Cultures of Shame in Britain, c. 1650-1800

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To my wife and parents,
and in memory of my Grandmother
Zeng, Shuduan (1928-2010)

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Acknowledgements

Four years ago, when I first stepped onto the land of Britain, I thought I had fully prepared myself for the challenges and difficulties ahead of me. Looking back now, I realised how wrong I was! They were of a magnitude far greater than I had imagined. As a non-English speaker studying British history, for four years I was not only researching, but also learning – learning how to write and speak correct and authentic English; learning British history that I barely knew; learning the idiosyncracies of a new environment. Sometimes I felt it was a race against time; the hours in the day never seemed enough – when my British friend can read a book or write up an article in two day, I need a week or even longer. The challenge propelled me to devote more than ten times the effort to achieve the same effectiveness as other fellow students. Sometimes I cannot help but feel – suitably enough, given the subject of this thesis – shame and frustration at the thought of my incompetence and the unprecedented challenge I had to overcome. I would like to take this opportunity to emphasise not only the struggle I had, but also the selfless, sustaining guidance, energy and encouragement that my supervisor, my family and friends have offered me. That is what enabled me to surmount the difficulties and finish my thesis. I am extremely proud of this – my first English written dissertation. Indeed, without their help the work would not have been possible.

Foremost, I am most grateful to my supervisor, mentor and friend Professor Mark Knights. I thank him for offering me, countless times, rich and insightful advice; I thank him for his incredible patience and forgiving tolerance of my ignorance and confusion. He understands my plight, and offered me unending support both academically and emotionally. Mark would never be fazed by the work I submitted but would always

Declaration

The thesis is entirely my own work. It has not been published prior to the date of

submission, or submitted for a degree at Warwick or any other university.

Abstract

This thesis examines the cultures of shame in the latter half of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Britain. It offers a critical response to two oversimplified accounts of shame in the current non-historical literature: the traditional view, which identifies shame as a socially-constructed and morally-problematic emotion, and the recent revisionist view, which claims that shame is virtuous and entirely autonomous. By identifying shame as an emotion, a sense of honour, a moral sanction, a commodity, and a disciplinary weapon, and scrutinising it through the lens of religion, politeness, print, and law, this thesis explores how contemporaries experienced, interpreted, represented, and utilised shame for spiritual, moral, commercial, and judicial purposes over time. It demonstrates that shame, within different historical contexts, could be social as well as personal, morally virtuous as well as morally irrelevant or even bad. Shame was an essential religious emotion. Religious shame was a self-imposed and morally-virtuous emotion; it was desired and embraced by early modern Protestants, who saw it as a sign of piety and a means to come nearer to God. While religious shame was an emotion primarily concerning personal salvation, shame in a secular context was a socially-constructed concept dealing with a person's public honour. Early modern people regarded shame as something of great moral and disciplinary value, which functioned as an inward restraint keeping people away from sin, and a form of community and judicial punishments. However, the moral and disciplinary characteristics of shame were not immutable; in the eighteenth century, shame faced the danger of being abused and reduced to a superficial and detrimental concept.

List of Illustrations

Conventions

The original spellings, capitalisation, punctuation and italics of quotations taken from the primary sources have generally been retained in this thesis.

Chapter One

Introduction

Over the past six decades or so, shame has emerged as an important subject of discussion among psychologists, anthropologists, philosophers, and sociologists. Their exploration is centred on the nature of the emotion of shame, the legitimacy of shaming practices, and the moral, psychological, cultural, and social implications of shame. Scholars generally regard shame as a social emotion which occurs as a consequence of other people's judgment.[1] The stress placed on externally generated judgement and the potential harmful psychological and behavioural implications of shame, such as anger, depression, revenge and suicide, leads scholars to argue that shame is not only a morally superficial, but also a morally 'ugly' emotion that people would be better off without.[2] The pessimistic view of shame can also be found in criticisms of using shame as a disciplinary weapon in the judicial system. Many scholars argue that shaming punishments should be banned in modern liberal society because they involve forms of public humiliation and stigmatisation, which would degrade human dignity and risk the danger of mob justice.[3] However, this completely negative explanation of shame is not

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[1] See for example, June Price Tangney and Rhonda L. Dearing, *Shame and Guilt* (New York, 2002); Richard Wollheim, *On The Emotions* (New Haven, 1999); June Price Tangney and K. W. Fische (eds), *Self-Conscious Emotions: Shame, Guilt, Embarrassment and Pride* (New York, 1995); Bernard Williams, *Shame and Necessity* (Berkeley, 1993); Helen Block Lewis, *Shame and Guilt in Neurosis* (New York, 1971). Essays and books listed here and after are not exhaustive. The first section of this chapter will offer a detailed examination of current scholarship on shame.

[2] See for example, Tangney, 'Moral Affect: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 64 (1991), pp. 598-607; Tangney and et al, 'Relation of Shame and Guilt to Constructive versus Destructive Responses to Anger across the Lifespan', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 70 (1996), pp. 797-809; Andrew P. Morrison, *The Culture of Shame* (New York, 1996).

[3] See for example, Martha C. Nussbaum, *Hiding from Humanity: Disgust, Shame, and the Law*

without opponents. Recent years have witnessed a growing number of works which aim to defend the moral nature of shame.[4] In particular, the authors of *In Defense of Shame: The Faces of an Emotion* (2011) highlight the morally virtuous characteristic of shame, and argued that shame is essentially an autonomous emotion immune to social opinion and values.[5]

   In contrast to the substantial studies of shame undertaken by psychologists, philosophers, and anthropologists, it is surprising that the meanings and cultures of shame in early modern Britain have received little focused attention from historians. And hitherto little early modern historical evidence has been used to probe any of the argument made by the non-historical. The historical explorations thus far undertaken by medievalists are confined predominantly to the themes of chivalry, Christianity, and the female body.[6] The study of early modern shame is even more limited in scope. Besides Gail Kern Paster's 1993 examination of the connection between the early modern concept of shame and representations of the body in contemporary drama in the light of humoral medical theory,[7] the majority of works – including David Nash and Anne-Marie Kilday's excellent and timely monograph *Cultures of Shame* (2010), a

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(Princeton, 2004); James Q. Whitman, 'What is Wrong with Inflicting Shame Sanctions?', *The Yale Law Review*, vol. 107 (1998), pp. 1055-92.

[4] See for example, Daniel James Turnbull, 'Shame: In Defence of an Essential Moral Emotion' (PhD thesis, Birkbeck, University of London, 2012); Krista Karbowski Thomason, 'Rethinking Shame' (PhD thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2009); John Sabini and Maury Silver, 'In Defense of Shame: Shame in the Context of Guilt and Embarrassment', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, vol. 27 (1997), pp. 1-15.

[5] Julien Deonna, Raffaele Rodogno, and Fabrice Teroni, *In Defense of Shame: The Faces of an Emotion* (Oxford, 2011).

[6] Mary C. Flannery, 'The Concept of Shame in Late-Medieval English Literature', *Literature Compass*, vol. 9 (2012), pp. 166-82.

[7] Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (New York, 1993).

book which represents the first and perhaps the only substantial study of shame in early modern Britain[8] – tends to treat shame as a social practice and penal weapon, and discusses it in legal and judicial contexts.[9]

As a basic human emotion, social practice, and cultural phenomenon which were familiar to early modern people and society, shame is certainly a subject worthy of its own history. This thesis aims to broaden the current historical research field of shame, and investigate the meanings and cultures of shame within a variety of contexts over a broad period between 1650 and 1800. More importantly, this thesis offers a critical response to the modern scholarship on shame, arguing that its static, all-or-nothing mode of explanation – which defines shame as completely socially constructed and morally bad, or as entirely private and morally virtuous – has over-simplified the potentially complex and dynamic concept of shame. In this introductory chapter, I first offer a brief overview of the major non-historical works on shame during the past decades and, in particular, highlight the two opposite modern discourses of shame. In the second section, I examine the historiography on shame thus far undertaken by medievalists and early modernists. The final section sets out the research fields and scope, chapter outline, and the source material that will be used in this thesis.

The Modern Scholarship on Shame

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[8] David Nash and Anne-Marie Kilday, *Cultures of Shame: Exploring Crime and Morality in Britain, 1600-1900* (Basingstoke and New York, 2010).
[9] Another important and recently published study of the concept of shame in the criminal context is Judith Rowbotham, Marianna Muravyeva, and David Nash (eds), *Shame, Blame, and Culpability: Crime and Violence in the Modern State* (Oxford and New York, 2013). Other works which discuss shame in the criminal and judicial contexts will be examined in the latter part of this chapter.

What is shame? Historians have seldom attempted to conceptualise it, but shame and its related human emotions and concepts have been the subjects of frequent discussion among scholars from a wide range of disciplines for decades. Many works have sought to explore the nature of shame and its implications for the psychological and moral states of individuals, and also the cultural identities of different societies. Given the complexity of the concept, and in order to show the gap in the existing scholarship on shame, it will be instructive to provide a brief overview of non-historical works, prior to reviewing shame within existing social, cultural and criminal history contexts.

The traditional scholarship on shame in the modern context identifies shame as a social emotion which requires others' judgement in order to occur. In her famous monograph *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946), the American anthropologist Ruth Benedict argues that shame occurs when a wrongdoer is disapproved of, or fears for being disapproved of, by others. Here the presence of an audience and the externally generated judgement are crucial for evoking shame. Regarding shame as 'a reaction to other people's criticism', Benedict identifies Japan as a shame culture and America as a guilt culture since 'true shame cultures… reply on external sanctions for good behaviour, not, as true guilt cultures do, on an internalised conviction of sin.'[10] For

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[10] Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (Boston, 1946), pp. 222-3. However, Benedict has been criticised for her assertion that the Japanese shame culture relies on external sanctions of control, while Western guilt culture relies on internal sanctions of control. Opponents argue that internal/external criteria should not be used to distinguish guilt from shame because in traditional Japanese thought, shame comes from the internal consciousness of ethics, nurtured through custom and etiquette, and people's notion of shame is the result of self-control rather than external discipline. Another criticism is that Benedict violates cultural relativism. Nevertheless, Benedict's work is enlightened in that it sees shame as a group-oriented and social emotion, and defines shame and guilt in terms of multi-cultural backgrounds. See Millie R. Creighton, 'Revisiting Shame and Guilt Cultures: A Forty-Year Pilgrimage', *Ethos*, Vol. 18 (1990), pp. 279-307.

Benedict, shame is thus not only a psychological activity but also a powerful means of individual and social control; as an emotion, shame involves how a person feels others think of him or her, and is therefore socially constructed and externally imposed.

Benedict's research has played a significant role in popularising the social construction of shame. In 1953, Gerhart Piers and Milton Singer scrutinised shame and guilt in psychoanalytic and cultural contexts, and argued that there exists a causal relationship between social exclusion and the emotion of shame:

> Behind the feeling of shame stands not the fear of hatred, but the fear of contempt which, on an even deeper level of the unconscious, spells fear of abandonment… Accordingly, on a higher, social and more conscious level of individual development, it is again not fear of active punishment by superiors which is implied in shame anxiety, but social expulsion, like ostracism.[11]

In his prominent book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), the American sociologist Erving Goffman also emphasised the close connection between shame and social bonds. He argued that shame is felt because people fail to preserve or boost their public image and esteem within social interactions.[12] Psychologist Paul Gilbert similarly regards shame as an emotion associated with a loss of social attractiveness; as he writes, shame is 'part of the affective consequences that accompany detrimental changes in social status and belongs to a rich group of affects and experiences that pertain to losses of social standing, being demeaned or diminished'.[13] Frederic

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[11] Gerhart Piers and Milton Singer, *Shame and Guilt: A Psychoanalytic and a Cultural Study* (Toronto, 1972), p. 29.

[12] See Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (London, 1959), and his *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (Harmondsworth, 1963).

[13] Paul Gilbert, 'The Evolution of Social Attractiveness and Its Role in Shame, Humiliation, Guilt

Gibbons also claims that 'violations of social norms or transgressions of normative expectations produce feelings of embarrassment or shame for a person who is in the presence of others'.[14] In 2002, an empirical analysis carried out by June Tangney and Rhonda Dearing suggested that shame is 'most often experienced in the presence of others'.[15] It is explicit that in these accounts shame is explained within the context of social relationship between the self and others, and is defined as a socially constructed emotion, dependent on public exposure or social disapproval.

The social nature of shame leads many psychologists and philosophers to hold a negative attitude toward the emotion of shame. They argue that shame is a superficial emotion without moral depth because its utter reliance on external value not only excludes the important role of autonomous moral agency in assessing and disciplining the self, but makes people merely care about their appearance or dress and how others look upon them rather than true moral virtue or learning. Besides, critics of shame compare it with guilt, and argue that shame is not only a painful but also inferior and morally bad emotion. According to psychologists Helen Block Lewis and Tangney, for example, guilt is a negative evaluation of a specific misbehaviour according to a person's own moral value; a man obsessed with guilt always feels sorry for what he has done, and seeks to apologise and compensate. But in a state of shame, they argue, the individual feels pain not only because of the transgression he or she has made, but also because of a realisation that he/she is a bad person. Thus, while guilt promotes self-

and Therapy', *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, vol. 70 (1997), p. 113.

[14] Frederic X. Gibbons, 'The Evolution and Manifestation of Social Anxiety', in W. Ray Crozier (ed.), *Shyness and Embarrassment: Perspectives from Social Psychology* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 119.

[15] Tangney and Dearing, *Shame and Guilt*, p. 14.

reformation and empathy, shame is associated with feelings of shrinking or being small, which lead one to hide and escape.[16] As Stephen Garvey writes:

> The shamed self is thus either passive and helpless, or enraged. In contrast, guilt prompts the self to try to make amends for the wrong doing. Because guilt preserves some distance between the self and its wrongful act, it enables the self to become active and engaged in an effort to repair the damage the offence has caused. Shame supplies one such motive to repair.[17]

What makes the emotion of shame even more notorious and 'morally ugly' in the eyes of its critics is that shame (and fear of shame) potentially leads to a variety of immoral or destructive emotional and behavioural responses, such as depression, anxiety, flattery, anger, hatred, revenge, and even suicide. As Paul Gilbert writes:

> Shaming people can lead to various unhelpful defensive emotions, such as anger or debilitating anxiety, concealment or destructive conformity. Moreover, in a shame system, people can behave very immorally in order to court favour with their superiors and avoid being rejected for not complying with requests or orders. Prestige seeking and shame avoidance can lead to some very destructive behaviour indeed.[18]

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[16] June Price Tangney and et al, 'Moral Emotions and Moral Behavior', *Annual Review of Psychology*, vol. 58 (2007), pp. 345-72; Jessica L. Tracy and Richard W. Robins, 'Putting the Self into Self-Conscious Emotions: A Theoretical Model', *Psychological Inquiry*, vol. 15 (2004), pp. 103-25; June Price Tangney, 'Self-Relevant Emotions', in Mark R. Leary and June Price Tangney (eds), *Handbook of Self and Identity* (New York, 2003), pp. 384-400; Tangney and Dearing, *Shame and Guilt*, chapter 2; Lewis, *Shame and Guilt in Neurosis*.

[17] Stephen P. Garvey, 'Can Shaming Punishments Educate?', *Cornell Law Faculty Publications*, vol. 7 (1998), p. 766, cited in Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, p. 6.

[18] Paul Gilbert, 'Evolution, Social Roles, and the Differences in Shame and Guilt', *Social Research*, vol. 70 (2003), p. 1225. Also see Tangney and et al, 'Shamed into Anger? The Relation of Shame and Guilt to Anger and self-reported Aggression', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 62 (1992), pp. 669–75; Tangney, 'Moral Affect: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly', pp. 598-607.

The negative attitudes toward shame are apparent in the criticisms of shaming punishments. The American criminologist James Whitman writes that 'the chief evil in public humiliation sanctions is that they involve an ugly, and politically dangerous, complicity between the state and the crowd'.[19] Martha Nussbaum, in her book *Hiding from Humanity: Disgust, Shame and the Law* (2004), argues that 'shame is likely to be normatively unreliable in public life' and that 'a liberal society has particular reasons to inhibit shame and to protect its citizens from shaming'.[20] Like Whitman, Nussbaum claims that shame has demonstrated itself not only 'an unreliable way to punish, but one that is intrinsically problematic, for invites the mob to tyrannize over whoever they happen not to like'.[21]

Not all theorists regard shame as a socially-constructed and morally-problematic emotion, of course. Some scholars maintain that the presence of an audience is an important but by no means a necessary reason for feeing shame because shame can always take place when the individual accepts the fact that he or she has done something wrong according to the own ethical values, even if that wrongdoing is kept in secret. Thus Rom Harré argues that 'in shame, I accept the presence of the Other and the restrictions that are imposed';[22] or, as Nathan Harris says, 'acceptance of having done wrong is just as essential as exposure, with non-acceptance leading to different emotions.'[23] Similarly, moral philosopher Bernard Williams argues that it is wrong to

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[19] Whitman, 'What is Wrong with Inflicting Shame Sanctions?', p. 1059.
[20] Nussbaum, *Hiding from Humanity*, p. 15.
[21] *Ibid*., p. 235.
[22] Rom Harré, 'Embarrassment: A Conceptual Analysis', in W. Ray Crozier (ed.), *Shyness and Embarrassment: Perspectives from Social Psychology* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 203.
[23] Eliza Ahmed, Nathan Harris, John Braithwaite and Valerie Braithwaite (eds), *Shame Management through Reintegration* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 82.

see shame as simply a consequence of public exposure: 'if everything depended on the fear of discovery, the motivations of shame would not be internalized at all.'[24]

A few scholars defend the moral and disciplinary value of shame. Psychologists John Sabini and Maury Silver, for example, argue against Tangney for identifying guilt as a positive emotion and shame as a destructive one, pointing out that 'guilt and shame in people's experience can not be so easily segregated and that, if there was a shameless guilt, it would be anemic and unable to fulfil any important social or moral function'. Therefore, they claim that 'without the bite of shame, guilt lacks force'.[25] In his recent research on the emotion of shame, Daniel Turnbull likewise argues:

> Shame can spur us to go beyond the minimum requirements to perform supererogatory actions, by making us reflect on the type of person we want to be. Shame can also help us recognise wrongs done in our name by groups of which we are members, leading us to demand that restitution is made and say 'never again'.[26]

Supporters of shaming punishments argue that the desire to banish shame altogether from modern judicial system is neither realistic nor feasible, and that certain degrees of shame are an inextricable part of any satisfactory punishment regime.[27] While some scholars debate as to whether a modern judicial system should employ shaming punishments, others focus on how to appropriately use shame as a disciplinary weapon

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[24] Bernard Williams, *Shame and Necessity* (Berkeley, 1993), p. 81.
[25] Sabini and Silver, 'In Defense of Shame', p. 6, 12.
[26] Turnbull, 'Shame: In Defence of an Essential Moral Emotion', conclusion.
[27] Richard J. Arneson, 'Shame, Stigma, and Disgust in the Decent Society', *The Journal of Ethics*, vol. 11 (2007), pp. 31-63; Henry S. Richardson, 'Rawlsian Social-Contract Theory and the Severely Disabled', *The Journal of Ethics*, vol. 10 (2006), pp. 419-62; John Deigh, 'The Political of Disgust and Shame', *The Journal of Ethics*, vol. 10 (2006), pp. 383-418.

without resulting negative effect. John Braithwaite distinguishes the stigmatising use of shame and what he terms 'reintegrative shaming', arguing that reintegrative shaming sanctions would be a desirable means to punish misdemeanours because shaming the particular act instead of the person 'communicates the disapproval of an act with respect, and uses rituals to terminate disapproval with forgiveness, whilst encouraging the offender back to the community'.[28]

One of the most recent and powerful critical response to the traditional negative explanation of shame comes from Julien Deonna, Raffaele Rodogno, and Fabrice Teroni's *In Defense of Shame: The Faces of an Emotion* (2011). The authors regard the long-accepted view that shame is essentially a social and morally ugly emotion as 'dogmas'. They argue that shame is not a socially-constructed or externally-imposed emotion since it doesn't require a real or imagined audience in order to occur. People feel shame simply because they fail to meet the goal or norm of their own. In this sense, the emotion of shame is entirely autonomous, immune to social opinion or value. In addition, although shame may sometimes involve negative behavioural and psychological effects, it is nevertheless an emotion with great moral values which serve to promote virtuous behaviour and social integration, and to guard and foster personal values.[29]

Through this overview of the non-historical scholarship on shame, what becomes striking is that the modern definitions and evaluations of shame differ drastically. The

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[28] Braithwaite and et al (eds), *Shame Management Through Reintegration* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 39; also see John Braithwaite, *Crime, Shame and Reintegration* (Cambridge, 1989).
[29] Deonna, Rodogno, and Teroni, *In Defense of Shame,* esp. chapter 3 and 4.

traditional thinking on shame is negative. The majority of anthropologists, philosophers, and psychologists hold that shame is essentially a social emotion, which utterly relies on the presence of an audience and externally generated judgement. The heteronomous nature of shame leads shame to suffer a bad reputation. Modern scholars generally regard shame as a self-destructive and morally-ugly emotion that people should try to get rid of. This negative view on shame is not without criticism, especially in recent years, as Julien Deonna and his colleagues' volume *In Defense of Shame* indicates. They contend that shame is a positive emotion of great moral values. They also refute the traditional explanation of shame as a social emotion; however, they go from one extreme to the other, arguing that shame is completely autonomous and immune to any social opinion. Leaving aside the question of which discourse has better captured the nature of shame, the substantial divergence of views not only indicates the complexity of the concept of shame, but implies that, as I shall argue, any sweeping or all-or-nothing mode of explanation would be problematic.

The Historiography of Shame

Substantial studies of shame thus far undertaken by historians are limited in scope and amount. Inspired by the work of cultural anthropologists and in particular Ruth Benedict, some classicists and medievalists have tried to explore whether the ancient period and the Middle Ages of western society were a shame or a guilt culture, and how shame was represented in classic, chivalric, and courtly literature.[30] In Eric R. Dodds's

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[30] I am indebted to Ellen Wehner Eaton and Mary Flannery in this and the next paragraphs. See Ellen Wehner Eaton, 'Shame Culture or Guilt Culture: the Evidence of the Medieval French

The Greeks and the Irrational (1968) and Arthur W. H. Adkins's Moral *Values and*

Political Behaviour in Ancient Greece from Homer to the End of the Fifth Century

(1972), both authors identify the Homeric poems as the product of a shame culture,

because 'fame' or honour, a concept which they believe to be closely associated with a

sense of shame, played an important role in regulating behaviour and rewarding

heroism in ancient Greek society.[31] Similarly, Bernard Williams suggests that ancient

Greece belonged to a shame culture, but he points out that this shame culture was mixed

by guilt since Greek epic highlighted the issues such as personal moral value and

responsibility.[32]

Medieval chivalric culture and literature have been recognised as a fertile area for

the study of shame. The codes of shame and honour played a central role in establishing

chevaliers' identity and motivating their actions. The proverb that it is 'better to die

with honour than live with shame' had long been one of the most important motifs of

medieval chivalric and courtly literature; as Mary Flannery remarks, 'the word 'shame'

appears approximately two hundred times in Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur*.'[33]

Medievalists interested in the study of shame have explored literature such as the *Song*

of Roland and the legends relating to King Arthur, his Knights of the Round Table such

as, and especially, Sir Gawain. They argue that these texts were produced in the spirit

of a shame culture because of their preoccupation with, and praise for, Roland, Arthur

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Fabliaux' (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 2000), chapter 1; Flannery, 'The Concept of Shame in Late-Medieval English Literature', pp. 166-82.

[31] Eric R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkley and Los Angeles, 1968); Arthur W. H. Adkins, *Moral Values and Political Behaviour in Ancient Greece from Homer to the End of the Fifth Century* (London, 1972).

[32] Williams, *Shame and Necessity*, Chapter 3.

[33] Flannery, 'The Concept of Shame in Late-Medieval English Literature', p. 168.

and his Knights' virtuous characters – honesty, braveness, loyalty, and the love of honour.[34] Some historians focus on the questions of whether and when the west European society transferred from a shame culture to a guilt one. While they generally agree that this transition took place during the Middle Ages, they don't reach a consensus on exactly when and why it occurred. Some attribute the shift to 'the rise of interiority' and the growing importance of self-knowledge under the impact of the Renaissance; others attribute the rise of guilt culture to the elevation of Christianity in regulating individuals and society during the Protestant Reformation.[35]

However, historians such as Ewan Fernie reject the over-simple division between so-called 'shame cultures' and 'guilt cultures'. In his *Shame in Shakespeare* (2002), Fernie demonstrates the close link between shame and interiority, and opposes the traditional explanation of shame as a consequence of an external sanction and guilt as an inward conviction, claiming that 'less shame is found in cultures with a debased view of the self; it is societies where individual integrity and dignity is prized most highly that corruption and disgrace are most lamented'.[36] Other historians, such as Stephanie Trigg, by investigating medieval shame in the context of courtly rituals, demonstrate that 'there is a substantial degree of continuity' in shame cultures in

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[34] J. A. Burrow, *Essay on Medieval Literature* (Oxford, 1984), especially pp. 117-31; Robert L. Kindrick, 'Gawain's Ethics: Shame and Guilt in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight', *Annuale Mediaevale*, vol. 20 (1981), pp. 5-32; Loretta Wasserman, 'Honor and Shame in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', in Larry D. Benson and John Leyerle (eds), *Chivalric Literature: Essays on Relations Between Literature and Life in the Later Middle Ages* (Kalamazoo, 1980), pp. 77-90; Mark Lambert, *Malory: Style and Vision in 'Morte d'Arthur'* (New Heaven, 1975), pp. 176-94; Eugene Vance, *Reading the Song of Roland* (New Jersey, 1971), pp. 36-8.

[35] Eaton, 'Shame Culture or Guilt Culture', chapter 1; Jean Delumeau, *Sin and Fear: The Emergence of a Western Guilt Culture, 13th-18th Centuries*, trans. Eric Nicholson (New York, 1990); R. Howard Bloch, 'Tristan, the Myth of the State and the Language of the Self', *Yale French Studies*, vol. 51 (1974), pp. 61-81; Vance, *Reading the Song of Roland*, pp. 36-8.

[36] Ewan Fernie, *Shame in Shakespeare* (London, 2002), p. 24.

England from the mid-fourteenth century advent of the motto of the Order of the Garter through to the early modern period.[37]

Besides studying shame in chivalric and courtly literature, medievalists explore shame in a religious context. In her *Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subjects* (2008), Virginia Burrus refutes the conventional view that Christianity had led to a conversion of western culture from a shame one to a guilt one, arguing that 'Christianity innovates less by replacing shame with guilt than by embracing shame shamelessly'.[38] Burrus's argument is particularly illuminating for my research. It is intriguing to ask whether eighteenth-century British Christians embraced feelings of shame along with their early medieval ancestors. Besides religion, other areas such as blushing and bodily shame are also touched upon by historians. For example, Valerie Allen has investigated the relationship between shame, blushing, and bodies in a gendered context. She finds that while 'feminine blushes tend to converge on moments of sexual impropriety or of fear of it', male blushes 'express a wider, less specific range of cultural experience'.[39]

Compared to the work undertaken by medievalists, the detailed study of shame in the early modern (British) context is rare. An important monograph that concentrates on shame is from Gail Kern Paster. In his *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the*

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[37] Stephanie Trigg, '"Shamed be…" Historicizing Shame in Medieval and Early Modern Courtly Ritual', *Exmplaria*, vol. 19 (2007), p. 84. Also see his *Shame and Honor: A Vulgar History of the Order of the Garter* (Philadelphia, 2012).

[38] Virginia Burrus, *Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subjects* (Philadelphia, 2008), p. 7.

[39] Valerie Allen, 'Waxing Red: Shame and the Body, Shame and the Soul', in Lisa Perfetti (ed.), *The Representation of Women's Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Culture* (Gainesville, 2005), p. 192, cited in Flannery, 'The Concept of Shame in Late-Medieval English Literature', p. 174. Other work that concerns medieval body and shame includes Mary C. Flannery, 'A Bloody Shame: Chaucer's Honourable Women', *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 62 (2011), pp. 337-57; Clifford Davidson, 'Nudity, the Body, and Early English Drama', in his *History, Religion, and Violence: Cultural Contexts for Medieval and Renaissance English Drama* (Aldershot, 2002), pp. 149-79.

Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern Britain (1995), Paster explores the female's

bodily fluids and their cultural implications for shame, arguing that the contemporary

representations of the incontinent and leaky characteristic of women's body as

something 'disgusting' increased the threshold of shame, and promoted 'an emergent

ideology of bodily refinement and exquisite self-mastery'.[40] Some historians begin to

realise the potential value of shame as an approach to enlightening and interpreting

other historical themes. For example, in his 2014 essay Farid Azfar points out that

underlying the 1720 legal actions against homosexuality and in particular Mother

Clapp's molly house in London, was a deep social anxiety about the shameless urban

future.[41]

One book I wish to single out as representing the first substantial study of the

British cultures of shame over a long chronological period from the early modern to the

Victorian period is that of David Nash and Anne-Marie Kilday. In their *Cultures of*

Shame: Exploring Crime and Morality in Britain, 1600-1900, the authors examine how

shame was utilised, interpreted, and evolved as community, domestic, moral, and

judicial disciplinary practices over time. In general, they demonstrate 'the longevity

and the continued potency of cultures of shame', arguing that although shaming as a

penal weapon was coming to be seen as unacceptable and gradually disused, shame was

'not marginalised by modernising societies' but 'incorporated within them' and 'had

become an intrinsic component' of modernity, by integrating itself with new regimes of

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[40] Paster, *The Body Embarrassed*, p. 14.
[41] Farid Azfar, 'Beastly Sodomites and the Shameless Urban Future', *The Eighteenth Century*, vol. 55 (2014), pp. 391-410.

politeness, etiquette, and popular media. Nash and Kilday's study thus offers new evidence against the traditional argument about 'the modernising transition from shame to guilt cultures'.[42] *Cultures of Shame* is an important work, which for the first time examines the general history of shame in Britain.[43] While I agree with the broad thrust of Nash and Kilday's argument, namely the longevity and continual importance of the cultures of shame in Britain, I nevertheless think it needs further refinement and supplement. It should be acknowledged that the authors consider shame predominantly in the contexts of law and social control. The consequence of this approach is that their study regards shame mainly as disciplinary practices and the ideas associated with them, rather than a human emotion or feeling experienced by contemporary individuals and social groups; and consequently, they do not offer detailed investigation of the meanings of shame in other historical contexts such as religion and polite culture. Indeed, shaming is important but by no means the whole of shame; without examining the emotion, or exploring shame in other contextual themes or fields, we are unable to gain a whole picture of the cultures of shame. Thus, this gap constituted part of the inspirations for the present thesis.

Thesis Outline, Methodology, and Source Material

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[42] Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, p. 20, 172, 177.

[43] Another recently published book on shame is Rowbotham, Muravyeva, and Nash (eds), *Shame, Blame, and Culpability.* This book confirms Nash and Kilday's argument about the longevity and continual importance of shame in modern penal system that they have made in *Cultures of Shame*. It should also be noted that, as Nash and Kilday have pointed out, shame can be found in three detailedly studied areas, namely victimology, community-based rituals, and officially-sanctioned punishments. Historians dedicated in these areas don't offer direct or detailed investigation of shame, but their works nevertheless offer valuable insights on how shame was used in judicial system in early modern society. For the detailed review and secondary sources regarding these areas, see Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, pp. 8-12.

In view of the gap in current modern and historical scholarship on shame, this thesis sets two targets. First, it aims to refute the two oversimplified accounts of shame carried out by modern theorists. Second, it aims to broaden the research scope of the existing historical study of shame, and offer an illuminating and more comprehensive account of early modern British cultures of shame. My focus is that of the cultural and social historian. The basic strategy of this thesis is to examine shame within four different historical contexts, namely religion, polite culture, print culture, and crime and punishment. By identifying shame as an emotion, a sense of honour, a moral sanction, a commodity, and a disciplinary weapon, I seek to explore how early modern people experienced, interpreted, represented, and utilised shame for devotional, moral, commercial, and judicial purposes.

That Christian spirituality was preoccupied with feeling of shame has long been recognised. However, it is surprising that no substantial study of the early modern religious culture of shame has yet been undertaken.[44] This neglect leaves significant gaps not only in the history of Protestant spiritual lives and psychology, but also in the study of shame itself. To begin with, shame was surely an important contributing factor in constructing the Protestant psyche. Without considering the role of shame, it would not be possible to gain comprehensive insights into the inner world of Protestants.

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[44] By contrast, other aspects of religious psychology, especially those relating to melancholy, despair, and madness, and the associated emotions including guilt, fear, anxiety, and sorrow experienced by Protestants in early modern old and New England, have received detailed attention from historians. See Charles L. Cohen, *God's Caress: The Psychology of Puritan Religious Experience* (Oxford, 1986); John Stachniewski, *The Persecutory Imagination: English Puritanism and the Literature of Religious Despair* (Oxford, 1991); Julius H. Rubin, *Religious Melancholy and Protestant Experience in America* (New York and Oxford, 1994); Katharine Hodgkin, *Madness in Seventeenth-Century Autobiography* (Basingstoke and New York, 2007); Jeremy Schmidt, *Melancholy and the Care of the Soul: Religion, Moral Philosophy and Madness in Early Modern England* (Ashgate and Burlington, 2007).

Secondly, historical and non-historical scholars seldom examine shame in a religious context. As we have seen, historians interested in shame largely confine their research to the British and European history of crime and punishment, and therefore treat shame mainly as a disciplinary action, rather than as an emotion. Moreover, psychologists' work on shame makes no reference to the Christian religion. The consequence of this omission is that modern scholars are inclined to see shame as a social, externally-imposed emotion that arises from other's judgment of the self. This social perspective risks reducing shame to a morally superficial and psychologically detrimental emotion because of its utter dependence on external values, and its potentially negative consequences, leading to depression, suicide, violence, and revenge.

Chapter two seeks to fill this gap by scrutinising how early modern Protestants experienced and interpreted shame. Of course, it is neither easy, nor necessary, to assess the inward feelings of shame experienced by people from all Protestant groups throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Therefore, I selected Calvinists, Quakers, and Methodists as the main subjects of research. Calvinist is an inclusive term; under the umbrella of Calvinism were different religious groups such as Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Puritans, who were often not in agreement with each other. However, it should be noted that the things Calvinists had in common about shame were more significant than their disagreement over ecclesiastical, theological, and political issues. Moreover, different Calvinists possessed similar features of spirituality because of their general beliefs about the doctrine of predestination. I will pay particular attention to the

writings of Puritan Calvinists.[45] By the end of the sixteenth century, most Puritans were

Calvinists. In the mid seventeenth century, Calvinism still made up the dominant part

of Puritan thinking, though its hold was beginning to wane by the end of the century.

More importantly, as 'the hotter sort of Protestants',[46] these Puritans represented, and

indeed magnified, the Calvinist way of experiencing and interpreting shame. The reason

for examining early Quakers and Methodists lies in their anti-Calvinism position, and

in particular their denial of predestination.[47] Furthermore, since Quakers and

Methodists had in many respects found their root in Puritanism, researching these three

groups provides a way to see the continuity and change of the religious notion of shame.

While all these groups agreed that experiencing shame was vital to repentance and

salvation, it is noteworthy that Quakers were characterised by their unique sense of

shamelessness after conversion or when they were 'going naked for a sign', and that

Methodists were notorious for their emotional religiosity and intense inculcation of

shame.

In the second chapter I don't seek to study Protestant theology through the

examples of shame, but aim to investigate the religious meaning of shame more directly,

and to explore when, why, and how Calvinists, Quakers, and Methodists felt shame,

and how people from each group interpreted this emotion. The main sources used in

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[45] In chapter two, I adopt an inclusive definition of Calvinistic Puritans of the second half of the seventeenth century. These Puritans comprise those from the Anglican Church, and also Separatist, Independent, Presbyterian, and Baptist denominations. One reason for adopting this broad historical approach is that these Puritans, while holding different ecclesiastical and theological ideas, possessed similar features of spirituality.

