"Shaming the Devil!"
Performative Shame in Investigative TV-journalism

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Abstract

This paper considers the performativity of shaming in investigative TV-journalism. It argues that the construction of shame is not only a constituent element in investigative TV-journalism but also an important factor in pursuing some of its main objectives: establishing morals, exercising social control, reinforcing journalistic identity and ideology, and competing for attention in a diversified media theatre where drama, entertainment and emotional thrills are the hard currency. An empirical study of the Swedish TV programme *Uppdrag granskning*, is used to inductively propose three categories of shaming and to give some examples of the ways in which shaming is performed. The core of the paper is a theory driven analysis in which the performativity of shaming in investigative TV-journalism is analysed in the light of some converging media and societal trends.

Keywords: investigative journalism, shame, social control, morality, identity, performativity

Introduction

In an interview on national Swedish TV, a politician is outlining his professed views on immigration. His utterances are peppered with buzzwords like: solidarity, the UN charter of human rights, empathy, people in need, and so on. His smug smile gives the impression that he really cherishes this opportunity to give air to his idealism and sense of social responsibility. It is obvious that he believes this to be an opportunity to promote himself and his party. But, it is not. Instead it is an opportunity for the investigative journalist to expose a shocking discrepancy between the politician's public views and the views he expresses in private, his "true" opinions. His self-presentation as the politically correct champion of humanism is cross-cut with footage taken by a hidden camera. The murky racist slur coming out of his mouth in those pictures contrasts starkly with the poised sayings of the open interview. The hidden camera exposes him as a hypocrite and he is shamed on national television before hundreds of thousands of viewers, and potential voters. When the interviewing journalist confronts him with the hidden camera footage the smug smile is wiped off his face and replaced with blushing cheeks and nervous stammering; visible evidence of overwhelming shame[1].

This particular politician is not alone. The essence of investigative journalism is the exposure of wrongdoing at high societal levels and the subsequent calling to account; practices which inevitably result in the shaming of individuals, organizations, and authorities. Where there is investigative journalism, there is most likely some degree

of shame. The online Journalism College *Journalism Degree* introduces its courses of Investigative journalism by quoting Pulitzer Prize winner Walter Lippmann's statement: "There can be no higher law in journalism than to tell the truth and shame the devil" (Journalism Degree 2013). Paul Dacre, as editor of *The Daily Mail,* stated in a 2008 speech to The Society of Editors: "It [the press] has the freedom to identify those who have offended public standards of decency (…) and hold the transgressors up to public condemnation" (Dacre 2008) and indeed Fox News' titled a piece of investigative journalism: *Shame! Shame! Shame!* (Fox News 2013).

The present paper argues that shaming constitutes an integrated narrative element in investigative TV-journalism. It defines and contextualizes the concepts of shame and mediated shaming, gives examples of shaming in investigative TV-journalism and analyses the performativity of shame in connection with some of its objectives.

Methodology and Theoretical Perspectives

The study consists of two methodologically different steps. In the first step shame is shown to be a constituent element of investigative TV-journalism and the study's empirical material is used to give various examples of shaming, derived from a content analysis of 470 episodes of the weekly Swedish public service programme *Uppdrag granskning (Mission Investigate)*. A grounded theory approach is then used to inductively define three generic types of causes of shame: *Ineptitude, Callousness and Deviousness*. The purpose of this first step is mainly to establish and illustrate shame as a constituent element of one of the most important programmes of investigative TV-journalism in Sweden.

The second and major part of this study is a theory driven analysis of the performativity of shame. I use the analytical term performativity in a broad sense drawing on Judith Butler's use of the concept of performativity to show how actions, gestures and behaviour produce a series of effects that identify and consolidate identity and authority. She argues that identity is not merely expressed by those actions, but rather created, or constructed by them, albeit not on an individual, but rather at a discursive level within a larger social context. The focal point of this identity shaping is the repetitive authority of the actions in question, by repetition of authoritative actions individuals are performing identity, and in the process carving out spheres of authority and legitimacy which become a part of that particular identity (Butler 2011, Butler 1993: 2).

