Baghai, 2007: 11).

Such a critical interpretation of the Culture Industry clearly highlights how it is that both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are of the opinion that the various products and permutations of contemporary technology, as adopted and utilized within modern society and popular culture, possess the innate ability to pacify, coerce and manipulate the majority of people into conformity and obsequiousness, without ever providing them with the opportunity to edify or enrich themselves from a cultural perspective. However, it is important to be aware of the fact that Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) investigation and critique is primarily founded upon the premise that it was during this period of modern history that "the widespread scientization of technology and technologization of science" occurred, along with its imbrication to the economic imperatives and ideals of the capitalist market place which have led to the creation of the dubious and domineering situation in which humankind currently finds itself (Leitch, 2004: 56). Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 121) therefore indicate that the emergence of the situation that currently confronts humankind arises not as a result of the "low movement in technology" per se, but rather, due to the prolific and indispensable function that technology and its associated techno-scientific rationality serves within the consumerist economy of modern
society. As such, one of the most dubious and insidious aspects of the Culture Industry, according to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), lies within ideological role that it serves within the late capitalist society and how it is able to pacify and coerce the citizen of the modern world into conformity - despite its ostensible claims of promoting liberation, freedom and edification.

According to Kellner (2002: 8), it is primarily due to the totalizing nature of the situation in which modern culture found itself, and the ideological underpinnings associated with such homogenizing practices, that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) adopted the term "Culture Industry", as opposed to concepts like "popular culture" or "mass culture," because they wanted to "resist notions that products of the culture industry emanated from the masses or from the people" (Adorno in Kellner, 2002: 8). They therefore saw the Culture Industry as being an "administered culture", imposed from above, as an instrument of "indoctrination and social control" [my emphasis] (Kellner, 2002: 8). As such, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) use their analysis of the Culture Industry to call attention to what they perceive as being the "fundamental traits of the administered society" which they believe was invariably producing a homogenizing and reifying effect upon the denizen of the modern world - thus undermining the autonomy of the individual while also producing an atrophic and stultifying effect upon humankind's critical cognitive abilities and the possibility of cultural enrichment.

**2.4. What does the Culture Industry mean for the individual living in the modern world?**

What Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) essentially try to highlight, when considering this particular aspect of their polemic targeted towards the Culture Industry, is that through the process of acculturation which occurs within contemporary society, the individual is wholly objectified and devalued in relation to the technical production of goods and the reifying ideology espoused by the capitalist enterprise (Baghai, 2007). Extrapolating on such an assertion, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: xiv) note that:

> [o]n the one hand the growth of economic productivity furnishes the conditions for a world of greater justice; on the other hand it allows the technical apparatus and the social groups which administer it a disproportionate superiority to the rest of the population. The individual is wholly devaluated in relation to the economic powers, which at the same time press the control of society over nature to hitherto unsuspected heights [my emphasis].
As such, they argue that any person living within such a context signifies only those attributes by which "he [sic] can replace everyone else" and as a result of this, "he [sic] is interchangeable, a copy" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 145). This then leads Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 158) to assert that everything within modern culture is looked at "from only one aspect: that it can be used for something else" and as such, no object - including the individual - has an inherent value, as its value is discernible "only to the extent that it can be replaced". It is in this regard that Baghai (2007: 13) indicates that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, the abstract "exchange principle", which disguises the real relationships among human beings, "turns into the power that relates individuals, groups, and objects to one another and sets them apart". It is therefore this principle they believe that manages to become the "underlying principle of normative and cognitive conduct in our world", the principle medium through which society "makes its power over the individual felt".

Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 154) therefore claim that within the realm of the Culture Industry, the individual is nothing more than "an illusion" not merely because of the "standardization of the means of production", but because he/she is "tolerated only so long as his [sic] complete identification with the generality is unquestioned". Adorno (in Baghai, 2007: 10) therefore asserts that in contrast to the Kantian, the categorical imperative of the Culture Industry no longer has anything in common with freedom. It proclaims:

you shall conform, without instruction as to what; conform to that which exists anyway, and to that which anyone thinks anyway as a reflex of its power and omnipresence.

Based upon such an interpretation, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 154) maintain that "pseudo-individuality" is rife within the modern world due to the fact that the "peculiarity of the self is a monopoly commodity determined by society". Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 153) therefore assert that:

[I]ife in the late capitalist era is a constant initiation rite, everyone must show that he [sic] wholly identifies himself [sic] with the power which is belabouring him [sic].

Kellner (2002: 9) indicates that it is in this regard that the Culture Industry serves as a "powerful instrument of social control that induces individuals to accept their fate and conform to existing society". Such an assertion then leads Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 148) to argue that the "only choice" there is for the individual of the modern world is "either to join or be left behind"
and as a result of this, "[t]he bread which the culture industry offers man [sic] is [actually] the stone of the stereotype".

It is in this sense that Kellner (2002: 8) indicates that Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) theory of the Culture Industry provides one with a rebuttal to schools of thought - such as those of Brecht (1967) and Benjamin (1969) - who were of the opinion that the "new forces of mass communications" - especially radio and film - could serve as "instruments of technological progress and social enlightenment" as they could be tailored to create a heightened sense of "class consciousness" within the individual living in the modern world and thus allow them to become more critical and resistant towards the dominating form of reality that confronted them. In stark contrast to these auspicious and liberating claims, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) perceived these new technologies as instruments of "ideological mystification" and "class domination" and as such, they therefore suggest that the various culture industries are actually constructed in such a way so as to "inhibit the development of class consciousness" by "providing the ruling political and economic forces with a powerful instrument of social control" [my emphasis] (Kellner, 2002: 8). Their conceptualization of the Culture Industry therefore aims to provide a model of a:

- technically advanced capitalist society which mobilizes support for its institutions, practices, and values from below making class-consciousness more difficult to attain than before (Kellner, 2002: 8).

Such a description therefore cogently highlights the reifying and stultifying nature of such industries along with the ideological consequences and the undermining effects that they have upon the individual.

Augmenting such an assertion, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 145) claim that as an "individual", the denizen living within the modern world "is expendable and utterly insignificant" due to the fact that the "Industry is interested in people merely as customers and employees" [my emphasis]. Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 147) note that as "employees", people are reminded of the "rational organization" of the work place and urged to "fit in like sensible people". As "customers", "the freedom of choice", the "charm of novelty" - i.e. the claims toward a supposedly autonomous and liberated form of existence - are "demonstrated on the screen". In either case, as both customers and employees, "they remain objects" [my emphasis]. Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 155) even go so far as to claim that the realm of
friendship and intimate relationships has been tainted by the instrumentalized, objectifying and undermining ideological effects that are inherent to the Culture Industry when they assert that:

[a] modern city dweller...can now only imagine friendship as a "social contact" that is, as being in social contact with others with whom he [sic] has no inward contact [my emphasis].

Working within this particularly critical and pessimistic stance, Kellner (2002: 8) asserts that from the perspective of both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997),

the culture industries reproduce capitalist hegemony over the working class by engineering consent to the existing society, and thus establishing a socio-psychological basis for social integration.

Based upon this interpretation regarding the development of society along with its technologically determined culture, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 120) indicate that "films, radios and magazines [along with all other aspects of modern society] make up a system which is uniform as a whole and in every part". As such, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are of the belief that the culture industries essentially "coax" individuals into the "privacy of their home", or "movie theatre", while producing "consumers-spectators of media events and escapist entertainment" who are being "subtly indoctrinated into dominant ideologies and conformist behaviour" [my emphasis] (Kellner, 2002: 9). It is in this regard that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 136) claim that the Culture Industry remains within the realm of "entertainment business" whereby all the trends of the Culture Industry are "profoundly embedded in the public by the whole social process" and they are therefore "encouraged by the survival of the market in this area". Working from this position, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 143) go on to indicate that the Culture Industry is "corrupt", not because it is a "sinful Babylon" but because it is a "cathedral dedicated to elevated pleasure" whereby the "fusion of culture and entertainment" leads not only to a "depravation of culture", but inevitably to an "intellectualization of amusement".

In order to elaborate upon this particular pointer, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 143) indicate that when one is to critically evaluate the various forms of entertainment and liberating forms of relaxation offered by the Culture Industry, amusement itself becomes an ideal taking the place of the higher things of which it completely deprives the masses.
Gunster (2000: 62) indicates that it is in this regard that, according to Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) interpretation, the Culture Industry has a "very real monopoly on pleasure": as elusive, temporary, and false as its claims to "pleasure" or "leisure" may be, they are the only "real option for gratification" afforded to those who spend their working days "enslaved by the machines and institutions of modern capitalism". What Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) therefore seem to be illuminating within this particular aspect of their investigation is the accentuated form of reification and stultification that such an industry manages to exert over the individual as the Culture Industry is essentially able to penetrate every aspect of contemporary life - including friendship, interpersonal relationships, work and even leisure - with the aim of lulling/pacifying the denizen of the modern world into accepting the nature of reality and existence by embracing the predetermined forms of "escapist" entertainment and amusement with which the Culture Industry provides them - without ever reflecting upon the questionable and hegemonic nature of such a determinate form of existence.

Such an assertion then seems to place an interesting twist on Marx's (1843) claim that religion serves as the "opium of the people" in order to allow them to endure the exploited and subjugated form of reality to which they were exposed, as Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) now seem to be of the opinion that it is in fact the various forms of entertainment and relaxation offered by the Culture Industry which have actually usurped the pacifying role that religion once served in order to create a populace that is even more malleable, manipulable and exploitable. Elaborating upon this particular claim, Gunster (2000: 43) indicates that labelling "modern films" or "popular novels" as an "escapist" form of entertainment and relaxation within modern society is actually a "kind of cruel joke" because in reality, all the consumer actually escapes from is the "possibility of imagining another life" [my emphasis].

Augmenting such a critical claim, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 144) assert that within the context of modern society and the Culture Industry:

[p]leasure always means not to think about anything, to forget suffering even where it is shown. Basically it is helplessness. It is flight...not from wretched reality but from the last remaining thought of resistance. The liberation which amusement promises is freedom from thought and negation [my emphasis].

On a particularly dubious note, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: xvi) indicate that the ultimate result of such a totalizing and overwhelming scenario culminates in a situation whereby the
denizen of the modern world becomes "more subservient to his [sic] adversary" [my emphasis] which they refer to as "the absolute power of capitalism" [my emphasis]. As such, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are of the belief that the popular culture of modern society arises not as a result of intellectual endeavors axiomatically aimed at liberating and edifying the citizens of the modern world (as the proponents of the Enlightenment once claimed), but rather, as a part of the production process geared to fuel society's insatiable desire for capital accumulation and consumption alone. For Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), the Culture Industry therefore produces "amusement" that arouse in people needs that its products "promise to fulfill", but the promise is "always broken". The "dialectics of promise" and its "deceiving" therefore yokes people into a continuous cycle of consumption in which they are seeking "need-satisfaction" that is "postponed endlessly" (Pietilä, 2005: 149). It is in this regard that David Held (1980: 91) describes the Culture Industry as follows:

the culture industry produces for mass consumption and significantly contributes to the determination of that consumption. For people are now being treated as objects, machines, outside as well as inside the workshop. The consumer, as the producer, has no sovereignty [my emphasis].

The once emancipatory and liberating ideals of the Enlightenment therefore seem to have been completely abandoned and subsumed by the sacrosanct ideals of capital accumulation and the economic imperatives of the marketplace - with modern technology acting as the perfect tool to realise and actualise such instrumentalized and myopic ends. As a result of this, Schuetz (1989: 4) asserts that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), along with their colleagues of the "Frankfurt Institute of Social Research", maintained that the once educational and edifying role that culture was supposed to play in an individual's life was rapidly being replaced by the "manipulated pleasures" of "the ball park and the movie, the best seller and the radio" so that what ultimately transpires is the situation whereby the "Industry" manages to do all of the individuals' "schematizing" for her (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 124).

According to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 142), the "principle" guiding the culture of modern society "dictates" that the individual

should be shown all his [sic] needs as capable of fulfillment, but that those needs should be so predetermined that he [sic] feels himself to be the eternal consumer [therefore turning him/her into] the object of the culture industry [my emphasis].
Gunster (2000: 53) indicates that what Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are essentially arguing is that "mass culture does our thinking for us" due to the fact that we are fed "predigested" products that have already been "conceptually organized and processed for easy consumption". While "true experience" for Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) arises out of the "tension or dialectic between the familiar and the unfamiliar" - whereby we are forced to actively think about what we are seeing and feeling in light of our past, our future, and even speculate upon alternatives to the present - the data given to us by the Culture Industry, according to Gunster (2000: 53,) has "already been organized and classified for us". Films and television programs, radio broadcasts, and popular music have already been so extensively organized, sorted, and classified that there is nothing left for people to schematize. Thus, the capacity to have new experiences and to critically reflect upon things that do not fit into a "predetermined cognitive schematic, is fatally damaged". Our mode of apperception has therefore become "synchronic, static, and de-historicized, entirely preoccupied with the singular detail as detached from any kind of context" (Gunster, 2000: 53). As such, both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 27) argue that the products of the Culture Industry themselves, and the manner in which they are generally consumed, militate against the kind of mediation that is needed for critical thought as "cognition is restricted to its repetition; and thought becomes mere tautology".

What Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) fundamentally seem to be arguing within this point of their critique is that the products of the Culture Industry, along with the underlying ideological component guiding their production and dissemination, do not allow people to reflexively secure the intellectual distance that is necessary to think critically about - "to determinatively negate" - the world around them. In fact, according to their idiosyncratic interpretation of such phenomena, cognition becomes even "less than an activity of classifying, schematizing, or mediating experience through different concepts"; instead, it becomes "simple recognition by way of a single conceptual framework" (Gunster, 2000: 56). Difference and heterogeneity are therefore excluded as the Culture Industry manages this process by bringing every cultural object and activity "within the market" and, subsequently, "forcing the fungibility of each thing with every other thing" (Gunster, 2000: 56). As "use-value" is subordinated to "exchange-value", people grow accustomed to equivalence, and, before long, any object or characteristic that refuses to submit to quantification is "excluded as abnormal" - which also includes individuals who are not willing to conform to such predetermined dictates. Confining one's own thought in such a way not only makes everyday drudgery easier to live with, it also allows the individual to avoid the "agonizing consideration of potentiality": what could have been and
might be, both in terms of personal self-development and on a broader collective level (Gunster, 2000: 56).

As a result of this, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) believe that education within the modern world becomes primarily a means of acculturation, or adjustment in order to produce individuals who would be willing to mould themselves according to the ideals of mass culture and the economic imperatives of the market place - thus relinquishing any claims to personal freedom or autonomy. As Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 133) note, "not to conform means to be rendered powerless, economically and therefore spiritually" and thus, "the man [sic] of culture has to accept what the culture manufacturers offer him [sic]" [my emphasis] (1997: 124). According to Kellner (2002: 1), the emergence of this precarious situation led Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) to argue that it was the various culture industries of contemporary society that were retrogressively transforming culture from an instrument of "Bildung" and "enlightenment" - which aims to illuminate the sense in which culture can be (and should be) closely linked to the idea of education and improvement (Thomson, 2006: 73) - into an "instrument of manipulation and domination". Thus, culture - which was once perceived as a "refuge of beauty and truth" - was subsequently falling prey, they believed, to tendencies toward "rationalization, standardization, and conformity" which they interpreted as a consequence of the "triumph of the instrumental rationality" that was coming to "pervade and structure ever more aspects of contemporary life" (Kellner, 2002: 1).

What this then implies is that while culture was once conceptualised as a vehicle which "cultivated individuality", it is now merely an industry geared at "promoting conformity", which, according to Kellner (2002: 1), was a crucial - and highly contestable - part of "the totally administered society" that was ultimately producing "the end of the individual". According to Gunster (2000: 48), the creation of the Culture Industry, which is driven solely by the objective of making a profit from the sale of culture, ultimately leaves one with a "frozen, synchronic, and lifeless cultural landscape". On a particularly worrying note, Gunster (2000: 62) indicates that with the commodification of "values" which has occurred within the Culture Industry, there has also been an "alteration of their original use and value", including values that were originally opposed to such an Industry. Thus, every time a producer of cultural commodities promises "justice", "freedom" or "edification" to its customers, for example, it transforms the original ideal into an "advertising jingle" and thereby "effectively dissolving any critical potential it might once have had". According to Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), the definitive - and damning - consequence of such a determinate and instrumentalized process is the
disappearance of the inner life for the individual of modern society due to the fact that they are essentially obliged to bow down and acquiesce to the economic imperatives of society without acquiring or harnessing the ability to critically reflect upon their situation and the reifying, homogenizing and totalizing effect that it has upon their lives.

Based upon what has been mentioned thus far regarding Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) views of modern society and the cultural form it has assumed within the 20th century, one gets the distinct impression that for the critical theorists, contrary to the many claims which may attest to the progressive and liberating form that modern culture and society has managed to assume, they were neither impressed nor swayed by such triumphalist and sententious narratives. Their antipathetic stance regarding these pointers seems to be grounded on the premise that it was the very accomplishments and breakthroughs that one typically associates with modern society, and the cultural form that is has assumed, which were actually centrally involved in the creation of a world whereby an accentuated form of domination, conformism and oppression was being actualised. This then leads Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 149) to assert that:

> [e]everyone is enclosed at an early age in a system...which constitutes the most sensitive instrument of social control.

From their perspective, the standard of life enjoyed within such a context "corresponds very closely to the degree to which classes and individuals are essentially bound up with the system" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 150). This then leads them to assert that "tragedy" is reduced to the "threat to destroy anyone who does not cooperate". As such, they argue that in the demand for entertainment and relaxation, "purpose has absorbed the realm of purposelessness" whereby the denizen of the modern world has "already forgotten that there was ever a notion of what human life was" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997: 156). In the end, then, we are left with a "totalitarian system of cultural production" that effectively and completely "integrates individuals, their thoughts and activities, into prevailing social, economic, and political structures" (Gunster, 2000: 65).
2.5. Is Adorno and Horkheimer's Culture Industry thesis relevant and applicable to contemporary society?

Gartman (2012: 41) states that arguably one of the most powerful and comprehensive theories of contemporary culture to emerge is that of the Culture Industry, as authored by Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), which places a fundamental focus on the way that the "myriad manifestations of culture in modern capitalist society" — including: art, music, television, film, consumer goods, technology — are inextricably linked with the "unequal structures of power, wealth and domination". Kellner (2002: 12) augments such a claim by indicating that their critique of the culture industries has made many important contributions to the study of "media culture" and the potentially undermining effects that it can have upon society due to the fact that:

it provides models of radical critique of the artifacts of media culture, situates culture and communication within the capitalist political economy and historical context of its day.

Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), along with their colleagues at the "Frankfurt School", can therefore be considered as being the progenitors of this form of critique due to the fact that they were the first theorists who managed to conceptualise "culture and communications as part of society" and focus on how it is that the "socioeconomic imperatives helped constitute their nature, function, and effects" (Kellner, 2002: 12). By adopting a critical approach to the study of all social phenomena, Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critical theory is therefore able to conceptualise how the culture industries are actually able to potentially serve as instruments of social control and thus serve the interests of social domination.

However, Baghai (2007: 1) indicates that Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) engagement with the mass media and popular culture has often been criticized as a being "backward looking", "elitist", and an "ascetic renunciation of mass culture". Critics of their Culture Industry thesis have therefore claimed that they have "ignored the oppositional potentials of mass culture" and the "emancipatory applications of the new media", and implicitly fostered a "politics of resignation and despair". Elaborating upon this particular pointer, Pietilä (2005: 156) indicates that the claims that Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) theory of Culture Industry viewed media texts as monolithic, containing a well-marked preferred meaning, and the audience as "passive, prisoner of the text" (Pietilä, 2005: 157), make up the "standard critique" of that theory. The critics therefore tend to speak of Frankfurt School notions of "passive audiences" and "mislead masses" (Pietilä, 2005: 156), or of the fear, felt supposedly by the Frankfurtians, that the media
would homogenize the audiences into an "unthinking mass". Adorno especially is charged for such misconceptions as it was he who supposedly portrayed the consumer of cultural commodities "as a helpless victim of all-pervasive media reality" (Pietilä, 2005: 156). Kellner (2002: 15) elaborates upon such criticisms by indicating that to be sure, much popular culture lends itself precisely to Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) categories and critique, however, at times it appears as though their model of the Culture Industry does not allow for the "heterogeneity of popular culture" and "contradictory effects", instead "straight jacketing" media culture in the form of reification and commodification as signs of the "total triumph of capital" and the "total reification of experience". Based upon this, Pietilä (2005: 156) indicates that the Frankfurtians' work has often been evaluated in quite contradictory ways due to the fact that they abstained from "streamlining the complexity of their thinking" and "cultivated paradoxes, irony, mockery, and intentional exaggeration" which has led to even opposite interpretations of what they wrote.

In order to effectively address such concerns and critiques which have been levelled at Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) Culture Industry thesis, and to effectively highlight how it is that their investigation is indeed still a valid source of insight and critique with regard to the trajectory in which modern society, along with its popular culture, is moving, Baghai (2007: 1) indicates that Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) treatment of the mass media, as a philosophical critique of Enlightenment, needs to be read in a "particular historical context" due to the fact that "no thinker can escape his [sic] social origins entirely". Baghai (2007: 2) reinforces such an assertion by indicating that even before Hitler’s ascent to power within Nazi Germany during the 1930's, Adorno and Horkheimer were able to take note of a "historical transformation in capitalism" along with the "powerful influence wielded by communications technology" and as such, they were therefore able to "speculate about its implications for social change" [my emphasis]. Adorno and Horkheimer were therefore able to observe how it was that with "monopoly capitalism" and the rise of various forms of "command economies" across the globe in response to the post WWI global stagnation heralded the "end of the liberal era" and the advent of the so-called "administered society". In the context of what was seen as the "declining role of family as the primary agent of socialization", the "growing role of mass media as a substitute" therefore called for "specific attention". Setting out to address the "crisis of philosophy" that ran parallel to the "authoritarian potentials" of democratic America, they therefore found themselves involved in a "radical appraisal of Enlightenment"; a full-fledged critique of the
"self-destructive character of Western civilization" and their analysis of "mass media" is but one dimension of that project (Baghai, 2007: 12).

Based upon this, Baghai (2007: 2) indicates that the "truth element of their analysis", is not to be sought in its "universal validity", "power of sound prediction", or "established propositions"; but rather "in its ability to shed light on the specific constellation of social forces that shaped their time, and perhaps our own". Gunster (2000: 65) reinforces such an assertion when he indicates that one should not forget that Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) theory regarding the Culture Industry is an "ideal type" [author's emphasis]: it must therefore not be interpreted as a "description of empirical institutions". Instead, it seeks to:

abstract from real human beings and their social relations certain tendencies that manifest themselves to a greater or lesser degree in different circumstances.

Gunster (2000: 65) therefore claims that we must never lose sight of the fact that the "often brilliant, sometimes elitist, and always provocative comments of critical theory on mass culture" should not be understood as a "totalizing indictment" but as the "exploration of certain tendencies within reality".

In addition to this, Baghai (2007: 13) is quick to point out that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) do not see the "dominance of technological rationality" in the realm of culture as "inevitable". Instead, the Culture Industry is seen as the result of a "historically specific balance of power". As such, their critique of the Culture Industry is in fact a "critique of technological determinism" as it presented itself and operated within the late capitalist societies of the 20th century. It is therefore to be viewed as an attempt to introduce the possibility of critique by "destabilizing its reified reality" and thus, to break the "cozy symbiosis between symbols and privilege" in order to "transform culture into the force for freedom and equality that it has the potential to become" (Gartman, 2012: 41). Thus, the Culture Industry is not criticized as the agent of social control in administered capitalism, rather, it is examined within the constellation of social forces and processes that are to shape post-war capitalism.

Augmenting such a claim, Kellner (2002: 16) indicates that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) do not attack popular culture per se, but the forms it takes under capitalism. Thus, rather than "rejecting the popular tout court", Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are critical of a "form of standardized mass culture" that is part of the "industrial processes of mass production and consumption" within contemporary capitalism which in turn contributes to processes of
"homogenization and massification" of both "culture" and "audiences". It is therefore also important to be aware of the fact that when the undermining effects of the Culture Industry are discussed, they are viewed from the vantage point of those who disseminate them and the objective imperatives of the Industry as a purely profit-making enterprise. Thus, the inseparability of the social context within which the Culture Industry operates from the study of its effects is essential in the critique of mass media (Baghai, 2007: 13).

While Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) do adopt an incredibly pessimistic and cynical stance regarding the state of modern culture within the 20th century, Kellner (2002: 2) notes that they nevertheless continued to "privilege culture as an important, and often overlooked, source of social knowledge, as well as a potential form of social criticism and opposition". As Adorno (in Kellner, 2002: 2) notes:

the task of [cultural] criticism must be not so much to search for the particular interest-groups to which cultural phenomena are to be assigned, but rather to decipher the general social tendencies which are expressed in these phenomena and through which the most powerful interests realize themselves. Cultural criticism must become social physiognomy. The more the whole divests itself of all spontaneous elements, is socially mediated and filtered, is 'consciousness', the more it becomes 'culture'.

This passage points both towards Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) position which essentially argues that the "administered culture" of the 20th century was coming to play an increasing role within social production and reproduction, and to their belief that an analysis of culture can provide crucial insights into social processes. Regarding this particular pointer, Adorno (in Thomson, 2006: 81) indicates that in the "face of the administered world" - which they believed is spearheaded by the Culture Industry and its associated forms of technology - "the only way spirit can survive is through critical reflection on pseudo-culture, for which culture is essential". Such a statement then cogently highlights the immense amount of importance that both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) placed upon the emancipatory and edifying role that culture should serve within contemporary society, while also illuminating the gravity of the situation for the individual trying to comprehend the underlying structures and rationality propelling modern society and the cultural form it has assumed, as it is only by doing so that one will be able to critically evaluate the direction in which it is going in order to try and bring about some form of positive change. It is in this regard that Thomson (2006: 81) indicates, from Adorno and
Horkheimer's (1997) vantage point, it is only through "critical reflection" that society will be able to "confirm the survival of culture within its deformed surrogate".

Based upon this, Baghai (2007: 14) indicates that contrary to what the critics may claim, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) do not reduce the relation between the mass media and their audience to a "one-sided relation" between an "omnipresent agent of manipulation" and "passive dopes". They know that mass produced culture is more heterogeneous than what they present it to be and they are also aware that its relation to non-commodified culture is "much too complex to be reduced to a simple contradiction". This inevitable "impoverishment", however, is deemed necessary in breaking "the abstract monotony" of the administered society. The contention that "pseudo-culture is universal" is therefore "simplistic and exaggerated", however, the concept does not purport to include all peoples and classes indiscriminately but rather to give "shape to a tendency", to "sketch the physiognomy of a spirit" which also "determines the signature of an age", even if its validity is still "very limited both quantitatively and qualitatively" (Adorno in Baghai, 2007: 14).

Their critique of the Culture Industry is therefore not to be construed as a "call to abandon the mass media in its entirety" as the analysis of the Culture Industry essentially aims to provide one with a "viable interpretive framework to engage with the mass media" and to address the potentially undermining effects that it can have for the individual living in the modern world (Baghai 2007: 17). It is therefore important to note that rather than resignation from all forms of mass culture and its associated technologies (such as television), Adorno asserts that:

[b]y exposing the socio-psychological implications and mechanisms of television...not only the shows can be improved but more importantly the public may be sensitized to the nefarious effect of some of these mechanisms (in Baghai, 2007: 17).

This assertion can be regarded as incredibly pertinent with regard to the aims of this investigation as it alludes towards the possibility of a dialectic contained within such technological devices: while we should be critical of blindly embracing them, we also need to recognise their potential merits and benefits. As Gartman (2012) notes, the existing technology of a society reveals the contradiction "not between one social class and another", but between the "potential for a non-repressive society" and the "existence of the present repressive one". Technology therefore contains potentials for human liberation that cannot be developed within the repressive social relations of domination and it is therefore such "dominant relations" that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) aimed to explore within their critique of popular culture.
Based upon what has been mentioned above, Schuetz (1989: 11) indicates that the contribution of Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) Critical Theory towards an understanding of popular culture and the technology driving it can be assessed in two ways: one looks for "kernels of truth revealed by its philosophy" and the other "scrutinizes for inconsistencies or dubious claims". While Schuetz (1989: 11) indicates that all of these "critical interjections are valid", they nevertheless "do not contradict the contention that the germs of the disaster that hit Europe also exist in the seemingly healthy democracy of the United States". As such, Schuetz (1989) indicates that among the various points of investigation and critique with which Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) were intimately involved, they were centrally concerned about the "potential of powerful mechanisms and technological forces that can be used as a form of indoctrination and control" [my emphasis].

It is in this regard that Schuetz (1989: 11) states that from the inception of Adorno and Horkheimer's investigation into these matters - which was as early as 1932 - up until this point in history, the "psychological strategies for manipulation have become much more effective" [my emphasis] and so has the "hardware" [my emphasis] that is available for the purpose. Kellner (2002: 16) indicates that this point is "even more salient in the digital age of the Internet" and, in light of this particular investigation, the advent of a digitally based lifestyle that functions through the various platforms of social networking - offered by the array of mobile communications technologies available within the 21st century - only adds more credence to this rather worrying claim. We must therefore appreciate the fact that Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) insights regarding the Culture Industry indubitably provide us with a great deal of guidance and elucidation when considering the potential merits and pitfalls associated with such technological innovations, along with the dubious form that society can assume when guided directly by the dictates of technological determinism.

In terms of the current investigation regarding the dialectical nature of social networking, Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critique and insight into the Culture Industry can therefore be regarded as being of paramount importance as it cogently elucidates the undermining effects that a "pseudo-culture" - which is driven by a technological form of rationality, coupled with the indomitable economic imperatives of the late capitalist society - can have for the individual living within such a setting. As such, their claims have allowed us to conceptualise how it is that such a technologically driven society is actually able to manifest itself within the modern world, how the ideological underpinnings of a society guided by the dictates of technological determinism have the inherent potential to coerce the individual into subservient state of
conformity, as well as highlighting how the various cultural products created within such a setting fail to provide the consumer with any form of cultural enrichment or edification - whilst ostensibly claiming to provide the denizen of the modern world with the means for attaining a free and autonomous lifestyle. As such, the seemingly benign technological innovations of the 20th century do unfortunately seem to contain a dialectical tension due to the fact that they promise to achieve so much, yet, from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) perspective, fail to deliver on almost all accounts. In addition to this, we have also been alerted to the fact that within the realm of contemporary society, under the dictates of a purposive and instrumentalized rationality, almost every aspect of modern life - including people, relationships and humanizing/emancipatory values - are susceptible to commodification and objectification, and as a result, we have therefore been alerted to the fact that education, culture, values, relationships and even the faculty of critical thought are all at risk if such an instrumentalized process is left unchecked.

As we will see, such critical insights will prove to be invaluable with regard to the next section of this investigation which will primarily focus on Zygmunt Bauman's views regarding what he refers to as the "Society of Consumers" in the "liquid modern world" (Bauman, 2007: 31). From Bauman's perspective, contemporary society has in no way taken heed of the insights offered by the likes of Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), and as such, it currently finds itself even more immersed in a world that is based upon a purposive and instrumentalized form of rationality and the dictates of technological determinism. According to Bauman (2007), this ultimately leaves the individual - and her hopes of living a free, meaningful and autonomous life - in a more precarious position as people have only come to be more objectified, insignificant and expendable due to the fact that "consumption is now a pattern setter for interhuman relations" - with modern technology, and the ideals of consumerism, providing the driving impetus behind such a deterministic process (Bauman, 2007: 26). As we will see, Bauman's insights into the nature of contemporary society essentially expand upon many aspects of Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critique of the Culture Industry and it is in this regard Bauman's critique will be utilized to highlight how it is that the vast array of technological paraphernalia associated with the 21st century - including social networking sites - has the potential to become an undermining and homogenizing force within society when adopted for the instrumentalized and deterministic purposes that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) have so limpidly highlighted.
Chapter 3: Consuming life - why more may actually be less

It is the intention of this particular chapter to elucidate how it is that the notions of technological determinism, along with a highly purposive and instrumentalized form of rationality - to which both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) have previously alluded - have manifested themselves within the "consumerist society" of the late 20th century and early 21st century via the aid of the various social networking platforms and mobile communicative technologies that have proliferated within the modern era. In order to do so, it will firstly be necessary to highlight the nature and existential underpinnings of contemporary society, as elucidated by the works of Zygmunt Bauman (2003, 2007 & 2013) and his primary focus on the integral role which he believes "consumption" is now playing within the modern world; along with how it is that the notion of "consumerism" is inimically affecting the manner in which individuals now perceive themselves and the relationships that they experience with others. Once this has been achieved, we will then turn our attention to the pivotal, and potentially undermining role that Bauman (2003, 2007 & 2013) believes modern mobile communicative technologies - such as social networking services - have started to play within contemporary society, by focusing primarily of the link between social networking services, consumerist rationality and the objectification and commodification of the individual. Upon doing so, it will be clearly highlighted that within the 21st century, consumerist society finds itself even more immersed in a world that is dominated by a technological form of existence and an insatiable, myopic and instrumentalized desire to perpetually consume and as such, is open to many of the existential and ontological concerns which have previously been raised by both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997). Such an avenue of exploration will therefore aim to highlight how it is that the various technological innovations of the 21st society have, in many ways, failed to live up to their emancipatory ideals of promoting a lifestyle marked by freedom and autonomy as such devices have managed to produce a hegemonic and stratified order to which individuals need to conform lest they be shunned or alienated from society, along with the potential danger that such devices wield in terms of altering and distorting an individual's perception pertaining to interpersonal relationships.

3.1. What is "consumption" and what role does it play within the "society of consumers"?

While it was the critical theorists of the Frankfurt school, such as Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), who noticed the increased role that technology, driven by a technological form of determinism and purposive sense of rationality, was beginning to play within society during the
20th century, along with the proliferation of homogenised objects and commodities that served a reifying function within the cultural realm of society, Ritzer and Jurgenson (2010: 15) indicate that it was the French philosopher and sociologist, Jean Baudrillard, who very early on recognized the "increasing centrality of consumption in contemporary society". According to Lane (2009: 64), Baudrillard's commentary regarding what he perceived as being the central role that consumption had come to play within modern society can be found within The Consumer Society (1998) in which he opens with a vision of a "new system of human behaviour" which is most notably marked by the "abundant consumption of objects".

As such, Baudrillard (1998) described the prevalent trends of consumption, which he observed within the late 20th century, as giving rise to an "age of affluence" in which many people were beginning to "surround themselves" with an array of disposable "consumer objects" in order to sustain their sense of identity and being-in-the-world and as a result of this, he contended that consumption was actually beginning to "lay hold of the whole of life" (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010: 15). Lane (2009: 66) provides some additional insight regarding this particular matter by indicating that within The Consumer Society, Baudrillard essentially argues that in the modern era, it is the "consumption of objects" which can actually be regarded as a form of "cultural transformation" due to the fact that the "object of consumption" is now capable of having a "profound impact" on the lifestyle and identity of individuals living therein and the manner in which they see themselves and those around them. As such, Baudrillard (in Lane, 2009: 38) indicates on a somewhat perplexing note that within the "Consumer Society", not only does the Western world (and its denizens) "need its objects to construct an identity", but, more fundamentally, it "needs to destroy those objects" and dispose of them in order for this sense of identity to be perpetually established and maintained.

Elaborating upon this rather peculiar matter, Bauman (2007: 25) indicates that the notion of "consumption" is typically perceived as being a "banal, indeed typical affair" due to the fact that when reduced to its "archetypical form" of the metabolic cycle of "ingesting, digesting and excreting", it can undoubtedly be regarded as a "permanent and irremovable condition of life", one of the "inseparable elements" of biological survival which humankind shares with all other living organisms. However, Bauman (2007: 25) goes on to indicate that if the activity of consuming, viewed in this light, leaves little room for "inventiveness and manoeuvre", this does not apply to the role played and continuing to be played by consumption in "past transformations" and the "current dynamics" of the human mode of "being-in-the-world", in
particular, to its place among the factors determining the "style and flavour of social life" and its role as a "pattern-setter of interhuman relations".

Thus, in accordance with what Baudrillard's (1998) observations entail, Bauman (2007: 26) indicates that within the recent history of the late 20th century and early 21st century, there has been a highly consequential "breakpoint" regarding the role that consumption has come to play within society and the interhuman relations occurring therein. Bauman (2007: 26) indicates that this "breakpoint" can aptly be termed the "consumerist revolution" which marked the passage from "consumption to consumerism" whereby it is the "act of consumption" which has become "especially important if not actually central" to the majority of people, "the very purpose of existence" whereby their

ability to "want", to "desire" and "to long for", and especially [their] ability to experience such emotions repeatedly, actually underpins the economy of human togetherness.

As such, Bauman (2007: 28) notes that when it is viewed in this particular light, one can define "consumerism" as:

a force that coordinates systemic reproduction, social integration, social stratification and the formation of human individuals, as well as playing a major role in the processes of individual and group self-identification and in the selection and pursuit of individual life policies.

Bauman (2007: 30) then goes on to indicate that this "consumerist break" occurred primarily with the transition from the "society of producers" to the "society of consumers". Within the "solid modern era" of the "society of producers", Bauman (2007: 30) asserts that the notion of "gratification" seemed to reside primarily in the "promise of long term security" and not in the "immediate gratification" of ephemeral desires. Thus, in the pursuit of security, such a society put a "wager" on the human desire for a

reliable, trustworthy, orderly, regular, transparent, and by the same token durable, time-resistant and secure setting (Bauman, 2007: 29).

In that particular era, according to Bauman (2007: 30), large volumes of "spacious, heavy, stolid and immovable possessions" augured a "secure future", a future promising a "constant supply of personal comfort, power and esteem". As such, "bulky possessions" implied or insinuated a "well-anchored, durably protected and safe-existence", immune to the future "caprices of fate"
and the uncontrollable "vagaries of fortune". As a result of this, a great deal of value and importance was placed upon "prudence and long-term circumspection, on durability and security, and above all on durable, long-term security".

However, with the introduction of the "consumerist revolution" during the latter part of the 20th century, Bauman (2007: 31) asserts that the "human desire for security" and dreams of an "ultimate steady state" were no longer suitably deployed in the "society of consumers". According to Bauman (2007: 31), on the road to the society of consumers, the human desire for "stability" had turned from a principal "systemic asset" into the system's "major liability" and was therefore perceived as being a cause of "disruption or malfunction". As such, Bauman (2007: 31) indicates that the notion of "consumerism", in sharp opposition to the preceding forms of life, associates not so much with the "gratification of needs", as with an "ever rising volume and intensity of desires", which in turn "prompt use" and "speedy replacement" of the objects intended and hoped to gratify them. Bauman (2007: 31) then asserts that an "instability of desires and insatiability of needs" coupled with the resulting proclivity for "instant consumption" and the "instant disposal of its objects", chimes well with the new "liquidity" of the modern setting in which life pursuits have been "inscribed and are bound to be conducted in the foreseeable future".

Expanding upon this particular claim, Bauman (2007: 31) indicates that a "liquid modern setting" is "inhospitable" to "long-term planning, investment and storage"; as such, it "strips" the "delay in gratification" of its "past sense of prudence, circumspection and, above all, reasonability" [my emphasis]. Based upon this, Bauman (2007) is of the opinion that most objects of consumption within contemporary society inevitably lose their lustre and attraction after a short period of time and are promptly discarded - only to be replaced by a new set of objects that promise to gratify some other need or desire in a more thorough fashion. It is in this regard that Bauman (2007: 36-37) indicates, in a manner similar to that of Baudrillard (1998), that:

[t]he consumerist economy thrives on the turnover of commodities and is seen as booming when more money changes hands, and whenever money changes hands, some consumer products are travelling to the dump.

Thus, contrary to popular perception, Bauman (2007: 32) asserts that within the society of consumers, the "purpose of happiness" - which is most often invoked and used as "bait" in marketing campaigns aimed at boosting consumers' willingness to part with their money -
tends to be refocused from "making things or their appropriation" to their "destruction" and "disposal" - thus adding credence to Baudrillard's (1998) earlier claim pertaining to how it is that the citizen of the modern world's identity hinges upon the acquisition, destruction and disposal of the object of consumption.

Based upon this, Bauman (2007: 32) is of the opinion that "liquid modern consumerism" is notable, more significantly than anything else, for the "renegotiation of the meaning of time". As lived by its members, "time" in the "liquid modern society of consumers" is "neither cyclical nor linear", but rather "pointillist" and "punctuated" and is therefore "broken up" into a multitude of "eternal instants". As such, each "time-point" is now believed to be "pregnant" with the chance of another "big bang" and due to this, life now is experienced as being a "succession of presents" and a collection of "instants" experienced with varying intensity. Within the society of consumers, Bauman (2007) therefore believes that there has been a "renegotiation of time", whereby it has become more "hurried" ultimately giving rise to what Stephen Bertram (1998 in Bauman, 2007: 32) has coined the "nowist culture" and "hurried culture".

What Bauman (2007) essentially seems to be arguing within this particular aspect of his investigation regarding the role played by consumption in modern society, is that people now find themselves living in an "eternal present" which is constantly viewed as a "time of possibility" whereby the ideal goal - whatever it may be - "could and should be reached, perhaps in the next moment, or even in this very moment" (Rosenzweig in Bauman, 2007: 33). Thus, "prudence" within such a setting suggests that for anyone wishing to "catch a chance", "no speed is too great" - all hesitation is therefore "ill-advised", as every moment apparently offers the consumer the opportunity to realize and gratify their desires instantly and at a greater level of intensity. While Bauman (2007: 32) notes that it is true that in the "nowist" life of the consumerist era, the motive "to hurry" is partly spurred by the urge to "acquire and collect", the most pressing need that makes haste "truly imperative" is nevertheless the necessity to "discard and replace". Bauman (2007) therefore argues that, within such a setting - which is fundamentally based upon a myopic and instrumentalized form of rationality intrinsically focused on the endless pursuit of instant gratification - any "tool" that fails to bring about an instant form of gratification is to be "abandoned and promptly replaced" (which as we will later see, Bauman believes can also be extended to be any relationship that delivered a "bang" that was not as great or "big" as expected).
While consumer society rests its case on the premise to "gratify human desires to an extent which no other society in the past could reach or even dream of reaching", Bauman (2007: 44) contends that "the promise of satisfaction" remains "seductive" only as long as the "desire stays ungratified"; more importantly, "as long as the client is not completely satisfied". Consumer society, Bauman (2007: 47) maintains, therefore thrives as long as it "manages to render the non-satisfaction of its members perpetual". According to Bauman (2007: 47) the "yawning gap" between "promise and delivery" is neither a sign of malfunction, nor a side-effect of neglect due to the fact that:

*The realm of hypocrisy stretching between popular beliefs and the realities of consumers’ lives is a necessary condition of a properly functioning society of consumers* [author's emphasis].

Thus, in a manner redolent to that of Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critique regarding the Culture Industry of the 20th century and the subsequent rise of "pseudo-culture" and "pseudo-individuation", Bauman (2007: 47) maintains that every single "promise" made by the society of consumers within the 21st century must inherently be "deceitful", or at least "exaggerated", lest the "search for happiness grind to a halt" or its intensity fall below the level needed to keep the circulation of commodities going "between the factory lines, shops and rubbish bins". Based upon this, Bauman (2007: 47) indicates that in addition to being an "economics of excess and waste", consumerism is also an "economics of deception" as it "appeals to the irrationality of consumers" [my emphasis], not on their "thoroughly informed and sober calculations"; on arousing "consumerist emotions", "not on cultivating reason" [my emphasis] - as we shall later see, this sense of "irrationality" has now manifested itself within the realm of technology whereby individuals have now turned to technological solutions in order to satisfy and enhance all of their communicative and interpersonal affairs, and not necessarily for the betterment or enrichment of either.

Bauman's comments regarding the inherent amount of excess, waste and an insatiable desire to always consume - along with the inherent deception associated with such a process - within contemporary society can be regarded as being of paramount importance with regard to this particular investigation as his analysis essentially seems to be alluding to the fact that within the newly formed society of consumers, a strong sentiment of myopic individualization - which is not necessarily based upon a cultivated sense of reason - is being engendered within the denizen of the modern world due to the purposive and instrumentalized form of rationality
associated with "consuming life". As such, Bauman's (2007) critique seems to highlight how it is that individuals are now explicitly compelled, by the notion of perpetual consumption, to continuously look out for and preserve their interests alone, without caring for or needing any "excess baggage" or sentimental attachments due to the fact that such aspects would only hinder one's prospective chances of finding a perpetual, yet illusory, sense of happiness. We will now turn our attention towards Bauman's comments regarding the notion of interpersonal relations within the society of consumers as this will essentially allow us to appreciate the fact that within such a society, human relations and bonds are entering into an objectified, commodified and incredibly fragile stage due to the instrumentalized and myopic rationality adopted and embraced within such a society. In addition to this, Bauman's insights regarding this matter will also provide us with the theoretical platform from where we will be able appreciate how it is that the various technological innovations of the 21st century - including social networking services and mobile phones - are actually aiding and abetting such a process, thus undermining the possibility of individuals being able to connect with one another on a meaningful, respectful and responsible basis.

### 3.2. Does a consumerist rationale lead to the objectification of individuals and the fragility of human bonds within contemporary society?

Bauman (2007: 11) indicates, in a fashion similar to that of Baudrillard (1998), that the "existential setting" that came to be known as the society of consumers is distinguished by a "remaking of interhuman relations" on the pattern, and in the likeness, of the "relations between consumers and the objects of their consumption". Such an assertion then leads Bauman (2007: 12) to argue that within the society of consumers, no one can become a "subject" without first turning into a "commodity", and no one can keep his or her "subjectness" secure without perpetually "resuscitating, resurrecting and replenishing the capacities expected and required of a sellable commodity". Based upon this, Bauman (2007: 12) indicates that within the society of consumers, the "subjectivity" of the "subject" - and most of what the subjectivity enables the subject to achieve - is focused on an "unending effort to itself become, and remain, a sellable commodity". It is in this regard that Bauman (2007: 12) indicates, in a fashion redolent to that of Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), that the most prominent feature of the society of consumers is the "transformation of consumers into commodities" - which inevitably implies that the subject now becomes axiomatically objectified
in order to conform and acquiesce to the dictates of the consumer-based rationality that presides over society.

Bauman (2007: 14) refers to this recent phenomenon - whereby the individual is essentially objectified and commodified in order to be acknowledged as a "subject" - as "subjectivity fetishism" which, in accordance with Marx's previous notion of "commodity fetishism", hides the "commoditized reality" of individuals within the society of consumers. Thus, Bauman (2007: 14) indicates that with regard to the case of subjectivity in the society of consumers, it is actually the turn of "buying and selling tokens" deployed in the "construction of identity" which becomes effaced from the appearance of the final product. It is in this regard that Bauman (2007: 15) highlights how, within the society of consumers, the individual is relegated to the status of a mere commodity as it is only through such a dehumanizing process that one is actually presented with the opportunity to become desirable, acknowledged and worthy of recognition. As such, the ideological component contained within the society of consumers, which is based upon a perpetual cycle of consumption and disposal, is invariably aimed at promoting a sentiment of objectification and commodification which Bauman (2007) now believes is not restricted only to the world of produced goods coming off of the assembly line - which individuals are essentially compelled to purchase and later discard in order to promote and maintain their status as a sellable commodity - but it now also includes individuals and their inter-personal relationships as well.

Elaborating upon this particularly dubious pointer, Bauman (2003: 12) indicates that the notion of a "partnership" or "relationship" within the society of consumers now seems to be for "consumption on-the-spot" and for "one-off use without prejudice". As such, partnerships are first and foremost perceived as being "disposable", due to the fact that they can easily be replaced. Based upon this, Bauman (2003: 12) indicates that according to the instrumentalized and commodified rationality guiding individuals within the society of consumers, if a partnership is found to be "faulty" or not "fully satisfactory", the "goods" - in the case of a partnership, this would be the "faulty" Other - may be exchanged for other, hopefully more satisfying commodities. It is in this regard that Bauman (2003: 14) indicates that interpersonal relationships now seem to be comparable with "stocks" whereby one is required to "invest" a certain amount of "time and money" in the hope that such an "investment" would inevitably have "profitable" repayments and rewards for the individual involved. Thus, as long as the relationship stays "profitable" for the individual, it is seen as an "asset", however, as soon as things start to become tedious, strenuous or overbearing, such an investment is to be
"dropped" due to the fact that there is always a "better offer" just around the corner. As such, Bauman (2003: 14) asserts that according to the commodified, instrumentalized and myopic rationality adopted within the society of consumers,

promises of commitment to the relationship, once it is entered are meaningless in the long term.