[46] Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London, 1967), p. 27. Collinson also describes English puritans as 'Forward Protestants'. See Patrick Collinson, *English Puritanism* (London, 1983), p. 16.

[47] There were, it is true, some Calvinistic Methodists but there is not space to consider them here.

this chapter include 'ego-documents', such as diaries, memoirs, conversion narratives, and spiritual autobiographies, and also hymns, sermons, treatises, prescription, and manuals produced by prominent religious writers. Despite nuanced understandings of shame among three Protestant groups, the chapter nevertheless demonstrates that, first, shame was the essential religious emotion and constituted a part of the Protestant psyche; second, religious shame was primarily (though not entirely) a private, self-imposed emotion that always occurred in introspection and repentance, without the involvement of external judgement or the presence of an audience; and third, rather than being a negative emotion, as has often been argued by modern scholars, shame was wholeheartedly desired and embraced by Protestants as a penitential and devotional affection in their everyday spiritual life. By situating shame within the context of religion, and arguing for the private, moral nature of it, the thesis not only sheds light on the history of religious psychology, but corrects the dogma that has falsely judged shame to be a completely social, negative emotion.

The third chapter moves on to a more secular context, and investigates how shame was interpreted, experienced, and refined in the eighteenth-century polite culture. Historians have talked much about the nature of politeness and its social, cultural, and gender implications. They have told us a lot about what manners would be seen as polite and honourable, and what sorts of behaviour would be considered as indecent or boorish in polite society. Besides, historians have demonstrated that the eighteenth-century ideal of politeness was a synthesis of outward polish with inner virtue.[48] These findings

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[48] See for example, Philip Carter, Men and the Emergence of Polite Society (Harlow, 2001); Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford,

are illuminating to my research basically because the senses of honour and dishonour were closely linked. Yet so far, few historians of polite culture have yet made direct or detailed investigation of the emotion and conceptions of shame. Therefore, I seek to build on their research by exploring how codes of politeness, decorum, and honour reflected and influenced the contemporary notion of shame. Moreover, I draw on the argument made by Faramerz Dabhoiwala, who has reminded us that the concept of honour or reputation should be understood as 'a compound of moral and social factors'. According to Dabhoiwala, in contrast to the absolute standards of morality, reputation and honour were relative terms because in practice social opinions or subjective social considerations could be separate from and even at odds with moral norms in assessing a person's reputation.[49] This opinion is particularly important for the research of chapter three. It implies that moral norms were an important but by no means the only or necessary criterion for making judgment, or constructing the notion, of shame. In addition, the chapter also examines a particular aspect of the emotion of shame, namely bashfulness, shamefacedness, or excessive modesty. Modesty and bashfulness were dispositions that belonged to the sense of shame since they all involved a low self-esteem and an awareness of weakness, incompetence or inferiority of the self. Self-

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1998); John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (2nd edn, London and New York, 1997); Lawrence E. Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness: Moral Discourse and Cultural Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1994); Christopher J. Berry, *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptural and Historical Investigation* (Cambridge, 1994); Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783* (Oxford, 1989); J.G.A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce and History* (Cambridge, 1985); Michael Curtin, 'A Question of Manners: Status and Gender in Etiquette and Courtesy', *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 57 (1985), pp. 395-423;

[49] Faramerz Dabhoiwala, 'The Construction of Honour, Reputation and Status in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, vol.6 (1996), pp. 201-213.

abasing and blushing had long been regarded by religious and moral writers as a sign of virtue. However, in polite society they were coming under criticism and becoming a target of refinement.

In chapter three, I consider shame as an emotion and an idea associated with the concept of honour. Drawing on an intellectual approach, the first section offers a detailed examination on the works of eighteenth-century philosophers including John Locke, Anthony Ashley Cooper, Bernard Mandeville, Francis Hutcheson, David Hume and Adam Smith, and seeks to explore how their explanations of shame differed from each other and the religious ones. In the following section, I explore how polite writers talked about bashfulness and modesty, and why shamefacedness were increasingly considered as a false sense of shame that polite man and woman should try to get rid of. The final section, 'Banish false shame, this monster of vanity and arrogance', regards shame as a moral sense in crisis. By drawing on a variety of sources, ranging from essay periodicals, newspapers, and conduct manuals to dramas, this section investigates how polite society undermined the moral characteristic of shame, and reduced it to a superficial concept without moral depth. Overall, chapter three argues that the culture of politeness played an important role in elevating social factors to a place of significance in interpreting and experiencing shame. Eighteenth-century philosophers regarded shame as a social emotion, requiring the presence of others or social communication in order to occur. They also agreed that shame was an emotion of great moral value in promoting virtues and preventing sins. Besides, the expansion of polite sociability required people to be modest in communication, without involving

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the self-abasing elements of shame such as excessive humility, unworthiness and bashfulness. Finally, although polite writers repeatedly emphasised the centrality of moral virtue in establishing personal reputation, they could not prevent many contemporaries from indulging themselves in the vain glory of the trivial fashion and the praise of others. The material consumption and superficial sociability in polite society distorted the notion of honour, and accordingly led to a growth of what contemporaries termed 'false shame'. People with this false sense of shame, as many moral writers observed, blushed for virtuous behaviour, and felt ashamed for being counted unfashionable.

Chapter four examines shame in the context of print culture. This chapter draws on learning from the existing historiography of print culture and crime literature. Historians of this area have talked much about how early modern media reported and commented on crime, and how print contributed to shaping the public knowledge of crime. They agree about the generally moralistic perspective of crime writings before the eighteenth century, arguing that publications such as criminal biographies, gallows literature, trial reports, and murder pamphlets, though always lurid and sensational in form, were didactic and normative in intent. The moral function of crime literature was reflected in the fact that it often placed greater emphasis on the confession and penitence of the convicted criminal than on the sensationalism of the crime itself.[50]

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[50] J.A. Sharpe, '"Last Dying Speeches": Religion, Ideology and Public Execution in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, vol. 107 (1985), pp. 144-167; Lincoln B. Faller, *Turned to Account: The Forms and Functions of Criminal Biography in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 46; Joy Wiltenberg, *Disorderly Women and Female Power in the Street Literature of Early Modern England and Germany* (Charlottesville and London, 1992), p. 211; Joad Raymond, *Making the News: An Anthology of the Newsbooks of Revolutionary England 1641–1660* (Moreton-in-Marsh, 1993), p. 295; Peter Lake and Michael

Historians have pointed out that from the late seventeenth century onwards the crime

literature, although never abandoning its moral function, began to distance itself from

the didactic, conservative tone.[51] This shift is particularly evidenced by scandalous

publications dedicated to reporting the sexual scandals of aristocrats and social elites.

David Turner notices an innovation of language which was used to describe illicit

sexual behaviour; that is, formerly harsh and negative words such as 'adultery' and

'whoredom' were replaced by more soft, forgiving ones like 'gallantry', 'intrigue', or

'amour'.[52] Other historians such as Dabhoiwala and Donna Andrew focus on the

impact of the growing sensational and ambiguous tone in representing crimes and

scandals. They argue that the increasing printed material about the extra-marital liaisons

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Questier, *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England* (New Haven and London, 2002).

[51] Lincoln Faller notes a contradictory and ambivalent portrayal of highway robbers, and shows how such romantic representation of highwaymen as courageous, daring, and courteous anti-heroes fascinated the mass audience and, to some extent, softened the public's attitudes towards criminal roguery. Robert Shoemaker attributes the remarkably positive image of the 'gentleman highwayman' which emerged in the mid-eighteenth century to the impact of the rising print industry and the popularity of ideals of civility and politeness. John Brewer in his study of the famous case of the murder of Martha Ray in 1779, mistress of the Earl of Sandwich, observes a growing sentimental and commiserative tone in portraying even the most brutal murderers in the popular press of the time. Historians have also noted a shift in the representation of female criminals from being a target of condemnation to a subject worthy of sympathy and reform. See Faller, *Turned to Account*, chapter.8; Robert Shoemaker, 'The Street Robber and the Gentleman Highwayman: Changing Representations and Perceptions of Robbery in London, 1690-1800', *Cultural and Social History*, vol. 3 (2006), pp. 381-405; also see Gillian Spraggs, *Outlaws and Highwaymen: The Cult of the Robber in England from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (London, 2001) and J.A. Sharpe, *Dick Turpin: The Myth of the English Highwayman* (London, 2004). John Brewer, *Sentimental Murder: Love and Madness in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 2005), Chapter 3; Sandra Clark, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature of Early Modern England* (New York, 2003), pp. 39-61; Katherine Binhammer, *The Seduction Narrative in Britain, 1747-1800* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 40-71, 161-7; Robert Shoemaker, 'Print and the Female Voice: Representations of Women's Crime in London', *Gender and History*, vol. 22, 1 (2010), pp. 75-91; Jennie Batchelor, '"Industry in Distress": Reconfiguring Femininity and Labour in the Magdalen House,' *Eighteenth-Century Life*, vol. 28 (2004), pp. 1-20; Tim Hitchcock, *English Sexualities*, 1700-1800 (New York, 1997), Chapter 7; Vivien Jones, 'Scandalous Femininity: Prostitution and Eighteenth–Century Narrative', in Dario Castiglione and Lesley Sharpe (eds), *Shifting the Boundaries: Transformation of the Languages of Public and Private in the Eighteenth Century* (Exeter,1995), p. 55.

[52] David M. Turner, *Fashioning Adultery: Gender, Sex and Civility in England, 1660-1740* (Cambridge, 2002), chapter 1 and 2.

of the nobility offered an expanded forum in which aristocratic vice and their sexual affairs could be openly talked about by the populace.[53] Vic Gatrell's study of visual satire which flourished in the second half of the eighteenth century has increased our knowledge of how impolite matters of sex became a major subject of representation in this genre, and how they were exploited for the purposes of both shaming the upper classes and amusing the reading public.[54]

The above-mentioned works only sporadically mention shame, but they are illuminating because they imply a close connection between shame and crime or scandal literature. Indeed, crime and scandal are associated with shame, insofar as they are behaviours deemed infamous and shameful. It is therefore worth asking how shame was represented in criminal and scandalous prints between the mid-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and how these prints in turn reflected and influenced the contemporaries' senses of shame. Did the audience feel embarrassment and shame when reading the stories of those conventionally disgraceful sexual misconducts such as prostitution, seduction, and adultery? Did the popularity of printed media materials about aristocratic vice and the extensive representations of sexual matters lead to a growth of an unblushing readership and a culture of shamelessness? How did people

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[53] Faramerz Dabhoiwala, *The Origins of Sex: A History of the First Sexual Revolution* (London, 2012), Chapter 6; Donna T. Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice: The Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery, and Gambling in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Heaven, 2013), chapter 4.

[54] Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (London, 2006). Also see Lynda M. Thompson, *The 'Scandalous Memoirists': Constantia Phillis, Laetitia Pilkington and the Shame of 'Public Fame'* (Manchester, 2000); Cindy McCreery, 'Keeping up with the Bon Ton: the Tête-à-Tête Series in the Town and Country Magazine', in Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (eds), *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities* (London, 1997), pp. 207-29; Peter Wagner, 'The Pornographer in the Courtroom: Trial reports about Cases of Sexual Crimes and Delinquencies as a Genre of Eighteenth-Century Erotica', in Paul-Gabriel Bouce (ed.), *Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Totowa, 1982), pp. 120-40.

comment on these scandalous prints? These questions, drawn from the implications of the above works, lie at the heart of chapter four.

In order to answer these questions, I regard shame as a general reference to shameful transgressions, a form of public humiliation through print, a news commodity, and an emotion or sentiment that the perpetrator expressed, the writer intended to reinforced, and the reader experienced. The chapter sets out to examine printed ballads, criminal pamphlets, and trial accounts between the mid-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries. It then concentrates on materials about sexual scandals in high circles before and after the mid-eighteenth century; in particular, the chapter explores how newspapers, magazines, and satires engaged in 'a shame economy'. In the final section of chapter four, I investigate contemporary attitudes to the rise of scandal journalism and its impact on contemporary notions of shame. Overall, this chapter demonstrates that the eighteenth century witnessed a growing sensationalism of crime and scandalous prints and the commodification of shame. While seventeenth-century criminal prints were characterised by their general moral and didactic perspectives, and aimed to inculcate readers with a moral sense of shame, their eighteenth-century counterparts were becoming notorious for the writers and publishers' shameless preoccupation with the sensational details of upper-class corruption. This shameless representation of conventionally shameful subjects raised anxiety and criticism among contemporary writers, making them believe that they were living in an era without shame, in which, as they observed, the audience no longer blushed to read the stories about crime and depravity, which they should have treated with abhorrence and shame.

In the fifth chapter, I return to the theme which is familiar to historians interested in shame, namely shaming penalties. One important question that this chapter seeks to explore is why offences such as adultery, sodomy, and different sorts of cheating like fraud and perjury were more likely to incur shaming punishments. This is an important but rather neglected topic, though recent scholarship does shed some light on it. For example, Jörg Wettlaufer finds that breakdowns in mutual trust and cooperative relationships constituted the largest amount of offences leading to shaming punishments in historical French and German societies.[55] Nash and Kilday also argue that in pre-modern Britain 'challenges to the authority and reputation of the community's infrastructure and machinery were those most likely to be punished through the sentence of the pillory'.[56] Their discussions imply that, as I shall argue, shaming punishments were mostly constructed in the context of a social relationship. Through investigating the link between concepts of infamy and shame in the contexts of both community and court, I argue that there existed a causal relationship between the nature of crime and the form of punishment in early modern society. The use of public shaming was not random or indiscriminate; crimes that were usually deemed 'shameful' or 'infamous' by the populace were more likely to be punished by shame. This close association between the nature of crime and the pattern of punishment

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[55] Jörg Wettlaufer, 'The Evolution of Shame as a Prosocial Emotion: A Cross-cultural Study on Conflict and Cooperation in historical Societies' (an unpublished working paper, 2008), and 'Shame and Shaming: The Use of An Adaptive Social Emotion in Historical Penal Law and Practice' (a single-page sheet of the introduction to the research project), both are accessed at: www.shamestudies.de. Also see Wettlaufer, 'The History of Shaming Punishments and Public Exposure in Penal Law in Comparative Perspective: Western Europe and East Asia', in Bénédicte Sère and Jörg Wettlaufer (eds), *Shame between Punishment and Penance : The Social Usages of Shame in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times* (Firenze, 2013), pp. 197-228.
[56] Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, p. 72.

indicates that shame as a consequence of moral judgment was socially constructed, and that shame as a judicial sanction was a product of negotiation between the authorities and the communities. This finding is important, since it helps to explain why judicial shaming punishments encountered a crisis in the eighteenth century, and particularly in London. As we shall see, the infliction of shaming punishment on offenders whose transgression were not commonly deemed 'shameful' or 'infamous' always led to popular protest and violence at the site of the pillory. Besides, judicial shaming penalties were becoming unable to effectively evoke offenders and spectators' moral senses of shame, and even risked the danger of turning them into shameless monsters. These problems made shaming punishments a subject of debate. While reformist commentators criticised the excessive and stigmatising use of shaming devices, many authors acknowledged the important role of shame in the judicial and penal system. In essence, therefore, this chapter offers a further example of the importance of social factors in interpreting and deciding shame, and the uncertainty of the moral and disciplinary value of shame.

Collectively, by scrutinising shame through the lens of religion, politeness, print culture, and punishment, this thesis demonstrates that in early modern Britain shame could be social as well as personal, morally virtuous as well as morally irrelevant or even bad. While in a religious context, shame was primarily a private, self-imposed emotion concerned with personal salvation, shame in a more secular context was always interpreted and experienced as a socially-constructed emotion or idea dealing with a person's public honour. Early modern contemporaries praised the great moral and

disciplinary value of shame. Religious, polite, and legal writers emphasised the importance of keeping a moral sense of shame; they saw shame as a sign of penitence and piety, an inward restraint keeping people away from temptation and sin, a means to define and enforce codes of behaviour and shared social or legal values, and a powerful weapon to chastise and deter deviance. However, the moral and disciplinary characteristics were not immutable. Shame could be harmful to personal reputation and polite communication when it was expressed as a timid, bashful disposition. Besides, the superficial sociability, the pursuit of trivial fashion and vain-glory, the popularity of scandalous publications, and the abuse of shaming punishments were factors that threw the moral and disciplinary value of shame into crisis.

Introduction

In his well-known spiritual autobiography, *Grace Abounding to Chief of Sinners* (1665),

John Bunyan recalled that he once experienced 'continual affliction and shame' when

he thought of the saints who 'did both in their words, their carriages, and all their

expressions of tenderness, fear to sin against their precious Saviour'. This sense of

'great shame and astonishment' occurred again when Bunyan realised that his sin was

a 'most barbarous, and a filthy crime', which 'had horribly abused the holy Son of

God'.[57] Similarly, the eighteenth-century Irish Methodist preacher Thomas Walsh

wrote in his diary, 'I felt much shame before the Lord today, for my unfaithfulness and

unfruitfulness'. After a few days Walsh lamented again: 'sorrow and concern, and with

shame, and much brokenness of heart bowed my soul before the Lord.'[58]

Bunyan and Thomas Walsh's examples represent the typical way in which early

modern Protestants experienced the religious emotion of shame. As we shall see in this

chapter, countless Christians recorded their exercises of self-humiliation and feelings

of shame in spiritual diaries. In Protestant devotional lives, shame was a recurrent

emotion that was mostly felt in self-examination and repentance. It arose from a

negative judgement on the self with regard to the grievous apprehension of personal sin,

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[57] John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, ed. Roger Sharrock (Oxford, 1962), no. 183 and 192.

[58] *The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers. Chiefly Written by Themselves*, ed. Thomas Jackson (6 vols, London, 1866), vol. 3, pp. 229-30.

negligence of religious duty, failure to procure the assurance of salvation, and being underserving of the mercy of God. Moreover, shame was a continual disposition or psychological state that was closely connected with self-abasement and a sense of unworthiness. People who were prone to shame in this way acknowledged the omnipotent nature of God and the lowliness of the self, and tended to regard themselves as a 'worm' or 'dust'.[59] Although always grievous, religious shame was nevertheless, I shall argue, considered to be a moral emotion that everyone *should have* in order to come nearer to God. Preachers, clergymen, and theologians saw shamefacedness as a sign of piety, and praised feelings of shame as proof of true repentance, a means to resist temptation and sin, and a way to bring glory to God. People without a sense of shame would bring ruin upon themselves. Thus, seeing shame as 'one of the greatest restraints from sin which God hath laid upon humane nature', John Tillotson, the late seventeenth-century archbishop of Canterbury, warned that 'there must be shame, without which there is no hope of amendment'.[60]

'Let Us Shame Ourselves': the Calvinist Sense of Shame

Before scrutinising real examples of Calvinists' feelings of shame, it is necessary to provide an overview of general features of their beliefs and spirituality. The most

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[59] See for example Ralph Thoresby, *The Diary of Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S. Author of the Topography of Leeds*, 1677-1724 (2 vols, London, 1830), vol. 1, p. 422; John Tillotson, *Several Discourses of Repentance by John Tillotson, Being the Eighth Volume Published from the Originals by Ralph Barker* (London, 1700), p. 197.

[60] John Tillotson, *Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions by John Tillotson, D.D. Dean of Canterbury, Preacher to the Honourable Society of Lincolns-Inn, and One of His Majesties Chaplains in Ordinary* (London, 1678), vol. 2, p. 8; idem, *Several Discourses of Repentance*, p. 52.

important question for Calvinists is, as John Bunyan put it, 'How can I be saved?'[61]

Acknowledging total depravity of human beings and their inability to save themselves

through their own merits, Calvinists stressed the necessity of God's divine grace as the

only way for salvation. According to the Calvinist doctrine of double predestination,

before the creation of the world God has already predestined some people for salvation,

and at the same time ordained the remainder to eternal damnation for their sins.[62] As

redemption entirely depended on the will of God rather than human efforts, Calvinists

found it difficult to enjoy certainty about the assurance of election. The anxiety over

whether the self had been saved by God thus led Calvinists to strict introspection and

self-discipline, through which they examined their lives in detail in order to search for

evidences of sin and mercy. Calvinists emphasised the significance of purging the soul

and confession of sins through strict self-examination and repentance because they saw

such spiritual exercises as the result of the work of the Holy Spirit and proof of an act

of divine grace. Besides, Calvinists insisted on the ultimate authority of the Bible,

seeing reading Scripture as an important way to communicate with God and gain

knowledge for self-reformation. These private devotions were more rigorously

practiced by Calvinistic Puritans. And these Puritans were further noted for their zeal

for familial and public worship, and especially their insistence on strict sabbatarianism.

Self-examination, Bible reading, and public worship thus not only constituted the major

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[61] Leland Ryken, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans as They Really Were* (Michigan, 1990), p. 11.

[62] John White, *The Way to the Tree of Life: Discoursed in Sundry Directions for the Profitable Reading of the Scriptures* (London, 1647), p. 18; also see Randall C. Gleason and Kelly M. Kapic, 'Who Were the Puritans?' in Kelly M. Kapic and Randall C. Gleason (eds), *The Devoted Life: An Invitation to the Puritan Classics* (Downers Grove and Leicester, 2004), p. 26; Brian G. Armstrong, 'Puritan Spirituality: The Tension of Bible and Experience', in E. Rozanne Elder (ed.) *The Spirituality of Western Christendom* (Kalamazoo, 1984), vol. 2, pp. 243-48.

forms Calvinists' devotional exercises, but also shaped the central aspects of Calvinist spirituality.

The characteristics of Calvinist spirituality – their acknowledgement of total depravity, their great watchfulness for sins, their emphasis on the direct revelation of God, and their rigorous introspection and commitment to domestic and public worship – helped to decide when, why and how Calvinists experienced shame. Thus, we find that Calvinists always felt shame when they became aware of their sins. In his diary, Michael Wigglesworth, a Puritan minister and poet who lived in seventeenth-century New England, recorded that 'I am afraid and asham'd and unable to see God still loving me' when he found himself was encompassed by 'innumerable evils'.[63] Henry Newcome, an English non-conformist preacher of the mid to later seventeenth century, also lamented that 'I am much ashamed and confounded for my sin'.[64] A more detailed description of the inward affliction of shame comes from his contemporary, Bunyan, who once felt too ashamed of his sins and backsliding to 'look God in the face':

[It] was hard for me now, to have the face to pray to this Christ for mercy, against Whom I had thus most vilely sinned: 'twas hard work, I say, to offer to look Him in the face, against Whom I had so vilely sinned; and indeed, I have found it as difficult to come to God by prayer, after backsliding from Him, as to do any other thing. Oh! the shame that did now attend me! especially when I thought, I am now a-going to pray to Him for mercy, that I had so lightly esteemed but a while

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[63] Michael Wigglesworth, *The Diary of Michael Wigglesworth 1653-1657: The Conscience of a Puritan*, ed. Edmund S. Morgan (New York, 1946), p. 12.
[64] Henry Newcome, *The Diary of the Rev. Henry Newcome: from September 30, 1661, to September 29, 1663*, ed. Thomas Heywood (Chetham Society, 1849), p. 25.

before! I was ashamed; yea, even confounded, because this villainy had been

committed by me.[65]

While Calvinists stressed that 'shame and sorrow ever follow sin', we should be

aware that it is wrong to judge the 'sin' simply in the light of our modern values. In fact,

the religious definition of sin was much broader than that of today: it not only included

crime and moral wrongdoings, but could refer to the slightest slip in deed or perception.

For Calvinists, even natural affections relating to love could be dangerous and sinful,

and could excite a deep emotion of shame, if they stood in the way of a godly life.

Samuel Rogers, a young diarist and a later Puritan minister, saw his frequent contact

and association with a certain 'M. S.' – most probably a woman who was 'attractive to

Rogers' and at the same time 'charmed by him' – as a 'snare' and 'bait' that he felt

'ashamed' to mention in his diary.[66] Rogers considered his 'amorous affections' for her

as 'lascivious thoughts', possibly because matters of love prevented him from engaging

in religious duties. Thus, many times after he had met or thought of 'M. S.', Rogers felt

that he required 'a great deal of humility and shame', which made him 'overwhelmed

with melancholye' and 'ashamed to looke up to God'.[67]

The 'coldness' or 'dullness' of a private religious service and the neglect of public

worship were further recurrent reasons for experiencing shame. As the Anglican

theologian and leading puritan Richard Sibbes (1577–1635) wrote, 'there was never a

child of God of a dull temper and disposition, but he was shamed that he should yet not

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[65] Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*, no. 175. The entry of no. 192 that I have presented at the beginning of this chapter is another example of shame for sin.
[66] Samuel Rogers, *The Diary of Samuel Rogers, 1634-1638*, eds Tom Webster and Kenneth Shipps (Rochester and New York, 2004), p. xxvii, 3.
[67] *Ibid*., pp. xxv, 15, 51-2, 75.

have a heart more enlarged to bless God.'[68] In June 1635 Samuel Rogers recorded in

his dairy that 'my services so weake I am ashamed to write', and that 'I am ashamed to

consider this weeke past, I am wholly undeserving, dead, dull, unsavory'.[69] In April

1662, Henry Newcome similarly wrote that he was much 'ashamed and weary' of the

'deadness' and 'feebleness' of his spirit.[70] Wigglesworth, furthermore, recorded in

1653 that he wanted to 'hang down my head with shame before god'.[71] Ralph Thoresby,

an antiquarian and non-conformist diarist, repeatedly recorded his self-accusation and

intense experience of 'shame and grief' for neglecting godly exercises with his families.

On the Sabbath in April 1680, Thoresby attended a sermon on the necessity of singing

psalms, and was overwhelmed with a deep experience of sorrow and shame:

> [T]hough it has formerly been the constant practice of this family… I must
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> confess the neglect of it now, it being an aggravation of sorrow, and bringing my
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> inexpressible loss more freshly to remembrance. Methinks, I hear his very voice,
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> that with renewed pangs I am constrained to crouch to the bottom of the pew, and
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> there vent my sorrow in plenty of tears; so that, never yet, to my shame do I record
>
> it, was I able to sing one line in public or private.[72]

Thoresby was not idle or impious; as a scholar and local councilman, he spent much of

his time writing and involved in community affairs. Like Samuel Rogers, Thoresby was

greatly troubled when he saw that this social activity had impeded his spiritual service.

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[68] Richard Sibbes, *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. Alexander Balloch Grosart (Edinburgh, 1862), vol. 3, pp. 25-6.
[69] Rogers, *The Diary*, p. 10, 23.
[70] Newcome, *The Diary*, pp. 25-6, 137.
[71] Wigglesworth, *The Diary*, p. 4.
[72] Ralph Thoresby, *The Diary of Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S. Author of the Topography of Leeds*, 1677-1724 (2 vols, London, 1830), vol. 1, p. 42.

On 25 April 1702, spending all morning on the memoirs which were being prepared for the press, Thoresby 'deferred family prayer till noon'. In the afternoon, he was 'unhappily sent for by Alderman Dixon and Mr. Barker, under colour of business, but indeed to engage my vote for the next election of an alderman'. Seeing that all-day business 'prevented my attendance at the prayers', Thoresby wrote that he was unable to 'reflect upon it without shame and grief'.[73] Once again, the entry for the Sabbath on 14 September 1712 reads that 'I was also much troubled at the prospect of too much of this holy day's being unsuitably spent'.[74]

While shame had always occurred as an immediate and temporary emotion upon the self-awareness of personal sins and spiritual laxity, the Calvinist sense of shame was also a continual psychological state, or inner disposition closely connected with a sense of lowliness, impotence, and unworthiness. This sort of shame was essentially an inward practice of self-humiliation or abasement; unlike the sense of guilt that entailed specific sins, the self-abasing experience of shame involved a negative judgement about the self, requiring people to keep a humble heart, to abhor themselves, and to acknowledge their depraved nature and inferior status in everyday spiritual lives.

While shame and humiliation are considered as synonymous inward experiences, what were the relationship and differences between them in Calvinists' spirituality? Simplified greatly, shame was one of the major outcomes of humiliation; a person overwhelmed with inward humiliation would experience a cluster of emotions, including not only shame, but also guilt, sorrow, and fear. As Richard Sibbes

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[73] *Ibid*., p. 361.
[74] *Ibid*., p. 140.

commented, 'Inward humiliation, besides spiritual conviction, is when there are affections of humiliation. And what be those? Shame, sorrow, fear, and such like penal afflictive affections.'[75] The Puritan clergyman Thomas Manton also wrote that 'True humiliation is begun in fear, continued in shame, carried on by sorrow, and endeth in indignation'.[76] The experience of humiliation and the consequent affection of shame led to a 'humblenesse of minde', which was, as John Preston claimed, 'a base esteeming of a man's selfe in an acknowledgement of his unworthinesse to receive any grace with a high esteeme of God's love.'[77]

A typical example of this self-abasing experience of shame is found in the dairy of Cotton Mather (1663-1728), a puritan minister in America: 'sensible that I am nothing, have nothing, do nothing, but in an entire Dependence upon Him. I confessed before the Lord, my exceeding Unworthiness of all His Favours; and how unworthy I am to be accepted or assisted in His Praises. I went over the Articles of my Vileness, with all Self-Abasement.'[78] The vicar of Earls Colne in Essex Ralph Josselin (1617 – 1683) repeatedly wrote in his diary, 'I am nothing in my owne eyes, nay Lord worse then nothing.'[79] Bunyan saw himself as low, and even lower than 'a toad': 'I was more loathsome in mine own eyes than was a toad, and I thought I was so in God's eyes too… I thought now, that everyone had a better heart than I had… I fell therefore at the sight

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[75] Sibbes, *The Complete Works*, vol. 2, p. 46.
[76] Thomas Manton, *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton, D.D. : with memoir of the Author, ed. William Harris* (London, 1870), vol. 17, p. 361.
[77] John Preston, *Sins Overthrow: or, A Godly and Learned Treatise of Mortification wherein is Excellently Handled* (London, 1641), p. 42.
[78] Cotton Mather, *Diary of Cotton Mather, 1709-1724* (Boston, 1911), vol. 8, p. 338.
[79] Ralph Josselin, *The Diary of Ralph Josselin 1616-1683*, ed. Alan MacFarlane (Oxford, 1991), p. 62.

of my own vileness deeply; for I concluded, that this condition that I was in, could not stand with a state of grace.'[80] Similarly, Elizabeth White, a godly woman living in the mid-seventeenth century, recorded her sense of humiliation and abasement in her spiritual autobiography *The Experiences of God's Gracious* (1669): 'when I have seen a Spider, which of all Things is most loathsome to me, I have been ready to wish myself such a one, esteeming of it to be in a far happier Condition than I was'.[81]

The willingness to maintain a humble heart in spiritual lives means that pride – an emotion which was at odds with shame and humility – should be suppressed. An investigation into Calvinists' diaries reveals their great sensitivity and watchfulness with regards to pride. More importantly, in order to combat a proud heart, Calvinists desired spiritual humility and embraced that self-abasing emotion of shame. Thus, on 12 November 1636, realising that 'the Lord is angry for the base pride of my heart, for my lightness, selfe seeking', Samuel Rogers begged God to humble him.[82] In Michael Wigglesworth's diary, we find that for a very long time he was obsessed with 'pride and vain thoughts', and had been at great pains to curb his proud heart. An entry for February of 1653 reads 'pride I feel still again and again abounding, self-admiration, though destroying myself daily… ah Lord I am vile, I desire to abhor myself before these things'.[83] The next day, he confessed that his pride and vain thoughts were 'remarkably prevailing', and that he was 'unable to beat into my heart any great

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[80] Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*, no. 84.
[81] Elizabeth White, *The Experiences of God's Gracious Dealing with Mrs. Elizabeth White. As they were written under her own Hand, and found in her Closet after her Decease* (London, 1669), p. 6.
[82] Rogers, *The Diary*, p. 81.
[83] Wigglesworth, *The Diary*, p. 4.

affection of sorrow or shame'. [84] Wigglesworth's pride continued and sometimes became acute. At the end of May 1653, he recorded that 'I find pride so beset to trample upon my spirit in all I do (even this day I feel it) that with confusion of face I confess myself to be above measure vile'. [85] On 8 July 1655, Ralph Josselin desired to loath himself when he found that his 'heart exceeding vain, full of foolish wanderings after things that cannot profit'. [86] Similarly, Cotton Mather desired to be humbled each time he found his heart ensnared in pride; as he wrote in 1681: 'I did endeavour to humble myself this Day, as for my Unprofitableness in every Relation and my other manifold Corruptions, thus especially for my PRIDE, with the several Manifestations of it.' [87] On another occasion, Mather wrote in 7 November 1711 that 'upon a proud Thought, I will immediately form a Thought that shall carry the greatest Self-abasement, and Self-abhorrence in it'. [88]

The above examples suggest that shame – whether as a psychological response to sins, and spiritual laxity, or as an inward disposition to self-abasement and humiliation – was an individual, private emotion experienced by Calvinists in self-examination and repentance, without the actual presence of others' external judgement. This refutes the traditional view that shame is entirely a social emotion. The question, however, is why people still felt shame, even if they were able to hide their secret sins from the eyes and knowledge of men. One explanation is that Christians believed that God could see everything. Thus, Thomas Gouge, a Presbyterian clergyman, wrote in 1661 that 'we

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[84] *Ibid*., p. 5.
[85] *Ibid*., p. 20; also see pp. 8-9.
[86] Josselin, *The Diary*, p. 384.
[87] Mather, *Diary*, vol. 7, p. 16.
[88] *Ibid*., vol. 8, p. 126.

may hide our secret sins from the eyes of men, yet it is impossible to hide them from the all-seeing Eye of God, who seeth all… But seeing God is present in all places, it is impossible thou shouldest hide thy sins from his all-seeing Eye; and therefore never be encouraged to sin in hope of secrecy'.[89] Tillotson likewise warned, 'whenever we commit any Wickedness, we do it under the Eye of the great Judge of the World, who steadfastly beholds us, and whose Omnipotent Justice stands by us ready armed and charge for our Destruction, and can in a moment cut us off.'[90]

Examples of feelings of shame provoked by the omniscient eyes of God are prevalent in Calvinists' dairies and spiritual autobiographies. Bunyan recorded that one day, when he was 'in the midst of a game of Cat':

> [A] voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell? At this I was put to an exceeding maze; wherefore leaving my cat upon the ground, I looked up to heaven, and was, as if I had, with the eyes of my understanding, seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if He did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for these and other ungodly practices.[91]

Bunyan did not mention whether he was ashamed at that moment, but the 'hotly displeased' God surely created a highly unpleasant atmosphere in which emotions such as fear, shame, and guilt would be stirred up. Seeing that John Reads 'fell to dronkennes,

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[89] Thomas Gouge, *Christian Directions: Shewing How to Walk with God all the Day Long* (London, 1661), pp. 28-9.
[90] John Tillotson, *Several Discourses of Repentance*, p. 179.
[91] Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*, no. 22.

to neglect God in ordinances, the communion of his people, followed idle company', and that he 'keepes out of mans sights in regard of the shame', Ralph Josselin pleaded with God: 'but thy eye is every where oh God, rebuke him that he may returne and live'.[92] On 2 October 1648, Josselin wrote, 'the Lord discover truth, shame us in our selves and preserve us from reproach'.[93] Similarly, in June 1684 Ralph Thoresby acknowledged that he was 'often most deeply affected in meditation, and had reason to ascribe all disappointments and afflictions' to his sins, which 'though not many visible to carnal eyes, are all open to the All-seeing.'[94]

Besides fearing the all-seeing eyes of God, Calvinists regarded the witness and judgement of conscience as another reason for arousing the emotion of shame. The significant role of conscience in Calvinist and especially Puritan spirituality was repeatedly emphasised by contemporary theologians. They argued that conscience was God's watchman and spokesman in a man's soul, and could take notice and bear witness to a man's every sinful thought, word, and deed, and fill him with shame and confusion. William Fenner, an early seventeenth-century Puritan divine, wrote that 'we have conscience as a continuall watch-man, espying out all our ways, setting down whatever we do amisse, checking us for it for the present, and one day accusing us before God and setting all things in order before our faces.[95] According to Sibbes, 'God hath set and planted in man this court of conscience… wherein he keeps his first judgement, wherein he keeps his assizes. And conscience doth all the parts. It registereth, it

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[92] Josselin, *The Diary*, p, 40.
[93] *Ibid*., pp. 139-40.
[94] Thoresby, *The Diary*, p. 178.
[95] William Fenner, *The Souls Looking-glasse, Lively Representing Its Estate before God with a Treatise of Conscience* (London, 1643), p. 37.

witnesseth, it accuseth, it judgeth, it executes, it doth all.'[96] As a register, 'conscience keeps diaries' and 'sets down whatsoever we have done exactly.'[97] As a witness, it beholds everything and 'telles me what I think… what I desire, as well as what I speak, and what I do'.[98] Since 'God's spy in our bosoms' could discover all sins in the dark, He would impose painful feelings of shame and sorrow on people whenever they committed any wickedness in its sight.[99] Comparing the affections and conscience to the executioners and judge, Sibbes argued that when 'conscience accuseth of any sin, either of omission or commission', it would 'take revenge and correction by our own affections' such as 'grief, sorrow, and shame'.[100] William Fenner believed that a wronged conscience would pull down people who lived in sin, and 'then their affections are stirred exceedingly: they may weep, and sigh, and groan, and tremble, and be ashamed of their doings; they may be humbled thus before they are turned.'[101] Similarly, Thomas Manton wrote that 'conscience is whipped with a scourge of six strings: fear, horror, distrust, grief, rage, and shame'.[102] John Flavel, a seventeenth-century Presbyterian clergyman, warned people never to sin in the hope of concealment, because 'shame ariseth from the turpitude of discovered actions', and 'the shaming of conscience are insufferable torments.'[103] 'Oh what a shame will cover our Faces, when

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[96] Sibbes, *The Complete Works*, vol. 3, pp. 210-1. Henry Stubbes, a non-conformist preacher, similarly compared conscience to a notary, a witness, an accuser, and a judge that were employed in God's court. See, Henry Stubbes, *Conscience the Best Friend upon Earth or, the Happy Effects of Keeping a Good Conscience* (London, 1677), pp. 15-6

[97] Sibbes, *The Complete Works*, vol. 3, p. 211.