In this paper I apply Butler's principles to journalistic identity, authority and legitimacy. Actions identifying an investigative journalist as such are not legitimized by being an intrinsic part of journalism, but rather by the binding power of repeated action. Journalistic identity does not exist until it is performed, or made by repeated actions; actions which by their performativity are constantly negotiating and legitimizing the authority of journalism.

This paper also draws on a range of theoretical and micro analytical aspects of shame and shaming in the media which will be explained briefly as they are applied in the analysis.

Shame and Shaming as Concepts

Politics, Sociology, Psychology, Cultural Studies and Religion all have various ways of defining and analysing the concept of shame. Some features differ, but there are certain commonly accepted characteristics. Basically, shame is considered to be a social emotion. It is experienced when the self reaches awareness of being exposed to the regard of others with the reflective notion of their implicit or explicit judgment, and the sense that that judgment matters. The perceived judgment could either be directed at a violation of norms or inadequacy (Lewis 1992: 75, 117).

Sara Ahmad defines shame as "the affective costs of not following the scripts of normative existence" (Ahmad 2004: 107). Michael Lewis (1992) identifies a set of shame generating factors among which are: the breaking of societal norms, failure to meet standards, and inadequacy (Lewis 1992: 31-34); and he emphasises that shame is a result of a "focus on the self on the self's failure and an evaluation of that failure" (Lewis 1992: 33). However, the essential element of the shaming process is the exposure. Any of those shame inducing factors are not necessarily sufficient in themselves. They have to be exposed to some sort of third party or public eye perceived as pronouncing a moral judgment, to induce shame. And "shame is not produced by any specific situation but rather by the individual's interpretation of the situation" (Lewis 1992: 75).

Shame is defined as the interaction between contextualized behaviours and actions, and the imagined negative reactions and passed judgments of others to those actions and behaviours. Shame ensues even if the object initially does not perceive the actions as shameful, it is in essence their perception of either the external moral judgment, the notion of their actions judged as qualitatively poor achievement, or the negative social significance of the actions that generate shame (Tomkins 1995: 143, Lewis 1992: 30).

Shame could therefore be said to be an exposure of oneself through the eyes of others and, as such, it plays a primordial part in the construction of identity. The closer feelings of shame are to a person's core identity shaping values and the more the social context in which they are shamed means to that person, the deeper the impact (Madianou 2012: 5, 6). Experiences and manifestations of shame seem to be universal, but the particular actions or behaviours which are being considered shameful are dependent upon specific cultural values and therefore varies over time and could differ from one cultural sphere to another (Chilton 2012: 4).

The relationship between shame and its potential effects may vary considerably according to context. Even though shame is attributed a potential self-regulatory, reparative and reformative function, the emotion is not always translated into self-reflection, knowledge or reformation. Some sorts of shame have little to offer the shamed individual but a paralyzing trauma (Woodward 2000: 213, 228, 229, 233). Even though shame is a fundamentally individual emotion, shame could also be perceived as a collective failure to meet standards or to live up to ideals as a group, organization or even nation (Woodward 2000: 229). The perceived judgment could be in harmony with the subject's inner moral compass and the shame is thus experienced as an appropriate emotion producing self-reflection and possible transformation of behaviour (Madianou 2012: 5, Woodward 2000:214). However, if the judgment is perceived as unfair, the ensuing shame may rather result in anger, resentment and resistance and possibly even aggression (Chilton 2012: 5, 6).

The desire to hide or disappear, feelings of intense pain and discomfort, the feeling that one is no good, inadequate and unworthy, and finally the experience of being both the subject and the object of the shaming procedure, are reactions typical to feelings of shame (Lewis 1992: 34). Chilton (2012) identifies a universal set of visible physical reactions to being shamed: "blushing, lowering of the eyes, hiding the face and stooping shoulders" (Chilton 2012: 5).