According to Bauman (2003), while such a process - of perpetually replacing one's objects of consumption - inevitably keeps the economy of the consumerist market flowing at a steady pace, it does not bode well for the prospect of creating "meaningful and reliable" interpersonal relationships that are founded upon the notions of "love", "trust" and "mutual respect" due to the fact that both parties inevitably come to view the other, and by implication, themselves, as "objects of consumption" and thus, "disposable" once their novelty and allure has worn off. This then leads Bauman (2003: 58) to indicate that one of the central themes or mantras that manifests itself within contemporary society is that "when the quality [of a relationship or intimate partnership] lets you down", one can always "seek salvation in quantity" and when "duration is not on", it is the "rapidity of change" that may prove to be the "redeeming factor".

Expanding upon such a claim, Bauman (2003: 2) indicates that as a result of the consumerist rationale associated with interpersonal relationships and partnerships within contemporary society, the modern standards of "love" have been "lowered" and as a result, the "experiences connoted with the world have expanded". This has therefore resulted in the creation of the notion of love as "short, sharp and shocking episodes" underscored by an awareness of "brittleness and brevity" (Bauman, 2003: 5). As such, consumer culture seems to undermine/abolish the traits required in order "to love" as everything is promised to be "quick, easy, and safe". Based upon such an account of what the fundamental principles are involving the creation and dissolution of interpersonal relationships within the society of consumers, Bauman (2003: 47) asserts that when it comes to the notion of "lasting commitments", "liquid modern reason" perceives such attachments as being "oppressive"; and with regard to "durable engagement", it only sees "incapacitating dependency". As such, there is neither need nor use for them that the "liquid modern rationality" of consumers could justify. "Bindings" and "bonds" therefore appear to make human relations "impure" within the framework of the consumerist society. With regard to this particular pointer pertaining to the permutation of "reason" which has manifested itself within modern society, one is yet again reminded of Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critique of the Enlightenment, whereby they assert that as
humankind has progressed throughout history, reason itself has essentially regressed in order to become more unreasonable and irrational as it has fundamentally become more instrumentalized and purposive in nature - this now seems to apply to modern rationality's outlook regarding interpersonal relationships as well.

In order to highlight such an assertion, Bauman turns his attention towards the realm of technology within the 21st century and how it is that the various technological innovations of the contemporary era, particularly those serving an interactive and communicative function (such as social networking services and mobile telephones), have only accelerated and accentuated such a worrying situation. We will therefore now turn our attention towards his insights regarding these matters as they will invariably assist us in understanding how it is that along with the instrumentalized, and consumer-based form of rationality that is apparent within the society of consumers, the technological advances of the 21st century have created a powerful sense of technological determinism which has resulted in an increased sentiment of objectification, commodification and the subsequent fragility and frailty of human bonds. Such an avenue of exploration will therefore aim to elucidate one of the major dialectical components inherent to social networking, as it is these socializing services that ostensibly claim to supply the user with the necessary tools in order to maintain and nurture their interpersonal relationships, yet, inherent to such tools also lurks the inimical possibility of viewing the Other as a mere object, a means to an end - thus negating any possibility of truly creating or maintaining a durable and lasting relationship with another individual.

3.3. What role does technology play within the society of consumers?

According to Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 95), when one is to consider and evaluate the notions of "technology" and "technological development" within society, it is important to be aware of the fact that such elements are invariably "the product of cultural, social and political relationships". Therefore, all that we dub "technology" is more properly a feature of "techno-social" or "socio-technical" relations that encompass the wider environment in which they operate. Based upon such an understanding of what it means to talk about technology and technological development, Jackson (2009: 35) indicates that it was during the 19th century - when the developments of the Enlightenment were occurring at a rapid rate - that the various inventions of science and technology (such as the telegraph and later the telephone) "tore down the constraints of time and distance" and as a result, "revolutionised the nature of human communication and interaction". From a contemporary perspective, Clark and Roberts
(2010: 507) indicate that within the context of the late 20th century and early 21st century, advances in modern technology have once again "shifted" the manner in which people communicate and interact with one another. Clark and Roberts (2010: 507) go on to assert that not only has "wireless communication" made it possible for us to talk to one another when thousands of kilometers apart, but now we can instantly receive e-mails, send text messages, upload images and tweet while on move. As a result of this, a tremendous amount of people within the modern world are now making use of social networking sites (SNSs) and the various forms of social media with which they are associated in order to communicate, interact and socialize. Van Den Eede (2010: 196) reinforces this particular pointer by indicating that since the boom of "Web 2.0" - a term used to describe the internet in its new interactive format - early within the 21st century, the usage of the various Social Networking Sites available to the public has been on the rise and is only continuing to increase, due to the fact that social networking sites such as "Facebook", "Xing" and "Twitter" are becoming increasingly popular - Facebook is currently approaching a milestone record of nearly 1 billion active users worldwide (Fuchs, 2011: 141).

As a result of the exponential growth and usage of social networking sites and the various forms of communicative technologies propelling such innovations, Bauman (2007: 2) indicates that such devices and technologies are beginning to spread within contemporary society - or the society of consumers - at "the speed of an extremely virulent infection" as they have now stopped being "just one option among many" - particularly when considering the prospect of communication and interpersonal interaction - and have turned into the "default address" for "swelling" numbers of men and women (young and old) across the globe. De Ridder (2013: 1) elaborates upon this particular claim by indicating that with the introduction of new "online media", in its various formats ranging from social networking sites, online dating and multiplayer gaming, and its growing rate of popularity among the denizens of the modern world, it has "clearly become part of everyday life" and as such, it is "here to stay". Based upon this, Bauman (2007: 2) indicates that the general perception pertaining to social networking and other related tele-communicative devices has been transformed from once being viewed as the "next best thing" to the "thing in itself". Turkle (2011: 13) augments such a claim by indicating that "online connections" were first conceived as a "substitute" for face-to-face contact when the latter was perceived as being "impractical", however, Turkle (2011: 13) notes that this perception has very quickly changed within the technologically driven society of the 21st century as the "text message" has now become "the connection of choice".
Due to the rising volume of individuals turning to such mediums in order to communicate and interact with one another, Bauman (2007: 2) is of the opinion that the notion of "social life" - particularly within the technological epoch of the 21st century - has now become an "electronic life" whereby most "socializing" is conducted primarily in the "company of a computer, IPod or mobile telephone" therefore implying that these new forms of technologically based interaction and communication seem to have usurped "face-to-face interaction" as the "gold standard" of human relations (Jackson, 2009: 60). Based upon this, Bauman (2007: 2) indicates that the inventors and promoters of "electronic networks" have clearly struck a "responsive chord" within the individual who currently finds himself/herself living in the society of consumers. As such, Bauman asserts that the creators and promoters of such services may rightly "boast" of having satisfied a "real, widespread and urgent need" which only a technologically mediated form of communication and interaction could satisfy. Bauman (2007: 2) then goes on to ask the crucial question as to what it is that this "need" essentially entails.

According to Lewis (in Bauman, 2007: 2), at the "heart of social networking" is the "exchange of personal information". Users are therefore required - and are clearly happy in doing so - to reveal "intimate details of their personal lives", to post "accurate information" of "personal events" and "intimate experiences" and to even share photographs depicting such occasions. As a result of this, Collin et al (2011: 10) indicate that the most frequently used forms of communication pertaining to the usage of social networking services now include:

- updating one's own profile; commenting on photos or other posts; posting public messages to others or "wall" style messages [and] social network based instant messaging.

In light of the fact that there has been such a "rapid uptake" of both "social media" and "SNS practices", Colin et al (2011: 8) believe that a truly significant "shift" has occurred in the way that individuals are now approaching, perceiving and utilizing the internet for communicative and interactive purposes as social networking services now allow users to communicate meaningfully with others in an array of interesting and diverse forms. While Ellison et al (2007: 1143) believe that this "shift" should be perceived as being both a positive and liberating movement within the communicative practices of the 21st century due to the fact that it is currently providing users with a greater degree of "autonomy" (Parsell, 2008: 43) which is enabling individuals to present themselves in their own "personalized online profile", "accumulate friends" of their own inclination while also allowing the members of the social
networking sites to join "virtual groups" based on "common interests" - Bauman (2013) has a considerably different opinion regarding this matter; particularly with regard to how it is that he believes social networking services and the technological innovations associated with such practices are playing an instrumental role in promoting a form of technological determinism which is accelerating and accentuating the commodification and objectification of the individual in order to propagate the sentiment of consumerism, whilst also inhibiting the possibility of creating and maintaining durable and meaningful interpersonal relationships.

According to Bauman and Lyon (2013: 23), with the rise of electronically based mediums of communication and interaction, the condition of being constantly "watched" and "seen" has been reclassified from a "menace" into a "temptation" with modern technologies, such as social networking sites and social media, providing the individual with the perfect means to engage in and indulge such a temptation. Viewed from this perspective, Bauman and Lyon (2013: 23) assert that the promise of "enhanced visibility" along with the prospect of "being in the open" for "everybody to see" and "everybody to notice", chimes well with the new "liquid modern condition" whereby such prospects and opportunities now present themselves as the "most avidly sought proof of social recognition" and therefore of a "valued" and "meaningful" existence. It is in this regard that Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 24) indicates that having one's own "complete being" registered and acknowledged in "publicly accessible records" seems to be the "best prophylactic antidote" against the "toxicity of exclusion" as well as a "potent way" to keep the "threat of being evicted" from the society of consumers away. Thus, when considering the underlying impetus driving the individual's sense of being-in-the-world and identity within the technologically mediated "information age" of the 21st century, Bauman (2007: 13) indicates that "invisibility is tantamount to death". What Bauman (2007 & 2013) is essentially alluding to within this particular aspect of his investigation is the fact that within the modern world, there is a strong sense of obligation and coercion - in the form of technological determinism - which inherently compels individuals living within such a context to make use of, and indeed, embrace the various technological innovations associated with such an epoch, lest they be extricated and excised from what is currently perceived as being the modern permutation of a meaningful existence.

In order to reinforce such an assertion, Bauman (2007: 2) indicates that while many young users may still trust social networking services to manifest their "freedom of choice", autonomy, independence, and believe it to be a means of "youthful rebellion" and "self-assertion", if one is to critically evaluate the situation which is currently unfolding on the Asiatic
shores of South Korea - which is technologically far superior to most of the world and thus presumably an ideal to which many nations would like to aspire, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 29) argues that most of what is considered to be "social life" within such a context is already "routinely electronically mediated". Within such a context, "social life" has therefore already turned into an "electronic or cyberlife", where most "social life" is conducted primarily in the company of electronic devices and only secondarily with "other fleshy beings". Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 29) therefore maintains that it is obvious to the young people living in such a context that they do not have so much as a "sniff of choice" regarding their prospective communicative and socializing practices and as a result of this, living social life "electronically" is "no longer a choice", but a "take it or leave it necessity". Turkle (2011: 16) extrapolates upon this particular pointer by indicating that while this technologically deterministic practice is becoming increasingly prevalent in technologically superior countries (such as South Korea), it is nevertheless encroaching upon the social and interactive practices of many different individuals residing in an array of nations around the globe.

Turkle (2011: 16) expands upon such an assertion by indicating that one of the primary reasons as to why this shift in communicative and socializing practices is currently manifesting itself across the globe is due to the fact that these new communicative devices and technologies presently offer the denizen of the modern world with the "space" for the emergence of a "new state of self" which is itself "split between the screen and the physical real", or as Turkle (2011: 16) cogently phrases it: "wired into existence through technology". In a similar vein of thought, Jackson (2009: 47) indicates that within contemporary society, the "virtual has managed to infiltrate the real", with today's communication systems offering us a world in which "reality is so immersed in simulation that appearances become the experiences themselves". According to Lane (2009: 30), it was Baudrillard who first noticed this trend whereby the "virtual" was in some way managing to replace, and become preferable, to the "real" in contemporary society - a situation that Baudrillard (1994: 1) refers to as "hyperreality" or "third-order simulation". According to Lane (2009: 84), the best example of the "hyperreal" from Baudrillard's perspective is "virtual reality", which is a world generated by "mathematical models" and "computer codes" that are "abstract entities" that have no inherent reference or semblance to the real world. Baudrillard's worry with "third-order simulation" or "hyperreality" is that it will eventually be the "dominant way of experiencing and understanding the world" - that is, a world without a real origin whereby "we no longer even have the real as part of the equation".
Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon 2013: 37) augments and reinforces Baudrillard's rather dubious assertions regarding the prevalence of the "hyperreal" and the "disappearance of the real" - when attempting to understand and operate "meaningfully" within the modern world - when he claims that due to the widespread use and embrace of the various social networking sites and social media services, life within in the 21st century is becoming increasingly "split" between "two universes" - "online" and "offline"; and as such, it is therefore "irreparably bicentred" with virtually every notion related to present-day life processes inevitably bearing a mark of their "bipolarity". Deuze (2011: 137) supports such a claim by stating that life in today's liquid modern society is all about "finding ways to deal with constant change, whether it is at home, at work or at play". As a result of this, over the last few decades, these "key areas of human existence" have converged in and through the modern individual's concurrent and continuous exposure to, use of and immersion in media, information and communication technologies.

As a result of this, more of the individual's time gets spent using digital, online media, and as such, "multi-tasking ones media" has become a regular feature of everyday existence as it now fundamentally "penetrates all aspects of contemporary life". Thus, in accordance with what Baudrillard (1994) and Bauman (2013) have mentioned regarding the prevalence of the "hyperreal" and "bipolarity" of life within contemporary society, Deuze (2011: 137) argues that it is in fact "life lived in", rather "than with" [author's emphasis], the various forms of digital media available to the public that can be defined as the "ontological benchmark" for the individual living in the 21st century.

Based upon this, Turkle (2011: 16) is of the opinion that people across the globe, who have access to these and similar technologies, are becoming increasingly "terrified" of "being cut off from the grid" as their new found sense of identity and being now reside within a technological and digital format. As Jackson (2009: 48) notes, "the virtual now counts, we take the faceless at face value" and as a result of this, "the virtual is not just as real to us as the physical world, it is now an alternative to the earthly". People are therefore starting to feel a strong sense of obligation to continue utilizing and embracing such forms of communicative devices in order to be both acknowledged and appreciated within the digital world which has become so prevalent - and seemingly important - on a global scale. Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 24) provides some additional elucidation regarding this particular claim by indicating that the recent "phenomenal success" of social websites, such as "Facebook", is a good illustration of this new
trend whereby people essentially feel compelled or obligated to maintain an active digital lifestyle in order to ensure that they are not excommunicated or ostracized by the digitally driven society of the 21st century.

According to Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 24), if one is to scrutinize the official Facebook site where it claims that users can create "profiles with photos", "lists of personal interests", "contact information", and "other personal information", one will invariably discover a description of the various "benefits" which Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 24) believes can be credited with "tempting, attracting and seducing its users". As Parsell (2008: 43) notes, "online" people are presented with the opportunity whereby they believe they are "free" to associate with exactly whom they want, "free to construct and manipulate their online presentations" by "emphasizing certain characteristics" (e.g. one's commitment to a certain political outlook), "de-emphasizing others" (e.g. one's age) and even "changing" some (e.g. one's gender). Ostensibly such claims appear to offer the individual a liberated and autonomous form of digital existence as social networking sites, such as Facebook, now seem to supply the user with fairly simple, easy, innovative and inexpensive solutions with regard to making friends, interacting on a meaningful basis and allowing people to stay up-to-date with what is occurring in their social lives - even if they live thousands of kilometers apart. While such beneficial opportunities and merits may indeed reside within the digital world of online interaction, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013) nevertheless believes that there is a great deal more to the situation than initially meets the eye that one needs to be aware of when trying to gain an accurate impression of the situation in its totality.

According to Bauman's idiosyncratic interpretation regarding this matter (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 25), what the "legions of active users" enthusiastically embraced when they joined the ranks of Facebook's - and similar social networking sites - "active users" was the prospect of two things that "they must having been dreaming about":

First, they must have felt too lonely for comfort, but found it too difficult for one reason or another to escape their loneliness with the means at their disposal. Second, they must have felt painfully neglected, unnoticed, ignored and otherwise shuttled on to a side-track, exiled and excluded but once again found it difficult, nay impossible, to lift themselves out of their hateful anonymity with the means at their disposal.

Based upon this, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 25) states that Facebook, and its creator, Mark Zuckerberg, offered them with the "powerful means to alleviate the dire situation" in
which they found themselves as they have now been presented with the opportunity to place themselves, their intimate stories and their sense of being-in-the-world on public display in order to receive the acceptance and acknowledgement they so deeply desire.

While this may seem like an entirely benevolent turn in terms of the developmental trajectory of communicative and interactive practices within the 21st century, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 25) is rather wary and skeptical of making such a grandiose claim as he is of the belief that it is actually the prospect of "social death" which avidly awaits those who have failed to, or refuse to, connect to the cyber world in order to maintain their contemporary sense of identity and being-in-the world. As Turkle (2011: 250) notes, within contemporary society, "Facebook [along with its underlying penchant for public display] has now become a volition, if you do not use Facebook people are not going to communicate with you". In order to augment such an assertion, Bauman turns to the comments made by Enriquez (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 30) who notes that:

provided it is not forgotten that what had previously been invisible - everyone's share of the intimate, everybody's inner life - is now required to be exposed on the public stage, it can be understood that those who care about their invisibility are bound to be rejected, pushed aside, or suspected of a crime. Physical, social and psychical nudity is the order of the day.

Based upon this, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 30) indicates that the teenagers - along with any other individual who chooses to participate in such practices - who are currently being equipped with "portable electronic confessionals" are but "apprentices" training and trained in the art of living in a "confessional society" - a society notorious for "effacing the boundary that once separated the private from the public", for making "public exposure of the private" a "virtue and obligation", and for "wiping out" from public communication anything that "resists being reduced to private confidences", together with "those that refuse to confide them". While such an assertion inevitably opens several avenues of critical exploration with regard to the matters of surveillance and the violation of privacy for the individual who is now essentially forced to utilize social networking services (which will later be explored within chapter 4), with regard to the outcomes of this particular chapter it is important to note that such a statement then places the claims of autonomy and freedom that are supposedly associated with the digital world of social networking into question, as it is Adorno (in Thomson, 2006: 83) who reminds us that:
Freedom means to criticise and change situations, not to confirm them by deciding within their coercive structures [my emphasis].

Based upon such a definition of what freedom and autonomy essentially entail from Adorno's critical perspective, one is left to wonder whether or not the claims of freedom and autonomy associated with digital life are in fact valid, or, if the individual is essentially coerced into believing such assertions due to the fact that it is "social death" that awaits them if they fail to do so.

De Ridder (2013: 2) elaborates upon this particular matter by indicating that while it is not exclusively young people who are at the forefront of developing, using, reworking, and incorporating new media into their interactive and communicative practices - they are nevertheless the primary target market for the developers and promoters of such technological innovations. As such, De Ridder (2013: 2) indicates that with regard to the utilization of social media and social networking, the "intimate stories and experiences" of young people - which were once created and explored between individuals in a private and intimate fashion and served a crucial function in terms of "identity formation" and in the establishment of durable interpersonal relationships (Turkle, 2011: 172) - are now typically becoming practices of "interactive audiences" as they are essentially mediated through particular "software platforms" (such as social networking sites) that De Ridder (2013: 2) believes are "more than merely intermediators", but rather "institutions" holding "symbolic powers" that actually manage to "shape the intimate stories themselves" along with the individuals creating such stories. Based upon such an assertion, De Ridder (2013: 11) claims that the new software platforms which drive social networking sites and services not only shape the meaning of "intimacy" and "intimate identities", but also the actual "stories and bodies" represented in the individual's "online profile". As such, social media and social networking services therefore appear to be instrumental in promoting a new "cultural form" of what it means to be "social" through "endless online connecting and sharing of intimate and personal information".

Commenting on this particular pointer, Turkle (2011: 172) indicates that traditionally, the "development of intimacy required privacy", intimacy without privacy therefore "reinvents the notion of privacy" in its entirety, with modern technology currently spearheading such a transition. As a result of this transformation, Turkle (2011: 176) maintains that what is not being cultivated within such a process is the ability for the individual "to be alone and reflect on one's emotions in private" as people are constantly "looking to their neighbours for validation",

91
or what Turkle (2011: 176) refers to as "other-directedness" and "hyper-other-directedness". According to De Ridder (2013: 2-11), such practices can therefore be considered as "troubling" as they then serve to reinforce the "late modern transformation of intimacies" that are gradually becoming "more open" and "connected to public realms", instead of being exclusively private - thus augmenting Bauman's claims about living in a "confessional society" and the incessant need to constantly expose oneself via the aid of communicative technologies (such as Facebook), in order to be both acknowledged and appreciated. De Ridder (2013: 2) is therefore of the opinion that the "social and cultural implications" of these "economic logics of digital media" can be seen as "intensively performative" as individuals, particularly of a younger persuasion, are beginning to believe that it is only through such practices that they are able to truly express themselves, and thus get the public acknowledgement and recognition that they so deeply desire. As Turkle (2011: 184) indicates, the youth of today are essentially compelled to "represent" themselves - via the various software interfaces of social networking services available - in "simple ways" which then manages to exert a considerable amount of pressure on these young users to "conform to these simplifications" - inevitably implying that these young users are forced to "reduce themselves" to fit into the predetermined stereotypes appearing on these social networking sites in order to invite and uphold a sense of acceptance from their peers.

It is in this regard that Deuze (2011: 40) argues that as these social media services become "more pervasive and ubiquitous", forming the "building blocks" for the individual's constant "remix" of the "categories of everyday life", they become "invisible" in the sense that the users "become blind to that which shapes [their] lives the most". The moment such media become "invisible", Deuze (2011) asserts that one's "sense of identity", and indeed one's "experience of reality itself", becomes "irreversibly modified", because it is essentially being mediated and broadcast to a public audience. Deuze (2011: 138) therefore argues that it is the new media of the 21st century, including social networking sites, that have become "the playground for a search for meaning and belonging" which he believes signifies the recognition of the "new human condition". According to Deuze (2011: 138), the "newness" of the "contemporary human condition" can perhaps best be understood in an abstract sense as a "socio-technical experience of reality" – a reality that seems to submit itself (potentially) to the affordances of media: a reality that could be "cut, pasted, edited, remixed, forwarded" and above all, made publicly accessible so that others can view it. As such, Deuze (2011: 138) argues that within the context of contemporary society, the new permutations of online media should not be seen as
somehow located "outside of lived experience", but rather should be seen as "intrinsically part of it", and in many ways, a determining factor in what it means to be a social individual within the 21st century.

In light of what has been mentioned above, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 30) indicates that the issues that currently confront the youth of contemporary society - along with all other individuals who decide to play an active role in the process of online socializing - are explicitly linked to the "change from a society of producers to a society of consumers". As such, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 30) maintains that being a member of the society of consumers is a "daunting and never-ending uphill battle" as the fear of "failing to conform" has now been supplemented by the "fear of inadequacy" and the various "consumer markets" - such as Facebook - are eager to capitalize on that fear. These "consumer markets" are therefore more than willing to "supply the tools" and "instruments" required for the individually performed "self-fabrication job" in order for this "fear" to be allayed and assuaged - even if such a process is inevitably marked by a "perpetual struggle" in which one continuously needs to engage if they are to remain on the social radar. It therefore becomes clear to see that a compelling and overriding sense of technological determinism, to which Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) have previously referred, has managed to manifest itself within the modern world, whereby social media and social networking services are coming to play a pivotal and instrumental role within the lives of denizens of the modern world as it is only through the utilization of such services and technologies that people now believe that they can find their true selves, being and identity - even if these notions come in a predetermined and fabricated form that has already been decided upon by the various software platforms delivering such possibilities.

What this therefore implies, according to Bauman's interpretation, is that it is the various technological tools that are currently available to the public, such as social networking sites and social media, which have an inherent tendency to make themselves the embodiment of the prevailing order - particularly in terms of what it means to socialize and interact on a meaningful basis - to which all individuals are required to conform (and embrace) lest they be shunned or extricated from the society of consumers. As Turkle (2011: 167) indicates, the reality of the new situation in which people currently find themselves essentially encourages and teaches them to see themselves as "one-with-their-devices". These instruments, and "self-help tools" can therefore be regarded as the "crystallizations of an irresistible necessity" - which now as before, humans must "learn", "obey" and "learn to obey" in order "to be free". It is in this regard that Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 30) indicates that the "test" the youth of
contemporary society now need to "pass" in order to be admitted to the "social prizes" they covet demands them to "recast themselves as commodities". "To consume" nowadays therefore means to "invest in one's social membership", which translates into a "never ending pursuit of saleability". What this essentially implies, according to Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 30), is that users of such services are now explicitly forced to sell themselves to the highest bidder, are enticed, nudged or forced to promote an attractive and desirable commodity, and so try as hard as they can, using the best means at their disposal, to enhance the market value of the goods they are selling. And the commodities they are prompted to put on the market, promote and sell are themselves [author's emphasis].