[98] *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 212.

[99] Thomas Brooks, *Complete Works of Thomas Brooks*, ed. Alexander Balloch Grosart (London, 1866), vol. 5, p. 281.

[100] Sibbes, *The Complete Works*, vol. 6, pp. 107-8.

[101] William Fenner, *A Treatise of Affections, or the Soul's Pulse* (London, 1641), p. 85.

[102] Manton, *The Complete Works*, vol. 2, p. 442.

[103] John Flavel, *The Whole Works of John Flavel, Late Minister of the Gospel at Dartmouth, Devon*

Conscience shall Reproach us', wrote Henry Stubbes, a non-conformist preacher.[104] Despite being grievous and painful, the emotion of shame arising from the judgement of conscience was valuable; thus Stubbs suggested, 'Repent of that before the Lord, which Conscience reproacheth you for, mourn for it, be ashamed of it, judge and condemn your selves for what is past, resolve against it for the time to come; this is a good course.'[105]

Shame was a painful and unavoidable emotion that arose from the self-awareness of sin, impiety, and unworthiness. But in a spiritual context, shame was by no means a morally bad or harmful emotion, as has been often asserted by modern scholars. We have seen that Calvinists embraced shame and self-humiliation through diligent and rigorous introspection in their everyday spiritual lives. How, then, did they evaluate this emotion?

To begin with, all Calvinist theologians accepted shame as a moral, reformative emotion. The Puritan divine John Howe (1630-1705) asserted that the emotion of shame, 'if by proper application… would contribute more to the reforming a vicious world, than most other methods'.[106] A practical function of experiencing shame was to resist and prevent sin. As Sibbes wrote, 'sin brings forth sorrow, shame, and grief, which are a means to cure sin.'[107] The Anglican clergyman John Wilkins (1614-1672) regarded shame as 'one of the most powerful curbs to restrain men from unworthy courses', and argued that if a man lost all sense of shame, 'there is little hope that any thing else

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(6 vols, London, 1820), vol. 3, p. 139.
[104] Stubbes, *Conscience the Best Friend upon Earth*, p. 33.
[105] *Ibid*., p. 63.
[106] John Howe, *The Works of John Howe,* ed. Henry Rogers (London, 1863), vol. 5, p. 397.
[107] Sibbes, *The Complete Works*, vol. 2, p. 108.

should prevail'.[108] Another Anglican clergy William Gurnall (1617-1679) similarly saw shame and sorrow as 'a gracious soule' that everyone should 'feele in his bosome for his sinful miscarriage'.[109] When people had committed any sinful behaviour they should at once inculcate a deep sense of shame, sorrow, and abhorrence: 'when thou hast found the sin that has done thee the mischief, then labour to fill thy heart with shame for it, and indignation against it, and so go big with sorrow, and cast it forth before the Lord in a heart-breaking confession.' [110] The Puritan divine Stephen Charnock (1628-1680) saw shame a 'holy emotion', and argued that 'the greater the shame, the greater the hatred of the occasion of that shame, and the more exact the watchfulness against it'.[111] Therefore, in order to break with sins, and to magnify the mercy of God, Charnock urged people to look back upon former sin with 'anger and shame'. [112] Moreover, theologians argued that a prompt self-inculcation of shame helped to prevent greater shame in the future. As Sibbes wrote, 'is it not better to take shame to ourselves now, than to be shamed hereafter before angels, devils, and men? How careful is God to us, by this private way to prevent future shame!' But to those who sought to conceal sin in the dark and refused to shame themselves, Sibbes warned that they 'shall be ashamed before God and his angels at the day of judgment, and shall be tormented in hell for ever'. [113] Other writers, such as John Tillotson and the

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[108] John Wilkins, *Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions by the Right Reverend Father in God* (London, 1682), p. 142.
[109] William Gurnall, *The Christian in Compleat Armour. Or, A treatise of the Saints War Against the Devil* (London, 1655), p. 150.
[110] *Ibid.*, p. 339.
[111] Stephen Charnock, *The Complete Works of Stephen Charnock*, ed. James M'Cosh (5 vols, Edinburgh, 1864), vol. 5, p. 550.
[112] *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 557.
[113] Sibbes, *The Complete Works*, vol. 6, pp. 46-7, 52.

Presbyterian minister William Bates, argued that the timely and sorrowful confession of sin with deep shame 'will prevent the exposing the sinner to public shame hereafter'.[114] In view of the reformative nature of shame, therefore, Richard Baxter remarked: 'it is better to go to heaven with the shame of a penitent confession, than to keep your honour till you are in hell.'[115]

Besides seeing shame as a reformative power that helped to combat and prevent sins, theologians regarded the self-abasing emotion of shame, or what they commonly termed 'self-humiliation', as a penitential and devotional experience. They emphasised the significance of self-humiliation in devotional lives, arguing that only if people brought themselves low and vile in their own eyes and acknowledged their unworthiness could they surrender to God, glorify Him, keep holiness of life, and receive unspeakable joy and surpassing peace. In order to humble the self, the first step is to acknowledge the omnipotence of God. Stephen Charnock claimed that 'the thoughts of his glory would put our low and sordid souls to the blush, and shame our base and unworthy affections, so unsuitable to the glory of our head'.[116] Sibbes encouraged people to 'consider His wisdom, holiness, power, and strength, with our own', since 'it will make us abhor ourselves, and repent in dust and ashes'.[117] Self-abasement was a preparation for receiving grace. Sibbes further stated as follows: 'Let us labour to work our hearts to humility, into true sorrow, shame, true fear, that so we

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[114] Tillotson, *Several Discourses of Repentance*, p. 184; William Bates, *The Whole Works of Rev. W. Bates*, ed. W. Farmer (London, 1815), vol. 2, p. 45.
[115] Richard Baxter, *The Practical Works of Richard Baxter: with a Life of the Author and a Critical Examination of His Writings*, ed. William Orme (23 vols, London, 1830), vol. 3, pp. 702-3.
[116] Charnock, *The Complete Works*, vol. 5, p. 89.
[117] Sibbes, *The Complete Works*, vol. 6, p. 48, 50.

may have God to pity and respect us, who only doth regard a humble soul.'[118] Baxter

encouraged people to humble and demean themselves, since 'humility is to other graces

as the morning star is to the sun, that goes before it, and follows it in the evening.

Humility prepares us for the receiving of grace'.[119] But if people refused to 'be

converted and become as little children', as Baxter warned, 'they shall not enter into

the kingdom of heaven.'[120] For Baxter, therefore, self-humiliation is a daily, repeated,

and continually inward practice which people should seize every opportunity to

exercise: 'Make use of humbling occasions to exercise your self-denial and lowliness

of mind, for God will give you humbling occasions enough, when he seeth good; but

when he doth it, be sure that you improve them to the abasing of yourselves.'[121]

The most important way of provoking and experiencing spiritual shame was

rigorous self-examination and sincere repentance in everyday devotional life. Thomas

Gouge argued that 'a frequent confession of a sin will make a man ashamed thereof,

and more watchful over himself, that he fall not into the same sin again'.[122] Seeing that

'a deep humiliation is necessary for salvation,' John Preston claimed that in order to be

'thoroughly humbled' and 'fully broken hearted', people should examine themselves

often: 'seeing your life to abound with actual sins, then look into your heart and nature,

which is wholly corrupted, and the root of all evil.'[123] According to Baxter, 'a free,

self-abasing confession' was crucial for experiencing shame, and that through

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[118] *Ibid*., vol. 6, p. 50.
[119] Baxter, *The Practical Works*, vol. 1, pp. 407-8.
[120] *Ibid*., vol. 2, p. 227.
[121] *Ibid*., vol. 3, pp. 710-6.
[122] Gouge, *Christian Directions,* p. 12.
[123] Preston, *Sins Overthrow*, pp. 36-41.

meditation of heaven and confession of sins, people would feel a series of 'contrary and more mixed passions', including 'hatred and detestation', 'godly fear', 'grief', 'godly shame', and 'holy anger or indignation'.[124] Tillotson saw private confession as a more important means to embrace shame and humiliation than attending public worship; therefore, he suggested, 'we should do well, on the Day before the public Fast, or at least the Morning before we go to the public Assembly, to humble ourselves before God in our families, and especially in our Closets; confessing to Him, with great shame and sorrow, all the particular Sins and Offences.'[125]

While theologians pointed out that shame could not occur without self-examination and repentance, they also emphasised that repentance would not be sincere or effective without experiencing holy shame. 'There could be no sincere Confession of sin and Repentance for it,' wrote Tillotson, 'without testifying their shame, and Confusion of Face upon the remembrance of their sins.'[126] Puritans likewise argued that 'the confession of sin must be mixed with shame'.[127] As Sibbes claimed, 'the way to cover our sin is to uncover it by confession… And this confession must be serious, thorough, humble, with grief, *shame*, and hatred.'[128] John Owen advised that people should fill themselves with 'shame and self-abhorrency' through meditation because this 'holy shame' is 'one ground of all those severe self-reflections'. Only if a man 'is ashamed of, and abased in, himself for every sin', as Owen claimed, 'doth faith evidence itself

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[124] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 316.
[125] John Tillotson, *Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions, by John Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, the Fourth Volume* (London, 1694), pp. 308-9.
[126] Tillotson, *Several Discourses of Repentance,* pp. 180-1.
[127] Bate, *The Whole Works*, vol. 2, p. 44.
[128] Sibbes, *The Complete Works*, vol. 6, p. 168.

and its own sincerity'.[129] Thomas Gouge urged people to confess their evil nature and practices before the Lord, and 'give not over until thou feel shame to cover thy face, and sorrow to fill thine heart'.[130]

Besides diligent self-examination and repentance, Calvinists saw diary keeping as another important way to experience and express the emotion of shame. As an extension of introspection, spiritual writings described the individual devotional exercises of meditation and confession, and recorded one's sorrow for sin and signs of God's mercy. As in meditation and repentance one 'cannot reflect upon without the shame of face',[131] in diaries people should also take note of their shame and humiliations. In his *The Journal or Diary of A Thankful Christian* (1656) John Beadle emphasised the significance of keeping a journal, arguing that in order to write a spiritual diary, one should examine himself every day:

> There is a book of three leaves thou shouldest read dayly to make up this Diary; the black leaf of thy own and others sins with shame and sorrow; the white leaf of Gods goodnesse, mercies with joy and thankfulnesse; the red leaf of Gods judgments felt, feared, threatned, with fear and trembling.[132]

Reading this 'book' was, in fact, a process of self-examination; the spiritual dairy was a transcript of this book.[133] Keeping a faithful account of every day devotional exercise was by no means an easy task; people often found themselves highly embarrassed and

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[129] John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William Orme (London, 1826), vol. 13, pp. 535-6.
[130] Thomas Gouge, *The Works of The Late reverend and Pious Mr. Thomas Gouge, Minister of the Gospel, St Sepulchres, London* (London, 1815), p. 429.
[131] Manton, *The Complete Works*, vol. 3, p. 487.
[132] John Beadle, *The Journal or Diary of A Thankful Christian* (London, 1656), To the Reader.
[133] Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford, 2013), p. 313.

ashamed to write down their sinful thoughts and deeds for fearing that this 'sin-list' would be one day used against them. Samuel Rogers wrote that 'I am almost ashamed to set to writing concerning any thing… What shall I then? spunge out, this day out of the booke of my remembrance… or scratch the eyes of this days out; with Jobs Nailes of cursing'.[134] Nehemiah Wallington, a Puritan artisan, also worried that 'these my own hand writing shall be broght against mee' in the final judgement.[135] However, Beadle insisted that keeping such a diary was necessary:

> The keeping of such a Journall, especially if we look often into it, and read it, over will be a notable means to encrease in us that self-abasement & abhorrency of spirit that is most acceptable in the sight of God. The more we look upon the loving kindness of the Lord, the more vile shall we be in our owne eyes…Oh! how will the serious survey of such a Journal abase the soul before the Lord![136]

Keeping a faithful diary, and recording personal sins in it, would not only contribute to holiness of life, but bring glory to God. 'I am ashamed in some kind' to write down 'the corruption of my nature, and filthynesse and deceitful of my hart', as Wallington claimed, 'yet my intent is to bring Glory to God by shaming myselfe'.[137]

This evidence suggests that the religious sense of shame was individual and self-imposed. However, it would be incorrect to think that social factors played no part in provoking or inculcating shame. It is in the nature of human beings that shame always occurs to some extent as a result of external judgements or the public exposure of

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[134] Rogers, *The Diary*, p. 6.
[135] Nehemiah Wallington, *The Notebooks of Nehemiah Wallington, 1618-1654: A Selection*, ed. David Booy (Aldershot and Burlington, 2007), p. 264.
[136] Beadle, *The Journal or Diary of A Thankful Christian*, p. 179.
[137] Wallington, *The Notebooks*, p. 29.

personal wrongdoing. But one question is worth considering, namely in what circumstance externally-imposed shame was necessary and valuable. Richard Baxter argued that if one found 'difficulty in forsaking any disgraceful sin', he should expose that sin to the public and desire to be shamed by 'beholders', because to lose others' good opinion is 'an easy price to prevent the loss of salvation'. Baxter acknowledged the usefulness of 'the eye of others' since human beings were always 'dark and partial' and inclined to 'cover of all vices'.[138] Thus he wrote, 'Secrecy is the nest of sin, where it is kept warm, and hidden from disgrace; turn it out of this nest, and it will the sooner perish. God's eye and knowledge should serve turn; but when it will not, let man know it also, and let the love of reputation help to subdue the love of lust.'[139] Other Calvinist theologians agreed with the positive role of outside judgement, and regarded the fear of shame imposed by others as a means of self-restraint. For example, John Wilkins suggested that in order to preserve the self from being despised, one should keep his esteem 'in the hearts of others'.[140]

Although external judgements were important, Calvinist theologians nevertheless insisted that shame should, first and foremost, be a private emotion experienced through diligent self-examination. Acknowledging the benefit of the judgement of others, Baxter reminded people to be sure 'not to make this a pretence to put off thy own duty of examining, but only use it as one of the last remedies, when thou findest thy own endeavours will not serve'.[141] Other writers warned that people should never try to

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[138] Baxter, *The Practical Works*, vol. 3, p. 867.
[139] *Ibid*., pp. 702-3.
[140] Wilkins, *Sermons*, p. 154.
[141] Baxter, *The Practical Work*s, vol. 3, p. 186.

criticise or shame others before examining and reforming themselves. In a sermon preached in 1675, Tillotson lamented that there are many Christians busy themselves 'in observing the errors and miscarriages of neighbour, and are forward to mark and censure the faults and follies of other men', without turning their eyes inward and asking themselves 'what have I done?'[142] Thomas Manton claimed, 'if we are to reprove others, let us take care that we be innocent ourselves, not culpable, but blameless. They that are faulty themselves cannot reprove others without blushing and great shame.'[143]

Early modern Calvinists not just experienced, but embraced the emotion of shame through strict self-examination and repentance in their day-to-day spiritual life. Although it is common that shame often occurred as the result of outside disapproval, Calvinists inclined to interpret it as a private, self-imposed emotion. Shame always arose from the apprehension of personal sins and impiety. It was also a continual inner disposition or psychological state, in which the pious abased themselves and acknowledged their lowliness and unworthiness of the love of God. Shame was a grievous emotion, but in a spiritual context we find wholehearted approval of it. Christians recorded in diaries their willingness to be shamed in order to cleanse the soul and walk with God. Calvinist theologians described shame as a 'penitential', 'devotional', 'moral', and overall, 'holy' emotion since it signified faith and piety. The private, positive nature of shame was largely defined by the Calvinist doctrines and

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[142] John Tillotson, *A Sermon Preached before the King, Febr. 26th 1674, By John Tillotson, D. D. Dean of Canterbury, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His MAJESTY* (London, 1675), pp. 30-1.
[143] Manton, *The Complete Works*, vol. 19, p. 123.

spirituality. Considering that Quaker theologies were at direct odds with Calvinism, an intriguing question thus arises, namely how early Quakers experienced and interpreted shame, and to what extent their sense of shame differed from Calvinists. It is these questions which the next section discusses.

The Quakers' Senses of Shame and their Shamelessness

In order to understand the early Quaker sense of shame and how it differed from that of other Christian groups, we should first consider the main characteristics of Quaker spirituality. In essence, the Quakerism that emerged in the 1650s constituted a part of the Protestant movement, and in many respects had its roots in radical Puritan tradition. Like other sectarian groups of the time, Quakers were dissatisfied with the established church, and aimed to convert Christians to a more authentic, original form of Christianity. George Fox, the founder of the Quaker movement, after years of religious searching, had a revelation in 1647 that 'there is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition.'[144] The idea that everyone could have direct communion with God, and that the spiritual truth lay completely in God's direct revelation, was essential for Quakerism. Believing that 'Christ has come to teach his people himself', the first Quakers denied all forms of outward sacrament, and regarded priests and their teachings as an obstruction that lay between humanity and God. They even denied the authority of the Bible, seeing it as a secondary rule, rather than the word of God itself. Quakers believed that the light of God was in every single person, and emphasised that the only

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[144] *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. John L. Nickalls (Cambridge, 1952), p. 11.

way to be saved was remain obedient to the guide of divine illumination. Salvation was available to everyone and could be experienced immediately in this world. The process of salvation was often described as 'a return to the state of innocence of the Garden of Eden'; re-generated Quakers believed that they were reconciled with God, had purged their sins, acquired the power to resist temptation, and had entered into a state of perfection resembling, or perhaps even going beyond 'the state of Adam which he was in before he fell'.[145]

This transformative experience, or what early Quakers termed 'convincement', was crucial to understanding the Quaker sense of shame. Pink Dandelion generalises the process of Quaker convincement into six stages: 1) an in-breaking of God's power, 2) a realisation of how sinful the believer's life had been, or a sense of conviction of sin, 3) a choice of hearty repentance, 4) being born again into perfection, or a measure of perfection, 5) gathering with other convinced Quakers, 6) calling 'the world' towards a new mode of religious experience.[146] The first three stages can be seen as a process of convincement of sin and self-denial. That was a time of sorrow and agony, in which Quakers would experience a mixture of painful emotions, of which shame surely

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[145] For the history of early Quakerism and Quaker theology, see: William C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1961), *The Second Period of Quakerism* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1961); Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (Oxford, 1946); Howard Brinton, *Friends for 300 Years* (New York, 1952); Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (New Haven and London, 1965); Leo Damrosch, *The Sorrows of the Quaker Jesus: James Nayler and the Puritan Crackdown on the Free Spirit* (Harvard, 1996); Douglas Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word: The Life and Message of George Fox, 1624-1691* (Wallingford, 1986), and his *The Covenant Crucified: Quakers and the Rise of Capitalism Covenant Crucified* (Wallingford, 1995), and *Seekers Found: Atonement in Early Quaker Experience* (Wallingford, 2000); Rosemary Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences: Early Quakers in Britain 1646-1666* (University Park, 2000); Pink Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism* (Cambridge, 2007), Carole Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism* (Paternoster, 2007).
[146] Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism*, pp. 23-4; and also see Nikki Coffey Tousley, 'No Place for Doubt: The Experience of Regeneration and Erosion of Certainty in the Theology of Second Generation Quakers' (M.Phil. Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2002).

constituted a major part. Here the Quaker experience of shame was much like that of Calvinists. It occurred as a result of the exposure of sins, and was considered as the prerequisite and impetus for sincere repentance. The in-breaking light of Christ played a critical role in provoking feelings of shame, because it was able to expose Quakers' 'inadequacy, emptiness of purpose, or well buried guilt', and compel them to repent sinful past and deny their totally-depraved selves.[147] As George Fox claimed, 'As the Light appeared, all appeared that is out of the Light, darkness, death, temptations, the unrighteous, the ungodly; all was manifest and seen in the Light.'[148]

Francis Howgill, an early leader of the Quaker movement, recorded his inward sense of trouble during the early stages of convincement:

As soon as I heard one declare that the Light of Christ in man was the way to Christ, I believed the eternal word of truth, and that of God in my conscience sealed to it… We all stood as condemned in our selves, and all saw our nakedness, and were all ashamed, though our glory was great in the world's eye, but all was vanity… As I turned my mind within to the Light of Jesus Christ, all the things that I had ever done were brought to remembrance… And all that ever I had done was judged and condemned, all things were accursed. My eyes were dim with crying, my flesh did fail of fatness, my bones were dried and my sinews shrunk. I became a proverb to all... I sought to cover myself any way, or with anything, but could not. I would have run anywhere to have hid myself, but there was nothing but weeping, and gnashing of teeth, and sorrow, and terror I roared out

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[147] Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England*, pp. 98-9.
[148] *The Journal of George Fox*, p. 14.

for the disquietness of my heart; and the kingdom was full of darkness.[149]

Howgill felt 'ashamed' because the in-breaking light illuminated his sinful past and made him aware that he was 'a proverb to all', and had no place to hide himself. The feeling of shame, together with other painful emotions such as sorrow and fear, led Howgill to a state of powerlessness and despair, which made him determine to suppress his carnal self and to surrender to God.

Similarly, in October 1654, John Banker, a sixteen year old young man, attended a Quaker meeting in Pardshaw, during which he experienced spiritual agony during convincement:

[T]he Lord's Power in the meeting, so seized upon me, that I was made to cry out in the bitterness of my soul, in a true sight and sense of my sins, that appeared exceeding sinful… I was smitten to the ground with the weight of God's judgment for sin and iniquity, that fell heavy upon me; and I was taken up by two friends. And Oh! the godly sorrow that did take hold of me, and sized upon me that night in the meeting; so that I thought in myself, everyone's conditions was better than mine… I being very much bowed down and perplexed, my sins being set in order before me; and the time I had spent in wildness and wantonness, out of the fear of God, in vanity, sport, and pastime, came into my view and remembrance.[150]

In this case, the author did not directly express whether he was feeling shame at the moment that God visited, but his inward agony and physical seizures did imply that he

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[149] *Early Quaker Writings 1650-1700*, eds Hugh Barbour and Arthur O. Roberts (Michigan, 1973), pp. 173-4.
[150] *Ibid.*, p. 183

was overwhelmed by a deep sense of humiliation, since he considered that God had discovered all of his sins and iniquities, and that 'everyone's condition was better' than his.

Many early Quakers kept similar accounts of this type of experience during the initial stages of convincement, and often used words and phrases such as 'smite down', 'wound', 'pierce', and even 'burn' to describe the in-breaking light of God. George Canby, for example, wrote that 'I fell down on the house floor as dead to all appearance as any clog or stone. When I came to sense again he had got me up in his arms; so that I can truly say I was smitten down to the ground by the living power of the Lord'.[151] In 1657, Richard Davies, a Welshpool hatter, wrote that the word of Lord 'was as a hammer and a fire, it was sharper than any two-edged sword, it pierced through our inward parts, it melted and brought us into tears, that there was a scarcely a dry eye among us.'[152] In his letter to Fox, the early Quaker preacher Richard Hubberthorne described 'the hand of the Lord' as the 'devouring fire', which was so 'hot and unquenchable' that 'nothing could live or pass through it'.[153] In these texts, Quakers did not directly mention the emotion of shame, and the inward and outward afflictions they described were not typical symptoms of shame. However, these examples demonstrate the power of the all-seeing light of Christ in spotlighting and reproving sins, and the painful nature of the early stages of convincement, which surely implied that shame was an unavoidable emotion of transforming Quakers.

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[151] Damrosch, *The Sorrow of the Quaker Jesus*, p. 108.
[152] Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 509.
[153] Barbour and Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings,* pp. 157-8.

Like Calvinists, the Quaker feeling of shame was not merely the result of understanding one's own sin, but also derived from an inward disposition to humiliation and abasement. Quaker writers taught that in order to be saved, people should first humble themselves and acknowledge their lowly status. George Fox urged people to 'keep thy mind down low, up to the Lord God; and deny thyself'.[154] Isaac Penington (1616-1679), an influential member of early Quaker movement, taught that 'when the meek, the lowly, the humble spirit is reached and raised, then the true love, the sweetness, the tenderness, the meekness must go forth over that'.[155] The early Quaker leader James Naylor claimed that God only favoured shamefacedness: 'your lofty looks shall be humbled, and your haughtiness bowed down; for now the Lord will exalt the humble and meek ones, that you have trodden upon; He will seek that which is lost, but will destroy the fat, and feed the strong with judgment.'[156] In 1688, William Dewsbury attended a Quaker meeting in London, in which he beseeched people 'to be meek and lowly' when waiting for the light of Christ, because God 'dwells with the humble, but he beholds the proud afar off'.[157] Elizabeth Bathurst, a second-generation Quaker apologist, also argued that during the visitation of the divine light, people should 'exercise in fear and trembling, together with Humility, Patience and Self-denial'. She saw this inward exercise of humiliation as a preparation for the remission of sin:

Before Remission of Sins comes to be known, there must be a centring down into

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[154] *Ibid.*, p. 347.
[155] *The Friends' Library: Comprising Journals, Doctrinal Treatises, and Other Writings of Members of the Religious Society of Friends*, eds William Evans and Thomas Evans (London, 1838), vol. 2, p. 282.
[156] James Nayler, *A Discovery of the First Wisdom from Beneath and the Second Wisdom from Above* (London, 1653), p. 31.
[157] *Friends Library,* vol. 2, p. 296.

the Manifestation of the Spirit of God within, which will bring down every

exalted Imagination, and every high Thing, and lay it Low, even to the Ground;

that so every Thought may be brought into Subjection to Jesus Christ.[158]

The idea that in order to unite with God in a state of glorification people should first afflict themselves with shame and humiliation was continually emphasised by eighteenth-century Quakers.[159] As this evidence reveals, Quakers seldom directly mentioned shame, but their discussions emphasising the necessity of self-abasement indicated that the emotion of shame, which was closely connected to a low self-esteem and a feeling of shrinking or of being small, a sensation that had to be experienced before one could be saved. If there was no shame, or if Quakers did not acknowledge their depraved and debased nature, they would not be able to purge their sins or fill themselves with the light of God.

Quakers often felt shame in the early stages of convincement because the light of Christ uncovered their sins, and made them aware that they were depraved and lowly individuals. An important question thus arises, namely how far the Quaker's inner light differed from conscience. Indeed, this is a question worthy of book-length research; even early Quakers themselves had 'split hairs into imperceptible slivers when trying to explain that, when they talked about the universal light in the conscience.'[160] Both Quakers and Calvinists saw conscience as the law of God engraved in the heart of human beings. The Calvinist writer Henry Stubbes regarded conscience as 'God's

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[158] *Hidden in Plain Sight: Quaker Women's Writings 1650-1700*, eds Mary Garman (Wallingford, 1996), pp. 404-4 and 417.
[159] For example, *Friends Library,* vol. 1, p. 228; vol. 2, p. 78, 313; vol. 11, p. 11, 191.
[160] Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, p. 109.

Deputy' and 'a Power of the soul', 'taking Notice, and bearing Witness of all Mans Thoughts, Words, and Actions'.[161] Similarly, the prominent Quaker theologian Robert Barclay defined conscience as 'knowledge which arises in man's heart from what agrees, contradicts, or is contrary to anything believed by him, whereby he becomes conscious to himself that he transgresses by doing that which he is persuaded he ought not to do'.[162] While both Quakers and Calvinists argued that a good conscience represented the law of God, they stressed the fallible nature of the conscience, arguing that it could be defiled and corrupted, and therefore should not be relied upon as 'the source of man's power' or an agent of salvation.[163] As Barclay claimed, 'the smiting of the conscience is sufficient to convince the heathen of sin and so to condemn and judge them: but not at all to help them to salvation' since conscience is essentially a natural facility related to human soul and self-will.[164] Like Calvinists who argued that human conscience should follow the guide of the Holy Spirit, Quakers claimed that conscience should be filled with the light of Christ. They all accepted the intellectual and moral values of a rightly enlightened conscience in leading people to a holy life. Thus, the relationship between human conscience and divine illumination is somewhat similar to content and container. Conscience is a site where the divine light should dwell. As a common Quaker phrase 'to the light of God in thy conscience' illustrates, 'the Light could shine through the conscience like a light in a lantern'.[165] For both religious groups, therefore, judging whether a conscience is good or evil depends completely on

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161 Stubbes, *Conscience the Best Friend,* p. 5.
162 Robert Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity* (Philadelphia, 1848), p. 143.
163 Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England*, pp. 111-2.
164 Barclay, *An Apology*, p. 117.
165 Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England*, pp. 111-2.

the nature of its contents or fillings: a conscience filled by the spirit of God is a powerful moral faculty which can spotlight and reprove sins and exert on its host a painful feeling of shame, but if the conscience is asleep or corrupt, this leads to a frozen and shameless heart.

However, there is a sharp disparity in belief between Calvinists and Quakers regarding the functions of Holy Spirit or divine light. For Calvinists, keeping a good conscience by following the guide of Holy Spirit would contribute to holiness of life, but make no contribution to salvation. This is because, according to the doctrine of double predestination, God has already appointed a number of people to be saved through his grace, and at the same time ordained the remainder to eternal damnation for their sins. Calvinists argued that the fall of humanity was permanent, and that those who were elected would not experience the Kingdom of Heaven in this world. As there was no easy way to enjoy a certain assurance of salvation, Calvinists regarded shame as an important lifelong emotion for remaining pious. In contrast, Quakers, by opposing the doctrine of predestination, argued that every person could be saved by obeying the divine light. Unlike Calvinists who acknowledged the usefulness of the human will in conducting spiritual exercises such as self-examination and repentance, Quakers insisted that the carnal self and the free will should be thoroughly suppressed, so that the conscience could be entirely filled by the light. This enabled people to experience unspeakable peace and joy of salvation.

Thus the Quaker convincement or re-birth may be seen as a process of self-denial. Damrosch describes this model of salvation as a transformation from 'dualism' to an

'unconflicted monism'.[166] Rebirth in the light requires the death of the self and its natural will.[167] A convinced Quaker thus has no way to understand the natural self and world, but submits to the leading of the divine light. As Richard Hubberthorne claimed, 'when the Lord reveals any of his ways within man, man must die and know his own ways no more, but must be led in a way which he knows not, contrary to his will, contrary to his wisdom, contrary to his reason, and to his carnal mind. For none of these must enter, but must be cast out into the lake which burns.'[168] Barclay likewise urged people to 'become a fool for Christ's sake', so that God can teach them in their own hearts.[169] Isaac Penington, meanwhile, kept an account of this inward experience of 'death' and 'foolishness' during convincement:

> I have met with the true peace, the true righteousness, the true holiness, the true rest of the soul, the everlasting habitation, which the redeemed dwell in… The Lord has broken the man's part in me, and I am a worm and no man before him. I have no strength to do any good or service for him, nay I cannot watch over or preserve myself. I feel daily that I keep not alive my own soul, but am weaker before men, yea weaker in my spirit (as in myself) than ever I have been. But I cannot but utter to the praise of my God, that I feel his arm stretched out for me; and my weakness (which I feel in myself) is not my loss, but advantage before him.[170]

Having a sense of self was necessary for feeling shame, chiefly because shame was, as

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[166] Damrosch, *The Sorrow of the Quaker Jesus*, p. 109.
[167] Gwyn, *The Covenant Crucified*, p. 100.
[168] *Early Quaker Writings*, p. 158.
[169] Barclay, *An Apology*, pp. 175-6.
[170] *Early Quaker Writings*, p. 234.

we have seen in the introductory chapter, an evaluative emotion concerning the image of the self. Once the sense of self was totally rejected by a convinced Quaker, he would, at least during a period of time, not experience any self-evaluative emotions such as shame, pride and guilt, but submit fully to the leading of the inward light, and share glory with God.

The inward state of 'shamelessness' was further justified by the Quaker doctrine of perfectionism. Believing that the perfect, infallible Christ had superseded the old, carnal self, convinced Quakers claimed that they were liberated from sin in this world, and therefore had nothing to be ashamed of. This state of perfection is appropriately described by Fox:

> Now was I come up in spirit through the flaming sword into the paradise of God… I knew nothing but pureness, and innocence, and righteousness, being renewed up into the image of God by Christ Jesus, so that I say I was come up to the state of Adam which he was in before he fell… But I was immediately taken up in spirit, to see into another or more steadfast state than Adam's in innocence, even into a state in Christ Jesus, that should never fall.[171]

James Naylor commented that Fox's perfect state 'is born of the heavenly, is heavenly, spiritual, eternal, and incorruptible; which is the state of the new man, which of God is begotten of the divine nature.'[172] A converted Quaker's self-image became the image of perfect Christ; what he or she had said or done was believed as the expression of the

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[171] *The Journal of George Fox*, p. 27.
[172] James Neale, *Love to the Lost: and a Hand Held Forth to the Helpless, to Lead out of the Dark* (London, 1650), p. 35.

divine. In 1650, Fox was on trial at Derby on a charge of blasphemy. When Fox was asked by the magistrates whether he was sanctified, Fox replied: '"Sanctified? Yes" for I was in the Paradise of God'. Being asked whether he had no sin, Fox replied that 'Christ my Saviour hath taken away my sin, and in him there is no sin'.[173] Naylor explained that the old, carnal George Fox 'was denied as dust; but the Spirit that spoken in him is equal with God'.[174] William Dewsbury kept a similar account of this innocent state after convincement: 'so through the righteous law of life in Christ Jesus I was made free and clean from the body of sin and death; and through these great trials my garment is washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb.'[175] While the extinction of selfhood left no room for self-evaluative emotion, the birth of this perfect self further convinced Quakers that they were free from sin and had nothing to be ashamed of. Being either foolish or perfect thus contributed to a sense of shamelessness, which constitutes a distinctive aspect of Quaker spirituality.