Other than being a noun describing an emotion, shame is also a verb. "To shame" is the action of inducing shame, making someone feel shame, or trying to brand certain individual or collective actions or behaviour as shameful. The shaming is either connected to some sort of exposure of such actions or behaviours or both to identifying them as morally corrupt or deviant, a process in which the shamer takes the initiative, becoming the subject and making the shamed, for the most part, an involuntary object. In the process the one shaming is establishing a power position in relation to the one shamed, an action that, depending on circumstances, could entail joy, contentment and satisfaction (Katz 1999: 144, 157-160). Donald L. Nathanson labels shaming an affective "weapon system" (Nathanson 1987: 247) which reconfigures power relations, empowers the shamer and provokes sentiments of fear, vulnerability and powerlessness in the one shamed (Nathanson 1987: 252, 268).

Shame in the Media and Mediated Shaming

The concept of shame and exposure of shameful behaviour and attitudes occupy a prominent place in several types of contemporary media productions, including the press and broadcast television. Reality-TV presents characters who engage in, are struggling with, or take pride in, shameful behaviour; tabloids dig up, reveal and expand upon celebrity scandals; talk show hosts put their guests on the spot on live television; and investigative reporters expose and confront politicians and officials with incompetence, fraud and power abuse. Kathleen Woodward states: "People who have done something for which they should be ashamed are used by the various enterprises of mass culture" (Woodward 2000: 212).

Mediated shame disperses and anonymizes the witnesses of the shaming and renders their moral judgment implicit and unarticulated, a fact which makes it virtually impossible to interact directly with them to correct one's image. A mediated response equivalent to the shaming, if at all possible, would demand resources beyond most people's means and risks contributing more to the reproduction of the shaming than to a restitution of image. The credibility and public appeal of established media outlets like TV news or popular documentary programmes also add weight to the shaming and deepens its impact. Mediated shaming thus amplifies the sentiments of vulnerability and powerlessness connected with shame. Madianou states: "Watching oneself on the media is bound to be an emotional experience involving pride, affirmation, confidence, but also possibly, rejection, shame and anger. The inability to control one's representation can often be the source of much contestation and dissatisfaction" (Madianou 2012: 5, 6, 10).

Media Trends Involving Shaming

In reality TV-shows like *Judge Judy, Super Nanny, Biggest Loser and The Luxury Trap*, shame is a form of disciplinary device, instrumental in conveying lessons of social

responsibility by creating awareness of "faulty" behaviour. Authoritative experts scold participants for having eaten too much, lived beyond their means, been too lenient with their kids etc. In spite of an initial resentment and sometimes resistance to the shaming, it is almost always represented as having a positive outcome. Shaming generates remorse, regrets and a change of heart, and contributes to getting positive results; better management of personal income and expenditure, the loss of weight, more harmonious kids etc. Anna McCarthy (2007) shows how shaming thus plays a role in the Foucauldian concept of governmentality, a discourse of discipline administered through a broad repertoire of organized, and sometimes mediated, practices, mentalities, rationalities and techniques by which citizens are coerced to discipline themselves in the face of a shrinking public sector (McCarthy 2007: 18). Laurie Ouellette (2004) argues that this type of show educates "TV viewers to function without state assistance or supervision as self-disciplining, self-sufficient, responsible, and risk-averting individuals" (Ouellette 2004: 232).

This trend towards corrective and governmental use of shame in TV entertainment coincides with an increased acceptance of shaming in the media as correction and punishment in a legal context. Shaming criminals as part of penal justice has seen a renaissance since the 1990s as an expression of dissatisfaction with the existing penal codes. The notion that shame, guilt and remorse must be induced to activate conscience has become a centrepiece in the concept of restorative justice. This notion has revived shaming, both in its retributive and corrective form, as a deliberatively administered form of punishment, rather than "an unintentional by-product or outcome" (Kohm 2009: 190, 191). Pratt (2000) identifies the return of "productive shaming and debasing humiliation" as legal sanctions as well as an increase of shame based "expressive extra-legal sanctions" of various kinds administered by the media (Pratt 2000: 418, 419).