From Bauman's (2013) perspective, the crucial purpose of social networking sites - such as Facebook - is therefore not necessarily the "satisfaction of needs, desires and wants" pertaining to a meaningful and efficient manner of interpersonal communication, but rather the "commoditization and recommoditization of the consumer": raising the status of consumers to that of "sellable commodities". As Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 30) notes, schoolgirls and boys (along with the array of other individuals making use of such services - both young and old) are now required and expected to:

- enthusiastically put their qualities on display in the hope of capturing attention, recognition and approval needed to stay in the game of socializing.

As such, the performativity issues mentioned by De Ridder (2013), along with the notions of technological determinism and a purposive sense of rationality to which Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) have alluded, seem to be major factors contributing to the increased popularity and zeal displayed by the modern individual making use of such services. According to Mills (2003: 9), such a situation then also resonates strongly with Foucault's (1977) understanding of what a "hegemonic" order entails due to the fact that he describes it as being:

- a state within society whereby those who are dominated by others take on board the values and ideologies of those in power and accept them as their own; this leads to them accepting their position within the hierarchy as natural and for their own good [my emphasis].

In light of what has been mentioned thus far, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 33) claims that Facebook's "mindboggling success" can in many ways be attributed to its role as a
"marketplace" in which, every day, people are able to fulfill the "stark necessity" of constantly promoting and upgrading themselves as desirable "consumer commodities" with the "exhilarating freedom of choice" and autonomy which the digital world of social networking and social media supposedly offers them. According to Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 21), such a situation - which is inherently driven by the imperatives of technological determinism and a strong sense of performativity - ultimately augurs and portends the "end of invisibility" and "autonomy", the "two defining attributes of privacy". Based upon Bauman's interpretation, the "death of anonymity" has arrived courtesy of the internet whereby individuals "submit their right to privacy for slaughter of their own will". Viewed from this perspective, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 21) maintains that within the digital world of the 21st century,

the pressure to deliver one's personal autonomy to the slaughter house is so overwhelming, so close to the condition of a flock of sheep, that only a few exceptionally rebellious, bold, pugnacious and resolute wills are prepared to make an earnest attempt to withstand it.

Such a statement then echoes and reinforces the claims made by both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) who assert that within contemporary society and the ideological component contained within the Culture Industry, the manner in which people are fundamentally forced to perceive themselves, as well as those around them, is being dramatically altered due to the objectifying and commodifying form of rationality that is now associated with what it means to be an individual or a subject within the modern world of consumers. It would therefore appear as if this ideological component - which, according to Bauman (2013) is driven and guided by the economic imperatives of the marketplace and operates under the notion of subjectivity fetishism - along with the strong sense of technological determinism, which Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) introduced in their critique of the Enlightenment and contemporary culture, has in some way managed to imbricate itself to the new notion of what it means to be a social and desirable individual in the modern world.

As Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 130) indicates, the arrival of the internet has put within the grasp of everyone the ability of making one's "being-in-the-world" (Dasein) tangible and irrefutable. Gaining being-in-the-world with the help of Facebook therefore has a certain allure, calling for "no hard-to acquire skills" and being "risk free, legal, widely recognized, acknowledged and respected". However, as has been explicated above, when viewed from another perspective, it is the various communicative devices and technologies associated with
such modern day socializing practices which actually seem to serve both an instrumental and coercive role in maintaining and upholding such practices, ultimately altering the public's perception of what is required of them if they truly want to be acknowledged as active members and participants within such a society: thereby creating a homogenizing and hegemonic order to which all need to conform, ultimately undermining the individual's freedom, autonomy and privacy under the guise of free and easy solutions for social interaction and communication. According to Baudrillard's interpretation of such matters (as stated in Lane, 2009: 132), a "bleak irony" is revealed when one is to assess and critically evaluate the supposed "development of technology" due to the fact that rather than technology being "an extension of man [sic] and his power", it is now technology that actually "runs the world", producing "systems" and "virtual states" of being to which everyone is required to acquiesce lest they be shunned from the technologically driven world, ultimately giving rise to what Baudrillard (in Lane, 2009: 33) terms "hyperfunctionality" whereby the technological object is no longer "practical" or "utilitarian", but "obsessional".

While Bauman's critique of social networking services and the instrumentalized and commodified rationality which guides them depicts a scenario that is rather dubious, if not damning - particularly if one is to compare it with the conventional accounts of what social networking services entail and the myriad of beneficial possibilities associated with such technologies - as stated by Ellison et al. (2007) & Collin et al. (2011); Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 35) indicates that despite the objectifying and commodifying role that such services seem to play within the society of consumers, as well as the fact that such services seem to abolish any conventional accounts of what privacy and autonomy may entail, "many relationships are still conducted in part - or completely - online". Therefore whatever one makes of it, Facebook and other social networking services that serve a similar function have quickly become "the means of communicating" [my emphasis] and as such, the notion of "connecting" is now a significant "dimension of daily life for millions". Such a claim is augmented by Jackson (2009:54) when she asserts that "social networks" have indelibly changed human life more than any other facet of modern technology - and not necessarily for the beneficial criteria with which they are usually associated as it is "not always apparent how our time in this disembodied, alluring, liberated world changes us, and especially influences our relations with each other" (Jackson, 2009: 48). We will therefore now turn our attention towards Bauman's (2003, 2007 & 2013) analysis regarding the effects that networked life is having upon the individual living within the modern world, along with how it has altered, and ultimately distorted the manner in which
individuals perceive the notions of intimacy and meaningful, durable relationships - thus highlighting another potentially undermining aspect inherent to the dialectical nature of social networking services.

3.4. How is social networking technology affecting the nature and perception of interpersonal relationships within the modern world?

Within her book titled *Distraction: The erosion of attention and the coming dark age*, Jackson (2009: 100) indicates that within modern society the notion of "mobility" has quickly climbed the ranks of the uppermost among "coveted values" whereby individuals now find themselves living in an era where they can unashamedly call themselves "cyber" or "digital nomads". According to Jackson (2009: 100), such a situation has emerged as a direct result of a series of liberations and progressions which modern technology - and in this regard mobile communicative technology - has made possible. In accordance with this, Bauman (2003: 59) indicates that "mobile telephones" and the associated mobile communicative technologies which accompany them - including social networking services and social media - are for "people on the move", which, as Bauman (2007: 32) has previously mentioned, is indubitably a characteristic associated with the rushed, hurried and nowist culture inherent to the society of consumers. As Turkle (2011: 160) notes, "with mobile devices one moves into the virtual with fluidity and on the go". It is in this regard that Bauman (2003: 59) indicates that one of the strongest allures with regard to such mobile technologies is the fact that a person can never be regarded as "out" or "away"; as such, they are now perceived as being "always in" and thus, open to a "continuous flood" of incoming texts, messages, calls and updates. As a result of the persistent "web of calls and messages" to which the user of such technologies is exposed, Bauman (2003: 59) maintains that the modern individual now receives an inherent sense of "comfort" and a feeling of invulnerability as the notions of corporeal reach and touch have been cancelled, "made null and void", leaving the person and their virtual/digital personas, as the "sole stable point in the universe of moving objects". Such a claim is augmented by Turkle (2011: 228) who indicates that the new "simulated" or "virtual" form of interaction provided by mobile communicative technologies now offers the denizen of the modern world the "warmth of a technological cocoon" due to the fact that "behind a screen" an individual now feels "protected" as the novelty of "texting" offers the user a "reassuring sense of distance" and a measure of "personal control" (Turkle, 2009: 188). It is primarily due to these reasons that
Bauman (2003: 62) indicates that the realm of mobile "electronic networks" has quickly become an increasingly popular and eagerly used "currency" of human interaction.

The imperative question that needs to be raised at this particular juncture of our investigation regarding the dialectical nature of social networking is why is this indeed the case? Was it the novelty of easily "connecting" with another individual that proved to be the attractive feature for the user, or was it the new facility of "cutting the connection" that presented itself as the decisive factor contributing to the growing utilization and popularity of such networks? According to Bauman's (2003: 62) interpretation, there is no shortage of occasions when the "second option" of "cutting the connection" feels "more urgent" and "matters more than the first". In order to provide greater clarity with regards this rather worrying assertion, Bauman (2003: 62) goes on to indicate that the advent of "virtual proximity" renders human connections simultaneously "more frequent and more shallow, more intense and more brief". As such, connections tend to be "too shallow and brief to condense into bonds". While this may seem like a potentially undermining or troublesome factor for the individual attempting to engage in the creation of an online relationship, Bauman's (2003) analysis indicates otherwise, as he fervently maintains that such a form of interaction is actually regarded as being preferable and perfectly suited to the ideals of the liquid modern times which explicitly places a great deal of importance on quick, efficient and easy solutions. Regarding this matter, Jackson (2009: 111) notes, in a manner redolent to that of Bauman (2007), that within the liquid modern setting of contemporary society, "permanence and stability no longer appear to be revered or esteemed". As such, "online contacts" - as opposed to "durable bonds" - require "less time and effort to be entered and less time and effort to be broken" and are therefore actually more suitable - and preferable - to the precepts of what a relationship should entail within the context of the society of consumers.

Elaborating upon this particular matter, Jackson (2009: 66) indicates that within the technologically driven era of the 21st century, a "face-to-face" meeting is now perceived as being "far less predictable than a virtual encounter" and as a result of this, individuals are "losing the will to face one another" and thus "turn away from the real". Turkle (2011: 1) elaborates upon such a claim by indicating that modern communicative technologies now propose themselves as the "architect of intimacies" which suggests satisfactions - such as quick and easy solutions to finding love or an ideal Other - that manage to "put the real on the run". As such, Jackson (2009: 66) maintains that the technological innovations of the 21st century seem to be "degrading the earthly to a mere utility, a tool, something to be avoided". Thus,
according to Borgmann (in Jackson, 2009: 66) against the virtual, the actual world seems "dumb, poor and hard in comparison" and as a result of this, the virtual actually becomes the "preferred reality" - or, as Baudrillard (in Lane, 2009: 29) asserts, whatever is currently "lacking" in the "human subject", is now invested purely in the "technological object". Based upon such a dubious assertion, Jackson (2009: 120) goes on to argue that it is actually the notion of "detachment" which is the cost of our "wondrous and liberating mobility", the price that one inevitably pays when living "untethered to one location or relationship" and "tethered to a screen". In accordance with this, Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 4) notes that in terms of intimate and durable interpersonal relations within contemporary society:

[m]utual engagement is over. Mobility and nomadism are now prized (unless you’re poor or homeless). The smaller, lighter, faster is seen as good...

Such a statement then leads Bauman (2003: 62) to assert that with regard to the supposed merits associated with such mobile technologies, "distance" is now "no obstacle to getting in touch - but getting in touch is no obstacle to staying apart". It is in this regard that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 221) indicate that "modern communications media" have had an "isolating" and alienating effect upon the individual living within contemporary society due to the fact that it is the very "progress" which has been made in such fields which now "literally keeps men [sic] apart". What this therefore implies, according to Bauman's (2003: 62) understanding, is that one of the biggest "merits" associated with "virtual proximity" is the fact that it can be, both substantively and metaphorically, finished with "nothing more than the press of a button" and as a result of this, Bauman (2003: 88) asserts that it is in fact the "disposability of humans" [my emphasis] which is now being propagated by these new social media platforms and their supporting mobile communicative technologies. In accordance with this, Turkle (2011: 161) indicates that "mobile technology" has rendered us all "pausable" and as such, "connected life encourages us to treat those we meet online the same way we treat objects - with dispatch" (Turkle, 2011: 168).

Based upon this, Bauman (2003: 62) claims that one of the most "seminal accomplishments" of "virtual proximity" and "online connectivity" is the "separation between communication and relationship". According to Bauman (2007: 39 - 40), the user of such mobile devices is now so inundated with an "excess of information" - which inevitably arises as a result of maintaining a constant online connection - that the task of "filtering" the "relevant, meaningful information" to which one is exposed, outgrows the "capacity of the filters" resulting in a situation whereby
"the line separating the meaningful message" - the ostensible object of communication - from "background noise" - its acknowledged adversary and most noxious obstacle - has all but been "washed away". As Eriksen (in Bauman, 2007: 41) indicates:

when growing amounts of information are distributed at growing speed, it becomes increasingly difficult to create narratives, orders, developmental sequences. The fragments threaten to become hegemonic. This has consequences for the ways we relate to knowledge, work and lifestyle in a wider sense.

Dubrofsky (2011: 121) augments such a claim by indicating that social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace "encourage users to generate and be exposed to a massive amount of information" whereby it is actually the notion of "information overload", in a "literal sense", which becomes the only "aim". There is therefore "no expectation that users will synthesize information or even read or make sense of it" and thus, according to Dubrofsky (2011: 121), the focus is "not on impact", "or use" but rather, the perpetual "circulation" and endless "addition" of messages to the ever-growing pool of information. As Van Den Eede (2010: 200) indicates, from a Heideggerian perspective, the notion of "shallowness" is constantly looming within such an excessive and superfluous situation due to the fact that it essentially reduces the possibility of "real understanding" from ever emerging between the individuals involved in such (redundant) communicative practices whilst also inhibiting the attainment of "Being-in-the-world" due to the fact that such (pseudo) interactive practices are often riddled with ambiguity, superficiality and "idle-talk". Based upon this, Dubrofsky (2011: 121) indicates that one of the biggest "problems" with regard to these "new communication technologies" is the fact that the ground upon which social networking platforms gain their "impetus" relies purely on the "output and circulation of messages", and producing an "abundance of these", which then becomes an "integral aspect" contributing to the sentiment of "information overload" - and by implication, a lack of real understanding - experienced by the user.

Thus, unlike the "topographical proximity" of the past, virtual proximity - with its endless stream of "beeps, pings and multitasking" (Jackson, 2009: 13) - neither requires that bonds are established beforehand nor necessarily results in establishing them in consequence. As a result of this, "being connected" is now perceived as being "less costly" than "being engaged" - but, as Bauman (2003: 62) quickly points out, is also "considerably less productive" in terms of "bond building" and "bond maintenance" due to the fact that the "Other" is now "disarmed and detoxified"; reduced to an "instrument of one's own self-endorsement" and thus, ultimately
perceived as being a redundant and fungible entity (Bauman, 2003: 116). As Jackson (2009: 37) indicates, there is a "fine line" between "rich relations and meaningless hyper-connectedness" and it is due to this that Turkle (2011: 154) believes that "networked life" is actually preparing the user for "relationships with less" as the user becomes less willing to "get out" into the real world and "take a chance".

In light of what has been mentioned above, Bauman (2003: 62) indicates that one of the most significant allures pertaining to "electronic life" resides in the fact that virtual proximity now "defuses the pressure that non-virtual closeness is in the habit of exerting". Thus, non-virtual proximity stops well short of the "tough standards" of "unobtrusiveness" and the "rigid standards" of "flexibility" that virtual proximity has set and it is due to this fact that Bauman is of the opinion that "virtual and non-virtual proximity have switched places" or, as Turkle (2011: 160) notes, "simulation" is now simply viewed as "being better". As a result of this, Bauman (2003: 64) believes that electronic communication can no longer be regarded as an "overture" to a "longer and more substantive conversation" but as a "substitute for it". While Bauman (2003: 64) indicates that it would be both foolish and irresponsible to blame the electronic gadgets of the late 20th century and early 21st century for the slow yet consistent "recession of personal, direct, face-to-face, multifaceted, multipurpose and continuous proximity", he nevertheless maintains that the recent manifestation of virtual proximity currently offers the denizen of the modern world with an array of features and benefits which highly accentuate and accelerate such a regressive process, which can paradoxically be viewed as being both indispensable and admirable within a liquid modern world - a world which, as Bauman (2003: 64) has previously explicated, explicitly promotes, explicitly promotes, advocates and prizes the ideals of mobility, flexibility and fluidity.

As a result of this, Bauman (2003: 64) maintains that the more "human attention" and "learning effort" is absorbed by virtual proximity, the less time is dedicated to the acquisition of skills which non-virtual-proximity requires. Brannigan (2010) reinforces such an assertion by indicating that as a direct result of "online-connectivity", "in-person encounters", and the skills required to engage in such encounters are "eroding". According to Brannigan (2010) the virtual has become our "new reality" due to the fact that communicating and interacting in cyberspace has become "seductive" for its alleged "safety, simplicity, immediacy and freedom". Elaborating on this particular claim, Brannigan (2010) indicates that "cyber connection" espouses an "interactive comfort zone" which creates an illusory sense of safety and control for the user.
While a face-to-face encounter is inherently "vulnerable" and risks the "fracture of trust", which Brannigan (2010) asserts is "our most social virtue", online connectivity seems to negate or abolish any of the uncertainty and vulnerability associated with non-virtual proximity. Thus, from a communicative perspective, Brannigan indicates that interacting in cyberspace is alluring due to the fact that it is presented to the user as being "quick and easy", severed from the knots of "personal, familial and social contexts". In person however, we enter an "intricate tapestry" of "embodied cues", challenging us to be "palpably present" and "sensitive to another's expressions, pauses and body language".

In addition to this, Brannigan (2010) notes that the lexicon apparent online (such as "lol"; "2nite" and "brb") - also referred to as "computer-mediated-communication" or "CMC" (Turkle, 2011: xiii) - is actually designed to offer the user "high-speed response and gratification" - which is therefore in direct accordance with the ideal of "instant gratification" which, as Bauman (2007) has previously indicated, is so highly prized within our liquid modern times. In person however, Brannigan (2010) indicates that we need to consciously "embrace the reality and serendipity" of the "unexpected" which therefore requires "restraint", "patience" and understanding - features and traits which no longer seem to have any place or purpose within a society that is inherently founded upon mobility, excess and waste (Bauman, 2007). Thus, with regard to the supposed "freedom" associated with online life, Brannigan (2010) maintains that cyber connection's "unfettered nature" provides "a venue without rules and accountability". Any individual making use of a social networking service can therefore simply "delete" or "unfriend" a relationship that is perceived as being taxing or overbearing. In stark contrast to this, face-to-face interaction, with its potential for "authentic engagement", is only possible on the basis of "civility, respect, and accountability".

As a result of the predilection and proclivity which the modern individual is currently exhibiting with regard to virtual proximity, Bauman (2003: 64) is of the opinion that the skills which are critical for non-virtual proximity fall into disuse, are forgotten, never learned, shunned and used reluctantly; this then adds to the allure of virtual proximity and therefore becomes self perpetuating and accelerating.

According to Jackson (2009: 57), the result of such a regressive situation has altered the manner in which modern individuals keep and make friends, jobs and even how they "pursue love". In
order to elucidate such an assertion, Bauman (2003: 65) examines the realm of "internet dating" - another form of social networking service that has gained a great deal of popularity within the technologically driven society of the 21st century due to fact that such sites claim to offer the user an easy and efficient solution with regard to how they can find true love and an ideal Other.

Elaborating upon this particular matter, France (in Bauman 2003: 65) indicates that:

[a]s the generation weaned on the net enters its prime dating years, internet dating is really taking off. And it's not as a last resort. It's a recreational activity. It's entertainment.

According to France (Bauman, 2003: 65) for today's "lonely hearts", "discos" and "single bars" are a "distant memory" as internet dating has now become a preference and a predilection. As such, this "new generation" is entering into a situation whereby they have not acquired enough of the "sociability skills" that "making friends in such places would require". Based upon this shift in the socializing practices associated with the youth of contemporary society, Bauman (2003: 65) notes that internet dating is now perceived as being "advantageous" because with the advent of virtual proximity, one can "always push delete"; there is "no obligation to reply"; and as such, one is "empowered" with the knowledge that they can "date safely", secure in the knowledge that they can "always return to the market place" - i.e. the various social networking sites offering such services - in order to do "another bout of shopping" if their "ideal partner" turns out to be "flawed" or "less than gratifying". Proponents of internet dating services - and other social networking sites that offer similar services to the public - therefore claim that on the internet "one can date without fear of real world repercussions" - as Bauman (2003: 65) notes:

just like browsing through the pages of a mail-order catalogue with a 'no-obligation to buy' promise and a 'return to the shop if dissatisfied' guarantee on the front page, so too can one now feel when shopping for partners on the internet.

Thus, according to Bauman's (2003: 65) interpretation of such services, "termination on demand" - which is marketed to the user as being "instantaneous", "without mess" or "regrets" - is the "major advantage" of internet dating and as such, internet dating now fulfills the "new standards of rational choice [within the society of consumers] perfectly " [my emphasis].

It is in this regard that Bauman (2003: 65) indicates that "what shopping malls did for the chores of daily survival, internet dating has done for the negotiation of partnership" due to the
fact that such services have actually removed the requirements of "full-time engagement", "commitment" and the "obligation" of "having to be there" from the list of "necessary conditions of partnership". As a result of this, Bauman (2003: 120) indicates that the "underlying metaphysics of consumerism has become the default philosophy for all modern life" [my emphasis]. On a similar note, Jackson (2009: 57) indicates that in a world where "looser, freer and context-free relationships" occur, if it goes wrong, one now has the ability "to just disappear". As a result of this, Jackson (2009: 57) maintains that the children who are born into the "mediated world" of "online connectivity" can actually be referred to as the "undo-generation" since they have a "start again" or "game over" mentality which can now apply to everything in life - including potential partners, friends and family. This harrowing depiction of the scenario which Jackson (2009: 59) believes is currently unfolding within the 21st century ultimately forces her to ask the unnerving question: "What kind of love treats people like chess pieces?".

In order to elaborate upon such a worrying concern, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 46) turns to the work of Kaufmann (2010) titled Love Online which focuses on the case of "online mediated and operated sex" - via the aid and guidance of various social networking platforms - whereby Kaufmann (2010) believes that the "dividing line between sex and sentiment is becoming increasingly ill-defined". Expanding upon such a claim, Kaufmann (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 46) points out two conflicting models of using SNSs for relationships of a sexual or romantic nature: The first model to which Kaufmann (2010) refers is titled the "Economic Model" which assumes that "individuals always act on the basis of rational self interest"; while the second, alternative model is supplied by the notion of "Love". According to Kaufmann (2010), it is this model which allows the individual to "abandon the egotistical self of old" and "devote himself/herself to others". The first option, or "Economic model", according to Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 47) is construed after the "consumerist illusion". As such, it would have the individual making use of such a service believe that they can choose a man - or woman - in the same way that one can "choose a yogurt in the hypermarket". But, according to both Kaufmann (2010) and Bauman (2013), that is not how love works as "love is not reducible to consumerism". Elaborating upon this particular pointer, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 47) indicates that the difference between "a man and a yogurt" is that "a woman cannot introduce a man into her life and expect everything to stay the same", but, courtesy of the "consumerist illusion" it all feels "safe" as the existential underpinnings of such a situation inevitably dictate that:
[s]he can log on with one click, and log off with another click...An individual armed with a mouse imagines that she is in complete and absolute control of her social contacts...All the usual obstacles appear to have vanished, and a world of endless possibilities opens up...A women on the net is like a child who has been let loose in a sweetshop (Kaufmann, in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 47).

According to Bauman (2007: 103), such an instrumentalized and myopic form of rationality, that the user of such services adopts in order to look for the ideal Other, invariably leads to a "life of liaisons and partnerships shaped and lived after a pattern of next purchase" and as such, Bauman (2007: 103) maintains that "sentimental logic tends to become ever more saliently consumerist" due to the fact that the underlying rationality guiding such an outlook is based upon the premise that it is actually possible to compose the object of love "from a number of clearly and specified social qualities and traits". Baudrillard (in Lane, 2009: 40) refers to such a contrived situation as the "hypermarket" whereby people are now "tested and sorted" according to "preprogrammed categories" in order to make people feel that they are getting some kind of "authentic experience" in a "sanitized and safe environment".