Convinced Quakers believed that they had entered into a perfect, sinless state through the leading of light within. But as time went by, enabling this perfect state to remain perfect is by no means an easy task. This was a real problem for Quakers, because 'the purged, solemn, and selfless self does have to go on living in the fallen world'.[176] What would happen if a convinced Quaker committed a sin again? Would he feel shame? Or would he continually insist on his innocence? Anti-Quaker pamphlets kept many accounts of Quakers who committed sinful behaviours without

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[173] *The Journal of George Fox,* p. 55.
[174] James Neale, *A Discovery of the Man of Sin* (London, 1655), pp. 12-3.
[175] Dewsbury, *Discoverie of the Great Enmitie of the Serpent against the Seed of the Woman* (Calvert, 1655), pp. 13-4, 16, 19, cited in Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, p. 83.
[176] Damrosch, *The Sorrow of the Quaker Jesus*, p. 111.

feeling shame. For example, Nicholas Kate, a Quaker in Harwell of Oxfordshire, who was reported to have appeared 'starke naked in a most immodest manner, even beyond the Pagans, and so walked through a long Street' of Newberry, asserted that 'any woman was as free to him as his wife'.[177] A Bristol Quaker likewise claimed that 'he was confident of his perfect holiness and on that account went to bed with a woman, and yet afterwards excused himself saying, there was a necessary for it, there was no other spare bed in the house.'[178] No matter whether these accounts were true or not, at least they indicate that the Quaker idea of perfection faced the danger of being abused as an excuse for sin. George Fox insisted that converted Quakers were perfect and would never fall. The only way to explain the repeated sin is that he or she was not a true Quaker at all, and therefore should be driven out from the Quaker community. But simply refusing to admit a wrongdoer's Quaker identity could not prevent Quakers from committing sin again. Facing the shortcomings of the Quaker doctrine and the criticisms of anti-Quakers, later Quaker theologians modified Fox's ideas about absolute infallibility or perfectionism so that to allow for Quakers who fell short. Barclay, for example, argued that there remained 'a possibility of sinning', if converted Quakers did not 'most diligently and watchfully attend unto the Lord'.[179] Bathurst similarly maintained that Quakers are infallible only if 'they are guided by the Infallible Spirit, namely, the Spirit of the Lord'; in other words, convinced Quakers might lose innocence if they failed to obey the leading of the divine light.[180]

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[177] Thomas Underhill, *Hell Broke Loose: or An History of the Quakers both Old and New* (London, 1660), p. 37

[178] *Ibid*., p. 38.

[179] Barclay, *An Apology*, p. 233.

[180] *Hidden in Plain Sight*, p. 379.

As convincement could not protect Quakers from sinning again, the state of perfection was temporary in nature. As Barbour wrote, 'new life cannot be accounted for as mere commitment or release from tension, since long period of struggle preceded and interrupted the feeling of peace.'[181] This suggests that the emotion of shame was unlikely to be extinct after convincement, but was merely restrained or superseded by the overwhelming joy and peace of salvation. Quakers committing sins would still feel shame. And like Calvinists, they embraced shame and humiliation, regarding them as an important way to resume piety and return to God. As the early Quaker apologist Thomas Ellwood (1639-1714) wrote, in order to 'rightly return, and be sensibly received into the unity of the body again', sinning Quakers should 'honestly and openly acknowledge their outgoings, and take condemnation and shame' to themselves.[182] The eighteenth-century Quaker missionary Patience Brayton recorded her continual inward struggle with sin and temptation. In a meeting at Kirklington, after keeping herself 'in the low valley of humiliation', Brayton was 'filled again with a renewal of divine goodness'.[183] On his way to Ireland, Samuel Neale, an eighteenth-century Irish Quaker minister, found that his 'weakness and frailties were great', and that he 'was irresolute with respect to standing against temptation and the allurements of sin, and sin-pleasing pleasure'. In such a state of qualm, Naylor reached Cork where he attended a meeting:

[M]y state was so opened to that highly favoured instrument in the Lord's hand…

that all I had done seemed to have been unfolded... I was as one smitten to the

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[181] Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England*, p. 108.
[182] *Friends Library,* vol. 7. p. 398.
[183] *Ibid.*, vol. 10, p. 466.

ground, dissolved in tears, and without spirit. This was a visitation from the Most

High, beyond all others that I had as yet witnessed: I was so wrought upon by the

power and Spirit of the holy Jesus, that like Saul, I was ready to cry out; 'Lord,

what wouldest thou have me to do?' I was almost ashamed to be seen, being so

bedewed with tears, and slunk away from the meeting, to get into a private place.[184]

The Quaker disposition to shame and self-humiliation has changed little over time. In

26 May 1836, the 78-year-old Mary Hagger wrote, 'sitting up in bed, my mind was very

unexpectedly by these words, "The Lord knows them that are his," which affected me.

I said in my heart, what have I to return for such favours; surely nothing but shame and

confusion of face!' Several days later, Hagger recorded that her 'short comings' and

'many omissions and commissions' caused her 'many hours of sorrow and bitter cries

to the Creator for forgiveness', and that she 'was strengthened again' through true

repentance 'in the days of humiliation'.[185] All of these examples show that convinced

Quakers still kept a watchful eye on, and always felt ashamed of, sins and spiritual

laxity. More importantly, this evidence demonstrates that the emotion of shame

provided sinful Quakers with a powerful impetus to repent and reunite themselves with

God. Therefore, Quaker convincement was not something that was experienced once

for all time, but rather, was a repeated spiritual exercise which was required throughout

the life.

Convinced Quakers not only kept a strict moral line to demonstrate their salvation

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[184] *Ibid.*, vol. 6, pp. 3-4.
[185] *Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 460.

and triumph over sins, but engaged themselves in 'the Lamb's War'.[186] In this war,

Quaker missionaries strove for 'calling "the world" towards a new mode of religious

experience' and to convince those still shut up in unbelief that they could be saved

through the leading of indwelling light of God.[187] Believing that they were filled with

the divine light and guided by immediate revelation from God, Quakers saw themselves

as a 'spokesman for God' or 'publishers of the Truth' just like those great prophets and

apostles in the Old and New Testament eras.[188] Quakers broadcast the prophet's

message not only through words, but also by 'signs and wonders' in a graphic way.[189]

In most cases, these signs functioned as a warning, aiming to 'turn men from evil' and

'to produce repentance so that the terrible threat would not really be allowed to take

place'.[190] According to Moore, Quakers' signs were designed to represent 'the fall of

the godless society and the coming of God's kingdom'.[191] Perhaps the most typical and

unusual sign provided by early Quakers was the practice of going naked. In a letter to

Quakers of Ulverston in 1652, George Fox wrote that 'the Lord made one to go naked

among you, a figure of thy nakedness, and of your nakedness, and as a sign amongst

you before your destruction cometh, that you might see that you were naked and not

covered with the truth'.[192] During the following ten years, the practice of going naked

as a sign became a recurrent phenomenon, which constituted a remarkable aspect of the

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[186] Gwyn, *The Covenant Crucified*, pp. 111-8; Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism*, p. 29.
[187] Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism*, p. 24.
[188] Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 151.
[189] Kenneth L. Carroll, 'Early Quakers and "Going Naked as a Sign"', *Quaker History*, vol. 67 (1978), pp. 72-5.
[190] *Ibid.*, p. 76.
[191] Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, p. 126.
[192] Cited in Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 148.

early Quaker movement in England.

The activity of going naked as a sign offers another perspective on the study of the Quaker sense of shame. Did early Quakers who had gone naked feel shame for their behaviour? If not, how did they overcome the emotion of shame? Although going naked did not always mean complete nudity, contemporary people, especially critics of the Quakers, nevertheless regarded it as immodest and shameful. 'They are the most immodest, obscene, people in the world', one author condemned, 'if all the Stories of their women's stripping themselves to the very skin, in the presence of men, and of men's so doing in the presence of women of late years [were collected], they would be enough to make a large Volume.'[193] It was recorded that in the summer of 1659, a Quaker in Colchester 'went stark naked all through the Market: And another day, which was the Lords day, in the same posture entered into the greatest assembly that was in that Town… and for a long time act the part of a Speaker'.[194] In 1653, a man and a woman, calling themselves Adam and Eve, 'went for some while as some uncivilized heathen doe, discovering their nakedness to the eye of every beholder, and when they were publickly examined at the Assizes for their brutish practice, the man wickedly affirmed that the power of God was upon him, he was commanded to do it.'[195] Similarly, in Westmorland, 'a mad man naked all but his shirt, [walked] through Kendall crying, Repent, Repent, wo, wo, come out of Sodome.'[196] It is apparent that contemporary observers were shocked and disturbed by naked Quakers; they

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[193] Underhill, *Hell Broke Loose*, p. 31.
[194] *Ibid.*, p. 35.
[195] Francis Higginson, *A Brief Relation of the Irreligion of the Northern Quakers* (London, 1653), p. 30.
[196] *Ibid.*, p. 30.

denounced these Quakers and their deviant behaviour as 'Signs of the Prodigious Delusions of the Devil' and 'Enthusiastically-Madness'.[197] For example, Charles Leslie condemned a Quaker for the following reasons:

> [I]nstead of being ashamed of such a Beast, he there blasphemously compares this Brutality of his to Isaiah's being commanded to go Naked for a Sign to Egypt. Not knowing that the sackcloth or Garment of Hair which Isaiah was Commanded to Loose from his Loyns, it being worn Girt close about the Loyns, was a Rough sort of a Mantle or Upper Garment Made of Hair.

Leslie then concluded that 'if a man shou'd Strip off his Cloaths, to Fight, Run, Work, or to do anything upon which he was very Intent, this was called being Naked, and that Shamelessly too'.[198]

Did these Quaker prophets really know no shame when going naked for a sign? Some naked Quakers described God's command and their activities as a 'burden' and 'sacrifice', which implied their reluctance and shamefacedness.[199] Indeed, as James Naylor observed, many naked Quakers acted contrary to their own wills.[200] Robert Barclay, for example, wrote that 'the Command of the Lord concerning this thing (going naked) came unto me that very Morning as I awakened, and the Burden thereof was very Great and seemed almost insupportable unto me'. Feeling that 'the Agony of Spirit'

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[197] Norman Penney (ed.), *The First Publishers of Truth* (London, 1907), p. 367; Higginson, *A Brief Relation*, pp. 29-30; Charles Leslie, *A Defence of a Book Intituled, The Snake in the Grass in Reply to Several Answers put out to it by George Whithead, Joseph Wyeth, &c* (London, 1700), pp. 47-8; Thomas Weld, *A Further Discovery of that Generation of Men Called Quakers* (1654), pp. 84-6.

[198] Leslie, *A Defence of a Book*, pp. 42-3.

[199] Solomon Eccles, *Signes are From the Lord to a People or Nation, to Forewarn Them of Some Eminent Judgment near at Hand* (London, 1663), single sheet.

[200] Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 150.

was 'great', Barclay 'besought the Lord with tears' that this command might pass away from him.[201] On another occasion, when God commanded William Simpson to go naked as a sign, Simpson wrote: 'I had rather have died than gone on this service'.[202] Solomon Eccles also took a note of his shame with regard to God's command: 'I can truly say that I have strove much, and besought the Lord, that this going naked might be taken from me.'[203]

No matter how great the inward shame and anguish were, these Quakers eventually obeyed God's command and stripped themselves in public to broadcast divine messages. The primary reason that Quakers were able to overcome their feelings of shame and fear was that these emotions represented a timid conscience, which convinced Quakers that their self-will had impeded the work of the divine light, and therefore should be suppressed by all means. As Barbour claims, 'if a consciously selfish motive opposed the impulse, this provided all the greater reason for proceeding.'[204] Obeying the guide of the light was not shameful; if Quakers felt shame for the call, it meant that they were ashamed of God. Moreover, convinced Quakers believed that their carnal self and free will were dead, or had been superseded by Christ; therefore, as the Quaker prophet Thomas Holme claimed, 'it is not I but God that goeth Naked.'[205] The sense of self is crucial for feeling shame since shame is an emotion that involves a judgement on the self. According to Damrosch, 'the enacting of the sign of nakedness expressed a

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[201] Robert Barclay, *A Seasonable Warning and Serious Exhortation to, and Expostulation with, the Inhabitants of Aberdene Concerning this Present Dispensation and Day of Gods Living Visitation Towards Them* (1672), pp. 1-2.

[202] William Simpson, *Going Naked a Signe* (Wilson, 1666), a broadside.

[203] Eccles, *Signes are From the Lord to a People or Nation*, a single sheet.

[204] Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England*, pp. 116-7.

[205] Weld, *A Further Discovery*, p. 84.

renunciation of selfhood that made ordinary shame irrelevant.'[206] The command of God was irresistible, but obeying it brought Quakers a sense of ease and joy. The burden of shame was a temporary one; it would be swept away once Quakers carried out their mission. As Thomas Briggs, a Cardiff Quaker, wrote: 'when I was Naked in the streets, the Burden was taken off me: that I said in myself, how easy am I now! It is good to obey the voice of the Lord.'[207]

Another, and possibly a more direct impetus for Quakers to conquer the sense of shame was offered by a much stronger emotion, that of anger. Early Quakers always felt angry when they witnessed what they believed to be sin, or when they felt themselves (and the Quaker community) to have been wrongly treated by religious opponents. Hence, going naked as a sign was a warning or protest against ungodly behaviour and religious persecution. One day in 1658, Elizebeth Fletcher and her companion Elizebeth Levens, two Quakers from Kendal, were publicly humiliated in the city of Oxford. It is recorded that 'the Black tribe of Scholars and magistrates daggered them first through a dirty pond or pool, afterwards had them to a pump, and holding their mouths to the pump endeavoured to pump water thereunto with other shameful abuses'. This humiliation enraged Fletcher, who 'went naked through the Streets of that City' as a sign to condemn those hypocritical scholars, and to warn them that 'the Lord would strip them off, so that their Nakedness should Appear'.[208] In 1667, officials raided a secret Quaker meeting in London and killed Quakers and wounded

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[206] Damrosch, *The Sorrow of the Quaker Jesus*, p. 165.
[207] Thomas Briggs, *An Account of Some of the Travels and Sufferings of that Faithful Servant of the Lord, Thomas Briggs* (London, 1685), p. 8.
[208] Penney (ed.), *The First Publishers of Truth*, pp. 258-9.

several others. The incident stimulated Solomon Eccles to go naked 'through Bartholomew Fair at Smithfield as a sign'.[209] Samuel Pepys, who witnessed Eccles's behaviour, wrote that 'a man, a Quaker, came naked through the Westminster Hall, only very civilly tied about the privates to avoid scandal, and with a chafing-dish of fire and brimstone burning upon his head, crying, Repent! Repent!'[210] In fact, it was not the first time that Solomon Eccles went naked; all of his actions occurred when he disagreed with the iniquity and wickedness that he had encountered. One day, when Eccles saw other persons' 'filthy shows' and 'cursed practices', he 'immediately prepared to lay down [his] body a sacrifice for God' to go naked for a sign. On another occasion, he went naked in order to warn 'all drunkards and swinish men and women'.[211] From other sources, we may read something Eccles did not mention. For example, he once besmeared his elbows with excrement and went naked to a church at Aldermanbury in London during the service. In the church he shouted: 'I might as well come into the Church with that Filth in my Hands, as the Minister with a Bible'.[212] Here, excrement was used as a means to humiliate the clergyman and his Bible, showing that it was great indignation and hostility to Quaker enemies that forced Eccles to go naked. Going naked was a warning, a denouncement and a protest, which could not be carried out without the impetus of strong emotions. If we have to ask when Quakers experienced shame while going naked, it might be answered that they did feel shame

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[209] Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, p. 25.

[210] Samuel Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, available at http://www.pepysdiary.com/, 29 July 1667. The digital version is based on *The Diary of Samuel Pepys MA. FRS*, ed. Henry Wheathley (10 vols, 1893-9). Hereafter cited as Pepys, *Diary*, with date of entry. Eccles, *Signes are From the Lord to a People or Nation*.

[211] Eccles, *Signes are From the Lord to a People or Nation*, a single sheet.

[212] Leslie, *A Defence of a Book*, p. 42; Higginson, *A Brief Relation of the Irreligion*, p. cccxxii.

when they witnessed, as Eccles lamented, 'how greatly is God dishonoured by this provoking Generation'.[213] This feeling of shame then switched to anger, and became an uncompromising motivating force that encouraged Quakers to provide a sign.

Although there was significant disagreement over theological issues between Quakers and Calvinists, they had many similarities in experiencing and interpreting shame. Quakers regarded shame as a moral emotion which was crucial for keeping holiness of life. They often experienced shame during the early stages of convincement. It was the indwelling light of Christ that produced this painful feeling, since the light uncovered Quakers' sinful past and made them aware of their debased nature. However, the Quaker sense of shame had distinctive features. Believing that they were in union with God and living a sinless, perfect life convinced Quakers that they had entered into a state of shamelessness. This state was, however, a temporary one, because they had to go on living in a fallen world, and face the danger of backsliding. Therefore, shame and self-humiliation were still important spiritual experiences that every person should have in order to resist sin and stay with God. Early Quakers were notorious for their activity of going naked. While Quakers did feel ashamed of being naked, they saw it as a false emotion. The requirement of self-denial, the leading of the light within, and indignation against sin and their religious enemies provided Quakers with the power to overcome shame and timidity.

The practice of going naked as a sign nevertheless decreased rapidly after 1662.[214] Eighteenth-century Quakers regarded their eristic predecessors and their boisterous

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[213] Eccles, *Signes are From the Lord to a People or Nation*, a single sheet.
[214] Carroll, 'Early Quakers and "Going Naked as a Sign"', p. 86.

behaviours as odd and inappropriate, placing more emphasis on looking inwardly through private spiritual searching in silence. In this changing context, the significance of shame as a moral and private emotion was continually stressed by Quakers.

'Holy Shame Shall Warm My Heart': the Methodist Sense of Shame

The Methodist movement that began in the late 1730s had a major impact on eighteenth-century Britain's religious culture. The rise of Methodism can be seen as a critical response to the coldness and apathy of the Church of England.[215] Methodist ministers such as John Wesley and George Whitefield, despite their respective Arminian and Calvinistic wings, advocated an affectionate and heart-felt faith, and saw an outpouring of emotions as a significant sign of piety. Although emotive religiosity did not exclusively belong to Methodism, a heightened sense of shame was nevertheless central to the Methodist movement. This section will first explore the Methodist attitudes towards shame by seeing how ministers impressed the emotion on their flocks, and then discuss why Methodist outpourings of shame were increasingly questioned as enthusiastic madness and hypocrisy. This section finds that, as with Calvinists and Quakers, Methodists regarded shame as an important moral emotion which was indispensable in everyday devotional exercise. Methodists and Quakers had similar

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[215] For the general history of eighteenth-century British Methodism and its religious, social, and cultural influences, see for example: Randy L. Maddox and Jason E. Vickers, *The Cambridge Companion to John Wesley* (Cambridge, 2009); G. M. Ditchfield, *The Evangelical Revival* (London, 1998); W. R. Ward, *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening* (Cambridge, 1992); Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought 1785–1865* (Oxford, 1991); D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London, 1989); Henry D. Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism* (London, 1989); David Hempton, *Methodism and Politics in British Society 1750–1850* (London, 1984); J. D. Walsh, 'Origins of the Evangelical Revival', in G. V. Bennett and J. D. Walsh (eds), *Essays in Modern English Church History: In Memory of Norman Sykes* (London, 1966).

spiritual experience during conversion; but unlike convinced Quakers who believed that they were sinless and perfect, converted Methodists still acknowledged their sinful, fallible nature. While Methodists, like seventeen-century Calvinists and Quakers, embraced shame through introspection and wholehearted prayer, it is noteworthy that Methodist ministers placed a particular emphasis on evoking and inculcating a sense of shame through passionate preaching.

Early Methodist preachers were experts in using enthusiastic sermons to provoke the excessive feelings of their hearers. John Nelson, a lay preacher and John Wesley's principle assistant in Yorkshire, suggested, 'no other preaching will do for Yorkshire, but the old sort that comes like a thunderclap upon the conscience. Fine preaching does more harm than good here.'[216] Provoking a congregation to weeping was a welcome consequence of such 'thunderclap' preaching. In order to prompt their listeners to spiritual tears, Methodist preachers, most notably George Whitefield, often moved and wept themselves during sermons. One of Whitfield's hearers wrote:

> I hardly ever knew him go through a sermon without weeping, more or less, and I truly believe his were the tears of sincerity. His voice was often interrupted by his affection… I could hardly bear such unreserved use of tears, and the scope he gave to his feelings, for sometimes he exceedingly wept, stamped loudly and passionately, and was frequently so overcome, that for a few seconds, you would suspect he never could recover.[217]

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[216] Cited in Edward Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1991), p. 31.
[217] William Jay, *Memoirs of the Life and Character of the late Rev. Cornelius Winter* (2nd edn, London, 1809), pp. 27-8. Cited in Thomas Dixon, 'Enthusiasm Delineated: Weeping as a Religious Activity in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in *Litteraria Pragensia*, vol. 22 (2012), p. 63.

Whitefield encouraged people to shed tears, since 'the white gutters made by their tears' were a proof of 'being affected' and the working of God: 'your tears and deep attention are an evidence that the Lord God is amongst us of a truth.'[218]

The outcome of emotive preaching was remarkable. James Lackington (1746-1815), a notable bookseller in Britain, recalled that Whitefield 'had a perfect command over the passions of his audience': 'In every sermon that I heard him preach, he would sometimes make them ready to burst with laughter, and the next moment drown them in tears; indeed it was scarce possible for the most guarded to escape the effect.'[219] The Scottish evangelical preacher James Robe (1688-1753) noted that 'Mr. Whitefield's Sermons were attended with much power… several crying out, and a very great but decent weeping and mourning was observable through the auditory.'[220] The sermons preached by Robe himself had a similar effect, 'many being so deeply affected in hearing, that frequently a general Sound of Weeping, through the whole Congregation rises so high, that it much drowns my Voice.'[221] John Gillies (1712–1796), another Scottish Methodist minister, recorded that during a sermon to a large congregation, listeners 'attended with great horror and trembling, and loud weeping… many did continue crying in the most doleful manner along the road in their way home.'[222] On

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[218] John Gillies, *Memoirs of the Rev. George Whitefield* (Middletown, 1839), p. 39. Cite in Dixon, 'Enthusiasm Delineated', pp. 63-4; George Whitefield, *The Works of the Reverend George Whitefield* (London, 1772), vol. 5, p. 371.

[219] James Lackington, *Memoirs of James Lackington, who from the Humble Station of a Journeyman Shoemaker, by Great Industry, Amassed a Large Fortune, and Now Lives in a Splendid Stile, in London* (Newburgh, 1796), p. 121.

[220] James Robe, *Narratives of the Extraordinary Work of the Spirit of God, at Cambuslang, Kilsyth, &c began 1742* (Glasgow, 1790), p. 35.

[221] James Robe, *A Faithful Narrative of the Extraordinary Work of the Spirit of God at Kilsyth* (London, 1742-3), p. 99.

[222] John Gillies, *Historical Collections relating to Remarkable Periods of the Success of the Gospel, and Eminent Instruments Employed in Promoting It* (Glasgow, 1754), vol. 2, p. 141.

May 13th 1758, John Nelson attended Wesley's sermon and remarked: 'I never saw a congregation so affected. Most of the people were in tears, some for joy, and some from a sense of their sins.'[223] One night in January 1782, William Black, a prominent Wesleyan minister in Nova Scotia, noticed that there was a young man who 'trembled greatly, and cried' outside the house wherein he was preaching. When Black went out of the house, he found that the young man was 'kneeling on the snow, crying and praying in the bitterness of his soul.'[224]

The extremity of tears shed by both preachers and flocks was not exclusively a Methodist phenomenon; it may be seen as a revival of seventeenth-century puritan and nonconformist traditions.[225] Early Methodists approved of such excessive weeping, since it embodied the sense of shame required by sincere repentance and conversion. It should be noted that shame was, of course, not the only emotion that led to tears. Methodists usually shed tears of grief, fear, and joy for reasons of either anxiety about eternal damnation or gratitude to God's blessing. In most cases, these emotions coexisted and were linked with each other. But it is clear that Methodist preachers placed particular emphasis on experiencing shame. They claimed that 'fear and shame were the immediate effects of sin'; but while people afflicted with a sense of fear were scared by the wrath of God and the terror of hell, a sense of shame and humiliation urged them to have 'a deep view into their original Guilt and Pollution' and 'abase

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[223] *The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers,* vol. 1, p. 252.
[224] *Ibid.,* vol. 1, p. 263.
[225] Bernard Capp, '"Jesus Wept" But did the Englishman? Masculinity and Emotion in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, vol. 224 (2014), pp. 75-108, especially 95-102. I would like to thank Bernard for allowing me to read this essay before it was published.

themselves and repent in Dust and Ashes'.[226] The early Methodist minister John Cennick (1718-1755) stated that 'whosoever then here examines himself and finds he is not in the faith, let him with tears and shame, confess it before our Saviour'.[227] Besides seeing shame as grievous reflection on sins, Methodists also emphasised the importance of shame as an inward disposition to self-humiliation and abasement. As John Wesley wrote, 'it is great wisdom to esteem ourselves nothing.'[228] Thomas Scott (1747-1821), a prominent Anglican evangelical, stressed the importance of self-humiliation, claiming that humility 'may be considered as most essential to the Christian temper', and that people should see themselves 'to be as nothing before the infinite Creator'.[229] Furthermore, Methodists saw the sense of shame and humiliation as a sign of grace and salvation. According to Philip Doddridge, a prominent eighteenth-century non-conformist minister whose evangelical writings and hymns made a great contribution to the Methodist movement, 'vain are all your religious hopes, if there has not been a cordial humiliation before the presence of God for all your sins'. 'If God purposes finally to save you,' wrote Doddridge, 'he will humble you by repeated disappointments till he teaches you better. You will be ashamed of one scheme and effort, and of another, till you settle upon the true basis.'[230]

While Methodist preachers emphasised the importance of shame, they did not

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[226] John Cennick, *The Fall and Redemption. Being the Substance of a Sermon preached at Ballynahone in the County of Tyrone in Ireland* (Dublin, 1754), p. 6; Robe, *A Faithful Narrative*, p. 111.
[227] John Cennick, *The Danger of Infidelity; or, the Necessity of a Living Faith in Christ. Being the Substance of a Discourse delivered in Bristol* (London, 1791), p. 13.
[228] John Wesley, *Instructions for Christians* (London, 1800), p. 291.
[229] Thomas Scott, *Essays on the Most Important Subjects in Religion* (London, 1800), p. 331.
[230] Philip Doddridge, *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul* (London, 1796), pp. 165, 196.

ignore the value of fear. They stressed that the fear of the Lord was the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10), and that in order to provoke shame, the proud heart should first be terrified.[231] A usual way of threatening people was to inculcate them with horrendous or supernatural images of a furious God, the final judgement, a horrific hell, through enthusiastic preaching. The Methodist lay preacher Nathaniel Snip wrote that he threatened his listeners 'with everlasting Brimstone and Fire in case they believed not themselves to be in a State of Perdition'.[232] James Robe, meanwhile, once asked his listeners what they felt during sermons, and 'they told me that they were under dreadful apprehensions of the terrible wrath of God, due to them for their sins, especially for their slighting of Jesus Christ by unbelief'.[233] As Nathaniel Hurst, an auditor of Methodist sermons, said: 'I used to think that the ground whereon I stood was hot under me which made me almost to tremble and to think if the ground should open and swallow me up I should perish forever.' When going to the bed at night, Mary Ramsay 'felt the pangs of hell and misery', and feared that she 'should never awake'. Similarly, Sarah Middleton noted that 'I felt my self so vile that I thought hell was ready to swallow me up.'[234] Nobody would doubt the success of early Methodist preachers in awakening and frightening their flocks' consciences by preaching the terror of damnation. According to Bruce Hindmarsh, 'with this first awakening of conscience

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[231] Wesley, *Instructions for Christians*, p. 48; *The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers*, vol. 1, p. 262.

[232] Cited in Albert M. Lyles, *Methodism Mocked, The Satiric Reaction to Methodism in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1960), p. 77.

[233] Robe, *Narratives of the Extraordinary Work of the Spirit of God,* p. 85.

[234] The examples of Hurst, Ramsay and Middleton are cited in D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative, Spiritual Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2008), p. 140.

typically came a fear of hell, and this was followed in due course by a more evangelical shame for having offended God.'[235]

Like their seventeenth-century predecessors, Methodist preachers saw God as the shaming audience because he could discover every secret sin. God was 'the most vigilant overlooker of all', Doddridge warned, 'he is continually near you, wherever you are, and wherever you are employed, by day or by night', even if you can 'conceal evils from others, you could not but know they were open to him.'[236] Doddridge recorded his overwhelming sorrow and shame when he realised that God had witnessed, and was angry at his spiritual laxity and sins: 'Alas, Lord, whither am I fallen! Thine eye sees me still; but Oh how unlike what it once saw me! Cold and insensible as I am, I must blush on the reflection. Thou see me in secret, and see me often amusing myself with trifles in those seasons, which I used solemnly to devote to thine immediate service.'[237] Besides convincing their flocks of the power of surveillance by God, it is noteworthy that early Methodist preachers could provoke feelings of shame in their listeners by placing them 'in the story as living actors', and making them find 'themselves individuated and addressed in ways that seemed to specify them uniquely'.[238] When John Nelson attended a sermon preached by John Wesley, he was overwhelmed with shame for feeling that Wesley singled him out and spoke to him by name:

When he began to speak, his words made me tremble. I thought he spoke to no

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[235] Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative*, p. 202.
[236] Doddridge, *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, p. 22, 328.
[237] *Ibid.*, p. 300.
[238] Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative,* p. 143, 208.

one but me, and I durst not look up; for I imagined all the people were looking at me. I was ashamed to show my face, expecting God would make me a public example, either by letting the earth open and swallow me up, or by striking me dead.[239]

Nelson's experience was typical; in his study of evangelical conversion narratives, Hindmarsh offers many similar examples which demonstrate Methodist preachers' capacity to impose shame on their flocks by individual and personalised ways of preaching. For example, Thomas Cooper wrote after hearing John Wesley's sermon: 'I thought I was the person he made his discourse upon for he told me all that every [thing] I did. I was so ashamed of my selves.' On another occasion, when Charles Wesley preached a sermon on adultery, one of his hearers Samuel Webb felt that his well-buried sins were exposed. Thus, he 'could do not to make a disturbance before the sermon was over'. Similarly, Maria Price despised herself as 'a dark dead stony hearted damned unbelieving Pharisee' because she felt that Charles Wesley was able to read her mind and see her guilt.[240]

As well as skilful ways of preaching, hymns were widely used by Methodists to heighten the spiritual sense of shame. One does not have to search very far to find that 'shame' was one of keywords of the lyrics of Methodist hymns. Lamenting about the shame and sinfulness of the self and crying for the mercy of God were integral parts of hymns. These hymns were produced as a kind of sermon or an exemplary prayer,

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[239] *The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers,* vol. 1, p. 16.
[240] Examples of Thomas Cooper, Samuel Webb, and Maria Price are cited in Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative,* pp. 144-5; For other similar examples see pp.139-58 and 208.

teaching people the right way of confessing sins and communicating with God. Warning that 'confusion, shame, and misery' were due outcomes of 'loudly-crying sins', Methodist hymn writers stressed the necessity of shamefacedness in confession, and urged people to 'sink down with shame before sacred Jesus's Name' and 'blush for shame at his pierced feet'.[241] Thus one of Charles Wesley's hymns reads 'let me feel my load of shame, / And groan my want of love: / Low in the deepest deep / My humbled spirit lay, / And give me there to cry, and weep / My pensive life away.'[242] In another hymn, Charles Wesley wrote: 'Base wretch that I am! / With sorrow and shame / The sin I confess / Which robbed me of all my sweet comfort and peace.'[243] Methodist hymn-writers regarded feelings of shame as a 'holy' experience that everyone should embrace. A hymn produced by John Cennick thus reads 'He is thy head, / Fall down and yet be glad! / With Joy and Shame. / I own I am a sinner vile: / From Unbelief is all my Smart; / But ah! chastise me with a Smile, / And holy Shame shall warm my Heart.'[244] Charles Wesley similarly wrote: 'Let me sink into the Dust, / Full of Holy Shame adore; / Jesus Christ, the Good, the Just, / Bids me go, and sin no more.'[245]

The experience of shame and humiliation was not only important when repenting and converting, but was also required after receiving the assurance of salvation. Here the sense of shame was mixed with gratitude and unworthiness. As John Cennick wrote,

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[241] See, for example, John Cennick, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns* (Dublin, 1752), p. 2, 98, 119, 122; George Whitefield, *A Collection of Hymns for Social Worship, More Particularly Design'd for the Use of the Tabernacle Congregation* (London, 1753), p. 86; John & Charles Wesley, *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley… Together with the Poems of Charles Wesley not before Published*, ed. G. Osborn (London, 1869), vol. 4, p. 4.
[242] Wesley, *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*, vol. 4, p. 427.
[243] *Ibid.*, p. 414.
[244] Cennick, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns*, p. 70, 97.
[245] Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (Bristol, 1755-6), vol. 1, p. 161.

'I Stand amazed / Ashamed abased, / To think I'm one, / He set his Heart upon: / I blush with deepest Shame, / Dear Lamb, / When I behold / me in that Fold, / Bought by thy Smart, / And Laid so near thy Heart.'[246] Charles Wesley wrote: 'Overwhelmed with Pardoning Grace, / Jesus, at thy Feet I lie, / Dare not see thy smiling Face, / Tremble at thy Mercy night; / I, a Child of Wrath and Hell, / How can I look up to Heaven! / Lord, I faint thy Love to fee, / Blush, and die to be forgiven.'[247] Converted people's experience of shame was, for the most part, not an acute, grievous self-reflection on sin, but rather a much gentler psyche of humility and lowliness. Charles Wesley, in one of his hymns, described this inward state as 'the guiltless shame', 'the sweet distress', and 'the genuine meek humility'.[248]

As Methodist hymns indicate, shame and self-humiliation were important psychologies for those who had been graced by God. Methodist ministers emphasised that blessed people should go on keeping a lowliness of heart, blushing at the mercy of God, and acknowledging their undeserving of grace because of their original and particular sins. 'So a true Christian,' as John Cennick wrote, 'the more he knows of Jesus, the more he experiences of his Grace and Mercy, and ripens for Glory, the more he bows down, and with Humility and Shame confesses his own Unworthiness, and adores the free Grace of God his Saviour.'[249] For Methodists, converted people were not sinless or infallible, but were still tempted by Satan. The sense of shame functioned as a powerful restraint, helping converts to preserve the grace of God and to resist

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[246] Cennick, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns*, pp. 151-2.
[247] Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, p. 161.
[248] *Ibid*., p. 260.
[249] John Cennick, *The Hidden Treasure. Being the Substance of a Discourse Delivered at Philbatch on the Milford-Haven in South Wales* (Dublin, 1754), p. 9.

temptation. In order to continue to be pious after conversion, Doddridge advised people to ask themselves a set of questions in their day-to-day spiritual exercises:

Are you more frequently renewing your application, your sincere, steady, determinate application, to the righteousness and blood of Christ, as being sensible how unworthy you are to appear before God, otherwise than in him? And do the remaining corruptions of your heart humble you before him, though the disorders of your life are in a great measure cured? Are you more earnest to obtain the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit; and have you such a sense of your own weakens, as to engage you depend, in all the duties you perform, upon the communications of his grace to "help your infirmities?" Can you, at the close of your most religious, exemplary, and useful days, blush before God for the deficiencies of them, while others perhaps may be ready to admire and extol your conduct? … Do you learn to receive the bounties of providence, not only with thankfulness as coming from God, but with a mixture of shame and confusion too, under a consciousness that you do not deserve them, and are continually forfeiting them?[250]

The essence of Doddridge's advice, indeed, seemed to be to inculcate converted people with a sense of shame. Here shame was a lasting inward state, involving the senses of humility, abasement, and unworthiness. As the Irish Methodist preacher Thomas Walsh remarked, the pious after conversion 'saw nothing whereof to glory in himself before God, but rather was continually filled with holy shame and deep abasement at the

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[250] Doddridge, *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, p. 196.

disparity which he still perceived between himself and his holy Lord'.[251] The

Methodist ideal of shame as a lifelong spiritual psyche changed little in the nineteenth

century. In 1813, the prominent Wesleyan divine Jabez Bunting warned that even if a

person was redeemed by God, he would go on facing the danger of corruption because

humanity was fallible in nature. Therefore, the self-abasing emotion of shame, together

with feelings of sorrow and regret about sins, were still needed:

> Sin… is not changed in its nature, so as to be made less exceedingly sinful… by
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> the pardon of the sinner. The penalty is remitted; and the obligation to suffer that
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> penalty is dissolved, but it is still naturally due, though graciously remitted. Hence
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> appears the propriety and the duty of continuing to confess and lament even
>
> pardoned sin. Though released from its penal consequences by an act of divine
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> clemency, we should still remember, that the dust of self-abasement is our proper
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> place before God.[252]

Reinforcing this sense of shame led Methodists to examine themselves rigidly.