The growing numbers and expanding amplitude of mediated political scandals is another major trend where shame and shaming in a journalistic context play a key role. The modern media scandal traces its cultural, historical and religious roots to concepts of sin, shame, punishment and atonement (Allern & Pollack 2012: 11, Thompson 2000: 12).

The principal elements of a political scandal are directly linked to the process of shaming: media exposure of some moral deviation by a high profile official or politician, a public reaction of outrage to that transgression is published and a calling to account is issued, which may have detrimental effects upon the person's reputation and possibilities to keep holding office (Thompson 2000: 13, 14, Thompson 2005: 42, 43). Allern & Pollack (2012) also point out the societal function of the scandal. By means of the scandal journalists are not just exposing societal ills and identifying culprits but also satisfying demands for justice and atonement. The suggestion is that the news media is presently occupying the role formerly held by religious bodies when it comes to "evaluating sinful conduct, suggesting penance and considering forgiveness" (Allern & Pollack 2012: 19). Political scandals could be seen as a sign of the press fulfilling its role in a healthy democracy, but factors like demonization, media hunts, and sometimes, trivialization, puts the democratic intrinsic value of the mediated scandal into question (Allern & Pollack 2012: 10-12).

Thompson (2005) argues that the increase in political scandals is linked to the changes brought about by the development of communication media. Political leaders are more visible in person than ever before and the personalized political landscape gives trust-

worthiness, character and integrity a new status of political importance. This new visibility also means that practices that used to be carried out in private are is more often exposed as shameful by the media. Media coverage gives politicians a new kind of power, based on public image, but also renders them more vulnerable to shaming as modern channels of the media are diversified and decentralized to the point where maintenance of public image is beyond control. Thompson (2005) also points to how the 1960s and 1970s saw a development in journalist culture where disclosure of secrets, including those about private lives, fuelled distrust with politicians and became a naturalised journalistic *modus operandi*, thus setting the stage for the mediated scandal (Thompson 2005: 41, 44, 45).

Shame as Attraction and Cultural Commodity

The trends towards public shaming in various forms of media must also be understood in the context of attraction and commercial media logic. Shaming on television carries a market value. Kohm talks about shaming in the media as "a salable popular cultural commodity" (Kohm 2009: 189) and Woodward states: "the commercialization of shame – the retailing of the emotions – has penetrated all levels of mass culture"(Woodward 2000: 231, 232). The political scandal is giving news outlets a competitive edge, both financially and as symbolical capital, boosting the news producer's professional reputation. The exposure of a scandal is hard currency when journalistic awards are considered (Allern & Pollack 2012: 19).

Personalized shaming is an engaging narrative element contributing to dramatic nerve and viewer pleasure in several ways, thus carrying a market value in any media production. Ferguson (2010) shows how watching shame works as attraction by reuniting elements of voyeurism, guilty pleasure, self-reflection and binary identity formation. She uses the Freudian concept "unheimlich", or uncanny, to explain how the self by watching mediated shame contemplates its own position vis-à-vis normality. Watching someone being shamed is, at the same time, taboo, eerie, uncomfortable, and familiar. It creates the paradoxical and thrilling sensation of unsettling identification with (it could have been me), relief (but it's not, puh!), and yet repulsion (that is outrageous!). Ferguson makes the point that positioning oneself within this apparent contradiction is a prominent facet of a "process of mediatized psychosocial normalization" (Ferguson 2010: 93).

