

ABSTRACT

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Indonesian Idol singing competition has been one of the most popular television programs in Indonesia for more than ten years. Its existence in Indonesia is a phenomenon and it started the trend of talent show in Indonesian television. This research aims to learn how the audiences respond to Indonesian Idol talent show in television and the meaning of the responses as it represents audience attitude toward this program. This research applied Ien Ang's method of data collection in her work *Watching Dallas* (1985) to Universitas Airlangga Surabaya students and their parents as the respondents. On September 27, 2014 an announcement was posted in several social media to collect the data. 19 responses were collected and analyzed with the approach also used by Ien Ang, namely 'symptomatic reading' approach by Louis Althusser and coding to help classify the data. The result shows that most of the audience gave negative responses to Indonesian Idol. The analysis shows that high commercialization is the cause of audience resistance. From the result and analysis it is concluded that Indonesian Idol has become a product of culture industry where capitalism operates: the society become the passive audience and media owners and producers become ones who take control of the audiences.

Keywords: audience study, culture industry, Indonesian Idol, symptomatic reading