Like other protestant groups, the Methodists regarded prayer as an important way to

experience shame, and insisted that prayer would not be sincere without wholehearted

shame and remorse for one's sins.[253] Doddridge urged people to take on a great deal of

shame and pain when praying. In an exemplary prayer, he wrote: 'I may justly appear

before thee this day with shame and terror, in confusion and consternation of spirit…

How then shall I appear in thy presence, or lift up my face to thee! I am full of confusion,

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[251] *The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers,* vol. 3, pp. 274-5.

[252] Jabez Bunting, *Sermon on Justification by Faith* (Leeds, 1813), p. 11; Cited in Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, p. 400.

[253] George Whitefield, *The Works of the Reverend George Whitefield* (London, 1771-2), p. 22.

and feel a secret regret in the thought of applying to thee.' [254] In another prayer, Doddridge wrote: 'I come from my very heart ashamed of myself, and with an acknowledgement in the sincerity and humility of my soul, that I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly. I am confounded myself at the remembrance of these things. Lord, I am ashamed to stand or to kneel before thee.'[255] The evangelical writer Isaac Watts (1674-1748) also urged people to fill their hearts with 'uneasy and painful affections' during introspection and confession. He advised people to examine their hearts by asking themselves: 'Dose thou look back on thy own former transgressions, with holy shame and sincere sorrow? Art thou covered with an inward blush at the recollection of thy past follies? Has thy sincere and unfeigned repentance been manifested by all the proper passions that attend a penitent, by self-abasement and inward confusion, by mourning in secret, and a holy displacency and resentment against thyself and thy folly?' [256] Emphasising the importance of self-examination led Methodists to a wariness of sin and backsliding. James Robe once asked his followers about their spiritual experience after conversion, and wrote:

> When they spoke of their former Ways they blushed, and wept, and said, None in
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> all the Country round were so vile as they, and earnestly desired to exalt Free
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> grace: And when I was cautioning them against new Temptations and Relapses,
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> they showed a Sense of their own Weakness, and were afraid on that Account to
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> come near their old Companions… They said, they would wish rather to die than

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[254] Doddridge, *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, p. 218.

[255] *Ibid*., p. 302.

[256] Isaac Watts, *Discourses of the Love of God, and Its Influence on All the Passions: with A Discovery of the Right Use and Abuse of Them in Matters of Religion* (London, 1770), p. 69.

go back to old Sins, and if ever they should be left to any of them, they would

incline to leave the Country, because of the Dishonour it would bring on the Work

of God, which they could not bear to see.[257]

Nonetheless, Methodists' emotive religiosity and intensive inculcation of religious

passions were not without problems. In 1766, Samuel Martin, an opponent of

Methodism, observed that Methodist preachers' enthusiastic preaching led their

followers to melancholy. 'One of their hearers complained to me,' wrote Martin, 'that

she had not been happy ever since the communion at a particular place.'[258] John Nelson

had suffered long from depression, and many times had been tempted to suicide:

'feeling my corruptions, with strong temptations, I fell into great doubting. I was almost

in despair. I could scarce pray at all, and was tempted to murder myself. One day, as I

was going to hear Mr. Grimshaw, and going over a bridge, I was strongly tempted to

leap into the river.'[259] Besides inward depression, a more visible problem was physical

agitation. Hysterical reactions, which usually manifested themselves in crying,

groaning, trembling and fainting, were expressions of mixed spiritual passions. While

Methodist preachers regarded these physical agitations as a sign of the working of Holy

Spirit, conventional Anglicans attacked them as fanaticism and enthusiastic madness

inspired by demons. In 1779, an anti-Methodist satire ridiculed such excessive

behaviours:

> *Seraphic* --- whilst in Torments others roar,

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[257] Robe, *A Faithful Narrative*, p. 11.
[258] Samuel Martin, *A Few Thoughts and Matters of Fact Concerning Methodism* (1766), pp. 8-9.
[259] *The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers*, vol. 1, p. 242.

By Satan Scourg'd, or fasten'd to the Floor;

A *Pandemonium* of the *F --- d'ry* make,

Feel *fancy'd* Flames, and Chains *ideal* shake;

Laugh, cry, display what Modesty should hide;

Now boil with Rage; *Becalm'd*, again subside;

Now ebb, now flow, as *Priestcrast* rules the Tide.

These *Mad-folks* foam, rant, caper, and curvet,

Flame, shiver, tremble, dance, chaunt, rave, and fret.[260]

In another anti-Methodist tract *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compared* (1754), George Lavington (1684-1762) remarked that it was not possible to describe the progress of Methodism 'without taking in shocking and horrible things':

Such are their Crying out, Screamings, Shriekings, Roarings, Groanings, Tremblings, Gnashings, Yellings, Formings, Convulsions, Swoonings, Droppings, Blasphemies, Curses, dying and despairing Agonies, Variety of Tortures in Body and Mind… This, is no doubt, is a *Fling* at Mr. *Wesley's* Accounts; which are in Truth too *shocking* and *terrible*, to be written, or read, without *Horror* and *pain of Mind*: And one would really imagine, that *Bedlam* was let loose, and all the *Hypochondriac* and *Hysterical*, *Epileptic*, *Convulsed*, *Fevered*, *Delirious*, *Bewitched*, and *Possessed* persons were summoned from all Quarters of the Nation.[261]

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[260] Anon., *Fanatical Conversion; Or, Methodism Displayed* (London, 1779), pp. 14-5.

[261] George Lavington, *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compared* (London, 1754), vol. 2, p. 18; For detailed descriptions of Methodist physical reaction, see pp.18-22; 105-7.

Lavington argued against Methodists, who saw excessive emotional expressions as the 'extraordinary Workings of God in the Soul' and 'Marks and Proofs or true Piety', claiming that such hysterical actions were only marks of 'Madness and real Disease'.[262] Critics even claimed that Methodism was responsible for the increase of madmen: 'But if these gentlemen (Methodist ministers) are determined to build, I would recommend to them the plan of a certain edifice… which… may accommodate many of the religious mad in this country.'[263] In 1765, an Anglican writer accused Methodist preachers of using 'strange Gestures and horrid Expressions, as tend to the making People mad and disordered in their Sense'.[264] Another anti-Methodist ridiculed Wesley's London chapel for being the place in which people were trained to be a 'fanatic mad':

In *holy Go-Carts* there, by *due Degrees*,

They're taught to *snivel, groan, cant, whine,* and *wheeze,*

Heart-melting Tones of *wheedling Intercession*,

Boanergy, on *Mobs* to make Impression;

Stage-Tricks, to fill the gloomy Soul with *Fear*,

And wring from *Guilt a shilling*, and a *Tear*.[265]

Facing criticisms regarding Methodist enthusiasm, both Methodists and their opponents began to reflect on the important question of how to distinguish, experience, and express spiritual emotions; they asked whether the excessive weeping, groaning and screaming were the authentic expressions of inward shame, guilt and fear, and the

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[262] *Ibid.*, p. 10, 92.
[263] Cited in Lyles, *Methodism Mocked,* p. 109.
[264] Anon., *The Doctrine of Methodism Examined and Confuted, By a presbyter of the Church of England* (London, 1765), p. 13.
[265] Cited in Lyles, *Methodism Mocked,* p. 74.

real signs of conversion. In his *A Fine Picture of Enthusiasm* (1744), the Anglican clergyman John Scott acknowledged that 'sensitive passions' were of 'an excellent use' in religion, but stressed that sincere spiritual affections should be 'gentle', 'soft', and 'easy' because religion 'is a wise, a still, and silent thing' that consists 'not only in intermittent Fits of Passion, but in the Midst of cool Thoughts and calm Deliberations', and it 'does not come and go, like the Colours of a blushing Face.'[266] In acknowledging the positive role of moderate spiritual affections, Scott warned about the danger of uncontrolled, excessive passions in religion. He argued that physical agitations such as bitter cries should not be seen as a sign of piety, because 'there are many Men who are sincerely good, who yet cannot raise their sensitive Passions in their religious Exercise; who are heartily sorry for their Sins, and yet cannot weep for them.' Accordingly, Scott noticed that 'there are many gross Hypocrites that have not one Dram of true Piety in them, who yet can pour out their confessions in Floods of tears.'[267] In 1740, William Bowman, vicar of Dewsbury and Aldbrough, asserted that 'an outward Shew of extraordinary Holiness and Piety, is not always an Indication that a Man is sincere; that under this Mask has often lain concealed the greatest Wickedness and Impiety'.[268] In 1766, John Tottie, archdeacon of Worcester, emphasised that 'the Operations of the Spirit are not violent and tempestuous… but they are so gentle and peaceable in their Nature as they are in their Effects'.[269] None of these authors directly discussed the

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[266] John Scott, *A Fine Picture of Enthusiasm, Chiefly Drawn by Dr. John Scott, Formerly Rector of St. Giles's in the Fields. Wherein the Danger of the Passion Leading in Religion is Strongly Described* (London, 1744), p. 3, 14.

[267] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

[268] William Bowman, *The Imposture of Methodism Display'd, in a Letter to the Inhabitants of the Parish of Dewsbury* (London, 1740), p. 2.

[269] John Tottie, *Two Charges Delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Worcester* (Oxford, 1766),

emotion of shame, but they nevertheless implied that physical reactions such as weeping, which had long been regarded as an expression of shame, may be sham, and therefore should not be fully trusted or elevated to a place of significance.[270]

Moreover, critics argued that sincere spiritual feelings should be spontaneous, rather than having an obvious purpose, or being mechanical. It was observed that many Methodist laypeople compelled themselves to shed floods of tears because they saw it as a prerequisite of salvation. In 1754, the Methodist minister of Glasgow John Gills said:

> they believed there was a good work going on; that people were convinced, and brought into a converted state; and they desired to be converted too: they saw others weeping and fainting, and heard people mourning and lamenting, and they thought if they could be like these it would be very hopeful with them; hence, they endeavoured just to get themselves affected by sermons, and if they could come to weeping, or get their passions so raised as to incline them to vent themselves by cries, now they hoped they were got under convictions, and were in a very hopeful way.[271]

Similarly, Scott regarded the Methodist process of conversion as a trick of self-deceiving and a kind of masochism. He noted that Methodists forced themselves to enter a state of dread, remorse and sadness, and saw experiencing grievous emotions as a necessary step to conversion:

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p. 16, 21.

[270] Shame and sham are terms that closely linked; see Kate Loveman, *Reading Fictions, 1660-1740: Deception in English Literary and Political Culture* (Aldershot and Burlington, 2008), chapter 4, pp. 85-108. The relationship between shame and deception will be discussed in chapter 5.

[271] Gillies, *Historical Collections,* vol. 2, p. 156.

Suppose these Men, before their *pretended Conversion*, or *Regeneration*, to have a good Dose of *Melancholy* in their Tempers, this will naturally dispose them to terrifying *Apprehensions*, and *mournful Conceits*; and, being thus disposed, their Fancies are easily impressed with *dreadful* Images of the Wrath of God, and their own undone Condition. And, according as the Temper of their Bodies is more or less disposed to Fear, so this *frightful* Passion continues *longer* or *shorter* upon them. If it continues *longer*, it will, from that reiterated or repeated Impressions of those dreadful Objects which first raised it, by Degree be heightened into *Horror* and *Desperation*! And, when it is so, then the Man is under *Conviction* of his undone Condition, and under the Terrors of the Law, and the Spirit of Bondage, which, according to the New Method, is always the *first* Step to Conversion. And when the *first* Fury of *Despair* is over, it naturally issues into a *deep Melancholy*, and there spreads itself in *woeful* Regrets, and self-condemning Reflections and this is what they call *Compunction*, which is the next Step to be taken in this Methodical Way of Conversion.[272]

Religious emotions were thus falsely provoked. Methodists believed that they were graced by God simply because 'they have run through all the Stages of Passion'.[273] Thus, while Methodist preachers' intense inculcation of shame might have produced shamefaced believers, ironically, they might not have any sense of shame at all.

Critics of Methodist enthusiasm argued that true and sincere spiritual emotions should not be imposed from outside by means of terror or superstition. In his *Die and*

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[272] Scott, *A Fine Picture of Enthusiasm*, p. 9.
[273] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

be Damned. Or an Antidote against every Species of Methodism and Enthusiasm (1758),

Thomas Mortimer strongly criticised Methodist ministers for preaching fear by

conjuring up dreadful and supernatural scenes. As Mortimer observed, many Methodist

preachers 'dive into scripture for passages which they wrest in favour of their terrific

form of preaching the gospel, and as fear is ever predominant in weak minds, they

endeavour to produce vouchers from holy writ to terrify the ignorant into the belief of

their particular systems, making their appeals to the passion of fear.' Opposing the

invocation of fear, Mortimer argued that ministers should endeavor to 'implant in the

minds of men a love of true religion, and a lively faith in Christ, by mild persuasive and

the cool dictates of reason and argument.'[274] In *An Essay on the Characteristics of

Methodism* (1781), the eighteenth-century Cambridge graduate John Mainwaring

argued that true religious affection should be prompted by reason rather than by fear.

He criticised Methodist preachers for trying to 'awaken and inflame the devout

affections, and rouse men to a sense of piety' by 'incessant appeal to their fears'.

Although he acknowledged that fear was a useful spiritual emotion, Mainwaring

nevertheless argued that 'a settled piety can only be the result of an informed

understanding'.[275] Because Methodist preachers often exploited fear as a means to

trigger and reinforce the sense of shame, opponents' accusation against the invocation

of fear implied that the sincere emotion of shame should not be exerted by terror.

Perhaps the most explicit and detailed discussion on the sincerity of religious

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[274] Thomas Mortimer, *Die and be Damned. Or an Antidote against Every Species of Methodism* (London, 1758), p. 39.
[275] John Mainwaring, *An Essay on the Character of Methodism* (Cambridge, 1781), p. 20.

emotions in the eighteenth century was carried out by Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), a prominent evangelical theologian and preacher in New England. In his influential *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746), Edwards did not directly discuss the emotion of shame, but rather, scrutinised an equivalent spiritual experience: humiliation. Like many British commentators of the time, Edwards accepted humiliation as a significant spiritual psychology, but warned that a genuine experience of humiliation should not be triggered by terror, or expressed by extravagant physical reactions. He identified falsely provoked humiliation as 'legal humiliation'. Acknowledging the usefulness of 'legal humiliation' in making people 'sensible that they are little and nothing before the great and terrible God, and that they are undone, and wholly insufficient to help themselves', he nonetheless insisted that 'legal humiliation has in it no spiritual good'.[276] For Edwards, people in 'legal humiliation' are 'legally humbled and have no *humility*', and are not truly aware of 'their own odiousness on the account of sin' or 'the hateful nature of sin' because their feelings of shame or humiliation were not produced by a deeply affected heart, but rather imposed by the fear of 'the wrath of God', 'the strictness of his law', and 'the eternal damnation'.[277]

Johnathan Edwards argued that sincere humiliation only belongs to what he termed 'evangelical humiliation'. Edwards defined it as a sense by which 'a Christian has of his own utter insufficiency, despicableness, and odiousness, with an answerable frame of heart'.[278] In contrast to legal humiliation, the evangelical is a spontaneous and

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[276] Jonathan Edwards, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (Edinburgh, 1772), p. 210.
[277] *Ibid.*, p. 209.
[278] *Ibid.*, pp. 208-9.

voluntary spiritual feeling or disposition, in which people, by 'a discovery of the beauty

of God's holiness and moral perfection', are not only convinced of the odious nature of

sin and the depravity of the self, but voluntarily 'deny and renounce themselves' and

'sweetly yield themselves at the feet of God'.[279] The differences between legal and

evangelical humiliation indicate that the former is a sense that compels people to

surrender, while the later encourages wholehearted repentance and reformation.

Moreover, Edwards regarded evangelical humiliation as 'the principle part of the great

Christian duty of self-denial'. True self-denial has two requirements, the first being 'a

man's denying his worldly inclinations, and in forsaking and renouncing all worldly

objects and enjoyments'; the second, and the more important requirement is the denial

of 'his natural self-exaltation, and renouncing his own dignity and glory, and in being

emptied of himself; so that he does freely and from his very heart renounce himself,

and annihilate himself'.[280] To see whether a man has successfully denied himself

according to these two requirements helps to judge whether he is in a sincere state of

humiliation. Self-humiliation is important, but Edwards warned people against spiritual

pride, arguing that a humble man is never proud of his humiliation, but sees his baseness,

impotence and filthiness as insufficient. Humiliation is a lifelong disposition; in order

to maintain this devotional psyche, Edwards advised people to implement 'a great

strictness of self-examination' by asking themselves whether they are 'thinking highly

of their humility':

If… you answer, *No, it seems to me, none are so bad as I*. Do not let the matter

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[279] *Ibid*., pp. 209-10.
[280] *Ibid*., p. 212.

pass off so; but examine again, whether or not you do not think yourself better than others on this very account, because you imagine you think so meanly of yourself. Have not you a high opinion of this humility? and if you answer again, *No; I have not an high opinion of my humility; it seems to me I am as proud as the devil*; yet examine again, whether self-conceit do not rise up under this cover; whether on this very account, that you think yourself as proud as the devil, you do not think yourself to be very humble.[281]

Emphasising the importance of self-examination in keeping a humble heart not only demonstrates that sincere humiliation is a self-imposed experience, but also implies that people should express their spiritual affections in a private and moderate way. As Edwards wrote, people in true humiliation never showed their humility in 'any singular outward meanness of apparel, or way of living', and only those who feigned humiliation 'are apt to be much in speaking of their humiliation, and to set them forth in high terms, and to make a great outward show of humility, in affected looks, gestures, or manners of speech, or meanness of apparel, or some affected singularity'.[282]

Like seventeenth-century Calvinists and Quakers, Methodists regarded shame as an important moral emotion required by everyday spiritual life. Although Methodist ministers advised their followers to experience shame through strict self-examination and wholehearted prayer, they were notorious for their intense inculcation of spiritual emotions by enthusiastic preaching. In particular, they often tried to provoke feelings of shame by threatening their flocks with horrendous and superstitious scenes.

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[281] *Ibid*., p. 234.
[282] *Ibid*., pp. 232-3.

Contemporaries attacked Methodists' enthusiastic ways of preaching as fanaticism, and claimed that spiritual affections such as shame and sorrow provoked by superstitious fear were insincere and fruitless. These criticisms re-confirmed a principle which had long been emphasised by Protestant writers, that is, spiritual shame should be a spontaneous moral emotion produced by diligent introspection, rather than intense inculcation.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined how Calvinists, Quakers, and Methodists experienced and interpreted the emotion of shame between the mid-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is clear that despite the controversies among these groups over ecclesiastical, theological and political issues, early modern Protestants, including Quakers, regarded shame as a basic, significant moral emotion in spiritual life. In a religious context, shame was an immediate emotion arising from an apprehension of sins and spiritual laxity, and also a continual inward disposition to self-abasement and unworthiness. Three religious groups all praised shame as a penitential and devotional emotion, which not only signified faith and piety, but also functioned as a powerful restraint, helping people to resist temptation and sin. In addition, spiritual shame is primarily an individual, self-imposed emotion. Early modern Protestants embraced shame through rigorous self-examination and private confession, and saw shame that was imposed from the outside as secondary or even problematic. Devotional life required people to keep a watchful eye on sins, and take shame to themselves whenever they committed

any sinful behaviour, but also to cloth themselves with humility, and acknowledged their lowliness of status. Therefore, shame was a central and lifelong religious sentiment, which constituted an important part of the Protestant psyche.

Besides these shared understandings, it should be noted that the Quaker sense of shame had distinctive features. In contrast to Calvinists who believed that only a limited number of people could be saved and that it is impossible to experience salvation in this world, Quakers maintained that 'Christ has come to teach his people himself' and that the Kingdom of Heaven could be experienced immediately by all. Convinced Quakers believed that they had been superseded by Christ, and entered into a sinless, perfect, and infallible state. The extinction of the self-will and the doctrine of perfectionism made converted Quakers believe that they had nothing to be ashamed of. In like manner, the necessity of self-denial and obeying the divine illumination provided Quakers with power to overcome their feelings of shame and fear, and to go naked for a sign. However, the sense of shamelessness did not change Quakers' understandings of shame as a moral and individual emotion. Because converted Quakers had to go on living in such a fallen world and facing danger of backsliding, they should embrace shame and self-humiliation in order to preserve the grace of God and prevent themselves from sinning again.

The significance of religious shame seemed to be heightened in the eighteenth century. While seventeenth-century Calvinists encouraged people to embrace the emotion of shame, eighteenth-century Methodist ministers intensively inculcated shame in their flocks. Early Methodist preachers were experts in adopting emotive

preaching to terrify followers' conscience and provoke their spiritual feelings. Opponents of enthusiastic Methodism questioned the sincerity of Methodists' hysterical emotional expressions, and argued that sincere spiritual affections such as shame and remorse should be moderate, and experienced as a consequence of self-examination rather than outside enforcement.

In spite of these different understandings, the status of shame as a fundamental Protestant psyche had changed little. At the end of eighteenth century England witnessed the evangelical revival within the Anglican Church. From the writings of the leading evangelical revivalists, we find that the importance of shame as a moral and individual emotion was continually emphasised. In his letter to a woman in June1777, the prominent evangelical cleric John Newton (1725-1807) wrote: 'one eminent branch of our holiness, is a sense of shame and humiliation for those evils which are only known to ourselves.'[283] Elsewhere Newton re-emphasised that feeling shame was the mark of piety and holiness: 'those who are most spiritual, are most deeply affected with shame, humiliation, and grief… because they have the clearest views of the holiness of God, the spirituality of the law, the love of Christ, and the deceitfulness of their own hearts.'[284] The Cambridge evangelical clergyman Charles Simeon (1759-1836) also wrote: 'let our humiliation be deep, and our repentance genuine: let us be willing to take shame to our selves both before God and man; and be indifferent about the estimation of man, provided we may but obtain in favour of a reconciled God.'[285]

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[283] John Newton, *The Works of the Rev. John Newton* (6 vol, 3rd edn, London, 1824), vol. 1, p. 690.
[284] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 474.
[285] Charles Simeon, *The Entire Works of the Rev. C. Simeon* (12 vols, London, 1833), vol. 3, pp. 299-30.

Henry Venn (1725-1797), an Anglican minister and one of the founders of the Clapham Sect, taught that only if people degenerated their spirt and embraced shame by making themselves 'more loathsome than the beggar on the dunghill', would God clothe them with 'the robe of salvation'.[286] Like their Puritan forebears, evangelical revivalists carried out diligent self-examination in daily life and recorded in diaries their shame and sorrow for omissions and commissions. The great abolitionist and evangelical William Wilberforce (1759-1833) once lamented: 'how little good have I done compared with what I might have done! What procrastination! Consider in detail how deficient in the duties of an M.P., father, master, friend, companion, brother. Resolutions broken. Intemperance often. How sinful this when taken in relation to motives to self-denial, from love to Christ – and to self-extinction, for me a vile ungrateful sinner! Oh shame, shame!'[287]

We should not deny the positive effects of shame in preventing sins and promoting morality. However, in the light of our modern humanistic values, the religious sense of shame seems cruel, since it advocated essentially a dehumanised mental state of self-abasement and lowliness. This oppressive sense of shame was not without challenges in early modern time. During the eighteenth century – a century that has been identified as an age of enlightenment, refinement and socialisation – the meanings of shame witnessed changes. Religious shame played a crucial role in people's daily life, but it did not represent the whole culture of shame. Secular and social factors that emerged

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[286] Henry Venn, *The Life and A Selection from the Letters of the late Rev. Henry Venn, M. A.*, ed. Henry Venn, B. D. (London, 1834), p. 228.
[287] William Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*, eds Robert Isaac Wilberforce, Samuel Wilberforce (5 vols, London, 1838), vol. 4, p. 344.

in the eighteenth century called for new and refined ways of interpreting shame; at the same time, however, they potentially impaired the moral power of shame. It is to these secular and social influences on the cultures of shame in an age of enlightenment and refinement that the next chapter now turns.

Chapter Three

Shame and the Culture of Politeness

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the ways in which shame was experienced and interpreted as a fundamental part of the Protestant psyche in early modern Britain. It demonstrated that shame in the religious context was a recurrent emotion or inward state of self-loathing and unworthiness, in which people blushed for their sins and backslidings, and abased themselves as worms and dust before God. Shame was self-imposed, either by the reproach of conscience or the imagined surveillance of God, and was considered positively by Protestant theologians as 'bridles or restraints which God hath put upon humane nature' and a means to come closer to God.[288]

This chapter offers a closer look at the culture of shame in a more secular and social context, with particular attention to the question of how shame was interpreted and discussed in eighteenth-century polite society. The chapter comprises three sections. The first section provides an intellectual history of the emotion of shame by examining the works of enlightenment writers such as John Locke, Anthony Ashley Cooper, Bernard Mandeville, Francis Hutcheson, David Hume and Adam Smith, and examines how their views on shame differed from each other and religious interpretations. The second section discusses how feelings of shame were refined in order to meet the requirements of, and to promote, polite social communication. The final section will

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[288] Tillotson, *Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions*, p. 6.

explore the impact of polite culture on the relationship between notions of shame based on absolute moral standards and those constructed by relative social opinion, and then discuss how codes of politeness potentially undermined the moral power of shame, and reduced it to a superficial feeling without moral depth.

This chapter argues that the eighteenth-century culture of politeness played an important role in elevating social factors to a place of significance in interpreting and experiencing shame. In addition, principles of sociability and refinement inculcated a moderate sense of shame, which required people to be modest and humble in polite social interaction, without involving self-abasing elements of shame such as excessive humility, unworthiness and bashfulness that had long been approved by religious and moral writers. Furthermore, seeing politeness as a synthesis of outward polish with inner virtue, polite writers argued that the sense of shame should be constructed by both moral and social values. The moral and social constructions of shame were not necessarily at odds with each other insofar as social judgement accorded with moral norms. However, under the influence of polite culture, the importance of social opinion in incurring shame became so great that it could be separate from and even subvert moral standards. The consequence of this was increasing anxiety about the growth of what many polite writers termed 'false shame', a morally superficial and harmful emotion that relied entirely on the opinion of others, which mainly derived from the judgment of, for example, a person's appearance or outer fashion rather than his or her true moral quality or learning.

Secularising Shame

While the polite ideal first emerged as a form of personal and social refinement in the late seventeenth century, there was also a simultaneous growing interest in the cult of the emotions. Throughout the long-eighteenth century, a large number of treatises were published in the effort to explore the nature of human emotions, and to teach readers how to regulate and exploit their passions or affections in both religious and social lives. Historians attribute this rising interest in emotions to the impact of polite culture. As Thomas Dixon claims, 'a governed and rational passion, properly educated and smartly dressed, could be deemed to have won the approval of the will and intellect, and to have gained entry into polite society in the form of sympathy, affection or sentiment.'[289] The emergence of John Locke's empirical philosophy can be seen as another impetus for the contemporary interest in human psychology. Inspired in part by the Newtonian view that rational laws of the universe could be processed through the human faculty of sensation, and also in order to counter the Cambridge Platonist's belief in the inborn or pre-existing nature of reason and the unreliability of sensation in understanding reality, Locke compared the human mind to a blank slate or *Tabula rasa* wherein reason was not naturally given, but originated in the accumulation of experience derived from sensation and reflection. Feelings, as a basic form of physical sense and an important way of accessing knowledge, thus became an object of much academic discussion.

The proliferation of writings on the emotions can also be seen as a critical response to the epicurean account of human nature held by Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and

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[289] Thomas Dixon, 'Revolting Passions', *Modern Theology*, vol. 27 (2011), p. 302.

Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733), and also to the Calvinist belief in the total depravity of humanity. In *Leviathan* (1651) Hobbes argued that human beings were driven by appetites and desires, and that virtue was the product of selfishness. Similarly, Mandeville in his *The Fable of the Bees* (the 1714 edition) upheld the view that humanity was selfish and greedy, arguing that self-interested actions could contribute to social welfare. Such cynical and pessimistic attitudes about human nature provoked much criticism from eighteenth-century philosophers and moralists. Critics argued against the sinful origins of humanity, claiming that people not only had an innate faculty of morality to subdue vice and pursue virtue, but also possessed sentiments such as benevolence and sympathy by which to promote the public good. In this way, emotion was closely associated with morality, and became an important means of feeling, practising, and expressing virtues. Moreover, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the Methodist movement, characterised by its passionate and emotive religiosity, furthered contemporary debates on religious affections. It was within this mixed context that the human faculty of feeling was placed under great scrutiny in the late-seventeenth and eighteenth-century religious, philosophical, and scientific writings. Shame, as a basic human emotion, became one of the most frequently discussed subjects.

In order to understand the meaning of shame in relation to polite society, a brief look at contemporary attitudes towards the nature of 'passion' is required. Briefly, early modern discourse on the passions was twofold. On the one hand, both religious and secular writers inherited the Stoic view, and warned about the negative aspects of the

passions, arguing that passions were the violent and troubling movement of the soul, and could lead people to immorality and sin. In his *Characters of the Virtues and Vice of the Age* (1695), Abel Boyer, a French-English scholar, wrote that 'there is in all passions a kind of injustice and self-interest, which makes them very dangerous to be followed'.[290] The Anglican clergyman Francis Bragge (1664-1728) also observed that when people were vehemently moved and affected by the passions, they would feel 'a kind of uneasiness and pain, and suffer under the violent impressions'.[291] Isaac Watts in his *The Doctrine of the Passions Explained and Improved* (1724) warned about the dangers of ungoverned passions:

> Ungoverned passions break all the bonds of human society and peace, and would change the tribes of mankind into brutal herds, or make the world a mere wilderness of savages. Passions unbridled would violate all the sacred ties of religion, and raise the sons of men in arms against their creator. Where passion runs riot, there are none of the rights of God or man secure from its insolences.[292]

Later writers continually expressed their mistrust of passions, stressing the need to subdue rebellious feelings. In 1790, for example, Edmund Burke claimed that 'not only that the passions of individuals should be subjected, but that even in the mass and body as well as in the individuals, the inclinations of men should frequently be thwarted, their will controlled, and their passions brought into subjection'.[293]

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[290] Abel Boyer, *Characters of the Virtues and Vice of the Age* (London, 1695), p. 167.
[291] Francis Bragge, *A Practical Treatise of the Regulation of the Passions* (London, 1708), p. 2.
[292] Isaac Watts, *The Doctrine of the Passions Explained and Improved: Or, A Brief and Comprehensive Scheme of the Natural Affections of Mankind* (Coventry, 1724), p. v.
[293] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution, and Other Essays* (London and New York, 1951), p. 57.

On the other hand, contemporary writers acknowledged the fact that passions had moral, religious, and intellectual values when they were well regulated and directed by virtue and reason. According to Watts, 'when the passions are once set right, they become exceeding serviceable to us in things that relate to God, and to our neighbour, as well as to ourselves.' He further claimed that the rightly regulated passions were 'lively, warm, and vigorous principles and powers in our nature, which animate us to pursue good, and avoid the evil', and that even 'painful passions may be happily engaged in the interest of God and religion'.[294] Similarly, in his *The Government of the Passions* (1704) William Ayloffe wrote that if passions could receive 'great advantages from the assistance of virtue, after some training in her school, they repay her richly, and served her as faithfully'.[295] Thus, passions, as Bragge wrote, 'are not designed to be destroyed', but rather might be of great use if they 'are governed by reason and religion'.[296] Early modern writers called such well-regulated and morally-constructed passions 'affections' or 'sentiments', and used these terms to distinguish milder, rational, and virtuous forms of feeling from violent, ungoverned, and morally-problematic passions. It is noteworthy that both religious and secular writings of the time encouraged people to cultivate godly, virtuous affections.[297] A typical example of these works comes from Jonathan Edwards's *Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*, in which he wrote: 'holy affections are not heat without light, but evermore arise from

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[294] Watts, *The Doctrine of the Passions*, pp. v-vi.
[295] William Ayloffe, *The Government of the Passions, According to the Rules of Reason and Religion* (2nd edn, London, 1704), p. 16.
[296] Bragge, *A Practical Treatise of the Regulation of the Passions*, p. 9.
[297] Thomas Dixon, '"Emotion": the History of a Keyword in Crisis', *Emotion Review*, vol. 4 (2012), p. 339; 'Revolting Passions', pp. 301-2.

some information of the understanding, some spiritual instruction that the mind receives, some light or actual knowledge.'[298] The Scottish moral philosopher Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) advocated 'universal calm good-will or benevolence', which he regarded as 'the leading affection of the soul' and 'the highest perfection of our nature' that every person should have in order to promote morality and to restrain self-interested and irrational appetites or passions.[299]

The interpretation of the human faculty of feeling determined how the emotion of shame was treated by contemporary scholars. All passions should be placed on moral ground, and shame was no exception. In the following discussion, we shall see that secular discussions shared the religious view that shame was an emotion of great moral values, and functioned as a means to defend virtue and resist sin. However, what made secular interpretations different from religious ones is that eighteenth-century philosophers generally regarded shame as a social emotion, which was closely connected with a sense of honour and reputation, and usually occurred as a result of external judgement rather than self-examination.