Viewing imagery of shame is a cultural performance distancing the viewer from the object. The process engenders both a sense of relief not to be at the receiving end of the shaming and a confirmation of a social position as "not one of them". It thus constitutes a symbolic ritual of self-affirmation and identity formation in binary opposition to the characters shamed. The public shaming involved in political scandals also satisfies a sense of justice. A distinction is made between the innocent and the guilty and a well-deserved punishment is executed (Allern & Pollack 2012: 11). Ferguson summarizes by stating that "narrative mobilizations of shame" turn TV shows into "texts in around which sadistic, masochistic and reparative pleasures can be played out" (Ferguson, 2010: 93, 96).

Shaming in Investigative Journalism

A Constituent Element

There are several elements making shame an inevitable feature of investigative TV-journalism. The reporting is essentially about establishing a certain morality and point out deviations from that morality, deviations indicating some sort of societal problem that should be disclosed in the public interest.

> Their stories call attention to the breakdown of social systems and the disorder within public institutions that cause injury and injustice; in turn, their stories implicitly demand the response of public officials – and the public itself – to that breakdown and disorder (Ettema and Glasser 1998: 3).

The disclosure of misconduct is not just general, but up close and personal. Journalists engage in building a convincing case of personal guilt and accountability, with the view of exposing wrongdoers and confronting them on camera (SVT, Uppdrag granskning 2011, Hanson 2009: 278, De Burgh 2008: 15).

Drawing from Lewis' categories of shame inducement I have used my empirical material to inductively identify three main categories of shaming:

1. Ineptitude: Mistakes and shortcomings, lack of skill and competence, faulty or non-existing routines and deficient or substandard equipment or methods.

2. Callousness: Unwillingness to help, procrastination of pressing matters, inhumane bureaucracy, negligence in dealing with responsibilities.

3. Deviousness: Lies, cover-ups, trickery, elusiveness, evasion of responsibility and the blaming of others.

Table 1 illustrates how the footage imputes shame in various ways to individuals or organizations by socially and culturally constructing the breaking of societal norms, failure to meet standards and inadequacy. The most common methods are testimony from victims or witnesses, exposure of wrongdoing during an interview and experts pinpointing blame. The examples below are not to be seen as analytical categories, but only as a sample of other empirically observed instances of shaming.

Performative Shaming

The shaming in investigative journalism could be analysed and understood by applying the concept of performativity to certain of its features and objectives.

First: investigative journalism depends on the establishment of a moral point of departure according to which the investigated conditions and actions are measured. The narrative strives to articulate and amplify the moral charge of that point of departure thus working towards emotional and moral consensus, or the establishment of a common moral ground. Shaming is instrumental in this process as it concretizes, objectifies and amplifies the moral transgression and in the process narratively validates the investigation. The more shame is generated, the greater the moral deviation appears and the weightier and the more important the investigation (Hanson 2009: 25-27, Hawkins 2001: 415, 416, Ehrat 2011: 229).