It is in this regard that Baudrillard (in Lane, 2009: 30) believes that modern technologies - such as internet dating sites and "hypermarkets" - have managed to acquire a mythological dimension due to the fact they do not operate through "clear logical reason", but according to "fragmented personal mythologies" which now seem to purport the belief that technology will always be able to improve upon nature. Such a pointer is then resonant of Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997: xvi) critique of the Enlightenment's "reversion into mythology" and of the instrumentalized form of techno-scientific rationality which has emerged within the modern world, as a direct result of the Enlightenment, which advocates the notion that "technology is able to offer humankind the solutions for all of its problems" (Morozov, 2012: 303). This mythological sense of rationality now seems to extend into the realm of human nature and interpersonal relationships as individuals have now become reducible to predetermined categories and attributes, awaiting to be consumed (and later, discarded), with technology essentially overseeing such a reductivist process. According to Bauman (2007: 103), this then inevitably leads to an explicit and egregious sense of objectification and commodification which can be applied to all individuals in society as the consumerist illusion guiding such a process espouses a logic whereby "if the object fails, you are not required to purchase it" and "if it fails after purchase" you "must discard it" - thus implying that human beings are now perceived merely as being fungible objects of desire and pleasure.
Based upon this, Bauman (2007: 103) asserts that people who are now looking for partners over the internet are beginning to give the impression that such an endeavor is actually an "emotionally removed activity" akin to a scenario whereby one goes to the "butcher" in order to find that perfect cut of meat. Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 136) therefore indicates that the various online dating agencies which have proliferated within the 21st century express the "universal habit" of arranging potential "objects of desire" according to the "preferences stated by potential clients" - like colour of skin or hair, height, breast size, declared interests, favourite pastimes etc. The tacit assumption is that human beings seeking the agency's assistance in the search for human companions need to and can compose them out of their selection of traits. According to Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 136), in the course of that "decomposition for the sake of recomposition", something vital disappears from view and from mind and to all practical intents and purposes is lost: namely, the "human person", "the Other" of morality; the subject in his or her own right and the "object of my responsibility". Bauman (2013: 136) goes on to indicate that such a situation can be regarded as being incredibly worrying due to the fact that when another human being is treated along the lines of a "commodity good" selected according to "colour", "size" and a number of "add-ups"; "adiaphorization" - which refers to a situation whereby "systems and processes become split off from any consideration to morality" (Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 7) - is in "full swing and at its most devastating" due to the fact that an "assembly line of traits" can hardly be perceived as being a "moral object", whose treatment is subjected to moral judgement (Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 137). As a result of this, Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 137) indicates that all too often that "someone", who is being "watched" and scrutinized on the various dating and relationship sites to which Bauman (2013) has referred, is treated as "something", and that "something" is "disembodied information", sorted by means of "software" and "statistical techniques". As such, Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 138) maintains that "relational databases" of this sort tend to "obscure our human relationality" and that there is therefore something "deeply disturbing" about these systems due to the fact that they seem to possess the inherent tendency to "tear such relationality apart" or even, more subtly, to "erode it bit by bit".

For Bauman (2007: 106), such a situation ultimately translates into the "absence of bonds with others" whereby the "disposability of individual identities and interhuman bonds" are now represented as the "substance of individual freedom" [my emphasis]. It is primarily due to such an assertion that Bauman (2007: 107) indicates that "the electronic network" actually resembles a "wind-blown dune of quicksand" rather than a "building site for reliable bonds" as
such communication networks are now actually designed to equip an individual with a "safety device" making the formation and dissolution of relationships "painless, instant and trouble free". According to Bauman (2007: 107) it is actually this "safety device" and not the facility of getting in touch - let alone staying together permanently - that endears the electronic substitute for face-to-face socialization in a market-mediated world and as such, it is actually the "act of getting rid of the unwanted", much more than "getting hold of the desired" which has now come to embody the meaning of "individual freedom". As such, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 43) indicates that in many ways, the reasons for Facebook's success as a socializing network service are very similar to those of internet dating services. Bauman (2013: 43) therefore claims that some of the primary reasons for Facebook's success include the fact that: 1) It was those facilities, provided by Facebook, that allowed the "modern drive" for "effortlessness, convenience and comfort" to finally "reach, conquer and colonize" the hitherto "stubbornly and passionately independent land of human bonds"; 2) They made that land "risk free", or almost, making any "overstaying of their welcome" by ex-desirables "impossible"; 3) They made "cutting one's losses cost-free"; and 4) All in all, they accomplished the feat of "squaring the circle", of "eating the cake and having it": by cleansing the "business of interrelating" from any "strings attached", they removed the "ugly fly of unbreakability" that used to "blight the sweet ointment of human togetherness".

Based upon what has been mentioned above, Bauman (2003: 65) is quick to point out that the "responsibility" for altering the modern individual's perception of what it means to enter into and maintain a "partnership", along with how one views potential partners within contemporary society, "cannot be laid solely at the door of electronic dating" or technology alone. As such, Bauman (2003) believes that many factors within the liquid modern society have made long-term commitments "thin on the ground". However, Bauman (2003: 74) does indicate that the "invasions and colonization" of "consumer market forces" and a consumerist rationale within the realm of interpersonal relationships, along with the strong sense of technological determinism which has emerged within contemporary society via the aid of electronic dating services and other social networking services, constitutes one of the most "awesome of dangers threatening the present form of human togetherness". It is in this regard that Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 86) notes that one of the most "seminal effects" of the progress which has taken place in the field of mobile-communicative technology is the "progressive and perhaps unstoppable liberation of our actions from moral constraints".
3.5. Concluding remarks regarding Bauman's society of consumers and the potentially undermining role that social networking technology plays therein

Bauman's various insights regarding the nature of consumer society and the role that social networking services - and the associated communicative technologies which accompany them - play within such a setting can be considered as being extremely relevant and insightful with regard to the aims and outcomes of this particular investigation pertaining to the dialectical nature of social networking, as his work has vividly highlighted how it is that within the 21st century, society does indeed find itself more immersed within a world whereby an incredibly powerful sentiment of technological determinism - verging on what Morozov (2012: 308) refers to as "technological fetishism" - seems to reign supreme, and not necessarily for the benefit of the modern individual. Thus, not only have Bauman's insights alerted us to the fact that within contemporary society, the denizen of the modern world is explicitly compelled - via the obsessional nature of consumerism and the technological fetishism that has imbricated itself with notion of consuming life - to both utilize and embrace these new communicative devices in order to avoid the potential prospect of social death, but he has also alerted us to the fact that such devices inevitably manage to produce a commodified, objectified and instrumentalized rationality that is not only applicable to the natural world which surrounds us - as both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) have previously highlighted, but now also includes individuals and their interpersonal relationships as well. One can therefore assert that Bauman's critical insights have, in many ways, elucidated how it is that the various concerns of Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) - regarding the increasing role that technological determinism and a highly instrumentalized, techno-scientific form of rationality have started to play within modern society - have managed to manifest themselves in the 21st century, along with Baudrillard's (1998) assertions regarding the cultural transformation that has occurred within contemporary society through the process of perpetual consumption and the emergence of a hyperreal state of existence which technology alone has made possible.

Based upon what has been mentioned within this particular chapter regarding the objectification and commodification that can be associated with the usage of social networking services, along with the potential that such devices wield in terms of altering and distorting the individual's perception of both himself/herself and those with whom they interact, it becomes apparent that there is a great deal more to the benevolent and liberating features that such technologies supposedly offer the individual. As such, it is fairly clear that a certain amount of caution and critical insight needs to be adopted when attempting to evaluate such assertions,
as Bauman's comments have managed to cogently highlight how social networking sites are indeed playing a major role in undermining the autonomy, freedom and privacy of individuals and this therefore yet again manages to illuminate another aspect of the tyrannical nature of technology as initially outlined by Adorno and Horkheimer (1997).

While one could easily assume that from Bauman's perspective, social networking services, mobile phones and the other forms of interactive and communicative technologies which have proliferated within the 21st century are to be regarded as being taboo, pugnacious and detrimental to one's well-being (and therefore to be avoided at all costs), such a stance would inevitably overlook the dialectical dimension contained within such technologies. As Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 97) indicates, such technologies can in many ways be regarded as a "double-edged sword" whereby they can be "usefully applied" to deal with particular tasks (such as promoting a medium for quick and easy communication), however, they nevertheless possess the potential to "cut both ways" and thus "hurt and damage" unintended targets. As such, the responsibility or blame associated with what Bauman refers to as the "crumbling of human bonds" cannot be laid solely at the doorstep of technology. As Bauman (2013: 49) notes, "computers are not the culprits, but neither are they the saviour" - which is unfortunately a perspective that is being both adopted and embraced within the modern world due to the strong sentiment of technological determinism that is present within such an epoch. Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 49) therefore maintains that the "mess" which currently confronts society is rooted in the way our "existential predicament is tackled and deployed by the kind of society we have constructed, while being constructed by it". On a similar note, Kaufmann (2010 in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 47) indicates that the various problems and issues which have been delineated with this particular chapter cannot be rooted in technology alone, but rather, in the "existential dilemma" into which present-day society casts its members, with a particular focus on the increasing role that the consumerist rationale is playing in the modern world along with how humankind has created a mythological narrative associated with technology and how it is technology alone that will manage to produce solutions for any problem that has arisen in the past or may arise in the future.

We will now turn our attention to the critical works of Foucault (1977), with particular focus on his analysis of the Panopticon and how it is that the notion of surveillance, via the aid of modern day technology, is managing to play an ever greater role in the modern world. While certain of these aspects have already been alluded to within the works of Bauman (particularly with regard to his insight into how it is that private life is essentially becoming increasingly
public), we will now take a look at the various implications of what it means to live in a society whereby the various mobile communicative technologies found therein possess the ability to foster and maintain a sentiment of ubiquitous surveillance at the expense of the individuals making use of such technologies. Such a course of investigation will therefore aim to illuminate how it is that social networking sites, when interpreted and analysed from Foucault's (1997) theoretical perspective, possess the ability to act as tools of surveillance and thus undermine the freedom, privacy and autonomy of the modern individual. This will then yet again highlight another aspect inherent to the dialectical nature of social networking technology.
Chapter 4: Social Networking - a modern extension of the Surveillance state?

In this final chapter, we will investigate what it means to live in a society whereby the technological tools – specifically social networking services – that the denizen of the modern word utilizes in order to interact and communicate freely with others, may actually possess the ability to act as surveillance tools which might then paradoxically serve to undermine their autonomy and freedom.

According to Farinosi (2011: 62), within today’s liquid modern society the boundary between private life and public life has been blurred primarily due to the development of a "new generation of Internet applications" referred to as "Web 2.0". Fuchs (2011b: 137) indicates that it was Tim O’Reilly (2005) who initially introduced the notion of Web 2.0 in order to describe the "new series" of programs and interfaces available to the user of the internet within the 21st century that are able to "operate as platforms that support various communication functions and technologies" and as such, "constitute an architecture of participation and rich user experience". Based upon such a definition, Fuchs (2011b: 134) indicates that social networking services (SNS) are typical applications of what is termed Web 2.0, due to the fact that:

they are web-based platforms that integrate different media, information and communication technologies, that allow at least the generation of profiles that display information that describes the users, the display of connections (connection list), the establishment of connections between users that are displayed on their connection lists and the communication between users.

According to such a summation of what these new Web 2.0 applications encompass - particularly in their SNS format - Fuchs (2011b: 137) asserts that one of the most important and striking characteristics pertaining to these contemporary web-based platforms is that they are all able to "store, process, assess and sell large amounts of personal information and usage behaviour data". Augmenting such a claim, Farinosi (2011: 62) indicates that:

[from Facebook to You Tube a vast amount of personal material is shown to a mass audience of the Internet and it would seem that very often the desire to put oneself on display is stronger than the fear of being monitored;

or as Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 23) notes, due to the rise of social networking services and mobile communicative technologies within the society of consumers, "the fear of disclosure has been stifled by the joy of being noticed".
Viewed from this particular perspective, Farinosi (2011: 62) intimates that not only are the various social networking services and social media applications of the 21st century "radically changing the way we interact with other people", but they are also altering our view of "what is private". As Casio (in Farinosi, 2011: 23) indicates, social networking services have marked "a shift" toward a "more interactive, social and collaborative web" but also one that is "more and more coming under surveillance" [my emphasis].

Andrejevic (in Dubrofsky, 2011: 113) echoes similar concerns regarding the increasingly blurred line which has emerged between that which is considered private and public along with the "rising levels of surveillance" taking place on the Web 2.0 by indicating that social networking sites - such as Facebook - persistently "raise the potential" of "putting the self under surveillance" due to the fact that most (if not all) social networking sites require the individual to "input" and "circulate" data about "the self" on a regular basis. In addition to this, Andrejevic (in Dubrofsky, 2011: 113) indicates how it is that such requirements - regarding the constant circulation and regular uploading of personal data - actually possess the innate ability to foster a sentiment of perpetual disclosure within the user that "can be rendered habitual, mundane" and "a seamless part of one's daily routine" - thus amplifying the possibility of continuous online surveillance, through a process of normalization, by essentially increasing the "invisibility" of such invasive activities (Deuze, 2011: 40).

With regard to this particular area of focus, Owen & Imre (2013: 473) assert that one of the "more contentious issues" to arise when researching social networking sites (SNSs) is "how to conceive of surveillance in relation to SNS use". According to both Owen and Imre (2013: 473), the existing approaches with regard to indagating surveillance on social networking sites can be broadly categorized as being "liberating", "commodifying" and "exploitative". Thus, those that frame surveillance within the realm of social networking as being both a liberating and emancipatory element that can be associated with the digital world of the 21st century tend to:

emphasize the potential for character building whilst experimenting with identity under the spotlight of a friendly gaze (Ellison et al. & Pearson in Owen & Imre, 2013: 473).

Augmenting such an auspicious outlook towards the notion of online surveillance and the friendly gaze which manifests itself upon the various social networking sites and associated Web 2.0 platforms, Albrechtslund (in Owen & Imre, 2013: 473) suggests that SNSs offer the user of such services a mode of "participatory surveillance" in which "SNS practices" are
"anchored in surveillance practices" that are "potentially empowering, subjectivity building, and even playful".

Thus, when viewed from this particularly sanguine and liberating perspective, online surveillance - via the aid of SNS platforms - seems to be nothing more than a beneficial and benevolent feature that can inextricably be associated with a highly productive and sociable online lifestyle. As such, proponents of surveillance practices on social networking sites - such as Ellison et al. (2009); Pearson (2009); and Albrechtslund (2008) - seem to be of the opinion that such activities are nothing to be frowned upon or questioned as they inherently provide the user of such services with a myriad potentialities and opportunities in order to enrich and essentially enhance their online experience. While this may indeed be the case, it is nevertheless the intention of this particular chapter to critically highlight the manner in which online surveillance, via the aid of social networking platforms, manifests itself, what the underlying aims of such practices entail and why there is indeed a great deal more to the situation that the liberating and emancipatory claims, as espoused by the proponents of online surveillance, often tend to overlook.

4.1. Attempting to gauge the notion of online surveillance from a critical perspective

Owen and Imre (2013: 473) indicate that an altogether "dissenting voice" on the matter of "surveillance on social networking sites" is that of Christian Fuchs (2009a, 2009b, 2010, 2011a, 2011b), whose work sits "diametrically opposed" to those schools of thought advocating the liberating and emancipatory potential of online surveillance. In order to provide additional elucidation regarding this particular matter, Fuchs (2011b: 135) offers a "typology of surveillance analyses" which can be regarded as being either "neutral", to which the aforementioned approaches - such as Ellison et al. (2009) and Pearson (2009) - belong, against "negative approaches" to surveillance which inherently aim to outline the exploitative, commodifying and dystopian dimension of such activities (Fuchs, 2011b: 135).

Extrapolating upon this subject, Fuchs (2011b: 135) indicates that the "neutral surveillance" analyses belong to a "general orientation" that is typified by the work of Anthony Giddens (1981) in which surveillance is simply considered to be a "normal extension of the modern bureaucratic society". As such, Fuchs (2011b: 135) goes on to indicate that neutral surveillance approaches typically define surveillance as the "systematic collection of data about humans or
non-humans" and that surveillance is "a characteristic of all societies". Thus, for Giddens (and those supporting this particular stance), surveillance can be regarded as:

the coding of information relevant to the administration of subject populations, plus their direct supervision by officials and administrators of all sorts (Giddens in Fuchs, 2011b: 135).

Based upon such a definition, Fuchs (2011b: 135) indicates that the "basic assumptions" underlying the notion of "neutral surveillance" include the following aspects: 1) There are positive aspects of surveillance; 2) Surveillance has two faces, it is enabling and constraining; 3) Surveillance is a fundamental aspect of all societies; 4) Surveillance is necessary for organization; and 5) Any kind of systematic information gathering is surveillance.

According to Fuchs (2011b: 136), there are "important arguments" speaking against defining surveillance in a neutral way, including: 1) Etymology: From an etymological perspective, the French word "surveiller" literally means "to oversee, to watch over". It therefore implies "a hierarchy" and is thus connected to notions such as "watcher, watchmen, overseer and officer". As such, Fuchs (2011b: 136) maintains that surveillance should be conceived as a "technique of coercion" (Foucault in Fuchs, 2011b: 136); 2) Theoretical conflationism: Neutral concepts of surveillance put certain phenomena, such as "taking care of a baby" or the "electrocardiogram of a myocardial infarction patient", on one analytical level with "very different phenomena", such as "pre-emptive state-surveillance of personal data" of citizens for "fighting terrorism" or the "economic surveillance of private data" or "online behaviour" by Internet companies (Facebook, Google, Amazon, etc.) for "accumulating capital" with the help of "targeted advertising". Neutral concepts might therefore be used for "legitimizing coercive forms of surveillance" by arguing that surveillance is "ubiquitous and therefore unproblematic"; 3) Difference between "information gathering" and "surveillance": If surveillance is conceived as "systematic information gathering", then no difference can be drawn between "surveillance studies" and "information society studies" and between a "surveillance society" and an "information society". Therefore, given these circumstances, there are no grounds for claiming the existence of "surveillance studies" as a discipline or transdiscipline; 4) Normalization of surveillance: According to Fuchs (2011b: 136), the "danger" in approaching and viewing surveillance in such a pragmatic and utilitarian fashion lies in the possibility that a "normalization of surveillance" arises to the point that "[i]f everything is surveillance, it becomes difficult to criticize coercive surveillance politically".
Based upon such a critique of the neutral approach with regard to the field of surveillance studies and how such approaches possess the ability to foster an indifferent form of relativism with regard to what the notion of surveillance encompasses, how it operates within society and what its intended goals/outcomes entail, Fuchs (2011b) advocates a "negative" approach towards conceptualizing and understanding surveillance on the Web 2.0 - particularly in the SNS context - with the best-known "negative concept of surveillance", according to Fuchs (2011b: 136), being the one purported by Michel Foucault (1977) - which will shortly be expanded upon and explored in greater detail. As such, Fuchs (2011b: 135) argues that the negative approaches towards online surveillance are both necessary and imperative within the realm of critical surveillance studies - and the school of Critical Theory (Fuchs, 2009a: 2) - due to the fact that if one is to work from the premise that:

information, media, communication, culture, and technology play an important role in contemporary capitalism, then the critique of these phenomena in contemporary society becomes one of the tasks of a critical theory of society (Fuchs, 2009a: 7).

As such, a critical theory of "information, communication, and media" can be viewed as a "sub-domain of a contemporary critical theory of society" and it is in this regard that critical theory attempts to conceptualise the notion of negative surveillance within contemporary society as:

a form of systematic information gathering that is connected to domination, coercion, the threat of using violence or the actual use of violence in order to attain certain goals and accumulate power, in many cases against the will of those who are under surveillance [my emphasis] (Fuchs, 2011b: 135).

Based upon what has been delineated above, it becomes clear to see that there is indeed a considerable amount of (contentious) debate surrounding both the nature of online surveillance practices which are currently manifesting themselves on the various Web 2.0 platforms - including social networking sites - and what it is that their intended outcomes and aims essentially entail. In addition to this, Lyon (in Trottier and Lyon, 2012: 91) indicates that it is important to be aware of the fact that the realm of "social media surveillance" in the 21st century is one aspect of "liquid surveillance", in which surveillance technologies are "no longer static or unitary" but rather "malleable and adaptive". Such a statement then clearly highlights the importance that one should associate with the notion of surveillance in the 21st century, as it now seems to have expanded (and mutated) into many walks of life - in fairly novel and innovative ways (Bauman & Lyon, 2013) - and as such, it is therefore necessary for anyone
inclined to critically engage with such a topic to initially gain a firm grasp of such nuanced matters if they are ever to be accurately understood and evaluated.

In order to effectively achieve this particular outcome, it will firstly be necessary to introduce the critical works of Michel Foucault (1977), as delineated within Crime and Punish: The birth of the prison, which places a central focus on the manner in which "disciplinary practices" have "shifted" within the Western world as time has elapsed (Mills, 2003: 42); along with his insights regarding Bentham's Panopticon (Foucault, 1977: 200) and how it is that the notion of the "panoptic schema" has indelibly altered the manner in which one can view the disciplinary practices within modern society. Once this has been achieved, we will then attempt to apply Foucault's (1977) critical insights regarding discipline and surveillance within the modern world to the realm of social networking to see if any cogent links can indeed be established - with a particular focus on whether or not negative surveillance techniques (Fuchs, 2011b) have been adopted and utilized on such platforms. Such a course of investigation will then hopefully illuminate yet another dialectical attribute inherent to the realm of social networking.

4.2. How to conceptualise the notions of discipline and surveillance within a Foucauldian paradigm

According to Mills (2003: 42), one of Foucault's (1977) central concerns within Discipline and Punish: The birth of the prison, lies in his examination of the way in which power has operated throughout the various regimes that have existed within particular historical epochs. In Discipline and Punish, Foucault (1977) therefore aims to describe the way that "power has been exercised" in different eras in Europe, moving from the "public spectacle of the tortured body" of the individual deemed to have "committed a crime" to the "disciplining, incarceration and surveillance of those convicted of crimes in the present day" (Mills, 2003: 42). As Jackson (2009: 133) indicates, Foucault's (1977) investigation of these matters aims to illuminate how it is that:

[w]hile kings once ruled by war and torture, by the late Middle Ages subtle and indirect means of exercising power began to spread, capillarylike, into every nook and cranny of society. Thickets of regulations shaped behaviour. Nearly every act became supervised and recorded [my emphasis].

Based upon the trajectory in which society seems to have traversed with regard to its disciplinary practices - with particular focus on how explicit methods of discipline and punishment have gradually become more implicit and subtle as society has become more
enlightened, Mills (2003: 43) indicates that Foucault's (1977) insights essentially aim to elucidate how it is that, over the course of Western history, "tremendous change" has taken place with regard to how the notions of order, control and discipline have been conceptualised, implemented and maintained - with surveillance playing an ever greater role as society has progressed towards modernity.

Mills (2003: 44) then goes on to indicate that for Foucault (1977), the notion of discipline can be conceptualised as "a set of strategies, procedures and ways of behaving" that are associated with certain "institutional contexts" and which "permeate ways of thinking and behaviour in general". Discipline, from Foucault's (1977) perspective, is therefore said to consists of:

- a concern [from an institutional perspective] with control which is internalised by each individual: it consists of a concern with time keeping, self-control over one's posture and bodily functions, concentration [and] sublimation of immediate desires and emotions (Mills, 2003: 43).

According to Foucault's (1977) critical interpretation, the elements listed above are seen to be the effects of "disciplinary pressure" and "power", at the same time they are all actions which produce the individual as "subjected" to a "set of procedures which come from outside of themselves" but whose central aim is the "disciplining of the self by the self" (Mills, 2003: 43).

As such, within *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1977) attempts to elucidate the variegated manner in which different regimes have attempted to exercise disciplinary power through the use of a range of different mechanisms and techniques. Based upon this, Mills (2003: 45) indicates how it is that the Panopticon, originally conceptualised and advocated by Jeremy Bentham (1748 - 1832) - a highly influential English philosopher and reformer who was also a major advocate and proponent of the precepts contained within the Enlightenment (Jackson, 2009:130 & Farinosi, 2011: 63) - plays an important role within Foucault's (1977) conceptualisation of discipline and surveillance within the modern state, as it is the Panopticon which essentially symbolises for Foucault (1977) an "internalised disciplinary practice" as one is "forced to act as if one is constantly being surveyed even when one is not".

It is in this regard that Foucault (1977: 187) indicates that within the modern "disciplinary regime" - which he associates with modern society's embrace and utilization of surveillance in order to maintain discipline and control over the population (Jackson, 2009:133),
disciplinary power... is exercised through its *invisibility*, at the same time it imposes on those whom it subjects a principle of *compulsory visibility*. In discipline, *it is the subjects who have to be seen*. Their visibility assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. *It is the fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his [sic] subjection* [my emphasis].