In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), Locke defined shame as 'Uneasiness of the Mind, upon the Thought of having done something, which is indecent, or will lessen the valued Esteem which others have for us'.[300] However, it was in his famous writing on education that Locke provided a more detailed discussion of the moral value and social dimension of shame. For Locke, one of the most important

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[298] Edwards, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*, p. 165.
[299] Francis Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* (London, 1728), p. 72.
[300] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding* (5ᵗʰ edn, London, 1706), p. 147.

ways of teaching children virtue and good manners was to inculcate them with deep-seated senses of honour and shame. Locke saw this early planted sense of shame as 'the great Secret of Education', claiming that '*Esteem and Disgrace* are… the most powerful incentives to the Mind… If you can once get into Children a Love of Credit, and an Apprehension of Shame and Disgrace, you have put into them the true Principle, which will constantly work, and incline them to the right.'[301] According to Locke, since youngsters, even at very early ages, were sensitive to praise and commendations, parents should therefore take advantage of this natural disposition to teach their children that 'those that are commended, and in Esteem for doing well, will necessarily beloved and cherished by every Body, and… when any one by Miscarriage falls into Disesteem, and cares not to preserve his Credit, he will unavoidably fall under Neglect and Contempt.'[302] When children made a mistake, parents should show them 'a cold and neglectful countenance' and only in this way could they learn 'modesty and shame' and 'quickly come to have a natural abhorrence for that which they found made them slighted and neglected by everybody'.[303] Corporal punishments such as whipping should be carefully avoided, because, as Locke wrote:

> If the greatest Part of the Trouble be not the Sense that they have done amiss, and the Apprehension that they have drawn on themselves the just Displeasure of their best Friends, the Pain of Whipping will work but an imperfect Cure. It only patches up for the present, and skins it over, but reaches not to be the Bottom of

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[301] John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (8th edn, London, 1725), p. 56.
[302] *Ibid*., p. 57.
[303] *Ibid*., p. 59.

the fore-ingenious Shame, and the Apprehensions of Displeasure, are the only

true Restraint.[304]

The only fault that deserved harsh correction was 'obstinacy or rebellion', but even in

these circumstances, 'the Shame of the whipping, and not the Pain, should be the

greatest Part of the Punishment', since 'Shame of doing amiss, and deserving

Chastisement, is the only true Restraint belonging to Virtue.'[305]   In addition, children's

sense of shame was fragile, and should be carefully preserved. Hence, rebukes and

chiding must be 'not only in sober, grave, and unpassionate Words, but also alone and

in private'. If parents exposed their children to shame by publishing their miscarriages,

children would become 'less careful to preserve other good Thoughts of them' and

suspect that 'their Reputation with them is already blemished'.[306]

Locke's *Some Thought Concerning Education* is not concerned with feelings or

psychology, but his view on shame coincided with, and indeed influenced, the

eighteenth-century moral philosophers' interpretations of this emotion. The sense of

shame that Locke fervently advocated was essentially a socially-constructed and

honour-oriented one. But emphasising the social origin of shame and the importance of

external judgement did not mean that shame was irrelevant to moral values. Indeed,

Locke did not regard reputation as 'the true Principle and Measure of Virtue', but

believed that a good reputation made young people 'come nearest to it'.[307] Shame was

not just a means of education, but became the very purpose of it, since this emotion

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[304] *Ibid*., p. 59.
[305] *Ibid*., p. 95
[306] *Ibid*., p. 61.
[307] *Ibid*., pp. 59-61.

contained the seeds of virtue and civility, and led youngsters to good manners and politeness.

Walter Charleton, in his philosophical treatise *A Natural History of the Passions* (1701), shared Locke's view on the social and moral natures of shame. According to Charleton, shame was a grievous passion, but its outcome might be positive, since it gave people 'more wariness for the future', and excited 'an expectation of amendment'.[308] The feelings of shame and glory were psychological responses to the consideration of 'what opinion other men have of us'. These two feelings, as Charleton remarked, 'though directly opposite each to other, do yet agree in their end, which is to incite us to virtue; the first by hope, the other by fear: and that we may make a right use of them both, we are to have our judgment well instructed what actions are truly worthy praise or dispraise.'[309] Francis Hutcheson in his *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* (1728) also highlighted the social nature of shame. He regarded shame as an emotion that belonged to what he termed 'a sense of honour' and 'the public passions', and defined it as 'an uneasy sensation only arises from Apprehension of other people's dislike, condemnation, or resentment of injuries done by us'.[310] The social dimension of shame was also reflected in the fact that 'men may feel the Passion of Shame for the dishonourable Actions of others'.[311] Furthermore, Hutcheson stressed the essentiality of moral norms in constructing notions of shame and honour:

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[308] Walter Charleton, *A Natural History of the Passions* (London, 1701), p. 140.
[309] *Ibid.*, p. 140.
[310] Francis Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* (London, 1728), pp. 4-5, 95.
[311] *Ibid.*, p. 71.

To be honoured, highly esteemed, valued, praised, or on the contrary, to be despised, undervalued, censured or condemned; to be proud or ashamed, are words without any meaning, if we take away a moral sense. A sense of morality there must be, and natural it must be, if the desire of esteem, pride or shame be natural.[312]

While Hutcherson defined shame as a sense of honour that relied on the opinion of others, two Scottish moral philosophers, David Hume and Adam Smith, offered a more detailed and systematic discussion of the social nature of shame. In his *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1738), Hume wrote that 'hatred, resentment, esteem, love, courage, mirth, and melancholy; all these passions I feel more from communication than from my own natural temper and disposition'.[313] The 'communication' of passions between people was a process which Hume termed 'sympathy'. Sympathy enabled passions to 'pass with the greatest facility from one person to another, and produce correspondent movements in all human breasts.'[314] For Hume, men were not self-sufficient in terms of feelings, but had to 'always consider the sentiments of others in their judgement of themselves'; without the influence of external or socially-transmitted emotions, personal feelings such as shame and pride would not be produced.[315]

It was through the theory of sympathy that Hume firmly deemed shame to be a social emotion. Hume did not directly discuss 'shame' in his *A Treatise of Human Nature*, but scrutinised the passion of 'humility' and the opposite feeling of pride.

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[312] *Ibid.*, p. 98.
[313] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature; or Being An Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects* (3 vols, London, 1739-40), vol. 2, pp. 73-4.
[314] *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 204.
[315] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 49.

According to Hume, the first requisite for experiencing humility is that there existed an 'unhappy' or 'disagreeable' subject, and that this subject should have a close, peculiar relation to the self. The subject might be 'every valuable quality of the mind' such as morality, learning, and wit, or those relating to the body such as a person's appearance and strength, or external things such as house, garden, wealth, clothes, and title.[316] However, merely an unhappy or disapproved of subject would not be sufficient to incur humility. Here, Hume stressed the necessity of social judgement, arguing that it was not the unhappy thing, but the unhappy feelings of others received by us through sympathy that eventually provoked our sense of shame. Accordingly, 'virtue, beauty and riches have little influence' on the passion of pride when they are 'not seconded by the opinions and sentiments of others'.[317]

The importance of social factors is further reflected in their capacity to decide on the strength of the experience of humility. For Hume, the degrees of 'social relation' between the self and others influenced how powerfully a person's feeling of humility operated. The first type of 'social relation' refers to the extent of a man's respect or esteem to persons who made judgement of him. Thus, Hume observed that humans were more likely to feel shame before the person they reverenced:

We receive a much greater satisfaction from the approbation of those, whom we ourselves esteem and approve of, than of those, whom we hate and despise. In like manner we are principally mortified with the contempt of persons, upon whose judgement we set some value, and are, in a great measure, indifferent about

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[316] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 8.
[317] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 72.

the opinions of the rest of mankind.[318]

Another type of 'social relation' refers to the extent of familiarity between the self and others. Thus, Hume wrote: 'we are most uneasy under the contempt of persons, who are both related to us by blood, and contiguous in place.'[319] In order to mitigate feelings of humiliation, a man could 'seek to diminish this sympathy by separating these relations', and place himself 'in a contiguity to strangers, and at a distance from relations'. This helps to explain why a poor man who was 'lightly treated' by strangers would find himself 'easier in that situation' than when he 'was everyday exposed to the contempt of his kindred and countrymen',[320] and also why 'men of good families but narrow circumstances' chose to 'leave their friends and country, and seek their livelihood by mean and mechanical employments among strangers, than among those, who are acquainted with their birth and education'.[321] This evidence demonstrates that humility or shame, in the philosophy of Hume, was an externally imposed emotion that was aroused as the result of a person's sympathetic or secondary experience of other people' dissentient opinions, rather than a self-condemnation arising from the work of conscience or other innate principles.

The socially-constructed nature of shame was further confirmed by Adam Smith. In his *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), Smith inherited Hume's theory of sympathy, and developed it by introducing the concept of 'impartial spectator', arguing that sympathy is not simply a transfer of feelings between persons, but rather a process

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[318] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 81.
[319] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 83.
[320] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 84.
[321] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 82.

of mirroring and imagination, in which one person imagines that there is an impartial spectator who comes to feel and reconstruct the passions of others by putting himself in their situations which he watches. 'As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel,' Smith wrote, 'we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation.'[322] Shame is an emotion felt as a result of sympathy. Thus, according to Smith, when 'we blush for the impudence and rudeness of another' it is not because that person feels shame and transfers this passion to us – in fact, he may have no sense of shame of his behaviour at all – but due to the fact that 'we cannot help feeling with what confusion we ourselves should be covered, had we behaved in so absurd a manner.'[323] In cases where an individual feels a sense of shame for violating moral norms, the passion of shame is provoked because that person views impropriety and wickedness 'in the light in which the impartial spectator would view it', and realises that his or her immoral actions will 'ever come to be generally known' and 'excite detestation and resentment' of others.[324]

Although it would seem that the concept of the spectator is somewhat similar to that of conscience which religious writers regarded as the vicegerent of God, and indeed Smith often used 'spectator' interchangeably with other terms and phrases such as 'conscience', 'reason', 'the inhabitant of the breast', 'the man within', and 'the great judge and arbiter of our conduct', Smith nonetheless argued that the passions or

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[322] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments; or An Essay Towards and Analysis of the Principles by which Men Naturally Judge Concerning the Conduct and Character, First of Their Neighbours, and Afterwards of Themselves* (London, 1853), p. xxii.
[323] *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[324] *Ibid.*, p. 172.

opinions reproduced by this imagined spectator were social in nature:

> Our continual observations upon the conduct of others certain lead us to form to
> ourselves certain general rules concerning what is fit and proper either to be done
> or to be avoided. Some of their actions shock all our natural sentiments. We hear
> every body about us express the like detestation against them. This still further
> confirms, and even exasperates, our natural sense of their deformity. It satisfies
> us that we view them in the proper light, when we see other people view them in
> the same light. We resolve never to be guilty of the like, nor ever, upon any
> account, to render ourselves in this manner the objects of universal
> disapprobation. We thus naturally lay down to ourselves a general rule, that all
> such actions are to be avoided, as tending to render us odious, contemptible, or
> punishable – the objects of all those sentiments for which we have the greatest
> dread and aversion.[325]

Thus, it is neither God, nor innate principles, but values shaped by social interactions
that decide the opinions of spectator, the rules for self-examination, and the basis of
sympathy. 'Man alone cannot reflect upon his behaviour', wrote Smith, but when he is
brought into 'society', he will be 'immediately provided with the mirror which he
wanted before.'[326] This 'mirror' is essentially the sight seen by the spectator, whose
feelings or opinions with regard to his host's appearance or manners are, in fact, the
reflections of social norms and customs. Without the involvement of social judgement,
emotions such as shame and pride will not exist. Thus, a wicked person will not feel

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[325] *Ibid.*, pp. 223-4.
[326] *Ibid.*, p. 162.

'the agonies of shame' if he 'never can reflect on the sentiment which mankind must entertain with regard to him'.[327] Similarly, if a man isolated himself from social interactions, as Smith wrote,

> He would not be cast down with inward shame at the thought of this deformity; nor would he be elevated with secret triumph of mind from the consciousness of the contrary beauty. All such sentiments suppose the idea of some other being, who is the natural judge of the person that feels them; and it is only by sympathy with the decision of this arbiter of his conduct, that he can conceive either the triumph of self-applause or the shame of self-condemnation.[328]

Emphasising the social nature of shame does not mean that Smith ignored the importance of morality in constructing a sense of shame. Possibly impressed by the negative impact of polite and commercial society of the time, Smith in the sixth edition of his *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1790) added a chapter entitled *Of the corruption of our moral sentiments, which is occasioned by this disposition to the rich and the great, and to despise or neglect persons of poor and mean condition*. In this new chapter, Smith expressed his anxiety about the growth of what he thought were the false senses of shame and honour. To acquire and enjoy the admiration of others is the great objective of humans; however, as Smith observed, many contemporaries abandoned 'the paths of virtue', and increasingly saw 'wealth and greatness' as the only measure of honour and the means to build up a reputation.[329] In the superior circle of society,

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[327] *Ibid.*, p. 121.
[328] *Ibid.*, p. 277.
[329] *Ibid.*, pp. 84-5.

'success and preferment depend, not upon the esteem of intelligent and well-informed equals, but upon the fanciful and foolish favour of ignorant, presumptuous, and proud superiors'.[330] Moreover, ordinary people were proud to imitate the fashionable dress, conversation, deportment, and even vices and follies of the rich and great. Such a vain individual 'assumes the equipage and splendid way of living of his superiors, without considering, that whatever may be praise worthy in any of these derives its whole merit and propriety from its suitableness to that situation and fortune which both require, and can easily support the expense.'[331] For Smith, the love of glory and the fear of shame are dispositions of the same nature; things building up the honour of an individual will also lead him or her to shame if that things changes to the opposite. Therefore, once people sought to build up reputation merely by means of outer fashions and vain admirations, as Smith warned, the sense of shame would inevitably become a shallow one. It was no longer either wickedness or vice, but poverty or unfashionable dress that made people blush.

The social and moral dimensions of shame were continually affirmed by the late eighteenth-century scholars. For example, in his *A Short View of the Human Faculties and Passions* (1770), John Bethum argued that 'love of fame and fear of shame… are such powerful and prevalent motives of action, that they must not be weakened or suppressed without substituting higher principles in their stead.' Like most other contemporary academic analysts, Bethum argued that the fear of shame 'serves for the restraint' of our conduct, making us 'renounce our follies' – a function that many 'higher

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[330] *Ibid.*, p. 87.
[331] *Ibid.*, p. 88.

principles are wanting'.[332] At the end of the eighteenth century, a scholar named Kingsmill Davan likewise emphasised the importance of the social nature and moral value of shame: 'shame arises from a sense of doing what may degrade our character in the opinion of others', it 'displays a graceful virtuous mind', and only 'the vicious' who 'has lost native feelings' and 'the path to returning virtue' cannot blush.[333]

While most eighteenth-century philosophers and academic analysts regarded shame as a socially-constructed emotion of great moral values, we should nevertheless be aware that there were scholars such as Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, who insisted that shame was a private emotion immune to social opinion, and some writers, most notably Bernard Mandeville and David Hume, questioned the moral origin of shame and regarded it as potentially a mentally harmful emotion. Thus, in his *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711), Shaftesbury argued against those who claimed that 'vice, virtue, honour, shame, all this is found in Opinion only' and that 'Opinion is law and Measure', claiming instead that the passion of shame derives from a sense of 'what is shameful and odious in itself', rather than of 'what is hurtful or dangerous in its Consequence' due to the condemnation of others. Thus, for Shaftesbury, shame is not a social emotion, but rather a private one, decided on by the moral values of the self:

The greatest Danger in the world can never breed Shame: nor can the Opinion of all the World compel us to it, where our own Opinion is not Party. We may be

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[332] John Bethum, *A Short View of the Human Faculties and Passions. With Remarks and Directions Respecting Their Nature, Improvement, and Government* (2nd Edition, Edinburgh, 1770), p. 69.
[333] Kingsmill Davan, *An Essay on the Passions. Being an attempt to Trance Them from their Source, Describe Their General Influence, and Explain the Peculiar Effects of Each upon the Mind* (London, 1799), pp. 51-2.

afraid of appearing impudent, and may therefore feign a Modesty. But we can never really blush for any thing but what we truly think Shameful, and what we shou'd still blush for, notwithstanding we were ever so secure as to our Interest, and out of reach of all Inconvenience that cou'd happen to us from the thing we are asham'd of.[334]

Bernard Mandeville in his notorious *The Fable of the Bees*, agreed with John Locke about the crucial role of education in cultivating a sense of shame, but pointed out the selfish and hypocritical motive of feeling shame, arguing that 'shame' and 'modesty' are nothing but a means to hide our strongest passions of 'Lust, Pride, and Selfishness', and by which to help us to receive 'the Esteem of others', and to enjoy 'our sensual Pleasures' and 'all worldly Comforts'.[335] Thus, a man who does not conceal or restrain his passions by a sense of shame, and offers to 'speak the Truth of his Heart and what he feels within' by telling a woman that 'he could like no body so well to propagate his Species upon as herself', will be called 'a Brute' and 'the most contemptible Creature upon Earth'.[336] By contrast, a well-educated gentleman can gain 'the Good Will' and 'the Affection of the Women' by hiding his real appetite and showing modesty, even if his 'Inclination to a Woman' is as violent 'as the brutish Fellow'.[337] Mandeville pointed out the self-interested motive for feeling shame, but he nonetheless acknowledged the potential moral and social values of this somewhat

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[334] Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (3 vols, London, 1711), vol. 2, pp. 418-9.
[335] Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees; or, Private Vice, Public Benefits* (3rd edn, London, 1724), p. 58, 64.
[336] *Ibid*., p. 63.
[337] *Ibid*., pp. 63-5.

selfish and pretended emotion. 'It is Shame and Education that contain the Seeds of all Politeness,' wrote Mandeville, 'it is incredible how necessary an Ingredient Shame is to make us sociable… The Happiness of Conversation depends upon it, and no Society could be polish'd, if the Generality of Mankind was not subject to it.'[338]

Although Hume firmly identified shame as a social emotion, it should be noted that unlike many religious or secular moralists who regarded humility as a virtue and pride a sin, he questioned the moral origin of humility, and regarded it as a mentally problematic emotion. According to Hume, 'morality is more properly felt than judged of… The uneasiness and satisfaction are not only inseparable from vice and virtue, but constitute their very nature and essence.'[339] According to Hume, while the passion of pride originates from a satisfaction with, or admiration for, virtue and beauty and therefore should be cherished as a positive sentiment, humility, given its painful and uneasy nature, is produced as a result of vice:

> There may be some … [who] may here be surpriz'd to hear me talk of virtue as
> exciting pride, which they look upon as a vice; and of vice as producing humility,
> which they having been taught to consider as a virtue. But… I observe, that by
> *pride* I understand that agreeable impression, which arises in the mind, when the
> view either of our virtue, beauty, riches or power makes us satisfy'd with
> ourselves: And that by *humility* I mean the opposite impression. 'Tis evident the
> former impression is not always vicious, nor the latter virtuous. The most rigid
> morality allows to us to receive a pleasure from reflecting on a generous action;

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[338] *Ibid.*, p. 57, 63.
[339] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 37-8.

and 'tis by none esteem'd a virtue to feel any fruitless remorse upon the thoughts

of past villainy and baseness.[340]

Furthermore, Hume argued that 'pride and vanity' might invigorate and exalt the mind, while excessive humility and self-abasement would 'deject and infeeble the human souls'.[341] For Hume, 'a well-established pride and self-esteem' are laudable, since they make us 'sensible of our own merit, and give us a confidence and assurance in all our projects and enterprizes'. And it would be 'more advantageous to overrate our merit, than to form ideas of it, below its just standard' because 'fortune commonly favours the bold and enterprising; and nothing inspires us with more boldness than a good opinion of ourselves'. By contrast, a modest, self-abasing disposition 'produces often uneasiness in the person endowed with it'.[342]

This section has offered an intellectual history of shame by examining some of the most influential philosophical works of the eighteenth century. Indeed, as this discussion has indicated, any attempt to identify the emotion of shame as purely a social, private or moral emotion will oversimplify the complexity of shame. Secular interpretations of shame were not entirely coincident with the religious ones. And even within the secular context, contemporary scholars did not offer a single or coherent discourse about the passion of shame. However, despite Mandeville's and Hume's questioning of the moral origin of shame, and Shaftesbury's view of shame as a private emotion, there can be little doubt that the majority of writers reviewed in this section

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[340] *Ibid*., vol. 2, p. 40.
[341] *Ibid*., vol. 2, p. 204.
[342] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 240.

were inclined to identify shame as a social emotion decided by other's judgement, and a sentiment of great moral values in promoting virtues and manners. If religious shame was essentially a private emotion concerning personal salvation, shame in a more secular context was chiefly a social emotion concerning one's public honour or reputation. These secular discourses were more than just ideas; in fact, they mirrored contemporary concerns about shame, and can be seen as a critical response to what many conduct writers saw as the 'false shame' which either impeded, or resulted from, polite society. It is to the polite writers' discussions on the right and wrong senses of shame that the next section now turns.

'Modest without being bashful': Impolite Shame

On 17 September 1751, *The Rambler* published a letter from a young gentleman who complained of his own shamefacedness and awkward manners at his friend's wedding-day celebration. The young man was virtuous and well-educated. From early childhood he had been 'inculcated nothing but the dignity of knowledge and the happiness of virtue', which not only encouraged him to pursue his studies with 'incessant industry', and to avoid everything which he 'considered as vicious', but convinced him that 'a tainted reputation the greatest calamity'. After graduating from the university, he sought to seize every opportunity to display his virtue and learning, hoping to be admired and to build a reputation. Undoubtedly, the young man would not decline his friend's invitation to the wedding-day celebration. On the day of celebration, however, when the young gent entered the dining room and saw how 'the whole company rose' at his

entrance, he was abashed and overwhelmed by timidity:

> I saw so many eyes fixed at once upon me, I was blasted with a sudden imbecility,
>
> I was quelled by some nameless power which I found impossible to be resisted.
>
> My sight was dazzled, my cheeks glowed, my perceptions were confounded; I
>
> was harassed by the multitude of eager salutations, and returned the common
>
> civilities with hesitation and importunity. The sense of my own blunders
>
> increasing my confusion, and before the exchange of ceremonies allowed me to
>
> sit down, I was ready to sink under the oppression of surprize; my voice grew
>
> weak, and my knees trembled.

The state of confusion and bashfulness continued when he found himself unable to answer other people's questions that were 'seldom discussed in books'. Fortunately, a clergyman rescued the young man with questions about Newtonian philosophy, which made him 'rouse from depression and discourse with ease and volubility'. But he soon realised that 'however I might please myself, I found very little added by my demonstrations to the satisfaction of the company', since his antagonist, who knew 'the laws of conversation too well to detain their attention long upon an unpleasing topic', dismissed the controversy, and resigned the young gent to his 'former insignificance and perplexity'. The experience of humiliation became acute when he heard several men in the company ridiculing 'the uselessness of universities, the folly of book-learning, and the awkwardness of scholars'. After dinner, the young man was invited to the tea table of the ladies, wherein he resolved to recover his credit by showing 'graceful compliment' and saying 'something pretty' to them. He tried to recollect all he had read

or heard in praise of beauty, but could find nothing to say. At this moment, the young

man was overwhelmed by shame:

> There are not many situations more incessantly uneasy than that in which the man
>
> is placed who is watching an opportunity to speak, without courage to take it
>
> when it is offered… I was ashamed of silence, yet could find nothing to say of
>
> elegance or importance equal to my wishes. The ladies, afraid my learning,
>
> thought themselves not qualified to propose any subject of rattle to a man so
>
> famous for dispute, and there was nothing on either side but impatience and
>
> vexation.

When the young gent finally found 'a happy compliment' after 'long indulgence in

meditation', he accidentally dropped the saucer from his hand. 'The cup was broken,

the lap-dog was scalded, a brocaded petticoat was stained, and the whole assembly was

thrown into disorder.' Realising that all hopes of reputation were gone, he stole away

in silence. It was at this moment that the young man's feeling of shame reached its peak:

> Shame, above any other passion, propagates itself. Before those who have seen
>
> me confused, I can never appear without new confusion, and the remembrance of
>
> the weakness which I formerly discovered, hinders me acting or speaking with
>
> my natural force.[343]

Samuel Johnson's portrait of this unsociable, gauche and pedantic young man

provided a typical example of impolite personality and unsuccessful communication,

which not only taught readers that desirable manners and address were of equal

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[343] *Rambler*, no. 157, 17 September, 1751.

importance as virtue and learning in polite society, but also demonstrated the significance of 'easiness' – a term that polite writers regarded as a 'naturally free and unconfined' way of communication, without involving 'harshness, formality, forced behaviour or conceits' – in modern polite sociability.[344] But in terms of the aim of this chapter, another, and indeed a more important, implication of this negative example is reflected in a phrase which Johnson quoted from Homer and used as a prologue of the story: 'shame greatly hurts or greatly helps mankind.'[345] We have seen that early modern authors identified modesty, awkwardness and bashfulness as dispositions that belonged to the sense of shame basically because they all involved a low self-esteem and an awareness of weakness, incompetence or inferiority of the self. Researching contemporary discussions about modesty in the context of politeness thus provides a new way of thinking about shame. As we shall see in this section, a modest, bashful disposition, which had long been regarded by both religious and secular moralists as a sign of virtue, became an object of refinement in polite society.

That modesty was a virtue and a significant element of good manners is well known. But the eighteen-century emphasis on the importance of modesty was not simply a restatement of an old theme. For polite theorists and conduct writers, modesty was one of the central principles of politeness, because it represented a scrupulous disposition and involved a natural shame and avoidance of vice, which they saw as virtuous qualities that helped to guard one's innocence and promote virtue. A modest

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[344] M. Deslands, *The Art of Being Easy at All Times and in All Places, Written Chiefly for the Use of A Lady of Quality* (2nd edn, London, 1724), p. 77, cited in Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, p. 22; Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (4th edn, 2vols, Dublin, 1775), vol. 1, EAS-.
[345] *Rambler*, no. 157, 17 September, 1751.

man was sensitive to shame, and always got ready to blush for any of vicious things and misbehaviours committed or encountered. *Spectator* No. 373 defined modesty as 'the Reflection of an Ingenuous Mind, either when a Man has committed an Action for which he censures himself, or fancies that he is exposed to the Censure of others'. 'A Man truly Modest,' as the *Spectator* further pointed out, 'is as much so when he is alone as in Company, and as subject to a Blush in his Closet, as when the Eyes of Multitudes are upon him.'[346] It was natural for females to be more inclined to be modest. For a woman, as Addison wrote, modesty 'is not only an Ornament, but also a Guard to Virtue. It is a kind of quick and delicate Feeling in the Soul, which makes her shrink and withdraw her self from every thing that has Danger in it. It is such an exquisite Sensibility, as warns her to shun the first Appearance of every thing which is hurtful.'[347]

In his *A Compleat Treatise of Moral and Intellectual Virtues* (1722), John Hartcliffe, a Cambridge scholar and conduct writer, spelled out the correlation between modesty and shame and how a modest disposition functioned as a means of preventing sins. 'We must put on such a Modesty, as may guard our Virtue against the strongest persuasions to Evil,' said Hartcliffe; a modest man 'blushes at the Sound of an Oath, and is ashamed of Drinking; he is too bashful for the Chamber of the Whore, and cannot behold the detestable Foreheads of the violent, unjust, and debauched Race of Mankind, without great Confusion of Face.'[348]

Another reason for emphasising modesty in polite society lay in the notion that a

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[346] *Spectator*, no. 373, 8 May, 1712. Repeated in *World*, no. 2, 11 January, 1753.
[347] *Spectator*, no. 231, 24 November, 1711. Repeated in Anon., *The Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed*, vol. 1, p. 329.
[348] John Hartcliffe, *A Complete Treatise of Moral and Intellectual Virtues* (2nd edn, London, 1722), pp. 160-1, 165.

modest person's aptitude for self-control, avoidance of exaggeration, and unassuming characters were desirable qualities that contributed to both elegant manners and a new model of an easy, polite, and mutually-respected sociability. 'True politeness is modest,' an eighteenth-century French behavioural guide remarked.[349] Here, modesty was not just a fear of shame or a watchful sensibility about immorality and sin, but rather, was a lasting and natural disposition to self-denial, which reminded a person of his or her own disadvantages, and required them to hold a moderate and even a lower self-estimation. According to James Fordyce, modesty required us 'not to rate our abilities or attainments… beyond their value, which must be estimated exactly in proportion to the pious, the benevolent, and the prudent use we make of them. Nor are we to contemplate only the bright side of our conduct, but to look also at those frailties and failing.'[350] Regarding modesty as 'one of the most attractive virtues that belongs to man', the Scottish scholar Henry Home (1696-1782) warned his readers against the passion of pride, which he saw as 'self-esteem in excess', which was so 'hateful' that 'ought to be repressed by every possible mortification'.[351]

Although the dispositions of modesty and shame were of great help to personal and social refinement, they were not without problems. It is striking that eighteenth-century conduct writers increasingly warned readers of the harm of excessive modesty, arguing that true modesty should be moderate, without involving the false, self-abasing elements of shame such as bashfulness, diffidence, humiliation and unworthiness. In

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[349] Anne-Thérèse de Marguenat de Courcelles Lambert, *Advice of a Mother to Her Son and Daughter* (London, 1737), p. 63.
[350] Fordyce, *Addresses to Young Men*, vol. 2, p. 214.
[351] Henry Home Kames, *Loose Hints upon Education, Chiefly Concerning the Culture of the Heart* (Edinburgh, 1781), pp. 98-9.

polite society, an overly modest or shamefaced disposition was regarded as anti-social, since it contradicted the easy, informal and sociable ways of communication. In the eighteenth century, the conflict between excessive modesty and refined sociability became so great that some contemporaries even regarded 'modesty' as a pejorative term. '*A modest Man*,' as the *Spectator* observed, 'is very often used to signify a sheepish awkward Fellow, who has neither Good-breeding, Politeness, nor any Knowledge of the World.' [352] Locke also wrote that 'there is often in people a clownish shamefacedness, before Strangers, or those above them: They are confounded in their Thoughts, Words, and Looks; and so lose themselves, in that Confusion, as not to be able to do any thing, or at least not do with that Freedom and Gracefulness'. Seeing this sheepish shamefacedness as a mark of ill-breeding, Locke argued that the only way to overcome the false sense of shame was 'not to think meanly of ourselves'. [353] In *Spectator* No. 484, Steele regarded modesty not as 'a certain Indication of Merit', but 'a certain Obstacle to the producing of it', because 'under the Notion of modesty, Men have indulged themselves in a Spiritless Sheepishness', which led those who indulged in it to give away every opportunity of making progress or building up their reputation in social communication and competition:

> I have said often, Modesty must be an Act of the Will, and yet it always implies Self-Denial: For if a Man has an ardent Desire to do what is laudable for him to perform, and, from an unmanly Bashfulness, shrinks away, and lets his Merit languish in Silence, he ought not to be angry at the World that a more unskilful

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[352] *Spectator*, no. 373, 8 May, 1712.
[353] Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, p. 212.

Actor succeeds in his Part, because he has not Confidence to come upon the Stage himself.[354]

The Marquise de Lambert, author of *Advice of a Mother to her Son and Daughter* (1737) also attacked excessive modesty for its harm to polite and intelligent sociability: 'there is nothing so improper for a Young Man as that Modesty which makes him fancy he is not capable of great Things. This Modesty is Faintness of Soul, which hinders it from exerting itself, and running with a swift Career toward Glory.'[355] Another polite writer likewise complained that 'there are men of great parts, that are guilty of downright bashfulness, that by a strange hesitation and reluctance to speak, murder the finest and most elegant thoughts'.[356] Thus, in view of the destructive effects of such overwhelmingly modest disposition to both personal refinement and polite social interaction, Chesterfield continually advised his son to subdue 'awkward bashfulness' and 'low diffidence of the self', which he saw as 'the distinguishing character of an English booby' or 'country bumpkin' who is usually 'frightened out of his wits when people of fashion speak to him, and blushes and stammers, without being able to give a proper answer'. Seeing excessive shamefacedness as a mark of incompetence in sociability and unmaking of gentlemanliness, Chesterfield reminded his son: 'to be civil with ease is the way to be well received in company… to be bashful is to be ridiculous.'[357]

The criticism of excessive modesty and shamefacedness continued in the late

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[354] *Spectator*, no. 484, 15 September, 1712.
[355] Lambert, *Advice of a Mother to Her Son and Daughter*, p. 3.
[356] Anon., *The Young Gentleman and Lady,* vol. 2, p. 179
[357] Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, *Lord Chesterfield's Maxims: or, A New Plan of Education, on the Principles of Virtue and Politeness* (London, 1786), pp. 13-4.

eighteenth century. Although Vicesimus Knox regarded modesty 'which causes an efflorescence in the cheek of the schoolboys' as a 'favourable presage of every thing amiable', he nevertheless warned that it would be 'a great misfortune' if 'excessive diffidence and bashfulness' continued through adult life.[358] Knox claimed that the excess of shamefacedness in adults would not only 'retard the acquisition of knowledge, and destroy its due effect when acquired', but also injure society since 'invincible diffidence' impeded 'the communication of many ideas and opinions which are calculated to improve mankind, and to sweeten the pleasures of friendly association'.[359] Moreover, Knox advocated an equal, mutually-respected model of communication, and strongly argued against those who had true learning and genius voluntarily shamed and abased themselves by showing their lowliness and servility to those rich and powerful:

> True learning, true taste, and true genius, can scarcely consist with abject servility. Yet persons with the characters of these qualities have often been disgracefully submissive to rank and opulence… They become voluntary slaves, and dearly earn the wages of their servitude.[360]

Besides urging readers to reject extreme and unreasonable shamefacedness and self-abasement, polite writers further emphasised the need of assurance in polite sociability, arguing that a true modest disposition should be a combination of self-confidence and a moderate sense of shame or humility. Thus, seeing assurance as 'the Faculty of possessing a Man's self, or of saying and doing indifferent things without

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[358] Knox, *Winter Evenings*, vol. 2, p. 67, 209.
[359] *Ibid*., vol. 2, pp. 338-9; and his *Liberal Education: or, A Practical Treatise on the Methods of Acquiring Useful and Polite Learning* (London, 1781), p. 36.
[360] Knox, *Liberal Education*, p. 262.

any Uneasiness or Emotion in the Mind', the *Spectator* argued that:

> Modesty and Assurance are both amiable, and may very well meet in the same
>
> Person. When they are thus mixed and blended together, they compose what we
>
> endeavour to express when we say a *modest Assurance*; by which we understand
>
> the just Mean between Bashfulness and Impudence.