Table 1. *Examples of Shaming in Episodes of **Uppdrag granskning***

Shaming	Example
Those responsible are made to face the negative conditions they have created.	Local politicians in Malmö are escorted to unfit lodgings for immigrants and faced with the heinous living conditions for which they are responsible, and meet the people who suffer from them – UG 020507
The filming of individuals responsible who refuse to be interviewed or are in any other way trying to evade being held accountable.	A CEO responsible for negligence in face of reports of the danger of asbestos at his factory is filmed at a distance when standing on his balcony in Spain after the team has tried unsuccessfully to get an interview. During the footage the speaker relates his luxurious tastes. UG 010418
Introduction of footage from popular culture is used to amplify any of the shame generating factors.	A scene portraying ridiculous policemen failing to solve an obvious case in an episode of "Pippi Longstocking" illustrates police inadequacy in solving crime in their own facilities. UG 110831
Actions are compared with someone doing it better. **Actions are associated with something negative.**	Omissions to check potable water and to inform citizens are compared to how much better the Danish authorities handle similar situations. UG 021217 The immigration policy of the Social Democrats is shown to be similar to that of the former anti-immigration party Ny Demokrati (The New Democrats) UG 020219
Symbolic visual representations are used to amplify any of the shame generating factors.	To illustrate the Swedish Church's possession of stocks in the porn and the weapons industry, a cut from a porn movie is voiced over by the slogan from the Church's ad-campaign "Are you looking in the right place? The Swedish Church!" and a cut from a youth Church choir is cross-cut with footage of fired missiles and wounded children. UG 011127
Hidden Camera directly exposing wrongdoing	A head-master of a private school explains why he actively sifts out children he considers a social liability. UG 131030
Cross-cutting between what the person says officially or on camera, and the "truth" as revealed by hidden camera or by witnesses.	Politicians expressing their official stand on immigration are cross-cut with their racist slur before a hidden camera. UG 020910
The person's statements are cross-cut with other seemingly contradicting statements.	An interview with a representative of a pharmaceutical company is cross cut with a radio interview in which he contradicts himself. UG 011009
The camera lingers as the person desperately tries, but fails, to find evidence of what they have said is correct	A Social Worker desperately trying to find reference to an expert statement on which she has based a decision to take child custody from handicapped parents. UG 021210
The journalist uses a judgmental vocabulary.	A politician trying to explain the disastrous housing situation in Stockholm is interrupted with: "Bla, bla, bla – what you say is baloney, you are just talking – but you are doing nothing". UG 020319
The interview starts out in expert mode – but changes into an interview of accountability.	A politician is commenting on the shortcomings of a political rival – half way through she is confronted with her party's support of that politician on the very issue she is criticizing. UG 050308

Second: since the investigative journalist has ambitions, not only to depict political reality, but also to actively interfere and change this reality, there is an inherent element of social control present. The investigative journalist's mission is not only the reporting of societal misconduct, but also the improvement of society (Andén-Papadopoulos 2003: 124, Ettema and Glasser 1998: 186, Hanson 2009: 11, 298).

However, the shaming in investigative journalism rarely has the function described as a main feature of reality TV, where the shaming leads to a change of hearts and personal conversions. The shaming in investigative journalism is rather a "shaming of the devil" (Journalism Degree 2013), a shaming to point out, establish and expose moral corruption. The people shamed are rarely represented as repentant and reformed. Instead of being a narrative turning point, or peripeti, it is more of a denouement or narrative release focusing on "ripping off the veil" (Petersson 1996: 14 – author's translation), or laying bare the villainy of the villain in a decisive moment (Ehrat, 2011: 216). It still could be seen as an element of social control and a part of a "governmentality related culture of surveillance" (Ferguson 2010: 89). Where reality TV educates "TV viewers to function without state assistance or supervision as self-disciplining, self-sufficient, responsible, and risk-averting individuals" (Ouellette 2004: 232), investigative journalism teaches individuals in positions of influence and power that they are not beyond accountability, and that they cannot abuse their power arbitrarily without risking be put to shame. Shaming in TV journalism implies that misdeeds and omissions may be detected even at the top levels of society and that one has to count with the possibility of being exposed, which may be a realisation contributing to self-discipline and scrutiny. Ettema & Glasser point out that the prospect of finding oneself involuntarily appearing in a piece of investigative journalism "poses a challenge to officials and policy makers because they must concern themselves not only with an outraged public but with the image of an outraged public" (Ettema and Glasser 1998: 190).

It also teaches viewers that society has ways of dealing with misconduct at high levels. When investigative journalists are shaming the authorities and people in high places on a weekly basis they constitute a way in which society deals symbolically with one of its problems. A society exposing and discussing shortcomings is a society seemingly dealing with those shortcomings. The problems are not solved, corruption and injustice are not eradicated, but repeated exposure of misconduct and identification of culprits gives the impression that they are being dealt with. This is a way in which society makes peace with itself and a process that restores confidence in societal institutions affected by moral transgression (Allern & Pollack 2012: 19). John Ellis (1999) labels this process "working through". TV is "holding our hands" as we work through certain elements of our culture, reassuring us by repeated interventions that things are under control (Ellis 1999: 74).