In light of what has been mentioned above, it becomes fairly evident, from a Foucauldian (1977) perspective, that the disciplinary practices within modern society have undergone a major shift in terms of their epistemological underpinnings, intended aims and how it is that they were to be effectively implemented and actualised within modernity - with the newer forms of discipline owing much to the precepts and outcomes contained within the Enlightenment as Foucault (1977: 222) notes, "[t]he Enlightenment, which discovered the liberties, also invented the [new] disciplines". However, before we can accurately gauge Foucault's (1977) assertions regarding the notion of an enlightened form of surveillance and discipline and then attempt to apply them to the world of social networking within the 21st century, we will firstly have to examine in greater detail how it is that Foucault (1977) actually perceived and understood Bentham's Panopticon and what it essentially symbolised for him in terms of modern society's changing attitude towards the notions of discipline, punishment and surveillance.

### 4.3. What does the Panopticon mean for Foucault in terms of the disciplinary practices in the modern world?

Within *Discipline and Punish: The birth of the prison*, Foucault (1977: 200) highlights - in detail - the principal upon which Bentham's Panopticon was founded - a principle which, Foucault (1977) believed, forever altered the way that society both perceived and utilized the notion of surveillance in order to both control and discipline its subjects (Jackson, 2009: 133). As Caluya (2010: 622) indicates, for Foucault (1977), Bentham's "panoptic architecture" can be viewed as an "exemplar of the shift in mechanisms of social control". Due to the fact it plays such a crucial and pivotal role within Foucault's understanding of modern disciplinary practices and the theoretical platform from where he gauges the notion of surveillance within the modern world (Mills, 2003: 46), it will now be delineated (in a fair amount of detail). Foucault (1977: 200) therefore states:
at the periphery an annular building, at the centre, a tower, this tower is pierced with wide windows that open onto the inner side of the ring, the peripheric building is divided into cells, each of which extends the whole width of the building; they have two windows, one on the inside, corresponding to the windows of the tower, the other, on the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from the one end to the other. All that is needed, then, is to place a supervisor in a central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman [sic], a patient, a condemned man [sic], a worker or a schoolboy [sic]. By the effect of backlighting, one can observe from the tower, the small captive shadows in the cells of the periphery... each actor is alone, perfectly individualized and constantly visible... The panoptic mechanism arranges spatial unities that make possible to see constantly and to recognize immediately. In short, it reverses the principle of the dungeon... to enclose, to deprive of light and to hide... Visibility [now becomes] a trap [my emphasis].

According to Foucault's (1997: 200) understanding of Bentham's Panopticon, it is actually the "invisibility of the observer" that is a "guarantee of order" as the "crowd" - which Foucault (1977: 200-201) describes as being a "compact mass, a locus of multiple exchanges, individualities merging together, a collective effect" - is effectively "abolished" and "replaced" by a "collection of separated individuals". As such, Foucault (1977: 201) maintains that the once overbearing and troublesome crowd is effectively transformed - via the internal workings and logic of Bentham's Panopticon - into a "multiplicity" that can now be "numbered and supervised".

Based upon such an understanding of how it is that the Panopticon essentially operates through the process of individualized surveillance, Foucault (1977: 201) asserts that the "major effect" of the Panopticon is to induce within the inmate "a state of conscious and permanent visibility" that assures the "automatic functioning of power". The Panopticon, for Foucault (1977: 202), is therefore to be seen as "a machine for dissociating the see/be seen dyad": in the "peripheric ring", one is "totally seen, without ever seeing"; whereas in the "central tower", "one sees everything without ever being seen". It is therefore the "perception of power" which becomes important as such an awareness of its perpetual presence "tends to render its actual exercise unnecessary".

It is in this regard that Smart (in Mills, 2003: 46) indicates that it is actually the notion of "disciplinary structures needing visibility to operate effectively" which is to be seen as incredibly important within the "panoptic schema" due to the fact that:
the power exercised through hierarchical surveillance is not a possession or a property, rather it has the character of a machine or apparatus through which power is produced and individuals are distributed in a permanent and continuous field.

Reinforcing such a sentiment, Foucault (1977: 201) indicates that through the internal workings and logic of the Panopticon, power has its principle "not so much in a person" as in a certain "concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes"; in an arrangement whose "interval mechanisms" produce the "relation" in which "individuals are caught up". As a result of this, Foucault (1977: 202-203) maintains that the individual trapped within the Panopticon is actually forced to "internalise the disciplinary gaze" so that:

he [sic] who is subjected to a field of visibility and knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power.

According to such an interpretation, Foucault (1977) maintains that a "new power relation" develops through the system of "panopticism" whereby the individual now plays "both roles" because, while the "oppressor" may well be absent, the prisoner has nevertheless internalised the "behavioural code of the oppressor" and will therefore "behave as though the prison guard is still watching" (Mills, 2003: 46). As such, Foucault (1977: 201) asserts that Bentham laid down the principle that "power should be visible and unverifiable": "visible" in the sense that the inmate will constantly have before his (or her) eyes the "tall outline of the central tower from which he [sic] is spied upon" and "unverifiable" in the fact that "the inmate must never know whether he [sic] is being looked at at any moment", but "he [sic] must be sure that he [sic] may always be so".

According to Farinosi (2011: 63), the two main effects of Foucault's (1977) insights regarding the modern disciplinary model which was structured around the central and pivotal notion of perpetual surveillance - via the aid of the Panopticon - were the "internalization of discipline in the mind of the observed" and the "voluntary subordination of the individual to the observer’s potential gaze". As such, Farinosi (2011: 63) asserts that:

[t]he asymmetrical power relation created by this building assured the automatic functioning of control and discipline and facilitates the classification and the management of the prisoners, forced to live in a total and permanent visibility.

Farinosi (2011: 63) goes on to indicate that the "Panopticon concept" - as delineated by Foucault (1977) - with its "vertical and hierarchical model of control" occupies a "pivotal
position" in the field of "surveillance studies" due to the fact that it "constitutes a strong theoretical framework for discussing surveillance dynamics" and as such, it has therefore managed to "attract numerous scholars", which have both "embraced Foucault's Panopticon" and "extended its principles and applications to the analysis of modern technologies" - including social networking services. This is primarily due to the fact that for Foucault (1977: 203), the "panopticon concept" can be perceived as a "privileged place for experiments on men [sic]", and for "analysing with complete certainty the transformations that may be obtained from them" and as such, it should be viewed as "a laboratory of power" (Foucault, 1977: 204).

It is also important to be aware of the fact that according to Foucault (1977: 205), the Panopticon "must be understood as a generalizable model of functioning" and a way of "defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men [sic]". From Foucault's (1977) perspective then, the concept of the Panopticon can - and should - be perceived as being "polyvalent" in its application due to the fact that:

wherever one is tasked dealing with a multiplicity of individuals on whom a task or particular form of behaviour must be imposed, the panoptic schema can be used (Foucault, 1977: 205).

From Foucault's (1977) perspective, it is therefore felicitous to regard the Panopticon as a "symbolic form of discipline and observation" that is applicable to "all establishments whatsoever" (Foucault, 1977: 205) and its "great excellence", according to Foucault's (1977) understanding, consists in the "great strength" it is capable of giving to "any institution" it may be thought "proper to apply it to".

Such an assertion then leads Foucault (1977) to argue that, through the development, implementation and embrace of the "panoptic schema" within modern society, the emergence of what he refers to as "the disciplinary society" and the "surveillance state" has now come to fruition (Foucault, 1977: 209). As Foucault (1977: 214 - 217) notes, one can now affirmatively speak of the formation of a "disciplinary society" and "surveillance state" that "stretches to an indefinitely generalized mechanism of Panopticism" whereby:

our society is one not of spectacle, but of surveillance...there continues the meticulous, concrete training of useful forces; the circuits of communication are the supports of an accumulation and a centralization of knowledge....; it is not that the beautiful totality of the individual is amputated, repressed, altered by our social order, it is rather that the
individual is carefully fabricated in it, according to a whole technique of forces and bodies... [whereby] thousands of eyes [are] posted everywhere [and] mobile attentions [are] ever on the alert [my emphasis].

Caluya (2010: 623) indicates that based upon what Foucault's (1977) observations entail with regard to surveillance in the modern world, one can cogently assert that the inner workings of Bentham's Panopticon - along with the logic that propels it - were actually geared at a "broader change in the social order" whereby the "movement towards the panoptical form" was not only a characteristic feature of the "modern prison" but also, "a new kind of society was implied in the transformation" in which "panopticism" now constituted the "technique, universally widespread, of coercion" [my emphasis] (Foucault, 1977: 222).

Thus, while Bentham's original conceptualisation of the Panopticon is viewed in terms of its ability to function as a "penal building", Foucault's (1977) "Panopticism" can actually be viewed as a "machine of power that is generalisable across extra-penal domains" (Caluya, 2010: 624). As Foucault (1977: 205) notes, the Panopticon can essentially be regarded as a "cruel and ingenious cage", and as such:

- the panopticon must not be understood as a dream building: it is the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form . . . it is in fact a figure of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific use [my emphasis].

4.4. Can Foucault's insights into the panoptic schema be effectively applied to the realm of social networking and online surveillance?

According to Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon: 2013: 12), Foucault's (1977) portrayal of the Panopticon - or what Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 11) refers to as the "arch-metaphor of modern power" - tells us much about how surveillance operates in the 21st Century due to the fact that his analysis, when transposed into the modern day workings of "digital-life", highlights how "power" is now able to "move with the speed of an electronic signal". Put very simply, Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 12) indicates that the "new surveillance practices" which occur in the digital world of the internet - including social networking sites - are explicitly based on "information processing", and as a result of this they now permit a "new transparency" in which "not just citizens" but "all of us", across a "range of roles we play in everyday life", are "constantly checked, monitored, tested, assessed, valued and judged" [my emphasis]. According to Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 12), the converse is not true however, due to the fact that:
as the details of our lives become more transparent to the organisations [and individuals] surveilling us, their own activities become less and less easy to discern.

Such a situation is then redolent of the unnerving narrative contained within Kafka's (1957) *The Trial* - in which the protagonist is arrested and tried for reasons never explained to him (Morozov, 2012: 213) - which ultimately provides one with what Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 10) refers to as a lucid description of omniscient "shadowy powers" that operate in such a clandestine and furtive manner so as to leave the subject "uncertain of anything".

Based upon this, Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 12) indicates that while power in the 21st century now possesses the ability to move "with the speed of electronic signals" in the "fluidity of liquid modernity", "transparency is simultaneously increased for some and decreased for others" - thus reinforcing Foucault's (1977: 202) assertions regarding how it is that surveillance in the modern world, via the aid of the panoptic schema, is inherently constructed in such a way so as to dissociate the "see/be seen dyad". While this may not necessarily be "intentional" or "conspirational" - due to the fact that such "opaqueness" often has to do with the "sophisticated technical character" of the digital world (Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 12) - both Bauman and Lyon (2013: 13) are nevertheless of the opinion that an increasingly vast amount of questionable surveillance is indeed taking place online - including the realm of social networking - whereby much of the personal information vacuumed so vigorously by organizations [and individuals] is actually made available by people using their cellphones, shopping in malls, travelling on vacation, being entertained or surfing the internet;

without them ever really knowing for what it is that this personal information is being scrutinised or whom it is that may be perusing it. On a similar note, Dubrofsky (2011: 112) indicates that as social networking sites such as Facebook continue to grow in popularity at an "unprecedented rate", the ways in which they "enable [new] forms of communication" are "worth paying attention to", especially due to the fact that they possess the potential to "optimize" surveillance practices that can be regarded as being "oppressive".

Elaborating upon this particularly worrying claim, Dubrofsky (2011: 114) indicates that when attempting to investigate areas such as surveillance on social networking sites and social media, it is initially useful to view these new types of media as "symptomatic texts" whereby they:
reflect, rearticulate, and participate in larger cultural discourses about valorizing expressions and displays of the self under surveillance.

According to Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 127), such symptomatic texts regarding the valorization of expressions and displays of the self under surveillance relate to a "long-term process in Western Cultures" whereby the notion of "scopophilia" - the love of being seen - has merged with the "growing ubiquity of surveillance practices", with the "striking effect" of such a merger ultimately resulting in the "willing involvement of individuals in their own surveillance". However, as Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 127) indicates, such a dubious prospect can also be viewed as an "extreme form of carelessness with one's personal information", which may then also "lull" the modern individual into "greater complacency about the travels of [his/her] digital persona". It is in this regard that Dubrofsky (2011: 114) indicates that with the introduction of social networking services (roughly in 2004), we see the emergence of a "love affair" between the "modern individual" and "surveillance technologies", with such technologies acting as "a powerful means" for both displaying and surveilling the self.

When viewed from this particular perspective, Dubrofsky (2011: 114) maintains that the popularity of social networking services provides one with access to "a shift" in the culture surrounding "surveilled displays of the self" whereby entry into the "digital enclosure" - which can be defined as the "online spaces" provided for the user by the various social networking platforms - essentially means "submitting to surveillance" [my emphasis] (Dubrofsky, 2011: 119). It is in this regard that Dubrofsky's (2011) claim resonates with what Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 23) has previously highlighted whereby he asserts that within the society of consumers, a cultural shift has occurred whereby the "condition of being watched" has been "reclassified" from a "menace into a temptation" - with many individuals now willingly succumbing to (and embracing) this surveillance-based temptation, regardless of what the wider implications of such a practice may entail. Such a statement then also reinforces the claims previously made by Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) regarding the hegemonic and homogenising tendencies contained within the Culture Industry due to the fact that as modern culture has progressed, it has become increasingly deterministic in terms of its technological proclivities and dependencies, ultimately resulting in a situation whereby the modern individual needs to both submit to and embrace such technological dictates in order to exist and operate on a meaningful basis.
It is in this regard that Andrejevic (in Dubrofsky, 2011: 119) indicates that it is important for one to be aware of the fact that this new "digital enclosure", which has been so graciously provided for the individual by the various social networking platforms available in the 21st century, is not to be perceived as a "neutral space" in which people can operate in a free and autonomous manner primarily due to the fact that while social networking sites - such as Facebook - are not "delimited by physical parameters", they are nevertheless "bound by specific requirements" as the user of such services is now essentially obliged to:

submit to electronic monitoring and acclimate to the fact that every action and transaction generates information about itself [my emphasis].

Fuchs (2011a: 151) bolsters this particular pointer by indicating that, given the fact that a social networking site such as Facebook is the "second most used web platform in the world", it is highly unlikely that many users would refuse to make use of such a SNS out of surveillance concerns because doing so will ultimately make them miss the social opportunities to stay in touch with their friends and colleagues, to make important new contacts, and may result in [them] being treated as outsiders in their communities [my emphasis].

As such, Dubrofsky (2011: 119) goes on to assert that the surveillance implications that can be associated with this new "digital enclosure" are both profound and worrying due to the fact that such an enclosure can now be regarded as:

a space where data flow is optimized, where each piece of data can be tracked by the makers of Facebook [and sites of a similar nature], and much of it tracked and accessed by [other] users in the digital enclosure.

Based upon such a description of the highly transparent enclosure provided for the user by the various social networking sites, Dubrofsky (2011: 119) argues that the social networking "subject" is now marked by the "details of its activities online, defined through online databases", and as a result of this, "it creates data tracks for every action it takes", resulting in what Poster (in Dubrofsky, 2011: 119) refers to as a "data subject" or a "data double" (Lyon in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 8).

What this therefore implies, according to Dubrofsky's (2011:119) interpretation, is that the "online subject" is essentially obligated to "integrate surveillance" - via the aid of what Bauman
(in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 73) refers to as "single-person-mini-panopticons" which are "commercially supplied" by social networking sites - into his (or her) life for an "unspecified period of time" in order to maintain his/her sense of "subjectivity" whilst also fuelling the extensive "databases" that contain a plethora of personal (and sensitive) information which can then be accessed (and potentially exploited) online. It is in this regard that Dubrofsky (2011: 119) maintains that social networking sites, such as Facebook, animate "a seamless integration of surveillance into the lives of users" whereby "surveillance now becomes a practice of the self", therefore implying that surveillance can actually be regarded as a necessary activity for the modern individual that needs to be carried out "alongside the living of their daily lives". Such an assertion then cogently highlights how it is that one of the central principles of Foucault's (1977) analysis regarding the panoptic schema - in which the Panopticon is designed in such a manner so as to foster the voluntary subordination of the individual to the observer’s potential gaze - has managed to manifest itself within the realm of social networking as individuals making use of such services essentially need to submit to the fact that they may be observed "at any given moment", without necessarily being aware of what purpose(s) such a practice may serve.

In light of what has been mentioned above regarding the nature of social networking sites and how they essentially operate within the digital world, it is clear to see that the practice of online surveillance does indeed manage to take place - at an alarmingly high rate - for the individual making use of such services and that such surveillance practices do occur in a fashion that is, in many ways, redolent of the Foucault's (1977) panoptic schema. In addition to this, we have also been alerted to the fact that surveillance within such digital environments essentially seems to be consubstantial with the usage of these socializing services due to the fact that in order to effectively display oneself on these digital platforms, one needs to submit to the fact that a constant amount of personal surveillance needs to be undertaken. Based upon this rather unnerving fact, it is now important to critically examine the forms of surveillance which are currently taking place on social networking sites such as Facebook - with a particular focus on the modern marketing surveillance techniques that have been adopted upon such Web 2.0 platforms - as this will essentially highlight why one needs to be incredibly wary and critical of the new surveillance practices that are now taking place online as they do indeed seem to evince traits and tendencies that can be regarded as being more than a mere friendly gaze. Such an avenue of exploration will thus attempt to add credence to Foucault's (1977) assertions regarding how it is that negative surveillance techniques and strategies have managed to
permeate throughout all spheres of modern life - and not necessarily for the benefit of those being surveilled.

4.5. Critically gauging the marketing surveillance practices taking place on social networking sites

In accordance with what has been mentioned above by both Bauman & Lyon (2013) and Dubrofsky (2011) regarding the online surveillance practices which are indeed taking place - at a fairly prolific rate - within the digital realm of social networking along with the axiomatic role that surveillance is essentially required to play in order to both maintain the subjectivity of the online user and the functionality of social networking sites such as Facebook, Trottier (2013: 1) indicates that "social media" are now making "social life more visible to businesses" through a "broad set of organizational tasks" including "market research, recruitment, and customer service". As such, Trottier (2013: 1) indicates that social networking sites, such as Facebook, have undergone a "tremendous diffusion into the business world", and that with the "large scale of information" that these social networking platforms currently offer the "various parties and organisations" that may be "interested" in acquiring such information, coupled with their "rapid spread to different social spheres", Trottier (2013: 2) suggests that this now opens up new possibilities for "market surveillance" and "exploitation".

Such an assertion is both supported and augmented by Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 121) who indicates that due to the fact that consumerism has grown "so central in the development of the liquid modern world", it now inherently aims to promote the sentiment of "pleasurable seduction" for the modern consumer in all spheres of his/her life, including the digital realm of social networking, in order to satisfy all of individual's consumption needs. However, Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 121) is quick to point out that in order for this form of "electronic seduction" to effectively operate within the modern world, a continuous amount of "systematic surveillance" needs to be undertaken on a "massive scale". It is in this regard that Mathiesen (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 121) indicates how one needs to be incredibly wary of such modern surveillance practices due to the fact that they are extremely opaque and hidden from public knowledge:

[b]elow the surface [of online activity] there is an enormous hinterland of undisclosed surveillance practices based on the use of the Internet...the vast trail of electronic signs
that we leave behind as we go about our daily affairs - in banks, shops, trade centres, and everywhere else, every day of the year [my emphasis].

While "popular literature" on this particular area of inquiry tends to highlight the "revolutionary potential" of these new forms of marketing surveillance occurring on social media sites, with authors like Shirky (in Trottier, 2013: 2) claiming that they enable "organizing without organizations", Trottier (2013: 2) nevertheless maintains that social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and the various market-based companies with which they are associated, face many "new opportunities" in order to increase their monetary rewards and profit generation by constantly monitoring, scrutinising and exploiting these social media platforms.

Extrapolating upon this particular pointer, Fuchs (2011b: 138) indicates that when considering the notion of online surveillance in the 21st century, it is important for one to be aware of the distinction between what Clarke (in Fuchs, 2011b: 138) refers to as "personal dataveillance" that is aimed at monitoring "the actions of one or more persons" and "mass dataveillance" which can be described as a process in which "a group or large population is monitored in order to detect individuals of interest". According to Fuchs (2011b: 138), when examining the manner in which Web 2.0 platforms operate, the boundaries between these two forms of surveillance have become increasingly "blurred" due to the fact that "targeted advertising" - an approach that many Web 2.0 based platforms utilize in order to generate income whereby "advertisements are tailored" to the "consumption interests" of the users (Fuchs, 2011b: 139) - concerns the "large mass of users on commercial Web 2.0 platforms" because, by agreeing to the "terms of use" which appear on these various sites, they essentially agree, in most cases, to the "surveillance of their personal data and their usage behaviour". As Elizabeth Bird (2011: 508) indicates, through the imposition of terms of use and "terms of service", Web 2.0 companies essentially "force" those individuals making use of their services to withdraw any claims of "privacy" and "ownership" pertaining to the content that they may upload, so that "anything they post becomes the property of the company" - thus allowing for the possibility of perpetual online surveillance - and exploitation - to take place. Or, as Fuchs (2011a: 151) cogently phrases it:

Facebook coerces users into agreeing to the use of their personal data and collected user behaviour data for economic purposes because if you do not agree to the privacy terms that make targeted advertising possible, you are unable to use the platform.
However, as Fuchs (2011b: 138) points out, "mass surveillance" of this sort is "fine-tuned" in such a manner so as to "detect and store the individual differences of users" and to then "target each user with a separate mass of advertisings". Based upon such an understanding, Fuchs (2011b: 138) asserts that Web 2.0 surveillance can actually be regarded as a form of "personal mass dataveillance" due to the fact that it is directed at large "user groups" who help to "hegemonically produce and reproduce surveillance" by continuously "providing user-generated (self-produced) content" on an individual basis. Such an observation then adds credence to Foucault's (1977: 200 - 201) comments regarding the individualized form of surveillance that the panoptic schema aims at promoting and facilitating due to the fact according to Foucault's (1977) interpretation, the Panopticon is effectively able to "transform the crowd" into a "collection of separated individuals" that can be categorically "numbered and supervised" - an approach which, according to Fuchs (2011a & 2011b), is now taking place on a massive scale in the online world via the aid of Web 2.0 surveillance. As a result of this, Fuchs (2011b: 138) asserts that one can affirmatively characterize "Web 2.0 surveillance" as "mass self-surveillance" with Facebook essentially acting as a "good example" for illuminating how it is that "personal mass dataveillance/mass self-surveillance works on Web 2.0" and for also highlighting how it is that such negative surveillance techniques promote an egregious form of commodification and exploitation for the users of such services (Fuchs, 2011b: 143).

In order to elaborate upon such a damning assertion, Fuchs (2011b: 138) initially indicates that for the critical theorist, Facebook is to be considered first and foremost as "a company" and as such, its "economic goal" is to achieve a monetary profit. However, as Fuchs (2009b: 22) indicates, commercial Web 2.0 applications - such as Facebook and other social networking sites of a similar nature - are typically of "no charge for users" and present themselves to users as platforms that can be utilized for "sharing free content" (Trottier, 2013: 13). As such, social networking sites like Facebook, that operate in this seemingly altruistic and utilitarian fashion, aim to generate profit in a fairly clandestine and intransparent manner by attempting to accrue "as many users as possible" - by means of offering them "free services" - and then "selling advertisement space" to "interested third parties" and "additional services" to users (Fuchs, 2009b: 22). It is in this regard that Fuchs (2009a: 172) indicates that "online advertising" can be considered as one of the primary means for "advancing capital accumulation" on the internet due to the fact that there is so much "personal data" available on Web 2.0 platforms, and as a result of this, there is a "great interest" displayed by many advertising firms and marketing agencies to "engage in surveillance of these data" in order to accumulate capital (Fuchs, 2010:
Based upon such an analysis of how it is that social networking sites such as Facebook actually aim to generate a profit, one can assert that the underlying logic propelling such an approach is as follows: the more users, the more profit, that is, the more services that are offered for free, the more profit there is to be generated due to the fact that more targeted advertising will be available for companies and organizations who are looking to seduce the consumer online (Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 121).