The *Spectator* advised would-be polite persons to 'cherish and encourage' a modest,

assured dispositions, and warned that 'a Man without Assurance is liable to be made

uneasy by the Folly or Ill-nature of every one he converses with' and that 'a Man

without Modesty is lost to all Sense of Honour and Virtue'.[361] Similarly, in his *Essays*

relating to the Conduct of Life (1717), Giles Jacob wrote that 'a Man must have a

superabundant Humility attended with the utmost Constancy and Resolution of

Mind'.[362] In 1753, *The World* told a fable about how 'Modesty', the daughter of

'Knowledge', and 'Assurance', the son of 'Ignorance', became good friends and helped

each other during a long journey. Thus, 'the follies of Assurance were continually

checked by the delicacy of Modesty; and the blushes of Modesty were frequently

relieved by the vivacity of Assurance.'[363] In his *An Essay on Politeness* (1775), John

Harris argued that the genuine disposition to humility was by no means 'a dastardly

spirit, a flattering resignation of the sentiments, or stooping to perform the lowest

offices in life', but rather, contained 'a decent pride', which 'supports a man in time of

trouble, adds importance to his character, pushes him with vigour to attempt noble

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[361] *Spectator*, no. 373, 8 May, 1712.
[362] Giles Jacob, *Essays, relating to the Conduct of Life* (London, 1717), p. 31.
[363] *World*, no. 2, 11 January, 1753.

actions, and withholds him from appearing in any part of his conduct mean and contemptible.[364] James Fordyce also claimed that a truly modest and humble person would never make himself 'sink beneath his station', 'yield up lightly the respect to which he is entitled', 'surrender without a reason any just claim supported by the laws of society', 'walk with down cast eyes', or 'tread with timidity and hesitation like a slave in the presence of a tyrant'. Instead, he possessed not only 'sobriety of mind, and modesty of deportment', but also 'a becoming resolution, an ingenuous confidence, in asserting, justifying, defending… what the heart believes to be right and true'. And this assured and confident temper, according to Fordyce, 'is not incompatible with an unassuming temper, or an unpretending manner.'[365]

Like other conduct writers of the time, Chesterfield also emphasised the significance of self-confidence in building up gentlemanliness and integrating into modern sociable living. He claimed that 'the medium' between excessive humility and imprudent pride 'points out the well-bred man', a man which he saw as 'modest without being bashful, and steady without being impudent'.[366] But it should be noted that unlike other polite writers who identified genuine modesty or shamefacedness as a reflection of a virtuous innate disposition, Chesterfield's modesty was a calculated and superficial one. The real, and perhaps most important, function of modesty was to conceal one's merit and inward pride and, by doing so, to gain good will and admiration

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[364] John Harris, *An Essay on Politeness; wherein the Benefits Arising from and the Necessity of Being Polite are Clearly Proved and Demonstrated from Reason, Religion, and Philosophy* (London, 1775), p. 59. Also see Anon., *The Polite Preceptor: or A Collection fo Entertaining and Instructive Essay* (London, 1776), pp. 88-91.
[365] Fordyce, *Addresses to Young Men*, vol. 2, pp. 210-7, 236-7.
[366] Chesterfield, *Lord Chesterfield's Maxims*, pp. 13-5.

from others. As Chesterfield wrote:

> Modesty is the only sure bait when you angle for praise… By this modesty I do not mean timidity, and awkward bashfulness. On the contrary, be inwardly firm and steady, know your own value… but take great care to let nobody discover that you do know your own value. Whatever real merit you have, other people will discover; and people always magnify their own discoveries, as they lessen those of others.[367]

It is clear that what Chesterfield truly advocated was assurance and confidence in modern polite communication. Chesterfield agreed the virtuous essence of modesty, and continually stressed the need of modesty for subduing impudence and insolence, but he strongly opposed the ridiculous and unbecoming shamefacedness which was usually associated with an overly-modest disposition. Chesterfield's self-interested model of modesty echoed Bernard Mandeville and David Hume who, as we have seen in the previous section, saw shame and modesty as nothing but a disguise of inward assurance, pride, and selfishness. As Chesterfield wrote to his son: 'assurance and intrepidity, under the white banner of seeming modesty' not only 'clear the way for merit', but provided 'possibly the most useful qualification that a man can have in every part of life.'[368]

Of course, not every conduct writer agreed with Chesterfieldian modesty. For example, Lambert advised readers to 'be humble without being bashful', because

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[367] Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters Written by the Late Right Honourable Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, to His Son, Philip Stanhope* (2 vols, Dublin, 1774) vol. 2, p. 17.
[368] *Ibid*., vol. 2, p. 52.

'shame is a secret Pride; and Pride is an Error with Regard to one's own Worth, and an Injustice with regard to what one has a Mind to appear to others'.[369] Richardson similarly warned: 'Over-Modesty borders nearly on pride: And too liberal self-accusations are generally but so many traps for praise.'[370] Knox similarly pointed out the potential hypocrisy of modest and humble dispositions, arguing that such seeming modesty 'is often the natural result of sullen pride and subtle artifice'. For Knox, 'pride is a cause of taciturnity no less often than diffidence' since there were many people believed that 'silence gives the appearance of wisdom', and that 'they possess no method of acquiring the character of wisdom so easily as by silence'.[371]

Regardless of the controversies over the motives of modesty, what had become a standard view of the eighteenth-century conduct writers is that dispositions such as self-denial and abasement, which had long been considered as the essential parts of the religious sense of shame, were regarded as inappropriate and potentially harmful in polite society. Conduct writers increasingly saw excessive modesty, bashfulness and low self-esteem as marks of false shame, and repeatedly warned readers against this harmful disposition because it exposed a person's weakness, impeded him or her from attending pleasing and intelligent social communications, and blocked the way to access a good reputation in polite society. Furthermore, this section again demonstrated that in polite society, others' opinion became an important factor in raising shame.

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[369] Lambert, *Advice of a Mother to Her Son and Daughter*, p. 60.
[370] Richardson, *A Collection of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments*, p. 54.
[371] Knox, *Winter Evenings*, vol. 2, p. 339.

'Banish false shame, this monster of vanity and arrogance!'

A frequently discussed issue within contemporary discussions of shame was, as many polite writers asked, what a 'right' sense of shame consisted of. Indeed, reasons for shame varied considerably from person to person according to their genders, rank, characters, and their specific circumstances. For the pious such as John Bunyan, even the slightest and the most secret mistake could impose a deep sense of shame. Samuel Pepys repeatedly wrote that he 'was ashamed to be seen in a hackney' for fearing being jeered at by his acquaintances and friends.[372] In Frances Burney's *Evelina* (1778), Lovel was not ashamed of his foppish dress, but he did feel being shamed by Evelina when the latter shew no admiration of him and refused his dancing invitation.[373] While fallen women sought to hide their shame in desperation, courtesans or those who were called 'demi-reps' unashamedly enjoyed their 'reputation' and 'honour' gained through unchastity.[374]

Despite the diversity of reasons for experiencing shame, eighteenth-century polite writers generally identify shame as a consequence of, first, moral judgement, that is, someone felt shame due to the violation of moral values and, second, social judgement, whereby a person experienced shame for being disapproved or despised by others. For eighteenth-century writers, as we shall see, shame should be measured and constructed by moral norms. Social judgement was important in inducing shame, but polite writers nevertheless insisted that others' opinion was the right reason for feeling shame only if

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[372] Pepys, *Diary*, 18 April, 1664; 21 April, 1667; 31 October, 1668; 21 April, 1669.
[373] Frances Burney, *Evelina* (London, 1994), p. 31.
[374] See Dabhoiwala, *The Origins of Sex*, chapter 6. For histories concerning sexual immorality of men and women in superior rank in the eighteenth-century, see the next chapter of this thesis.

it derived from and accorded with moral standards.

However, before investigating contemporary discussions about right and wrong senses of shame within the context of polite society, it is worthwhile looking at the early modern concept of 'civility' and how this linked to the later emergence of polite culture. In her study of early modern English behavioural literature, Anna Bryson argues that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed a gradual change of codes of manners from medieval 'courtesy' to early modern 'civility'.[375] Where medieval courtesy concentrated on the accomplishments of elegant behaviour and courtliness within the context of lordship and service, civility, if it did not rejected principles of courtesy, inculcated rules of civilised conduct in a wider range of the population extending beyond the circle of the court and noble household. A striking feature of civility literature was its concentration on etiquette for every aspect of gentlemanly conduct and good breeding, such as, in the words of historian of masculine politeness Philip Carter, 'table manners, dress, personal hygiene, the discharge of bodily waste, street conduct, and relations with social superiors and inferiors.'[376] The popularisation of these conduct guides made both elite and non-elite male readers believe that even without a noble lineage, the self-presentation of a civilised personality through polished behaviour and decent appearance could help to establish honour and reputation.

A typical example of civility literature in the mid-seventeenth century was Francis Osborne's *Advice to a Son* (1656). Like many seventeenth-century conduct writers,

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[375] Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*, p. 37.
[376] Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*, pp. 37-8; Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, pp. 55-6.

Osborne did not ignore the role of religion and morality in seeking good breeding and reputation, but put more stress on outside refinement by providing a large number of precise stipulations about practical matters such as dressing, speaking, and visiting, which made his account look like 'a study in how to avoid making errors as a means of maintaining one's standing and reputation in a distinctly competitive and ungrateful society.' [377] Osborne's ideal of refinement was characteristically practical and sophisticated. Duplicitous behaviour and pretended civility, if not being advocated, was at least tolerated in a competitive society; as Osborne wrote, 'Court him always, you hope one day to make use of, but at the least expense you can.'[378] Outer appearance was equally important in preserving and increasing a reputation; Osborne advocated a dress 'exceeding rather than coming short of others of like fortune' as a means to find 'acceptance where ever you come'.[379] Osborne's *Advice* was popular. Sir William Petty, a colleague of Samuel Pepys at the Navy Board, regarded this book among those 'most esteemed and generally cried up for wit in the world'.[380] Undoubtedly, Osborne's equation of civility and refinement with outside elegance would make its stalwart readers like Pepys more likely to regard an omission in dress or fashion as a disgrace and shame. On 19 October 1661, for example, Pepys, at a 'handsome dinner' with his friends, was ashamed of himself for 'not being neat in clothes': 'I find a great fault in me, could not be so merry as otherwise, and at all times I am and can be, when I am in

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[377] Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, p. 58.
[378] Francis Osborne, *Advice to a Son; or Directions for Your Better* Conduct (Oxford, 1655), p. 15.
[379] Osborne, *Advice*, p. 17, cited in Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, p. 58.
[380] Pepys, *Diary*, 27 January, 1664. Another two books which William Petty thought to be of the same reputation as Osborne's *Advice* were Sir Thomas Browne's *Religion Medici*, and Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*.

good habitt, which makes me remember my father Osborne's rule for a gentleman to spare in all things rather than in that.'[381]

Eighteenth-century advocates of politeness nevertheless found codes of civility represented in behavioural literature like Osborne's *Advice* deeply problematic; seeing 'civility' as 'mostly a Surface without Depth'. They worried that the excessive concentration on outer polish would marginalise the central role of moral virtue in refinement, and make external embellishments of dress and manners the sole criterion for the judgement of honour and dishonour.[382] Thus, the emergence of the concept of politeness as a superior mode of both personal and social refinement in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries can be seen as a critical response to the earlier deviant codes of civility. While civility was condemned as an inadequate mode of refinement which lacked morality and overestimated the importance of externality, politeness advocated harmony between inner virtue and outer polish.[383] Highlighting the fundamental role of moral virtue in refinement and establishing honour, polite writers argued that 'pleasing externality' was the genuine emanation of internal elegance or what Locke termed 'a well-formed Mind' rather than imposed stipulations of civility.[384] The moral nature of politeness was repeatedly emphasised throughout the eighteenth century. Antoine Courtin regarded 'outward honour' as the reflection of inner virtue, claiming that this honourable display 'attracts the Heart of Men; for 'tis

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[381] Pepys, *Diary*, 19 October, 1661.
[382] Anon., *The Polite Academy; or, School of Behaviour for Young Gentlemen and Ladies* (4th edn., London, 1768), p. 1.
[383] Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, chapter one; also see his 'Polite "Persons": Character, Biography and the Gentlemen', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, vol. 12 (2002), pp. 333-54.
[384] Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, p. 68.

the Property of Virtue to make it self esteemed, applauded and believ'd.'[385] Regarding

politeness as 'all moral Virtues in Epitome', the author of *Reflexions upon the*

Politeness of Manners (1707) argued that 'virtue consist not merely in Surface and

Exterior, but must have its Principle in the Soul'.[386] Similarly, true politeness was

virtuous. In 1734, the *Gentleman's Magazine* remarked, 'nothing that is indecent or

disagreeable can be polite.' [387] Samuel Richardson likewise claimed that 'true

politeness is but another word for Virtue'.[388]

   Seeing politeness first and foremost as an inward refinement reflecting virtue,

early eighteenth-century conduct writers stressed that a person's inner characters such

as morality and learning should be the foundation of the construction and judgement of

shame and honour. In 1713, the *Guardian* wrote that 'Knowledge is indeed that which,

next to virtue, truly and essentially raises one man above another. It finishes one half of

the human soul…and is…the natural source of wealth and honour.'[389] In 1747, an

anonymous polite manual claimed that a virtuous mind was the source of a good

reputation: 'the seat of solid honour is in a man's own bosom, and no one can want

support, who is in possession of an honest conscience.'[390] The *Spectator* repeatedly

reminded readers that feeling shame or glory merely for the reasons of, for example,

dress, title or fortune was not only wrong but potentially harmful. In July 1711, Richard

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[385] Antoine Courtin, *The Rules of Civility or the Maxims of Genteel Behaviour*, *with A Short Treatise on the Point of Honour* (London, 1703), p. 230.
[386] Abbe De Bellegarde, *Reflexion upon the Politeness of Manners; with Maxims for Civil Society* (London, 1707), p. 1.
[387] *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 4 (1734), p. 191.
[388] Samuel Richardson, *A Collection of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions, and Reflections* (London, 1755), p. 41.
[389] *Guardian*, no. 111, 18 July, 1713.
[390] Anon., *The Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed in such Principles of Politeness, Prudence, and Virtue* (2 vols, London, 1747), vol. 2, pp. 11-2.

Steele warned that 'Shame of Poverty' would make people not only 'launch into unnecessary Equipage, vain Expense, and lavish Entertainment', but 'go every Day a step nearer to it'.[391] Several months later, Joseph Addison pointed out that a 'vicious Modesty' was a sentiment which 'makes a man ashamed of his Person, his Birth, his Profession, his Poverty, or the like Misfortunes, which it was not in his Choice to prevent, and is not in his Power to rectify.'[392] Again, in 1714, a correspondence to the *Spectator* remarked that it would be a 'folly' and 'Mark of Ridicule' if a man prides himself 'in worthless' or 'shameful things' such as 'the Good of Fortune, a gay Dress or a new Title'.[393]

Firmly identifying shame as a morally-constructed emotion, eighteenth-century conduct writers shared the religious view that shame should be imposed by the moral agency of the self. James Fordyce (1720-1796), a Scottish Presbyterian minister and conduct writer, argued that the blame of conscience would not only make a wrongdoer's 'feelings of honour shrink back… like the sensitive plant from the hand that touches it', but also, more importantly, make him blush and truly aware that he had done something 'deviating from Virtue'.[394] Such sentiments did not mean that social opinion was insignificant. Compared to religious teachings, it is noteworthy that eighteenth-century conduct manuals more frequently highlighted the role of social spectators as a powerful moral restraint and shaming audience. Nevertheless, conduct writers insisted that in order to arouse a genuine, moral sense of shame, the judgement of conscience should

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[391] *Spectator*, no. 114, 11 July, 1711.
[392] *Ibid*., no. 231, 24 November, 1711.
[393] *Ibid*., no. 621, 17 November, 1714.
[394] Fordyce, *Addresser to Young Men*, vol. 1, pp. 39-40.

be prior to that of the world. 'It is that you are struck dumb immediately with a conscientious Shame for what you have been saying,' Addison wrote, 'then you are inwardly grieved at the Sentiments which you cannot but perceive others entertain concerning you. In short, you are against your self; the laugh of the Company runs against you.'[395] In 1790, the author of a female conduct guide expressed a similar view:

> There are two courts before which you must inevitably appear in judgement, your conscience and the world; you may possibly get clear of the world, but you can never get clear of conscience. Secure her testimony in favour of your honesty, 'tis what you own to yourself; but withal, do not neglect the approbation of the public; for a contempt of reputation naturally leads to a contempt of virtue.[396]

The extent to which the eighteenth-century emphasis on the moral origin of shame succeeded in correcting the potentially problematic notions of shame produced by the seventeenth-century codes of civility is a question which is, however, difficult to answer. But conduct literature offers an important perspective through which we are able to access contemporary perceptions of shame. Although discussions about manners and morals, as Anna Bryson wrote, 'are concerned with ideals, and may themselves give little indication of the distance between these ideals and real behaviour', they nevertheless reflected a 'significant cultural fact' and the existence of a real and 'hot' public concern of the time.[397] Thus, by taking a closer look at polite and conduct literatures we find that the discussions and concern about a 'false' sense of shame −

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[395] *Spectator*, no. 538, 17 November, 1712.
[396] Anon., *The Young Lady's Pocket Library, or Parental Monitor* (Dublin, 1790), p. 139.
[397] Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*, p. 6, 279.

which were always didactic and lamenting in tone – not only persisted, but dramatically increased throughout the eighteenth century.

Eighteenth-century polite and conduct writers regarded their age as a period where there was particular alarm over the prevalence of what they regarded as 'false shame'. They observed that many people enslaved themselves to others' opinion, and measured shame and honour merely by social opinion without concerning true virtue. Identifying such socially-constructed, morally-superficial shame as 'a vicious modesty', an anonymous author wrote that a man of this modesty always 'complies with every thing, and is only fearful of doing what may look singular in company. His course is with the torrent, and he lets himself go to every action or discourse, however unjustifiable in itself, so it be in vogue among him companions'. The author condemned this kind of modesty as 'one of the most ridiculous dispositions in human nature', since it made a man no longer feel shame for 'speaking or acting in a dissolute or irrational manner', and become 'ashamed of governing himself by the principles of reason, virtue, and religion'.[398] What this author had criticised reflected a real problem of his age. Modern sociable living made people attach more importance to the opinions of others who were in the same social group or circle. But social judgement did not always function as a weapon against immorality; it might exist independently of, or even invert moral virtue. The author observed that it was the desire for a reputation in company and the fear of being ridiculed as a coward or being kicked out of the fashionable world that obliged a man to 'conceal any serious sentiment' and 'appear a greater libertine than he is'. Once

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[398] Anon., *The Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed*, vol. 1, p. 334.

a 'modest man' blushed 'to do any thing that is opposite to the humour of his companions', his sense of shame lost its moral power and corrupted into the art of complaisance, and became an accessary to vice.[399]

This anonymous author was, of course, not alone in warning about the danger of such a socially-constructed, morally-superficial sense of shame. In 1777, James Fordyce wrote that 'we naturally wish for approbation, and shrink from contempt', and that the 'sense of honour and shame' was 'the most powerful, vivid, and beautiful principle of the yet uncorrupted mind'.[400] However, 'the fear of ridicule' and 'the hope of praise,' as he observed, often deterred young men from virtue, and incited them to evil when they were 'in those companies where praise and ridicule are distributed according to the laws of the modes'.[401] Being 'more studious of Honour as a Reward than of Honour as a Principle', and having 'more anxiety about what the world may say of them, than what they must think of themselves', these young men's 'predominant ambition' was, according to Fordyce, 'to Appear'.[402] In view of the negative impact of social judgement on the notions of shame and honour, Fordyce reminded his readers to 'make the Love of Fame coincide with the Love of Virtue', and never to 'suspend satisfaction upon the opinion of others'.[403] Similarly, Charles Townley (1737-1805), a wealthy country gentleman and collector, regarded 'false shame' as 'the most dangerous enemy of morals' because it left 'inexperienced youth wholly defenceless to encounter the force of false argument, ill-example, and the still more penetrating shafts of ridicule'.

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[399] *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 336-7.
[400] James Fordyce, *Addresses to Young Men* (2 vols, Dublin, 1777), vol. 1, pp. 95-6.
[401] *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 103.
[402] *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 102.
[403] *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 95, 98, 104.

Townley urged 'those who superintend education' to inculcate youth with moral virtue, which he believed was the ground of the right sense of shame and honour and a means to prevent the power of social opinion from inculcating false notions of what was shameful: 'the Preceptor should carefully inculcate that degree of firmness which enables men to assert their own sentiments, and convince his pupil that the worst species of cowardice is that of the dastard who betrays his best interests through fear of lessening himself in the eyes of those whose opinions he ought to despise.'[404]

Contemporary concern over the superficiality of shame was also embodied in the growing tide of criticism against those who measured shame and honour merely by fashion, title and wealth, rather than moral norms. The vain glory of dress was a frequent target of attack. But we should bear in mind that eighteenth-century polite commentators never denied or ignored the importance of good dress and appearance in building up reputation and promoting polite sociability.[405] Indeed, in a century of increasing urbanisation and socialisation, clothing was deemed to be an effective way of both establishing and assessing the quality and social standing of unknown men and women.[406] Early eighteenth-century conduct literature argued that suitable clothing should accord with the principles of conformity and moderation.[407] The *Spectator*

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[404] Charles Townly, *Memoirs of Charles Townly* (3rd edn, 3 vols, Dublin, 1789), vol. 1, p. 166.
[405] In his research on the dress in eighteenth-century England, John Style finds that ordinary people were also ashamed to be seen in a dirty and untidy shirt, and that this sense of shame encouraged them to wash their clothes regularly. Besides, Style finds that clergymen in Cheshire complained that many people did not attend church service in Sunday because they were ashamed of their indecent or inadequate dress. See John Styles, *The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven and London, 2010), p. 80 and 307.
[406] Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1760* (Oxford, 1989); Dabhoiwala, 'The Construction of Honour, Reputation and Status in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England', pp. 201-213.
[407] Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, pp. 61-2.

reminded readers to avoid appearing like a fop and a sloven because while the foppery

of over-dress reduced a man to a fool, a man appearing with 'an awkward and pitiful

dress' shall be 'coldly received'.[408] *Spectator* No. 631 argued that decent, neat, and

clean dress was 'a Mark of Politeness', since it 'produces Love', 'bears Analogy to

Purity of Mind', and 'renders us agreeable to others and easie to our selves'.[409] Even

Chesterfield, who was notorious for his influential but superficial and self-interested

ideas of refinement, agreed with the *Spectator*'s view on clothing: 'the difference in

dress between a man of sense and a fop is that the fop values himself upon his dress;

and the man of sense laughs at it, at the same time that he knows he must not neglect

it… for we cannot help forming some opinion of a man's sense and character from his

dress.'[410]

While eighteenth-century commentators acknowledged the significance of clothes

and physical appearance in polite society, what they really opposed were persons like

William Hickey – a real-life fop when he was young in the mid-eighteenth century –

who were not only unashamed of ignorance and effeminate foppery but rather gloried

in it. In 1766, articled as a clerk to Mr. Bayley, Hickey hastened to sculpt his hair into

a fashionable style:

> I was further gratified by having my hair tied, turned over my forehead, powdered,
>
> pomatumed, and three curls on each side, with a thick false tail, my operator being
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> Nerot, a fashionable French hair dresser and peruke maker justly considered the

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[408] *Spectator*, no. 150, 22 August, 1711; no. 478, 8 September, 1712.
[409] *Spectator*, no. 631, 10 December, 1714.
[410] Chesterfield, *Lord Chesterfield's Maxims*, pp. 34-5.

best in his line, in London. And thus equipped, I came forth a smart and dashing Clerk to an Attorney.[411]

Later, when Hickey received a commission to serve in the army, he rushed to his father's tailor in order to obtain fashionable regimentals, even though he had no idea about to which corps he belonged:

> I then went to my father's tailor, Anthony Marcelis, of Suffolk Street, Charing Cross, to order regimentals; but not knowing what corps I should be appointed, I conceived the best thing I could do would be to have a suit of each description… Upon my leaving Marcelis, I met in the street a dashing fellow in a scarlet frock, with black waistcoat, breeches, and stockings, which in my eyes appeared remarkably smart. I therefore returned instantly to the tailor to bespeak a similar dress… In three days, my clothes being sent home, I burst forth a martial buck of the first stamp; and not a little vain was I of the figure I made. I seldom appeared two successive days in the same dress… some of my brother Joseph's acquaintances enquired what the devil regiment I had got into, for that they met me in half a dozen different uniforms in as many days.[412]

Such preoccupation with fashionable dress was not merely a London phenomenon. In fact, the imitation of the dress and lifestyle of the capital's fashionable world was common in provincial towns and even the universities of Oxbridge, places which many contemporaries and modern historians regarded as untouched by urban culture and

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[411] William Hickey, *Memoirs of William Hickey*, ed. Alfred Spencer (3 vols, London, 1913-1925), vol. 1, p. 56.
[412] *Ibid.*, pp. 118-9.

metropolitan fashion.[413] William Hickey's contemporary, James Harris, later first Earl of Malmesbury and a diplomat, recalled his days as an undergraduate student at Oxford in 1760s: 'the set of men with whom I lived were very pleasant, but very idle fellows. Our life was an imitation of High Life in London; luckily drinking was not the fashion, but what we did drink was claret, and we had our regular round of evening card parties, to the great annoyance of our finances.'[414] The dramatist George Colman the younger also recalled his foppish youth at Oxford and how he unashamedly 'strutted along in the pride of' his 'unstatutable curls and coat' in front of the Vice-Chancellor on the day of enrolment:

> On my entrance at Oxford, as a member of Christ Church, I was too foppish a follower of the prevailing fashions to be a reverential observer of academical dress: – in truth, I was an egregious little puppy: – and I was presented to the Vice-Chancellor, to be matriculated, in a grass-green coat, with the furiously be-powder'd pate of an ultra-coxcomb; – both of which are proscribed, by the Statues of the University.[415]

The pursuit of trivial fashion, as presented in the behaviours of William Hickey and George Colman during their young years, was becoming prevalent in the eyes of eighteenth-century conduct and moral writers. In *Moral Instructions for Youth* (1742), an English edition translated from a popular French conduct book, the author observed that 'there are not a few' who make dress 'one of the principal Subjects of their Vanity,

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[413] Heather Ellis, 'Foppish Masculinity, Generational Identity and the University Authorities in Eighteenth-Century Oxbridge', *Cultural and Social History*, vol. 11 (2014), pp. 367-84.
[414] James Harris, *Diaries and Correspondence of James Harris, First Earl of Malmesbury* (London, 1844), vol. 1, p. ix.
[415] George Colman, *Random Records* (London, 1830), vol. 1, p. 264.

and one of the most painful and troublesome Concerns of their Lives'.[416] In 1747, another writer remarked that a vain man's happiness and concern were to a large extent decided by his dress and how other people looked upon it; 'it is that the dressing part of men are uneasy till they are regarded for a well-tied cravat, an hat cocked with an uncommon briskness, a very well-chosen coat, or for other instances of merit, which they are impatient to see pass without some particular observation.'[417] Instead of seeing vain glory as a result of seventeenth-century codes of civility or a phenomenon which existed only in restricted social circles, the author, like most contemporary polite commentators, regarded it as an eighteenth-century tide which was rising to an alarming level. 'The world is infatuated with the love of appearances instead of realities and substance,' he lamented, 'dress is grown of universal use in conduct of life; even so far, that civilities and respect are only paid to appearance which become a passport that introduces us into all polite assemblies, and the most certain method of making most of the youth of our nation taken notice of.'[418]

Not all conduct writers specifically discussed shame, but their intensive attack on vain glory and the deformed notion of honour indicated that the moral basis of shame was gradually eroding. In his *An Essay on Honour* (1741), Timothy Hooker complained that many people simply regarded 'noise and Shew, Title and Equipage, Glitter and Grandeur constitute the whole Idea of Honour'.[419] In 1755, the *Man* periodical argued that 'a pride founded upon birth, title, estate, or other things no way essential to our

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[416] Philippe Sylvestre Dufour, *Moral Instructions for Youth: or, A Father's Advice to a Son* (London, 1742), p. 53.
[417] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 5.
[418] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 4 and 145.
[419] Timothy Hooker, *An Essay on Honour* (London, 1741), pp. 15-6.

nature, is but a childish vanity. Whoever would think nobly of himself, must drop this silly pretension to regard'.[420] In his remarkably popular manual *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (1757), John Brown observed that 'the Love of Applause and Fear of Shame', if not 'wholly destroyed', were 'perverted' and 'turned upon unworthy Objects':

> [T]he Principle of Honour is either lost, or totally corrupted: That no generous Thirst of Praise is left among us: That our Ambitions are trifling and unmanly as our Pleasures: That Wealth, Titles, Dress, Equipage, Sagacity in Gaming or Wagers, splendid Furniture and a Table, are the sole Fountains, from which we desire to draw Respect to ourselves, or Applause from others: We aspire to Folly, and are proud of Meanness: the Principle of *Honour* is Perverted and Dwindled into *unmanly Vanity*.[421]

According to Brown, vain glory and false shame were different passions of the same nature and end; popinjays boasting about trivial fashions would not only blush for being seen in a less than fashionable dress, but also consider virtuous behaviour as shameful. As Brown observed, a man 'in Pursuit of Glory, and serve the Public at the Expense of his Ease, his Fortune, or his Pleasure' was often 'stared or laughed at in every fashionable Circle' as a 'silly Fellow' and 'Idiot'.[422]

The criticism over the false sense of shame continued in the late eighteenth century. An essay in the *Loiterer* periodical (1789-1790) identified those who took pride in

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[420] *Man*, 15 January, 1755.
[421] John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (3rd edn, 2 vols, London, 1757), vol. 1, pp. 61-2, 176.
[422] *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 59.

trifles, follies, and vanities as 'dashing men'. A dashing man 'must buy horses which he cannot ride' and 'contract debts which he cannot pay'; at the same time, as the *Loiterer* observed, he regarded 'respect to decency' as 'quizzical', 'virtue' as 'a bore', learning' as 'the devil', and 'obedience to superiors' as 'cowardly', and counted it his great shame to be judged virtuous or learned. The *Loiterer* inculcated those 'who are eager to shew their spirit and desirous of being called *Dashing Men*' with a notion that 'in an age like this, contempt of false shame is the noblest proof of spirit, and that those have the most *dash* who dare to be virtuous'.[423] Other writers such as Vicesimus Knox (1752-1821), a minister and prominent essayist, did not directly mention the sense of shame, but criticised those who sought to establish honour merely through the display of exquisite and trivial fashions. According to Knox, singularity in dress had become one of the commonest ways of seeking distinction: 'an enormous pair of buckles has given many a young man a degree of confidence, which no learning or virtue which he possessed, could ever have supplied.'[424] Knox stressed that a real honourable man was first and foremost 'a moral man', not a 'dunce' whose honour was built on 'external ceremony and dress'. Vanity would eventually contradict itself and defeat its own purpose; its consequence 'is too often ruin in polite life, bankruptcy in the commercial, and misery and disgrace in all'.[425]

Public concern over the prevalence of false shame was further reflected on

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[423] *Loiterer*, no. 19, 6 June, 1789.
[424] Vicesimus Knox, *Winter Evenings: or, Lucubrations on Life and Letters* (2nd edn, 2 vols, London, 1790), vol. 2, p.56.
[425] *Ibid*., vol. 2, p. 57, 128, 469. Also see the dialogue between Cicero and Earl of Chesterfield, in *Works of Vicesimus Knox, D.D.: with a Biographical Preface* (7 vols, London, 1824), vol. 2, pp. 198-202.

London's stages. In December 1789 Henry Mackenzie's comedy *False Shame, or the White Hypocrite* was performed in Covent Garden under the title of *The Force of Fashion*.[426] In this comedy Mackenzie represented how 'false shame', which he identified as a morally superficial and vicious disposition derived from an unbridled passion for praise and distinction, overpowered a 'virtuous' and 'amiable' young man, and made him pretend to be fashionable and wicked in order to be thought sophisticated by his companions. At the end of the comedy, Mackenzie delivered the moral lesson through the words of 'Miss Mountfort': 'a man who is first such a hypocrite from vanity, or from fear (of shame and ridicule), will be in danger of becoming the character he personates.'[427] Several years later, in another *False Shame* (1799), a comedy translated from German, Captain Erlach taught Emma, an orphan, that 'to be ashamed of abandoning absurd notions is false shame' and that 'among all the species of false shame, the most atrocious is to be ashamed of one's poor parents'. In another dialogue, when Emma said that she could not appear in 'splendid circles' because her companions were all in 'dazzling finery' and 'the world grounds its fickle judgement' on 'weak foundations', Erlach refuted: 'in plain words – that signifies – thou wast shamed of thy wardrobe', and urged Emma to 'banish false shame', which he decried as a 'monster of vanity and arrogance!'[428]

How polite culture contributed to the false sense of shame is a question that

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[426] However, this comedy was, as Mackenzie himself acknowledged, 'unsuccessful in the representation' at Covent Garden. In 1808 Mackenzie changed its title to *False Shame, or the White Hypocrite*, and included the comedy in his *Works*. Henry Mackenzie, *The Works of Henry Mackenzie* (8 vols, Edinburgh, 1808), vol. 3, p. 201.

[427] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 427.

[428] August von Kotzebue, *False Shame: a Comedy in four acts, Translated from the German of Kotzebue* (London, 1799), pp. 27, 70-2.

deserves further research. But the link between them is obvious. The increase of commercialisation and urbanisation in the eighteenth century called for polite sociability; politeness in turn boosted modern sociable living and material consumption. It was in this context that social opinion and the associated issues such as manners, dress, and wealth were increasingly regarded as crucial factors for gaining a reputation. Polite writers repeatedly stressed the moral basis of notions of shame and honour, but it could not prevent many contemporaries from indulging themselves in the vain glory of the trivial fashions and the praise of others. Luxurious consumption and superficial socialising in polite society distorted the sense of honour, and accordingly reduced shame to a morally-superficial emotion, in which many people, as contemporary polite writers lamented, blushed for virtuous behaviour, and feared the shame of being counted unfashionable.

Conclusion

In the secular context, shame was primarily a socially-constructed emotion, but its moral basis was under continual threat from the superficial and immoral social factors of polite society. Unlike religious writers who advocated shame as a self-imposed emotion, eighteenth-century philosophers highlighted the social dimension of it, arguing that shame was imposed from the outside as a result of social judgment. Although writers such as Bernard Mandeville and David Hume suspected the moral origin of shame, claiming that the feeling of shame was essentially a product of vice and always functioned as a disguise of self-interest and vice, both of them followed the

view of other scholars that shame had great moral values in promoting virtues and preventing sins. However, polite commentators worried that social factors would undermine the moral basis and power of shame. They regarded the eighteenth century as a period of particular alarm of over rising levels of dissonance between absolute moral norms and relative social opinions in constructing the notions of shame, and severely attacked those who measured shame and glory merely by superficial criteria such as dress, title, and wealth without concern for moral standards. Besides criticising the morally-superficial sense of shame, polite writers regarded excessive modesty and self-abasement as another sort of false shame, and urged people to overcome unreasonable shamefacedness because it not only impeded polite sociability, but prevented one from gaining a reputation in polite society. Of course, there is still much to be said in regard to notions of true and false senses of shame in contemporary society. For example, the rise of libertinism, the emergence of the term 'demi-rep', and the remarkable increase of popular interest in sexual scandals of those from the fashionable world in the eighteenth century surely reflected the changing notion of shame. The spread of scandal and the change of the contemporary notion of shame would not have occurred if without an important factor, a factor that remains to be investigated in the next chapter: print.

Chapter Four

Shame, Print, and Scandalous Publications

Introduction

One of the central features of eighteenth-century society was the immense expansion

of print, evident not only in the continual popularity of the traditional forms of the

ballad, broadside, chapbook, and pamphlet, but also in the development of new genres,

such as the periodical, newspaper, novel, and visual satire. Along with this burgeoning

culture of print, there was an increase in printed material about crime and scandal and

a growth of public interest in these areas. The story of wrongdoers and their

transgressions was a major theme in early modern media.[429] Cheap print such as

ballads and chapbooks, which had been widely used as a medium to circulate

information, regularly publicised freshly committed crimes to meet the demands of both

poorer and middling sectors of society.[430] Another popular form of crime literature that

emerged in the early seventeenth century was the pamphlet relating the life-story of a

condemned criminal. This type of literature was represented by the works of the prison

chaplains or visitors such as Thomas Cooper and Henry Goodcole.[431] From the 1670s

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[429] Geoffrey Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper*, 1700-1760 (Oxford, 1962), pp. 70-2; Peter King, 'Newspaper Reporting and Attitudes to Crime and Justice in Late-Eighteenth- and Early-Nineteenth-Century London', *Continuity and Change*, vol. 22 (2007), p.74; Robert Shoemaker, 'Print Culture and the Creation of Public Knowledge about Crime in Eighteenth-Century London', in Paul Knepper, Jonathan Doak and Joanna Shapland (eds), *Urban Crime Prevention, Surveillance and Restorative Justice: Effects of Social Technologies* (New York, 2009), p. 4.

[430] See Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2003), especially chapter 7.