This also ties in with John Fiske's (1994) thesis that heroic characters have a mythical function as mediator between the forces of order and the forces of disorder (Fiske 1994). Ragnhild Mølster (2007) characterizes the investigative journalist as an archetypal hero (Mølster 2007: 62, 63). When, at the end of each episode the investigative journalist succeeds in dealing with the villains, the hero demonstrates an imaginative way of coping with the conflict. The conflict has no permanent solution, but the hero's temporary success demonstrates that society has ways of living with, handling and coping with adverse conflicts and conditions, even if it is not permanently resolving them. Shaming

the Devil weekly on prime time television does neither reform 'the devilish elements of society' nor make them go away, but it assures us that 'evil' is somehow incessantly dealt with (Fiske 1994: 133).

Third: shaming contributes to the establishment of investigative journalism as a societal institution invested with the authority to deal with questions of justice and guilt, with the power to hear, prosecute and punish wrongdoers in the capacity of censor of other societal authorities and institutions. When taking the narrative form of a judicial process, episodes of investigative TV-journalism draw legitimacy and authority from culturally shared notions of justice, law and order. Episodes refer intertextually not only to news or documentaries depicting legal procedures, but also to the unfolding of police and court dramas as they are represented in popular culture. The judicial process narrative puts journalism in a legal frame, justifying actions and methods as part of a societal quest for justice (Ehrat 2011: 223, Fiske 1994: 8, 108).

The journalist's quest for justice is further tied to the profession by the predominant role often played by the journalists within their own narrative. Investigative TV-journalism is rarely about disclosing some misconduct, handing it over to some sort of authority and then reporting about the development. Many episodes feature a meta-story on the theme: the story of the journalist's quest for justice. Sometimes journalists even "change their footing from the narrator of the story to an actor within the evolving plot. (…) They frame actions as transgressions and sometimes exercise professional practices in order to generate transgressions" (Kampf 2011: 83).

The public shaming in this semi-legal context is a performative act in a double sense. First, it constitutes the establishment of authority over the shamed individual or organization, indicating that "the levels of dominance have been redefined" (Nathanson 1987: 252) and that the shamed are facing an authority before which they are vulnerable and contextually subordinate, regardless of position (Madianou 2012: 5). The repetitive shaming naturalizes this authority and performs in the process journalistic identity by creating a specific conception of professional power and mapping out boundaries of jurisdiction and legitimacy (Ferguson 2010: 92, Johansson 2006: 41, , Thompson 2005: 45, Woodward 2000: 235, Altheide 1992).

The institutionalized and recurring public shaming also performs a symbolical request for "the right to punish". Throughout history, shame in various forms has been used as legal punishment. In his *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault argues that an important manifestation of power in early modern Europe was public shaming as punishment, which by repeated action naturalized and publicly declared the sovereign's right to punish, and gave an opportunity for the public to approve of that right by their presence (Foucault 1977/1995: 48-50).

Repeated mediated shaming could be seen as a form of performativity through which investigative journalism manifests itself as an extra-legal institution with the right, not only to investigate and interrogate, but also to sanction (Ehrat 2011: 216, 230). David Altheide claims journalists have moved from just being "chroniclers of disorder" to becoming "instruments of repair" referring to "the direct participation of journalists and news organizations in the process of control and punishment" (Altheide 1992: 70).

However, an excess of shaming has a risk of backfiring turning the audience against the one shaming, and generating a reaction of contestation when the allegations are perceived as unfair, exaggerated or trivial (Presdee 2000, Nathanson 1987: 267). Kohm

(2009) states: "there are cultural limits to the kinds of humiliation audiences (…) are willing to consume" (Kohm 2009: 199) and Allern & Pollack (2012) comment that media scandals are sometimes based on "transgressions that from a political point of view are quite trivial" (Allern & Pollack 2012: 10).