According to such a summation of how capital accumulation occurs on the various Web 2.0 platforms, Fuchs (2011b: 138) indicates that a social networking site such as Facebook is "particularly well suited" for "targeted advertising" because it is able to "store and communicate a vast amount of personal likes and dislikes of users" so that "surveillance of these data" can then be used for "economic purposes" by finding out "which products the users are likely to buy". As such, Fuchs (2011b: 138) maintains that Facebook makes use of "mass surveillance" due to the fact that it:

\textit{stores, compares, assesses and sells the personal data and usage behaviour of several 100 million users} [my emphasis].

For this form of online marketing surveillance to actually work, Fuchs (2011b: 138) - like Dubrofsky (2011) and Bauman & Lyon (2013) - indicates that a "permanent amount of input and activity" on the part of the user is required. It is in this regard that the notions of the "produser" and "produsage" (Bruns in Elizabeth Bird, 2011: 503) become important due to the fact that such terms essentially aim to highlight how it is that, via the aid of the various Web 2.0 platforms available, there is a "collaborative and continuous building and extending of existing content" - on these platforms - through the "constant input" of individuals and communities utilising such platforms (i.e. the "produsers"). As such, it is the "produsers" who then effectively manage to create the content - or "produsage" (Elizabeth Bird, 2011: 507) - that actually makes the surveillance and commodification of the individual user possible.

According to Fuchs (2011b: 138), such produsage is in fact "guaranteed" by the "specific characteristics of Web 2.0" due to the fact that users of such platforms are required to regularly "upload user-generated content" (i.e. pictures, videos, comments) and engage in "permanent communicative flows" with family and friends. It is important to remember that such characteristics are inherent to all social networking sites and operate under the ostensible banner of free socialising services: services that Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 24; 29) has previously explicated need to be both utilized and embraced by the individual residing within
the modern world lest the prospects of "social death" and "exclusion" from the "society of consumers" emerge. As such, Elizabeth Bird (2011: 507) indicates that "media industries", such as Facebook and other social networking services, are becoming increasingly "adept at disciplining produsage" within the "produser" - due to the fact that the user is now essentially obligated to make use of these services on a daily basis - with the ultimate aim of "tracking" such "produsage" for the instrumentalized purpose of "online commodification" and "targeted marketing".

In light of what has been mentioned above, Fuchs (2011b: 139) asserts that Oscar Gandy's (1993) conceptualisation of the "panoptic sort" - which attempts to outline the theoretical underpinnings of modern day marketing practices - is "very important in the age of Web 2.0" primarily due to the fact that according to Gandy (1993 in Fuchs, 2011b: 139):

[t]he panoptic sort is a difference machine that sorts individuals into categories and classes on the basis of routine measurements. It is a discriminatory technology that allocates options and opportunities on the basis of those measures and the administrative models that they inform.

Thus, in a manner redolent of Foucault (1977), Gandy (in Fuchs, 2011b: 139) asserts that the panoptic sort can actually be regarded as "a system of power" and a form of "disciplinary surveillance" that flagrantly "identifies, classifies and assesses" those within its gaze.

Based upon such a definition, Fuchs (2011b: 139) argues that Facebook - and other corporate social networking platforms that operate in a similar manner - can indubitably be regarded and classified as a "panoptic sorting machine" due to the fact that: 1) It firstly "identifies the interests of the users" by "requiring them to upload personal data while registering" and also by monitoring their regular upload of "user-generated content" and assessing their "communicative practices"; 2) In a "second step" of the "Facebook panoptic sort", all of these data are then used for "classifying users" into different "consumer groups"; and 3) In the third step, a "comparative assessment" of the "interests of users" and "available advertisements is conducted", advertisements are then selected in order "match specific interests" and subsequently "presented to the individual users" (Fuchs, 2011b: 140).

The example process which has been delineated above, according to Fuchs (2011b: 140), vividly highlights the fact that not only does an extensive amount of online surveillance take place on social networking sites such as Facebook (and other commercial Web 2.0 platforms),
but that surveillance practices of this nature are also indubitably of the "panoptic sort" - based upon the Foucauldian notions of identification, classification and assessment - whereby an inherent sense of produsage commodification and user objectification takes place in a highly intransparent manner so as to promote the advancement of capital accumulation for the key stake holders - i.e. the social networking platforms and advertising agencies/marketing firms utilizing their services. In addition to this, Fuchs (2009b: 172) argues that the manner in which online advertising and capital accumulation takes place on social networking sites, via the medium of targeted advertising, can be regarded as being highly "manipulative" due to fact that such an approach is rooted within an asymmetric power relation as the individuals who are targeted, identified and then classified into different consumer groups rarely have any idea or understanding of the discriminatory surveillance practices associated with such a capital accumulation strategy. Such an observation then reinforces another one of the central precepts contained within Foucault's (1977) assertions regarding the panoptic surveillance practices within the modern world whereby he argues that due to the intransparency inherent to the panoptic schema, an asymmetrical power relation is inherently created which is aimed at reinforcing the dissociation of the "see/be seen" dyad (Farinosi, 2011: 63). When applied to the domain of Web 2.0 surveillance, this approach clearly appears to have been both utilized and embraced by various social networking sites (and the advertising agencies interested in the users of such sites), in order to systematically further the accumulation of capital while keeping the unwary consumer oblivious of such instrumentalized undertakings.

4.6. **Can Web 2.0 surveillance be regarded as a dominating and coercive practice?**

From an exploitative perspective, Fuchs (2011b: 142) indicates that not only does the "coercive advertising strategy" found on the various Web 2.0 platforms "limit the freedom and autonomy" of the individual utilizing social networking services - whilst also undermining his/her privacy - due to the fact that many commercial Web 2.0 platforms essentially

force their users to provide personal data and usage behaviour for economic surveillance processes that serve the purpose of targeted advertising and capital accumulation;

but he also indicates that the panoptic sorting process fosters a condition of "unpaid value creation by the users". Fuchs (2011a: 152) elaborates upon this particular pointer by indicating that if one is to work from the premise that the various individuals making use of social networking sites and other Web 2.0 platforms do become productive Web 2.0 "produsers" - as
Elizabeth Bird (2011: 507) has previously confirmed - then in terms of "Marxian class theory", this means that they become "productive labourers" who produce "surplus value" and are therefore "exploited by capital" because, for Marx, "productive labour generates surplus". Thus, from a critical Marxist perspective, it is not only those who are employed by Web 2.0 corporations for "programming, updating, and maintaining the soft- and hardware, performing marketing activities, etc", who are "exploited surplus value producers", but, according to Fuchs's interpretation (2011a: 153), so are the individual users and "produsers" of social networking sites who engage in the "production of user-generated content". As such, Fuchs (2011a: 153) argues that "produser" activity in a capitalist society can be interpreted as the "outsourcing of productive labour to users", who work "completely for free" and essentially help "maximizing the rate of exploitation" so that "profits can be raised" and "new media capital" may be accumulated. It is in this regard that Fuchs (2011a: 153) believes that such a situation is to be regarded as one of "infinite exploitation" for the users of social networking sites whereby one can actually speak of the "slave-like exploitation" of internet "produsers" (Fuchs, 2011b: 143).

In addition to this, Fuchs (2011b: 143) indicates that due to the fact that "personalized advertising" essentially relies on the "creation of economic value by users", one can also assert that it is the "users themselves", along with their "social relationships" (Fuchs, 2009a: 25), who are "objectified" - by the various social networking platforms that they may be utilizing - and "sold as a commodity to advertisers" [my emphasis] (Fuchs, 2010: 148) in order for a profit to be generated (Fuchs 2011b: 143). Such a claim then reinforces one of Bauman's (2013) central arguments pertaining to the antagonistic dynamic between the modern individual within the society of consumers in relation to the growing prevalence of social networking sites, whereby, according to Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 30), the crucial purpose of social networking sites - such as Facebook - is not necessarily the "satisfaction of needs, desires and wants" pertaining to a meaningful and efficient manner of interpersonal communication, but rather the "commoditization and recommoditization of the consumer": raising the status of consumers to that of "sellable commodities" [my emphasis]. In light of such an unnerving assertion, Fuchs (2011b: 143) unequivocally maintains that there is an "inherent connection" between "economic surveillance" and "user commodification/exploitation". When viewed from this particularly critical stance, Fuchs (2011a: 151) states that social networking sites such as Facebook - and other corporate Web 2.0 platforms - clearly "value profit much higher than the user [and his/her communicative needs]" due to the fact that in addition to the violation of
privacy and undermining of autonomy experienced by the individual - through the unbridled practice of perpetual online surveillance - there is also an egregious and explicit sense of objectification and commodification that manifests itself upon such platforms.

Such a damming (and harrowing) statement then reinforces one of the critical claims made by both Adorno & Horkheimer (1997: 145) regarding the regressive and objectifying traits contained within the Culture Industry whereby they assert that as an "individual", the denizen of the modern world is to be regarded as expendable and utterly insignificant due to the fact that such an Industry views the individual as a mere object - something that is both fungible and ultimately disposable. In addition to this, Adorno & Horkheimer (1997: 156) have also indicated how, as a direct result of the technologically deterministic tendencies and instrumentalized rationality adopted by the Culture Industry within modern society, we are left with nothing more than a:

totalitarian system of cultural production that effectively and completely integrates individuals, their thoughts and activities, into prevailing social, economic, and political structures (Gunster, 2000: 65).

Based upon such a critical analysis of the marketing surveillance practices taking place on the various Web 2.0 platforms and the undermining effects that they may potentially produce for the user of such services, one can infer that there is indeed a great deal more to the world of online surveillance than a mere neutral or friendly gaze that is "potentially empowering, subjectivity building, and even playful" (Albrechtslund in Owen & Imre, 2013: 473). It is also imperative to point out that not only are such surveillance practices to be interpreted as being highly invasive, obtrusive, objectifying and exploitative for the user, but, according to Margalit (1996: 201) such a situation can also be regarded as being extremely "humiliating" for the individual who is exposed to such a set of hegemonic and instrumentalized practices.

In order to augment such a statement, Margalit (1996: 201) indicates that the basis upon which he founds his understanding of what humiliation entails, hinges upon "two central motifs": the first is whether or not the individual has been "rejected from the Family of Man [sic]"; and the second is whether or not there is "denial of control" for the individual or party affected. According to Margalit (1996: 204), a form of systematic surveillance that imposes itself upon the individual whilst objectifying those who happen to fall within its gaze can be regarded as a form of humiliation in "both senses" due to the fact that, as a result of the objectification and commodification experienced by the individual making use of a particular social networking
site, he/she has effectively been "rejected from the Family of Man [sic]" because he/she is no longer treated as a human being or respected Other, but rather, as a mere object, a thing or as Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 8) phrases it, "a data double" that then undergoes a process of "rational discrimination".

In the second sense, such an instrumentalized and invasive surveillance practice can also be regarded as a source of humiliation due to the fact that, according to Margalit's (1996: 204) understanding, it constitutes a "violation of privacy" and as such, "restricts the control" that a person has over his/her interests. Margalit (1996: 204) elaborates upon this particular pointer by indicating that the "private realm" can be defined as "the minimal sphere for individuals' control over their interests". Violation of one's privacy can therefore be regarded as an action that restricts the individuals' control over that which is supposed to be within his/her control. As Dubrofsky (2011), Andrejevic (2007) and Fuchs (2011a) have previously highlighted, upon entry into a social networking site such as Facebook, the user essentially has no control over the digital enclosure in which they find themselves operating due to the fact that they are forced to submit to the terms of use and economic surveillance practices occurring therein. As Trottier (2013: 13) notes, such an "enclosure" can therefore be regarded as a "process" whereby a "variety of strategies for privatizing, controlling, and commoditizing information and intellectual property" evince themselves. In addition to this, Fuchs (2011a, 156) indicates that a flagrant violation of privacy occurs on social networking sites such as Facebook due to the following reasons: 1) Facebook "watches and records" usage behavior and personal data uploaded and entered by users (surveillance); 2) It "aggregates information" about users that is obtained from its own site and other sites (aggregation); 3) Based on aggregation it "identifies the consumer interests of users" (identification); 4) It is "unclear" to whom exactly the data is shared for economic purposes (exclusion from knowledge about data use, one can here also speak of the intransparency of data use); 5) the data are "exploited for profit generation" and thus, for "economic purposes" (data appropriation, understood as "the use of the data subject’s identity to serve another’s aims and interests"). Within such a heteronomous situation, Margalit (1996: 204) asserts that a "violation of privacy" has indeed taken place and as such, it must therefore be considered as being "humiliating" due to the fact that there is a "loss of control" for the individual(s) involved.

In light of the undermining, manipulative and exploitative features associated with the marketing surveillance practices taking place on the various social networking sites and other Web 2.0 platforms, Fuchs (2011b: 143) concludes that Web 2.0 surveillance can invariably be
regarded as a "system of panoptic sorting", "mass self-surveillance" and "personal mass
dataveillance" that manages to exert a tangible sense of power and domination on those who
happen to fall within its gaze, whilst also promoting an egregious sentiment of objectification,
 commodification and even humiliation for those exposed to such invasive practices.

Such a disturbing conclusion is in many ways supported by Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 67)
who indicates that "consumer surveillance" has become increasingly popular with the rise of
Web 2.0 due to the vast amount of personal data that can be located and scrutinised on such
platforms. Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 68), like Fuchs (2011b), also indicates that such
online market surveillance can be directly linked with Gandy's (1993) notion of the "panoptic
sort" due to the fact that a "general sorting machine" is indeed evident in the world of
"database marketing" and so called "geodemographics" whereby people are flagrantly
"clustered into crude population segments" so that marketers can "treat them differently"
depending on their "consumer behaviour". Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 67) therefore asserts
that this stratifying process - which is axiomatically guided by an explicit form of produsage
 commodification and instrumentalized rationality - clearly highlights how it is that the
Panopticon "effectively works" in today's "consumer setting" and how the "logic of the
panopticon" manages to affect "those within its gaze" due to the fact that within the realm of
"database marketing", the idea is to "lull intended targets into thinking that they count", when
all such a process inherently wants to achieve is to "count them, and, of course, to suck them
into further purchases" [my emphasis].

As such, Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon,2013: 53) argues that "the individuation" that occurs online -
through a highly individualized form of mass dataveillance occuring on the various Web 2.0
platforms - is clearly "objectified" and "commodified" whereby the "panoptic power" of such an
approach is utilized "in the service of marketers" with the intent of "lulling and luring the
unworthy" [my emphasis]. In addition to this, Lyon (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 58) asserts that
"such techniques work, routinely" as they both "feature and thrive" within a "lucrative
marketing industry" - this is supported by the fact that recent estimations currently value
Facebook - the largest social networking site to date - at 67.8 billion dollars (Satell, 2013).

Andrejevic (in Bauman & Lyon: 2013: 67) augments such a position by indicating that along with
the highly instrumentalized and commodifying form of rationality associated with the
surveillance practices aimed at identifying and targeting consumers, such invasive approaches
also tend to "encourage" a sense of "self-discipline" within the individual by fundamentally
coercing them to become "consistently conspicuous consumers" - which, as Bauman (2003, 2007 & 2013) has previously indicated, can be regarded as a perpetual struggle for the individual living within the society of consumers, therefore implying that such instrumentalized strategies possess the potential to become incredibly lucrative for the various parties orchestrating such a process. As such, Andrejevic (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 68) argues that the "organisational classification of users, clients, patients, consumers" is an "increasingly significant part of modern life" which also "defines the possibilities for action of affected groups" - thus supporting Fuchs' (2011b: 143) claim that Web 2.0 surveillance can invariably be regarded as a system of panoptic sorting that manages to exert a tangible sense of power and domination upon those who happen to fall within its gaze. It is in this regard that Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 55) indicates that, from his critical perspective, the Panopticon is:

![v]ery much alive and well, armed in fact with (electronically enhanced, "cyborgized") muscles so mighty that Bentham or even Foucault could not and would not have imagined them.

While the analysis of the marketing surveillance practices occuring on the Web 2.0 platforms contained within this particular chapter may appear to be incredibly dubious and worrying (if not damning), it is important to be aware of the fact that such observations and critical insights regarding the individualized, highly instrumentalized and objectifying form of Web 2.0 surveillance (or consumer surveillance) that is currently taking place on social networking sites accord in many ways with what Foucault (1977) actually suggests in Discipline and Punish. Within Discipline and Punish, Foucault (1977: 210) therefore asserts that the introduction and utilization of the panoptic schema has led to the extension of more "profound processes" within modern society due to the fact that such a schema is effectively able to introduce and coerce individuals into the "machinery" and "forces" of the "economy".

Foucault (1977: 218) elaborates upon this pointer by indicating that the formation of the modern surveillance state is connected with a number of "broad societal processes" including an "economic" dimension whereby the "primary aim" is to "increase both the docility and the utility of all the elements of the system" [my emphasis]. Thus, in order to

increase the particular utility of each element of the multiplicity [i.e. the individual], by means that are the most rapid and the least costly, the multiplicity must be used as an instrument of growth -
for which the practice of perpetual surveillance becomes increasingly important (Foucault, 1977: 220).

Foucault (1977: 211) therefore maintains that the "new disciplines" - fostered by the panoptic schema - function increasingly as "techniques for making useful individuals" [my emphasis] and as a result of this, such techniques have been "rooted" and adapted in order to effectively assist the growth and control of the "most important, most central and most productive sectors of society". Based upon this, Foucault (1977: 220) argues that such a disciplinary practice can actually be regarded as:

\begin{center}
\textit{a power that insidiously objectifies those on whom it is applied [in order] to form a knowledge about these individuals [my emphasis].}
\end{center}

In light of such a critical observation and how it is that the new disciplinary measures which have been ushered in - via the aid of the panoptic schema - are effectively able to assist in both the development and control of the "most important" economic sectors of society, Foucault (1977: 211) argues that within the modern world, there has been a "swarming of disciplinary mechanisms" whereby "disciplinary establishments increase" while their "mechanisms" have a "certain tendency" to become "de-institutionalised" and "circulate in a free state".

What this therefore implies with regard to this particular investigation, is that according to Foucault's (1997) understanding and interpretation of the modern day surveillance practices and disciplinary measures that have been introduced into society as a result of the panoptic schema, such techniques and disciplines have been effectively transferred, modified and adapted in order to suit the ideals of the late capitalist economy by providing the modern economic system with both an efficient and effective means for controlling and manipulating the individual in order to produce a desired outcome - the accumulation and generation of profit. Through the critical analysis that has been delineated within this chapter, one can thus affirmatively conclude that such a desired outcome has been effectively actualised within the digital world of the 21st century due to the fact that such disciplinary strategies and surveillance techniques have indeed managed to emerge, and have been effectively implemented and utilized, on the various social networking sites and corporate Web 2.0 platforms in order to both control and manipulate the individuals making use of such services.

While the critical analysis of the modern day surveillance strategies contained within this chapter has, up to this point, focused primarily on those surveillance practices which are
instrumentally aimed at advancing the economic interests and capital accumulation of a few key stake holders within the late capitalist economy, Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 55) indicates that it is crucial to be aware of the fact that this form of electronic marketing surveillance is by no means the only form of online surveillance that is taking place within the realm of social networking and on the internet in general. While it is beyond the scope of this particular investigation to explore all of the forms of surveillance that are currently appearing online, it is nevertheless important to highlight, briefly, a few other forms of surveillance that are currently taking place online in order to bolster the argument of how it is that social networking sites can indeed be used as tools to promote a sentiment of domination and control over individuals utilizing such services. Thus, according to the literature that is currently available, some of the other forms of surveillance that are beginning to appear within the realm of social networking - and other Web 2.0 platforms - now include:

1) Increasingly large amounts of interpersonal surveillance taking place on social networking sites between family members, friends, spouses, intimate partners and even strangers in order to monitor what a particular individual may be doing, with whom it is that he/she may be associating and what it is that he/she may be thinking and feeling - a situation that Mathiesen (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 68) refers to as the "Synopticon" whereby "the many" are now able to "watch the few". According to both Jackson (2009: 129) and Turkle (2011: 252), while such practices are intended to provide the individual with a sense of safety and control in order to assuage the feelings of uncertainty and ambiguity which one can associate with the capricious and vicissitudinous nature of modern life in the 21st century, when taken to the extreme, such voyeuristic tendencies possess the ability to undermine the promotion of trust and autonomy which can be regarded as crucial with regard to the formation of lasting and durable interpersonal bonds;

2) Due to the proliferation and popularity of social networking sites, Clark and Roberts (2010: 517) indicate that an increasingly vast amount of employers within the 21st century have assumed a "voyeuristic" role by furtively scrutinising the social networking profiles of their existing employees and potential candidates in order to gain an impression of who it is that is currently working for them, or who it is that may potentially be working for them in the near future. Clark and Roberts (2010: 517) indicate that such practices often occur without the employee/candidate's knowledge, effectively destroying the line between "what is appropriate for the work realm" and "what should exist in one's private realm". While such practices clearly constitute a flagrant violation of privacy, Clark and Roberts (2010: 518) maintain that the wider
effects of such practices may also prove to be "incredibly harmful for society" as the notions of trust, respect and privacy seem to be entering into a state of atrophication and entropy;

3) According to Morozov (2012: 143-178), governments of both of an authoritarian and democratic persuasion are becoming "increasingly inclined" to utilize the information contained on the vast array of social networking services in order to both monitor and scrutinise the citizens of their respective states - and in certain cases, questionable others who ostensibly pose some form of a threat to their respective states - in order to control them, manipulate them and if deemed necessary - dominate them. Such a claim is made all the more credible (and frightening) in light of the recent revelations made by Edward Snowden who exposed how it is that America's "National Security Agency" (NSA) has been utilising several underhanded approaches - including the illicit monitoring of social networking sites - in order to effectively spy on a plethora of individuals across the globe (Greenwald, MacAskill and Poitras, 2013);

4) Bauman & Lyon (2013: 61) argue that modern technologies - such as social networking sites - are now being used to determine "who is placed under specific surveillance", giving rise to what Bigo (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 62) refers to as the "Banopticon" whereby "transnational bureaucracies of surveillance and control", including both "businesses and politicians", now "work at a distance" in order to "monitor and control population movement" through online surveillance which is intended to "show who is welcome or not" by creating "categories" of people excluded "not just from a given nation state" but from a rather "amorphous and not unified cluster of global powers".

4.7. Concluding remarks regarding the surveillance practices taking place on social networking platforms

It has been the intention of this chapter to critically elucidate whether or not social networking sites possess the innate potential to act as surveillance tools within contemporary society and thus, operate as instruments that can be utilized to disempower and undermine the autonomy and freedom of the individual making use of such services. In order to effectively achieve this particular outcome, the reader initially had to be introduced to both the nature and epistemological underpinnings associated with the enlightened forms of disciplinary practices emerging within modern society, along with the intended aims/outcomes of the surveillance strategies which have become imbricated with such practices. We have therefore had to rely primarily upon the critical theoretical framework of Michel Foucault (1977) as delineated within
Discipline and Punish: The birth of the prison - along with the critical insights of contemporary theorists such as Fuchs (2009a, 2009b, 2010, 2011a, 2011b) and Bauman & Lyon (2013) - in order to ultimately ascertain whether or not the negative surveillance practices, which are inherently based upon a normative sense of domination and coercion, have managed to evince themselves on the various social networking sites and other Web 2.0 platforms which have proliferated within the 21st century.

From what has been delineated and explicated within this chapter, in direct contrast to the fairly benevolent and sanguine claims contained within the liberating and emancipatory approaches towards understanding online surveillance, one can confidently state - in a manner redolent of both Foucault (1977) and Fuchs (2011a) - that the emergence and sustained presence of negative surveillance practices is indeed evident within the modern world of social networking as evinced by their undeniable (even if fairly well concealed) manifestation on the various Web 2.0 platforms currently available online. In addition to this, based upon what has been gauged through the investigation contained within this chapter, it also becomes fairly evident that the various forms of marketing surveillance which are taking place on social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace can be viewed as being both a domineering and coercive force that has the potential to produce undermining, exploitative and humiliating effects for the individual involved, as well as being a practice that is inherently founded upon deceptive and duplicitous grounds resulting in the creation of an asymmetrical power relation between those that see and those who are seen.