Fourth: investigative TV-journalism operates within a market-driven media reality where viewer pleasure is a prerequisite for success. The production cannot just be in the public interest, but it also has to be of public interest (Petley 2013: 30, 31). One effect of this is that the ambition to investigate, and expose societal ills, is combined with aspirations of dramatic and captivating story-telling (Hanson 2009: 256, 257, Ekström, 2000: 477) "within the framework of an ideology of entertainment" (Johansson 2006: 36 – author's translation). Mats Ekström (2000) states that one way in which "TV journalism tries to be valid in the eyes of its viewers" (Ekström 2000: 468) is through a communication mode of attraction where audience involvement is accomplished through the "lust to gaze, the allure of pictures that make a strong impression, seeing something out of the ordinary, something spectacular, suppressed and/or forbidden", all of which have associations with shaming (Ekström 2000: 479) - see also the heading *Shame as Attraction and Cultural Commodity* above).

Watching shamed individuals in high positions plays a part in the process of identity formation. It strengthens the mythical concept of "us and them" serving as a marker of a social position as law-abiding, just and decent citizens, as opposed to corrupt politicians, officials, chief executives, etc. Shaming as a mediated ritual of exclusion and punishment offers a way to channel frustration with, and contempt of, corrupt officials and other shady elements occupying high positions in society. It also forms emotional attachments to the symbolical group of co-citizens who feel the same (Kohm 2009: 189, 197).

There is also a carnivalesque element to watching the shaming of the powerful and influential. Presdee (2000) links watching the shaming of "the other" to Bakhtins theories of the carnival where "the emerging of shame as an entertainment commodity is part of a civilizing process where an appeal for constraints on social behavior is served as entertainment" (Presdee 2000: 85). Bengt Johansson (2006) explains, that under the influence of the theory of the social responsibility of the press investigative journalism was given the mission to act as a substitute or representative of the public (Johansson 2006: 40). Journalists are thus acting on behalf of lowly citizens when shaming the privileged in society. "We" are for once shaming and punishing "them", instead of the opposite. The shaming offers a temporary liberation from the established order and constitutes the carnival's seeming suspension of hierarchal rank and privileges (Dentith 1995: 66, 72). The higher classes and officials are shamed, and the differences between them and us are minimised as their vulnerability and presumed guilt is played out before our eyes. Our mediated witnessing of "them", being shamed by our representative, reconfigures power structures, however momentarily (Petersson 1996: 14, Fiske 1994: 241).

Shaming consequently plays a part in resolving the tension between the journalist's dual roles of dramatist and story-teller, and serious social chronicler and critic (Johansson 2006: 36, Ekström 2000). Recurring dramatic revelations of societal importance concerning influential people is one element that eases the friction between those roles, confirming and reinforcing the investigative journalist's value, both as producer of drama, and as an upholder of the media outlet's record of serious social reporting. Thus, the investigative journalist contributes not only to the competitive edge in the

market, but also to the social and professional capital obtained by the shouldering of social responsibilities and the fulfilment of the democratic watch-dog mission: all in one performative act of shaming (Allern & Pollack 2012: 19).

Summary

Investigative journalism relies partly on shaming as performativity when combining discourses of journalism's democratic mission, the policing of moral boundaries, the calling of account, and the production of drama;. Forming a constituent element in this type of journalism shaming performs: (1) a validation of moral claims and an amplification of alleged moral deviations, (2) a deterrent effect upon officials conscious of the reach and impact of media attention, (3) a reinforcement of journalistic ideology and identity, placing journalism in a position of power with naturalized rights to censor, expose and sanction, and legitimizing various methods used in exercising that right (4) viewer pleasure, in the form of voyeurism, guilty pleasure, uncanny self-reflection, binary identity shaping, narrative resolution and a carnivalesque touch.

Note

1. *Uppdrag granskning*, SVT 1 – broadcast on September 9, 2002.

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