One can then argue that within this chapter we have also been alerted to the fact that even though Foucault's (1977) insights regarding Bentham's Panopticon and the panoptic schema emerged towards the middle of the 20th century, and that they essentially aim to interrogate the underlying rationality and wider societal implications associated with Bentham's enlightened disciplinary framework which he introduced to society in the 19th century, they are nevertheless still to be regarded as being highly relevant and useful with regard to understanding both the notion of online surveillance and the various aims and outcomes that can be associated with the surveillance state in which we currently find ourselves. Foucault's (1977) analysis has thus, in many ways, managed to both support and augment several of the central concerns and critical insights to which both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) and Bauman (2003, 2007 & 2013) have previously alluded - particularly in terms of the regressive qualities and objectifying tendencies associated with the enlightened world, which founds itself proudly
upon the ideals of technological determinism and a highly instrumentalized form of reason, along with the commodifying, objectifying and degenerative form that contemporary culture has managed to assume. It is in this regard that one is essentially obliged to agree with Fuchs (2009a: 15) who argues that, now, more than ever, one needs to approach and gauge the issue of Web 2.0 surveillance - in its various forms - from both a critical and wary perspective due to the fact that such instrumentalized and deterministic practices do inherently possess the potential to disempower, exploit and manipulate the user of such services.

Due to the fact that such a vast array of questionable (and negative) surveillance practices are currently taking place on the Internet and the various Web 2.0 platforms with which it is associated - including social networking sites, along with the undermining and exploitative potential contained within the various marketing surveillance approaches that have now been adopted and embraced by many corporations within the 21st century, it is clear to see that such furtive surveillance practices do indeed pose an incredible threat to the autonomy, freedom and general well-being of the individual effected by such invasive (and intransparent) surveillance strategies. As a result of this, one can confidently assert that there is indeed a great deal more to the nature of online surveillance than a mere friendly gaze that is regarded by some as being both a natural and neutral extension of the modern state.
**Conclusion**

It has been the overriding intention of this particular investigation to ascertain whether or not social networking services can indeed be regarded as a hegemonic force within society that possesses the innate potential to undermine the freedom and autonomy of the individual living within the modern world. Before extrapolating on the various findings that have emerged throughout the course of this investigation, along with what their potential implications entail, it is important to be aware of the fact that according to Van Den Eede (2010: 195), when considering both the nature of social networking services along with the various roles and objectives that they are intended to serve within the modern society of the 21st century, one needs to be acutely aware of the possibility that it might just be too easy to make "harsh moral judgements" and sweeping generalisations which are aimed at encapsulating everything it is that these new technological mediums supposedly entail for the denizen of the modern world. Thus, while the underlying hypothesis guiding this particular investigation has been rooted in the firm conviction that social networking sites can indeed be regarded as impressive technological achievements within the 21st century, and while there are certainly an array of benefits that can be associated with the utilization of such services, they nevertheless can be perceived as a hegemonic force within society - a few cautionary remarks need to be initially outlined before expanding upon what such an assertion entails in terms of this investigation.

According to Van Den Eede (2010: 195), before any overarching judgements and verdicts can be effectively formulated and postulated to a wider audience, one should initially try to gain a comprehensive understanding of what it is that is "really happening" within this particular area of investigation, and before proceeding to pose and address highly polarized (and reductivist) questions such as "are social networking services a bad or a good thing?", one should firstly attempt to acquire a broad understanding of the phenomena in question. In an attempt to take heed of Van Den Eede's (2010) cautionary remarks regarding the importance of initially gaining a comprehensive stance when striving to formulate a critical evaluation of social networking services in the 21st century, whilst also being mindful of Turkle's (2011: 243) axiomatic prescriptions pertaining to what an "amended narrative of technology" in the 21st century should entail - in the sense that it should attempt to critically elucidate "technology's true effects on us" whilst also remaining impartial enough so as to describe the current situation in an accurate and honest fashion - it has been the intention of this particular investigation to highlight whether or not there is a dialectical tension inherent to the nature, and underlying rationality, propelling the various social networking services that have emerged within the 21st
Such an approach has essentially been adopted in an attempt to avoid creating a polarized and superficial conceptualisation of the phenomena in question which would then inevitably lead to a simplified scenario whereby these new technological mediums are thrust into superfluous and misleading categories such as good or bad; liberating or subjugating; edifying or stultifying. Such an aspiration has fundamentally been founded upon a critical epistemological framework that has attempted to both evaluate and analyse a fairly expansive range of critical texts so that a sufficient amount of insight and edification could initially be gained before attempting to make any concluding remarks and assertions with regard to the dialectical tension in question.

In order to effectively achieve this particular outcome, we have firstly been required to analyse and assess Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critical evaluation of the Enlightenment as it has manifested itself within the course of Western history, along with what they perceive as being a highly corrosive form of rationality that it has both promoted and fostered within the modern world. Such an avenue of inquiry clearly managed to highlight that from Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critical perspective, within the modern world, the notions of the Enlightenment, progress and technological development need to be treated with a great deal of caution and evaluated in an incredibly wary fashion due to the fact that such benevolent and benign notions inherently contain a dialectical tension that, if left unchecked, threaten to thrust humankind into an even more subjugated and dominated form of existence. As has been elucidated throughout the course of chapter one, according to the vantage point adopted by both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), this dialectical tension - which can be regarded as being inherent to the notion of enlightened thought itself - is firmly rooted within a highly instrumentalized and purposive form of rationality which has managed to evince itself in the modern world as a direct result of the sacrosanct position currently occupied by the fields of both science and technology.

In addition to this, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) have also managed to indicate how it is that such an enlightened outlook has managed to produce a new mythological order and myopic understanding of reality, particularly in the sense that modern rationality now emphatically advocates a position whereby it is believed that only through the domains of science and technology will humanity ever be able to truly liberate and emancipate itself from the vicissitudes of fate. For both Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), such a mythological and myopic understanding of the "disenchanted world" needs to be thoroughly scrutinised, evaluated and
addressed - and subsequently countered by critical reflection - before any sweeping judgements or overarching claims can be formulated with regard to their benevolent and progressive qualities due to the fact that, as Adorno (in Thomson, 2006: 127) reminds us:

as soon as the possibility of progress is assumed directly, progress is betrayed by being turned into another lie in the triumph of domination.

What is of particular import with regard to the concluding section of this investigation is the fact that even though Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are incredibly suspicious and wary of the purposive/instrumental form of rationality that has emerged within the enlightened world, whilst also exhibiting an incredibly caustic attitude towards the vast array of scientific and technological innovations that have manifested themselves as a direct result of society's growing embrace of the mythological narrative associated with both science and technology, they are nevertheless able to appreciate the fact that if progress, liberation and emancipation are to ever truly evince themselves in the modern world, it would be too simplistic - and dangerous - to conclude that one must reject all of the precepts and products of enlightened thought in their entirety.

Contesting such a simplistic and superficial response, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) essentially argue that if the Enlightenment - along with all the technological and scientific innovations accompanying it - is ever to be "rescued from its own menace", such an accomplishment would only be achieved through a "rational critical reflection on itself" (Baghai, 2007: 2). It is therefore crucial to note that Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) do not advocate a position which inherently aims to reject the precepts, aims and innovations associated with an enlightened form of rationality tout court, but rather, the instrumentalized and myopic forms that they have managed to assume under the dictates of a highly "scientized" and "technologized" form of modernity. It is in this regard that they have therefore managed to limpidly highlight how it is that if the Enlightenment - along with the vast array of techno-scientific paraphernalia accompanying it - is to ever serve the liberating and emancipatory function for which it was once intended, it firstly needs to "become conscious of itself" (Baghai, 2007: 2).

What this therefore implies with regard to this particular investigation into the dialectical nature of social networking, is that the Western world has had a prolonged and protracted history of submitting to, embracing, and displaying an absolute faith towards the techno-scientific ideals of an enlightened form of rationality - with the 20th century marking for both
Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) the apotheosis of such a movement. One therefore needs to appreciate the fact that within the 21st century, modern society's embrace and enthrallment with an extended form of techno-scientific rationality, along with the infatuation and exuberance currently exhibited by the modern individual towards contemporary mobile-communicative innovations - such as social networking services - are not in themselves novel or anomalous occurrences due to the fact that such fervent attitudes and acquiescent tendencies appear to be firmly rooted, and documented, throughout the progression of Western society itself.

Thus, while such a blind faith in the technological achievements and scientific pursuits of the 21st century, along with the associated mythological belief that it is only through the disciplines of science and technology that the individual will ever be able to reach a condition marked by freedom and liberation, may be considered as alarming, myopic and inherently unfounded, Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) insights into these matters have managed to cogently highlight the caution and critical distance that needs to be displayed and adopted in order to effectively gauge the true effects that each new technology - including those related to social networking services - supposedly offers humankind, lest their true emancipatory qualities be betrayed by a blind faith that is currently rooted in a technologically deterministic outlook of the world which has also managed to penetrate the ontological conditions associated with the modern world.

In addition to this, Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) analysis of the Culture Industry has also effectively highlighted how it is that this dialectical tension, which is inherent to an enlightened paradigm, has also managed to manifest itself within the realm of contemporary culture - particularly when one is to evaluate the existential and ontological conditions associated with such a highly technologized setting. Within chapter two we have therefore been alerted to the fact that when contemporary culture is subsumed by the imperatives of the economic market place and the reductionist dictates of a highly rationalized form of technological determinism, it leads to a scenario whereby it is the very tools and innovations that have been created and introduced to society via the aid of enlightened thought - that paradoxically possess the potential to liberate and emancipate the modern individual - which can actually be utilized to wield a hegemonic, objectifying and stultifying influence on the unsuspecting individual residing within such a context.
As such, Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) Culture Industry thesis has therefore managed to highlight how there is a highly dubious and detrimental aspect to living in a world which is solely guided by a technologically deterministic outlook, whereby the individual now finds himself/herself completely engulfed by a vast array of technological paraphernalia that claims to liberate, edify and emancipate, but in reality, actually manages to bind and imbricate him/her to an exploitative and dehumanizing social order, whilst also abrogating the possibility of interpersonal contiguity. As Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: xiv) have previously indicated:

> [o]n the one hand the growth of economic productivity furnishes the conditions for a world of greater justice; on the other hand it allows the technical apparatus and the social groups which administer it a disproportionate superiority to the rest of the population.

Such a statement then lucidly highlights how it is that even though Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are incredibly critical of accepting notions such as progress and development when considering the technological innovations and advancements which have emerged within the 20th century, they nevertheless maintain that such innovations do possess the potential to act as edifying and emancipatory tools - just not under the deterministic and instrumentalized conditions in which they currently find themselves operating. As we have seen, such a statement is reinforced by Adorno's (in Baghai, 2007: 17) assertions regarding the mass media in the 20th century and what was then perceived as being the recent phenomenon of television and the role that it could potentially serve within contemporary culture:

> [b]y exposing the socio-psychological implications and mechanisms of television...not only the shows can be improved but more importantly the public may be sensitized to the nefarious effect of some of these mechanisms.

Thus, from a cultural perspective, the dialectical tension of such a situation resides in the fact that it is the very tools and innovations that modern technology alone has managed to bring into existence - which can indubitably be utilized to produce an array of beneficial and liberating outcomes for the user of such devices - which can serve a hegemonic function within society when they are perceived and utilized as instruments that need to be harnessed purely for the accumulation of capital and the further entrenchment of a technologically dependant lifestyle. When such a situation arises, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) are of the implacable position that such technological devices become nothing more than tyrannical tools that are subsequently disseminated throughout all spheres of society in order to propagate an egregious condition of conformism, isolation and ignorance - to which all denizens of the
modern world are required to acquiesce. As such, the analysis of Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) has managed to provide one with a highly critical framework and cautious platform from where the new technologies of the 21st century - such as social networking services and social media - can be effectively gauged, and how it is that before attempting to make sweeping statements and all-encompassing claims attesting to either their progressive or stultifying attributes, a wary and critical stance needs to be adopted in order to accurately evaluate such phenomena.

Within chapter three, Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) critical insights and comments regarding the phenomena listed above were then cogently augmented and bolstered by Bauman's (2003; 2007 & 2013) insights into the consumer-based nature and technologically deterministic underpinnings associated with society - and life - in the 21st century. Such an augmentation revealed itself primarily due to the fact that according to Bauman's critical stance regarding the phenomena in question, within modern society - or what he refers to as the society of consumers - it is the actual imperatives of consumerism and the dictates of technological dependency that have stultified and limited the ability of the various technological innovations of the 21st century - such as social networking services - to serve as truly liberating and emancipatory elements. This is primarily due to the fact that Bauman fervently maintains that such devices have been subsumed by the instrumental dictates of what a consumer based lifestyle - and as a corollary, a social lifestyle - should entail, thus diminishing the liberating capabilities that such devices may potentially wield for the modern individual.

Bauman's (2003; 2007 & 2013) insights regarding such a situation have therefore managed to indicate how it is that such an instrumentalized - and inherently deceptive - process has managed to foster the development of a new social order that finds itself even more immersed in the dictates of an implacable form of technological determinism and instrumental rationality, due to the fact that the mythological narrative associated with technology in the 21st century now purports that if an individual is to avoid the harrowing prospect of social death and exclusion from the society of consumers, the onus now falls solely upon the individual - and his/her wallet - to both utilize and embrace these new social networking platforms and mobile-communicative technologies in order to promote themselves as desirable commodities in order to acquire a sense of acceptance and acknowledgement - albeit ephemeral and illusory. As we have seen, Bauman refers to such a situation as subjectivity fetishism - whereby the individual is essentially seduced into believing that only by adopting and embracing such deterministic measures, will he/she ensure that they are not alienated and excommunicated from society.
Such an assertion then adds a distinctively 21st century twist to the mythological narrative associated with technology, due to the fact that the individual is now forced to acquiesce to the (highly dubious) supposition that in order to be regarded as a social and desirable element within society, it is only through a "dehumanizing merging between man [sic] and machine" (Jackson, 2009: 16) that the individual will ever attain a sense of liberty and emancipation within the modern world.

In addition to this, Bauman's (2003; 2007 & 2013) insights have also managed to highlight how it is that the various modern mobile-communicative technologies and social networking platforms, which were introduced into society during the early stages of the 21st century, managed to gain a great deal of their popularity, admiration and impetus due to the fact that they were initially presented to society as liberating technological aids that would invariably serve an accommodating role within the life of the modern individual who now finds himself/herself living in an incredibly high-paced, fluid and ever-changing setting. Based upon this, one can therefore affirmatively assert that when viewed from this accommodating perspective, these communicative devices and innovations have served their liberating purpose(s) admirably as they have allowed individuals residing within the 21st century to effectively communicate with one another while on-the-go, whilst also allowing them to maintain contact with their family, friends and loved ones even when thousands of kilometres apart - thus effectively destroying what Parsell (2008: 43) refers to as the "tyranny of distance". However, Bauman's (2003; 2007 & 2013) analysis has also made it starkly evident that when viewed from an instrumentalized and myopic perspective - which a consumer-based lifestyle explicitly promotes and advocates, it is these very liberating and accommodating technologies that possess the potential to transform and distort the modern individual's conceptualisation, understanding and appreciation of what the Other essentially entails, along with what the notion of a meaningful and durable interpersonal engagement encompasses.

Bauman's insights have therefore managed to elucidate how it is that such a dubious prospect is able to manifest itself within the modern world due to the fact that when viewed from this highly rationalized vantage point, all individuals, along with their interpersonal relations, are now becoming increasingly objectified and commodified in order to suit the preferences and predilections of the market place and a consumer-based lifestyle - essentially allowing for the metaphysical conditions associated with consuming life to infiltrate, penetrate and colonise the domain of interpersonal relations as well. As Bauman (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 137) has previously pointed out, when these contemporary devices and technologies are adopted and
utilized for such self-serving and instrumentalized purposes, adiaphorization is in full swing whereby the inevitable result for the individual living in the 21st century translates into the absence of bonds with others due to the fact that the very nature and historic conceptualisation of relationality and interpersonal bonds is slowly being corroded and torn apart.

Finally, within chapter four, we were introduced to Foucault's (1977) critical insights regarding what the implications and effects entail for the individual living in contemporary society when enlightened forms of technology are adopted and utilized for myopic and highly instrumentalized pursuits. It is in this regard that Foucault (1977) has cogently managed to highlight how it is that when modern technological devices are utilized for manipulative and exploitative purposes, they can, in many ways, serve to foster a condition of accentuated docility and conformism within the individual, thus reinforcing the hegemonic order of society - without ever allowing the individual to break free and critically evaluate the nature of the heteronomous situation in which they find themselves due to the intransparent, opaque and asymmetrical nature of such practices.

Such a discovery evinced itself primarily through Foucault's (1977) critical analysis and evaluation of Bentham's panoptic schema along with the underlying logic propelling it. As was revealed through this analysis and evaluation, through Bentham's progressive desire to introduce an enlightened edifice that both utilized and embraced the notion of intransparent perpetual surveillance - within not only penal institutions, but across all spheres of society - an asymmetrical power relation inevitably arises within modern society between those who see and those who are seen. As a result of this, the individual residing within the modern world is never entirely sure of who it is that may be watching, or for what purpose such surveillance is actually taking place - however, the individual is nevertheless acutely aware of the fact that such invasive surveillance practices can take place at any given moment. The inevitable outcome of such a heteronomous situation, according to Foucault (1977), results in a the scenario whereby the individual is forced to internalise the gaze of the surveyor and is therefore slowly coerced into acquiescing and conforming to whatever dictates society deems to be suitable at the time. According to Foucault (1997), such instrumentalized and invasive practices place the individual into a subservient and dominated form of existence which therefore forces them to relinquish any realistic claims to autonomy, freedom and privacy.
When such a critical analysis was transposed to the realm of social networking technologies and social media platforms, a fairly dubious and harrowing discovery revealed itself whereby it was clearly demonstrated how a considerable amount of opaque and questionable surveillance practices - redolent of Foucault's (1977) panoptic schema - are indeed taking place on the various social networking services that have emerged within the 21st century. Through the course of this particular aspect of the investigation into the dialectical nature of social networking, it was therefore elucidated how it is that the various principles and precepts guiding the panoptic schema have been adopted and implemented within an array of marketing surveillance strategies which are axiomatically guided by the desire to surveil, identify and categorize individuals, without them ever really being aware of such invasive and instrumentalized undertakings.

As we have seen, the overriding assumption propelling such marketing surveillance strategies ultimately rests on the belief that it is through such an instrumentalized - and manipulative - process that the various advertising agencies and marketing firms engaged in such activities can effectively identify individuals, evaluate their consumer behaviour and then cast them into different consumer categories in the hope that such a discriminatory process will ultimately make the individual consumer more susceptible to the barrage of advertising campaigns and marketing strategies associated with such practices. As has been evinced throughout the course of chapter four, not only have such practices been widely embraced and utilized on a number of social networking platforms, but, that they are also incredibly successful in terms of generating massive amounts of profit and income for the various parties utilizing such strategies.

Yet again, a dialectical tension manifests itself within such surveillance practices due to the fact that one can argue that if such an approach towards marketing and advertising was undertaken in a more transparent, open and discernible fashion, they would indeed allow for companies to streamline their services, thus allowing them to become more efficient and effective in their marketing campaigns; bolster their ability to serve the needs of their clients in a more thorough fashion; whilst also allowing them to foster a meaningful sense of rapport with potential customers in order to ascertain what it is that their real needs and desires entail. However, when such surveillance strategies are undertaken in a highly intransparent and opaque fashion, with the ultimate intention of "lulling and luring the unwary" (Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 53) - such practices take on a far more dubious dimension due the fact that, as we have seen, individuals are now essentially being manipulated, exploited and commodified in order to ensure that a
perpetual sense of capital accumulation is taking place - giving rise to what Fuchs (2011b: 143) has referred to as "slave-like exploitation".

It is in this regard that social networking platforms, such as Facebook, can be viewed as being complicit in this dehumanizing and undermining process as it is the various social networking services themselves that vigilantly surveil, identify and categorize the online behaviour and communicative patterns of their users in order to then sell whatever information appears on their particular platform to third parties that may be interested in acquiring such information. As has been highlighted, through such a process, the individual within the modern world - who makes use of these platforms - is subsequently transformed from being regarded as a venerable and respectable Other into a mere data double - implying that in the eyes of those surveilling these social networking platforms, the individual is transformed into nothing more than surveilled pieces of data (thus exempting them from the realm of moral and ethical consideration) that can then be exploited and manipulated in order to allow companies to generate vast amounts of income.

Based upon such a summation of the various findings and discoveries that have emerged throughout the course of this particular investigation into the dialectical nature of social networking, along with what their potential implications entail for the user of such services, it becomes clear to see that, like most of the technological innovations that have preceded them, there is indeed a dialectical tension inherent to both the nature, and underlying logic, propelling the various social networking technologies as they currently evince themselves and operate within the 21st century. Morozov (2012: 283) reinforces such an assertion by indicating that if there is an overarching theme to modern technology, it is that it "defies the expectations of its creators, taking on functions and roles that were never intended at creation". Noble (in Morozov, 2012: 283) elaborates upon this particular pointer by indicating that:

[t]echnology leads a double life, one which conforms to the intentions of designers and interests of power and another which contradicts them – proceeding behind the backs of their architects to yield unintended consequences and unintended possibilities.

With regard to the dialectical nature of social networking technologies, such a dialectical dimension has primarily emerged due to the fact that while they ostensibly contain the elements that will allow for edification, emancipation and liberation to take place, and while we have indeed been alerted to what several of these beneficial and liberating features entail, from what has been ascertained throughout the course of this investigation, one can cogently
argue how it is that these very liberating and beneficial elements have subsequently been transformed and distorted within the domain of modern society - via the highly corrosive form of rationality to which Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) have referred - in order to pursue an array of instrumentalized, myopic and objectifying outcomes. It is in this vein of thought that Douglas (in Morozov, 2012: 287) indicates that:

[w]hile each communication technology does have its own individual properties,...the economic and political system in which the device is embedded almost always trumps technological possibilities and imperatives.

It is in this regard that one can affirmatively assert that the underlying hypothesis guiding this particular investigation - which has focused on whether or not a hegemonic potential exists within the realm of social networking - has been reinforced and ultimately proved to be accurate. However, with this being said, it is important to note that it is not the intention of this particular investigation to reject social networking services in their entirety, but rather, to highlight how it is that there exists an imperative need within the 21st century to critically evaluate the phenomena in question, in an attempt to gain a firm understanding of what the various ethical and moral dimensions of such a situation entail in order to ultimately address and rectify the various issues and concerns that have manifested themselves, thus allowing for social networking services to attain and actualise their liberating and emancipatory qualities. It is in this regard that Turkle (2011: 293) indicates that one needs to be aware of the fact that in order to address the various issues and concerns that have arisen within this particular investigation, society is not simply going to get rid of the Internet and the various social networking services appearing therein, we therefore have to find a way to live with "seductive technology" and "make it work for our purposes".

Thus, according to Turkle (2011: 295), in order to "move forward", we firstly need to "embrace the complexity of the situation" in order to ascertain what it is that "really matters" if modern society is to ever enter into a liberated and emancipated state of existence. A promising avenue of exploration regarding this particular outcome seems to reside in the field of "probing the ethical challenges" associated with these new technologies (Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 132). According to Bauman and Lyon (2013: 132), technological change happens "so rapidly" and with such "profound consequences" that older forms of regulation badly need updating and it is in this regard that they advocate what Marx (in Bauman & Lyon, 2013: 132) refers to as a "new" form of ethics, which deals explicitly with the realm of technological innovations within the 21st
century, in order to place a priority on the dignity of persons whilst also emphasizing the "avoidance of harms" which can be associated with each new technology that is introduced into society. Such an assertion is supported by Bauman (2007: 89) who indicates that "the fate of ethical awareness and morally motivated behaviour" within modern society - particularly with regard to the highly technologized dimension that it has assumed - "arouses numerous, serious and well justified concerns". It is therefore the contention of this particular investigation that further research be conducted within this particular area lest the true emancipatory qualities of these technological innovations be betrayed. It is in this regard that Jackson (2009: 204) indicates how one should inevitably strive to "humanize technology before it dehumanizes us", due to the fact that from Jackson's (2009: 186) perspective,

[w]hen we embrace the machine not as a tool but as part of us and as one of us, we begin to lose the inner will and outer means to connect with one another. We risk living in solitary glass cages, enchanted by shadows on the wall.

Such a statement then cogently highlights the importance and gravity which needs to be associated with the highly technologized situation in which society currently finds itself, along with what the potential implications of such a scenario entail for the denizen of the modern world - thus effectively illuminating the overriding need to both explore and address these issues in a critical and comprehensive manner, before it is too late.
Reference List