[431] Henry Goodcole is known for writing a series of criminal biographies on the basis of his experience as an ordinary and visitor of Newgate prison in 1620s and 1630s. His most famous pamphlets include *The Wonderfull Discoverie of E[lizabeth]. Sawyer, a Witch, Late of Edmonton*

onward this genre was developed by the quasi-official publications of the *Ordinary's Account* – a narrative dedicated to providing an account of the criminal careers, the behaviour in prison, and the final confession of Newgate prisoners who had been executed at Tyburn – and the paralleled serial publication of the formal trial proceedings known as the *Old Bailey Session Papers* (*OBSP*).[432] Due to their regular and extensive coverage of crime and criminals, the *OBSP* and *Ordinary's Account* became not only, as a French visitor noted at the end of the seventeenth century, 'one of the most diverting the things a man can read in London', but also the key source of other crime narratives in competing genres, such as criminal biographies, compilations of trials, novels, satires, and the popular periodical press.[433] The eighteenth century witnessed the spectacular rise of newspapers and magazines as the most influential media in communicating information about crime and transgression. In addition to providing their readers with accounts of newsworthy offences committed by persons of the lower, non-elite social

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(1621), *Heavens Speedie Cry Sent after Lust and Murther* (1635), and *The Adultresses Funerall Day: in Flaming, Scorching, and Consuming Fire* (1635). Thomas Cooper was clergyman of Church of England and once worked a chaplain to the Fleet Street prison. His T*he Cry and Revenge of Blood Expressing, the Nature and Heinousness of Willful Murther* (London, 1620) is a representative literature of this genre.

[432] For the rise and fall of these two publications, see Andrea McKenzie, 'From True Confession to True Reporting? The Decline and Fall of the Ordinary's Account', *London Journal*, vol. 30 (2005), pp. 55-70; idem, 'Making Crime Pay: Motives, Marketing Strategies, and the Printed Literature of Crime in England 1670-1770', in *Criminal Justice in the Old World and the New*, ed. G. Smith, A. May and S. Devereaux (Toronto, 1998), pp. 235-69; Simon Devereaux, 'The Fall of the Session Paper: the Criminal Trial and the Popular Press in Late Eighteenth-Century London', *Criminal Justice History*, vol. 18 (2003), pp. 57-88; idem, 'The City and Session Paper: "Public Justice" in London, 1770-1800', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 35 (1996), pp. 466-503; Faller, *Turned to Account*; Peter Linebaugh, 'The Ordinary of Newgate and his Account', in J.S. Cockburn (ed.), *Crime in England 1550-1800* (London, 1977), pp. 246-69. For the general history of the *OBSP* and the *Ordinary's Account*, see 'About the Proceedings' on http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/static/Proceedings.jsp.

[433] [Beat-Louis de Muralt], *Letters Describing the Character and Customs of the English and French Nations* (London, 1726), p. 72. Although his letters was published in 1726, it was believed that, according to Robert Shoemaker, they were written up thirty years earlier. See 'About the Proceedings' on http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/static/Proceedings.jsp.

groups, newspapers and magazines also devoted to reporting the corruptions of the world of fashion.[434] As the scandals of aristocrats and elites were finding an ever-enlarged place in the contemporary popular press and pamphlets, a culture emerged in which the privacies and transgressions of the ruling classes could be openly discussed by the populace. This printed forum shaped popular understandings of right and wrong, law and crime, as well as honour and shame.

Crime and scandal are closely connected with shame insofar as they are behaviours deemed shameful and contemptible. Publicising a shameful transgression and perpetrator through the printed media could not only damage the reputation of the wrongdoer, and make the guilty party suffers from a painful sense of shame and humiliation, but also stir up shame and abhorrence among readers. The printed reports about, and images of, shameful persons and deeds therefore provide a suitable perspective through which to explore the culture of shame. This chapter explores the changing way in which shame was represented in printed material about crime and scandal, and its impact on the contemporary notions of shame. Did the audience feel abhorrence and shame when reading the stories of those conventionally disgraceful sexual transgressions such as prostitution and adultery? Did the proliferation of printed materials about aristocratic scandal and the extensive exhibition of their shame and vice contributed to a growth of an unblushing readership and a culture of shamelessness? How did contemporary people comment on such scandalous literature? These questions

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[434] Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*; Anna Clark, *The Sexual Politics of the British Constitution* (Princeton, 2004); Kristin Flieger, *Royal Romances: Sex, Scandal, and Monarchy in Print, 1780-1821* (New York, 2010).

lie at the heart of this chapter.

In this chapter, the term 'shame' has different meanings. It can include a general reference to shameful, infamous transgressions but also to an emotion or sentiment that the perpetrator expressed, the writer intended to reinforced, and the reader experienced. Shame is also considered in this chapter as a form of public humiliation through print. It is in the context of print culture that we are able to examine how these different but interconnected dimensions of shame – as an emotion, as a result of moral judgement, and as a shaming action – interacted with each other and constructed a broad culture of shame in the long eighteenth century. Within the scope of this chapter, it is impossible and unnecessary to give an exhaustive survey of all types of crime. The literature of capital crimes such as murder constituted the majority of early modern criminal writings and bore explicit ideological and moral functions, but this chapter will only examine it briefly because, as we have seen in the introductory chapter, this is a subject that has already been scrutinised by historians. Given that sexual scandal had long been deemed 'shameful' and 'infamous' that could potentially damage the perpetrator's reputation and influence the reader's perception of shame, the main focus of this chapter will be therefore on sexual transgression, with particular attention given to that of aristocrats and social elites.

This chapter comprises four sections. The second section focuses on news materials centring on crimes committed by ordinary people, and explores how shame was represented in ballads, pamphlets, and semi-official accounts roughly between the mid-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries. The third and fourth sections

concentrate on printed materials about sexual scandals of the high circles before and after the mid-eighteenth century, and examine how media such as newspapers, magazines, and satires gradually departed from the traditional ways of describing shameful behaviours. The fourth section investigates contemporary attitudes to the rise of scandal journalism and its impact on contemporary notions of shame. Sources such as novels, plays, and conduct books are not neglected, but receive rather less attention because the focus is on print's journalistic function.

Three arguments may be drawn from this chapter. First, seventeenth-century criminal accounts were generally morally-oriented or, if more accurately, dared not to abandon the moral perspective; the detail of transgression was considered less important, and was more often presented as the exemplary basis for didactic teaching. Teaching readers what was shameful and inculcating them with a moral sense of shame was considered by contemporary writers as a much more important purpose than reconstructing an authentic and tell-all account of the event. Second, the eighteenth century witnessed the 'commodification' of shame, which was evidenced by the spectacular increase and popularity of scandalous literature about upper-class adultery. In this cult of scandal journalism, shameful behaviour and the personalities involved became the main subject of representation; the moral function of such literature, and whether it could reinforce a moral sense of shame in the reader, was becoming a subordinate concern. Finally, the shameless representation of the traditionally shameful subjects of sex, nudity, and scatology in printed media raised anxiety and criticism among contemporary writers, making them believe that they were living in an era

without shame, in which, as they themselves observed, the audience no longer blushed to read the stories about crime and depravity, which they should have treated with abhorrence and shame.

Moralising Shame: the Representation of Crime in Prints, c. 1650-1700

Before the expansion of the periodical press in the eighteenth century, news ballads and pamphlets occupied an important position in the history of early journalism in England. Though the regular production of newsbooks began as early as the 1620s, the 'news' that these periodical publications reported was largely of events of foreign countries. The strict press censorship gave rise to official and authorised news periodicals. The abolition of the Star Chamber in 1641 and the temporary lapse of the Licensing Act between 1679 and 1685 made further contribution to the growth of the press. Before the end of the seventeenth century, however, newspapers remained few in number, and limited in distribution. Because newspapers were invented in an era of political crisis and party conflict, they were more often used for disseminating political news, while social and popular events such as those in respect to the crime were seldom touched upon.[435]

In comparison with the seventeenth-century press, the contemporary ballad was one of the most important forms of printed news media. It not only provided news of remote and political events, but also told stories about current local happenings, in

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[435] See Alexander Andrews, *The History of British Journalism, from the Foundation of the Newspaper Press in England, to the Repeal of the Stamp Act in 1885* (London, 1884), vol. 1, Chapter 3, 4, 5; J. B. Williams, *A History of English Journalism to the Foundation of the Gazette* (London, 1908), Chapter 2.

which crime was a recurring and popular theme. In a dialogue extracted from

Middleton's *The World Tost at Tennis* (1620), when the scholar said that he could make

ballads for a need, the soldier replied:

> Very well, sir, and I'll warrant thee thou shalt never want subject to write of; one
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> hangs himself today, another drowns himself tomorrow; a sergeant stabbed next
>
> day, here a pettifogger at the pillory, a bawd on the cart's nose, and a pandar in
>
> the tail; *hic mulier, haec vir*, fashions, fictions, felonies, fooleries: a hundred
>
> havens has the balladmonger to traffic at, and new ones still daily discovered.[436]

At the price of one penny, ballads were an affordable and accessible medium for news;

as Henry Peacham wrote in 1641, 'For a penny you may have all the News in England,

of Murders, Flouds, Witches, Fires, Tempests, and what not, in one of Martin Parker's

Ballads'.[437] Ballads involving criminal events were produced not merely for spreading

news, but rather, they had clear ideological purpose, aiming to inculcate a set of moral

values into the audience and deter them from going astray. This moralising and didactic

motive decided how shame was represented in criminal ballads; briefly, it was the

shameful nature and outcome of transgression, rather than shameful details of crime

that became the main subject of representation.

Stories about the lives and exploits of capitally convicted criminals such as

murderers and robbers constituted a major theme in early modern criminal ballads. A

typical form of such ballads was known as the 'goodnight' or the 'last farewell', in

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[436] Thomas Middleton, *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, ed. A. H. Bullen (New York, 1964), vol. 7, p. 154. Cited in Clark, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature*, p. 70.
[437] Henry Peacham, *The Worth of a Penny, or, A Caution to Keep Money with the Causes of the Scarcity and Misery of the Want hereof in these Hard and Mercilesse Times* (London, 1641), p.21.

which the condemned prisoner expressed his or her penitent last word, warned others against every small fault and vice, and made a spiritual preparation of death. These ballads functioned as a cautionary tale or a godly lesson, in which 'shame' and the relative terminologies such as 'disgrace', 'dishonour', and 'infamous' were explicitly pronounced in order to warn and decry. A notable feature of crime ballads is their rigid reinforcement of a notion that shame is the unavoidable consequence of committing sin and crime. In *The Golden Farmer's Last Farewell*, the condemned person, who was found guilty of murder and robbery in 1690, bemoaned his ruin that led to the imminent execution: 'I have run my Race, I now at last do see, That in much shame and sad disgrace, my Life will ended be.'[438] Phrases like this were typical. In another ballad, for example, James Selbee, who was condemned for murder, lamented: 'Had I been kind and loving to my Wife, I might have liv'd a long and happy life; But having run a loose lascivious race, My days will end in shame and sad disgrace.'[439] In order to inculcate readers with a sense of shame, ballad writers usually used filth or dirt as a metaphor for the shameful ends of reprobates. In *A Warning to all Lewd Livers*, the protagonist, a decadent, licentious, and consequently impoverished young man, was found dead, in a very shameful manner, in a dunghill: 'But like a poor despised wretch, His latest gasp that he did fetch, Was on a Dung-hill in the Night, When as no creature was in sight. But in the morning he was found, As cold as clay upon the ground: Thus was he born in shame to dye, And end his days in Misery.'[440]

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[438] EBBA 20802, Magdalene College, Pepys 2.187.
[439] EBBA 20814, Magdalene College, Pepys 2.200.
[440] EBBA 20838, Magdalene College, Pepys 2.225. Reinforcing the sense of shame by associating filth or dirt with reprobates and their transgressions was also evidenced by early modern conduct books. For example, Richard Cooke, who preached a sermon in London in 1629, wrote that the

Besides emphasising the shameful end of reprobates, early modern crime ballads also highlighted the trajectory of degradation of those condemned, that is, their minor faults and crimes committed in earlier lives that led them to shame and ruin. Thus from the ballad about the young man who was found dead in the dunghill, the audience learned that he 'did consume and waste time' in 'drinking' and 'unlawful game', 'haunted Taverns day and night' with 'Lewd women' and 'Cutpurse boys', and stole his mother's money and made her beg 'relief from door to door'. Gaining nothing but shame and contempt from such an extravagant, decadent lifestyle, he lamented that he became a social outcast: 'My dearest Kinsfolks do me chide, My dearest friends can't me abide: Those were my consorts of late, Their love is turned into hate… Both old and young, both great and small, Both Rich and poor despise me all: No friend to take my part have I, But was constrain'd in fields to lye.'[441] James Selbee also confessed his descent down the slippery slope of immoralities from minor delinquency and mistake: 'In wicked pleasures I my days have spent… I seldom did frequent the House of Prayer, But Harlots Houses and carousing too, And now I see what it has brought me to.'[442] By outlining a sinful past leading up to a final barbarous crime such as murder and robbery, criminal ballads conveyed the message that capital crime and the shameful end of ruin was neither incidental nor far away from ordinary people. Rather, they were predictable, and likely to be committed by all men and women if they failed to check the seeds of corruption or to resist the ubiquitous temptations of sin.

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credit and reputation of whoremongers lay 'not in the dust, but even in a dunghill'. Richard Cooke, *A White Sheete, or A Warning for Whoremongers* (London, 1629), A. 2. The connection between filth and shame is discussed in introduction and chapter 4.

[441] EBBA 20838, Magdalene College, Pepys 2.225.

[442] EBBA 20814, Magdalene College, Pepys 2.200.

It is true that over the course of the seventeenth century, ballad writers were becoming more interested in reporting the details of the crime, and became inclined to highlight that their accounts were factual report of the real criminal event.[443] But we should be cautious that 'truth' did not necessarily means the accuracy of information, and was even not a necessary part of contemporary news-writing.[444] Historians have reminded us that many of early modern criminal ballads should better be seen as fictional, rather than factual texts.[445] 'News accounts were important,' as Leonard Davis claims, 'only insofar they clearly taught lessons and offered interpretations. If they were not new, if they were not accurate, or even if they were completely fabricated, they could still serve this purpose.'[446] For criminal ballads which were produced for the purpose of moralising, whether the account of crime was true or not was less important. But offering the audience with a factual account of the crime and highlighting the authenticity of it not only helped to attract readers, but also provide the ballad with an exemplum, through which the moral lesson could be effectively delivered and inculcated in minds of readers. As David Turner argues, the moral message of criminal publications 'derived its power precisely from the premise that the people described in the accounts were real and that the events had actually taken place, giving them an immediacy and relevance sometimes lacking from traditional religious

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[443] It is not uncommon to read the intensive and detailed descriptions of crime and didactic message in criminal news ballads. For example, see EBBA 20780, Magdalene College, Pepys 2.161; EBBA 20762, Magdalene College, Pepys 2.144.

[444] Clark, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature*, p. 25.

[445] Matthias Shaaber, *Some Forerunners of the Newspaper in England 1476–1622* (Philadelphia, 1929), p. 193; Frances Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England, 1550-1700* (London, 1994), p. 3; Clark, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature*, pp. 25-7.

[446] Lennard J. Davis, *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel* (New York, 1983), p. 69.

conduct literature.'[447] Despite the growth of the narrative and sensational elements in seventeenth-century criminal ballads, the fact of crime was nevertheless considered less important than the moral meaning that ballad writers intended to draw from it; indeed, as Sandra Clark observed, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century the moralising function and cautionary quality of criminal ballads, particularly those known as the 'goodnight', had changed little.[448]

Pamphlets were another major form of print that had been used in disseminating news about crime in the seventeenth century. They were produced for different purposes: some provided lurid and sensational accounts to gratify the curiosity of the public, while others had explicit ideological intention, aiming to promote social consensus on moral values, and to enhance the legitimacy of the state in punishing criminals. But in most cases the sensational and didactic elements coexisted and were well balanced in criminal texts.[449] The majority of crime pamphlets in the seventeenth century claimed their moral functions, and regarded didacticism as an indispensable part of the texts. The pamphlet accounts were similar in structure. Typically they included factual accounts of the event, sketches of the criminal's sinful past, the apprehension and trial, and the criminal's confession and execution. Confession was a crucial subject of representation, enabling writers to give detailed description of criminals' outpourings of shame and remorse before their execution, and to inculcate readers with the moral sense of shame, which was believed by contemporaries to be the proper and must-have

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[447] Turner, *Fashioning Adultery*, p. 122.
[448] Clark, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature*, p. 78, 100.
[449] Peter Lake, '"Deeds against Nature": Cheap Print, Protestantism, and Murder in Early Seventeenth-Century England', in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (eds), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (London, 1994), p. 263.

psychological response to crime, and the powerful inward restraint that kept people away from the dangers of sin. In the first half of the seventeenth century, typical crime pamphlets were represented by the works of Thomas Cooper and Henry Goodcole. It is notable that both authors repeatedly reinforced the notions that 'shame, hell, and destruction' are the just 'reward and wages of sin', and that what brought bloody and monstrous criminals into 'shame and confusion' is a 'loose and profane' way of life in which they 'walk in their steps and ways of wickedness' and 'merrily pass away their times and days' in drinking, gaming, whoring and all kinds of 'luxury and excess'.[450]

The second half of the seventeenth century witnessed a proliferation of crime pamphlets, in which the new and probably the most influential genres were the *OBSP* and its sister publication known as the *Ordinary's Account*. In comparison with the *OBSP*, which presented more as a dispassionate and legalistic account of trial proceedings, the *Ordinary's Account* provided more subjective and moralistic narratives including the ordinary's sermons, short biographies of the condemned criminals and accounts of their confessions and behaviours before and at executions.[451] That the *Ordinary's Account* had explicit moral purpose is familiar to historians. It should be added that shame occupied a central place in the moral lessons delivered by the *Account*. The condemned criminals were expected to express their deep remorse and shame for the crime which had led them to the miserable end, and their outpourings of shame were one of the most important subjects of representation. Thus, in December 1693 Samuel

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[450] Cooper, *The Cry and Revenge of Blood Expressing* and his *Londons Cry Ascended to God, and Entred into the Hearts, and Eares of Men for Revenge of Bloodshedders, Burglaries, and Vagabonds* (London, 1620).
[451] 'About the Proceedings' on http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/static/Proceedings.jsp.

Smith, the Ordinary of Newgate prison, kept an account of a notorious malefactor's confession, and described it as a 'sincere, fervent and modest' example of repentance that deserved to be learned by criminals who hope to reconcile with God and be saved by Him: 'O my Lord I am ashamed and deeply grieve, that I no sooner knew thee, that I might longer have honored and served thee, than possibly now I can, in the extreamest part of my life; thus I seal the sincerity of my heart in owning thee for my Lord and my God, with the chearful shedding of my Hearts blood.' In the latter part of the *Account*, Samuel Smith recorded a 'penitent' prayer made by Abraham Stacy who was convicted of highway robbery: 'O Lord I must with sorrow and shame confess, it would be just with thee, should Death eternal be the wages of my sins. O Lord, I have slighted thy mercy, and what can I expect, but to be an everlasting sacrifice to thy Justice.'[452]

These confessions were not just an outpouring of inward shame and guilt for the specific offence that led to the death penalty, but rather a repentance of the general sinfulness and past delinquencies, such as idleness, Sabbath-breaking, failing to go to church, profaneness, and drinking, which had brought the perpetrator, stage to stage, to a life of crime and the miserable end.[453] It is notable that the Ordinaries and authors of many contemporary crime pamphlets, like their early seventeenth-century predecessors, inclined to highlight the criminals' penitential sentiments such as shame and sorrow for their degradation and sinfulness of the past, and regarded it as an effective way to warn readers of the danger and temptation of sins. For example, in his pamphlet on the

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[452] *Old Bailey Proceedings* (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 7.2, March 2015), *Ordinary of Newgate's Account*, 20 December 1693 (oa16931220).
[453] Sharpe, '"Last Dying Speeches"', pp. 150-2.

criminal life and the execution of the murderer Thomas Savage, Robert Franklin kept

an account of the prisoner's confession: 'the first sin I began with, was Sabbath-

breaking, thereby I got acquaintance with bad company, and so went to the alehouse

and to the bawdy house: there I was perswaded to rob my master and also to murder

this poor innocent creature, for which I am come to this shameful end.'[454] Similar

confessions were recurrent in the *Ordinary's Account* throughout a hundred years of

publication between the 1670s and the 1770s.[455] For example, the entry for 26th July

1732 recorded the pray of Daniel Tipping: 'Alas! what have I been doing since I came

into the World, Folly and Sin hath taken up my Time, I am ashamed to look back upon

the Years that I have spent, and to think of the Temptations that I have yielded to.'[456]

The condemned criminals should feel shame not only for their general and ultimate

transgressions, but also for having offended God. Humility and shame were the right

dispositions that every person should have in order to come nearer to God. Redemption

was still available to the condemned criminals; but in order to be reconciled with God

and prepare for salvation, the convict should, as the Ordinary repeatedly emphasised,

have a 'clean conscience' and 'glorifie God in taking shame to himself' through 'a

speedy repentance and thorough reformation'.[457] Thus, in September 1690, seeing that

there were several condemned criminals who 'were not so sensible of their sinful and

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[454] Robert Franklin, *A Murderer Punished and Pardoned: or, A True Relation of the Wicked Life and Shameful Happy Death of Thomas Savage* (London, 1669), p. 39.
[455] From the mid-1740s onward, the *Ordinary's Accounts* stopped offering sermons, and put more emphasis on the details of the crimes and trials of the criminals rather than their confessions. A consequence of this change is the weakening of the moral function of the *Accounts*. See 'About the Proceedings' on http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/static/Proceedings.jsp.
[456] *OBP*, 26 July 1732, *Ordinary's Account* (oa17320726).
[457] *OBP*, 20 December 1693, *Ordinary of Newgate's Account* (oa16931220); 26 July 1732, *Ordinary's Account* (oa17320726).

deplorable Condition', the Ordinary urged them to feel shame and make a sincere repentance:

> Where there is a Horror and Conviction there will be an unfeigned Grief for offending God's Holy Spirit, and an universal Hatred of all Sin as Sin, more as it pollutes than damns, put therefore your selves to Grief and Shame, chiefly for perverting the Long-suffering of God, who hath waited so long to be gracious to you; you have already, in excess, turned away your Hearts from God to the indulging of your Lusts.[458]

Authors of crime prints also stressed that it was God who brought the hidden crimes to light and perpetrators to public shame. 'Lord, thou knowest my secret sins, which yet are unknown to men, and all their Aggravations. Mine iniquities, Lord, have found me out; my fears and sorrows overwhelm me', a convicted criminal repented.[459] In 1686, an Ordinary wrote: 'the Omniscient Lord strangely brings such Malefactors to Light, that they may be convinced and ashamed of their Atheism and Presumption of impunity.'[460] The entry for 26 July 1693 also read: 'how will the Hypocrites painting dop off before the fiery Trial of God's Omnisciency. The Shame of his Wickedness shall be laid open to Saints and Angels, tho he wrap up himself in his studied Collusions with a pleasing Flattery, to his just remediless Confusion.'[461]

Shame was not only a grievous, penitential feeling, but was also referred to as the unhappy fate of the criminals, that is, the shame of a public death. Shame and death

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[458] *OBP*, 12 September 1690, *Ordinary's Account* (oa16900912).
[459] *OBP*, 17 October 1677, *Ordinary's Account* (oa16771017).
[460] *OBP*, 17 December 1686, *Ordinary's Account* (oa16861217).
[461] *OBP*, 26 July 1693, *Ordinary's Account* (oa16930726).

were very closely linked in crime prints: 'shameful death' and 'shameful end' were perhaps the most frequently used phrases in the *OBSP* and the *Ordinary's Account*, which reflected the shameful, ignominious nature of public execution. As with print ballads and early seventeenth-century crime pamphlets, the *Ordinary's Account* aimed to inculcate readers with a notion that shame and death were the final, unavoidable consequence of crime. It is notable that the Ordinaries always preached sermons from Romans 6:21, 'What Fruit had ye then in those Things, whereof ye are now ashamed? For the End of those Things is Death'. Thus, for example, the *Ordinary's Account* for the 18 July 1711 highlighted arguments that, first, 'the Sinner has but little Profit and Satisfaction by his Sins, even while he is committing them, and delighting, and enjoying himself in them'; second, 'nothing but Shame and Sorrow follows upon, and is to be reaped from them'; and third, 'Death, yea, Eternal Death and Damnation will be the sad Catastrophe and Conclusion and Reward of them.'[462] In order to prevent people from sinning and the consequent ruin and death, authors of the *Account* continually emphasised the importance of keeping a moral sense of shame and a watchful conscience. As an Ordinary wrote in 1676, 'shame and fear are the two great bridles that refrain Humane Nature from running into all kind of wickedness and when once it has cast them off, little good is to be expected.'[463] In another *Account*, the Ordinary saw conscience as 'God's Spy and Deputy, armed by the Authority of his Commission', and warned people never to conceal their sins because 'your Conscience will keep a

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[462] *OBP*, 18 July 1711, *Ordinary's Account* (oa17110718). A similar example comes from 23 October 1691, *Ordinary's Account* (oa16911023).
[463] *OBP*, 5 July 1676, *Ordinary's Account* (oa16760705). Another example see 24 October 1679, *Ordinary's Account* (oa16791024).

private Session within your selves, so as to condemn you with grief and shame for your most secret sins.'[464]

The printed ballads and the *Ordinary's Account* were, of course, not the only forms of publications involved in reporting or commenting crimes. However, their generally conservative, moralising perspectives represented the tone of the majority of seventeenth-century crime prints. Shame occupied a central place in the moralising discourses on crime. Ballad writers, the Newgate Ordinaries, and authors of crime pamphlets highlighted the shameful nature of sin, crime, and punishment. More importantly, they aimed to reinforce a notion that shame was the just and unavoidable consequence of crime and that in order to reconcile with God criminals should confess with wholehearted shame and remorse for their transgressions. Religious beliefs stood behind the contemporary discourse on crime. The idea that God would detect hidden crimes and bring criminals to public shame was universal. Authors of crime prints also emphasised the necessity of keeping a moral sense of shame and a watchful conscience in order to prevent sinning and ruin. All in all, in the seventeenth century criminal publications talked about shame largely within a moral context, while the detailed representations of the shameful malefactor and transgression were less frequent when compared to the next century.

Capitalising Shame: the Rise of Scandalous Publications, c. 1700-1750

In the eighteenth century, the balance between elements of moralising and

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[464] *OBP*, 26 January 1691, *Ordinary's Account* (oa16910126).

sensationalism in crime prints began to shift towards the latter. Moral instructions were continually offered by writers, but many of them were presented in the preface or editorial comment, and merely functioned as a means of justifying the sensational content of their publications. Meanwhile, the fact of a transgression, especially the shocking and titillating aspects of it, was becoming a major subject of representation. The coverage of crime expanded, but it also became more selective, focusing increasingly on the wrongdoings of elite men and women.[465] In the seventeenth century, shameful deeds were often represented as an exemplary basis for enforcing didacticism, and there was a real embarrassment in print media reporting the detailed facts of shameful transgressions. In the eighteenth century, however, the burgeoning culture of print and the paralleled rise of scandalous publications made the shame of social elite – especially conventionally shameful transgressions like adultery – a commodity or merchandise of great commercial values. It provided a business opportunity for publishers and writers, who unashamedly indulged themselves in producing the sensational and even salacious accounts of upper-class transgression.

But this was not an overnight transformation. The separation of moralising from the reportage and the growing emphasis on sensationalism in crime news was a gradual and far from comprehensive process. On the one hand, the seventeenth century had already witnessed a growing sensationalism in crime publications. Writers and publishers were becoming interested in describing the shocking and lurid aspects of the offence and decorating their books with eye-catching title pages in order to draw

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[465] Simon Devereaux, 'From Sessions to Newspapers? Criminal Trial Reporting, the Nature of Crime, and the London Press, 1770-1800', *London Journal*, 32 (2007), pp. 1-27.

attention of readers. This change is also presented in printed materials about sexual transgressions. The second half of the seventeenth century saw the growing popularity of portraits of famous harlots and aristocratic mistresses among the common people. Royal courtesans and their immoral sexual lives in Charles II's court stimulated writers to produce an abundance of accounts of their stories.[466] Even the sexual deviance of ordinary woman could generate considerable public interest. A remarkable example is that of Mary Carleton. Disguising herself as a German princess, she married and defrauded numerous elite men, including aristocrats between 1663 and 1673. Her notorious and unnatural life of crime became a subject of contemporary pamphlets, plays, memoirs and biographies.[467] These seventeenth-century accounts, which had strong elements of sensationalism, were to a large extent produced and read for sexual and erotic reasons.

On the other hand, during the first half of the eighteenth century the moralistic perspective still played an important role in deciding on the tone and format of crime news. A crucial factor that contributed to the continuity of the moralistic colour of crime publication was the Reformation of Manners Campaign between 1688 and the 1730s. Initially aiming to crack down on the corruption of the Royal court and upper-class licentious sexuality, but in fact largely concentrating on the vice and immorality of the lower classes, this movement to some extent heightened the conservative tone of printed media in discussing and reporting sexual immoralities and crimes.[468] It was in this

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[466] Dabhoiwala, *The Origins of Sex*, pp. 316-7.

[467] See Ernest Bernbaum, *The Mary Carleton Narratives, 1663-1673* (Cambridge, 1914); Hero Chalmers, '"The Person I am, or What They Made Me to be"', in Clare Brant and Diane Purkiss (eds), *Women, Texts and Histories 1575-1760* (London, 1992).

[468] Dudley Bahlman, *The Moral Revolution of 1688* (New Haven, 1957); A.G. Craig, 'The

climate that John Dunton published a bi-weekly question-and-answer periodical the *Athenian Mercury* (1691-1697). Identifying the journal as a vanguard of the moral reform, and in order to 'open the avenues, raise the Soul, as it were into Daylight, and restore the knowledge of Truth and Happiness, that had wandred so long unknown, and found out by few', Dunton and his editors provided a large amount of advice on marital and sexual issues, such as those relating to marriage, adultery, bigamy and various kinds of infidelity, on the basis of both religious and moral value.[469] The huge success of the *Athenian Mercury* in turn inspired the publication of several famous periodicals, including Daniel Defoe's *Review* (1704-13), *The British Apollo* (1708-11), *The Tatler* (1709-11) and *The Spectator* (1711-14), *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1730), and the Dr. Johnson's *The Rambler* (1750-52). While these periodicals continued to see the Bible as the fount of moral knowledge, they began to define virtuous behaviour according to new and more secular criteria such as reason, civility, and human nature.[470] Their moralistic and didactic function changed little, and which had a further impact on the tone of contemporary printed media in reporting crimes and immoralities. Indeed, over a long period of time between the late-seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries,

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Movement for the Reformation of manners, 1688-1715' (Edinburgh University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1979); Tina Beth Isaacs, 'Moral Crime, Moral Reform, and the state in Eighteenth-Century England: a study of piety and politics' (University of Rochester Ph.D. Thesis, 1979); Craig Rose, 'povidence, Protestant Union and Godly Reformation in the 1690s', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, vol. 3 (1993), pp. 151-169; Karen Sonnelitter, 'The Reformation of Manners Societies, the Monarchy and the English State, 1696-1714', *the Historian*, vol. 72 (September, 2010), pp. 517-42; Robert B. Shoemaker, 'Reforming the City: The Reformation of Manners Campaign in London, 1690-1738', in Lee Davison, Time Hitchcock, and Robert Shoemaker (eds), *Stilling the Grumbling Hive: the Response to Social and Economic Problems in England, 1686-1750* (Stroud, 1992) pp. 99-120.

[469] John Dunton, *The Life and Errors of John Dunton, citizen of London*, ed. J.B. Nichols (London, 1818), vol.2, p.188. Cited in Turner, *Fashioning Adultery*, pp. 66-7. Also see Helen Berry, *Gender, Society, and Print Culture in Late Stuart England: The Cultural World of the Athenian Mercury* (Aldershot, 2003).

[470] Turner, *Fashioning Adultery*, chapter 2; Dabhoiwala, *The Origins of Sex*, pp. 320-1.

sensationalism and moralising were competing elements that could often coexist within a single scandalous text.

However, the tone of news writing about transgression in the eighteenth century was undoubtedly more skewed towards sensationalism than ever before. This shift was epitomised by the rise of scandalous publications, in which personal shame and infamy became the major source and subject of representation. The publication of criminal conversation trials in the first half of the eighteenth century and the careers of early scandalmongers, most notably Edmund Curll, contributed considerably to this trend. The criminal conversation trial, which originated in the late seventeenth century and reached its height in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was a civil suit brought to the courts of the King's Bench or Common Pleas. Through a crim. con. suit a cuckolded husband could charge his wife's paramour and, if the charge was proved, would be awarded monetary compensation for the loss the husband had suffered by the infidelity.[471] Since a crim. con. trial was expensive, almost all prosecutions were therefore brought by the wealthy elite. Involving marital and sexual privacies of high and mighty people, the crim. con. suits could always arouse wide public interest. Going to law meant that the family's shame and infamy would be exposed in the press. Publishers employed hack writers to sit in the courtroom and note down the most sensational details of the trial. Their publications not only attracted a large reading public, but also became the source of other scandalous genres such as comedies about

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[471] Lawrence Stone, 'Honor, Moral, Religion, and the Law: the Action for Criminal Conversation in England, 1670-1857', in Anthony Grafton and Ann Blair (eds), *The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia, 1990), pp. 276-315.

cuckolds, memoirs of mistresses and courtesans, guides to brothels and prostitutes, satires on adulterers and cuckolded husbands, and novels about old libertines and poor maids – all were produced for profit, by means of capitalizing on the personal shame and exhibiting the titillating details of it.

The London bookseller and publisher Edmund Curll played an important role in rise of British scandalous publications. Trading on the shame of social elites and the obscene details of their scandals, Curll 'catered for, and perhaps helping to create, a new lower end of the book market'.[472] After the initial success of his two-volume books on the trial between the Marquis de Gesvres and his wife in 1714 – a notorious case centring on his wife Mademoiselle Mascranny's pleading for the nullity of the marriage because of his impotency – Curll soon published *The Case of Impotency* in 1715, in which he not only recounted some English historical trials noted for uncovering the impotency and sodomy of the noblemen such as the Earl of Essex and the Earl of Castlehaven, but included one of the most recent crim. con. cases about the Duke of Norfolk against his wife's lover, Sir John Jermaine. After this, Curll paid more attention to the crim. con. trials and the related issues such as adultery, polygamy and impotency of persons of rank that happened in his own age, from which he published *Case of Divorce for Several Causes* (1715) and *The Cases of Polygamy* (1732). All of these books must have proved attractive to the readers because, as Peter Wagner wrote, they 'highlighted the sometimes bizarre sex life of the aristocracy while at the same

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[472] Raymond N. MacKenzie, 'Curll, Edmund (*d.* 1747)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter Oxford DNB) (Oxford, 2004), online edition, January 2008. For the most recent research on Edmund Curll, see Paul Baines and Pat Rogers, *Edmund Curll, Bookseller* (Oxford, 2007).

time exposing them to ridicule'.[473] Offered under the guise of judicial reportage or medical documents, but in fact aiming at an audience interested in sensation and sex, Curll's publications opened a peephole through which readers could see the sex-life of the upper classes and enjoy a vicarious pleasure.

The muckraking career of Edmund Curll was undoubtedly radical in the still conservative atmosphere of the early eighteenth century when the movement of moral reform was reaching its apogee. Not surprisingly, his lurid and libellous publications shocked many contemporaries and triggered extensive criticism. People who felt infringed by Curll's pamphlet warned him 'to prevent any scandalous dispute'. In April 1718 Daniel Defoe condemned Curll in *Mist's Weekly Journal* for publishing a pornographic book *Eunuchism Display'd* (1718), and asserted that Curll deserved punishment for it.[474] In 1725 Curll was brought before the King's Bench for publishing a translation of an old and fairly infamous obscene text under the title *The Nun in Her Smock* (1724). Three years later, Curll was sentenced to stand in the pillory for publishing the Scottish spy John Ker's memoir, a book which enraged the authority because it involved high political secrets from the reign of Queen Anne.[475] Critics of Curll's mercenary and unscrupulous publishing activities and the scandalous, prurient content of his publications continued throughout the centuries. Even modern reviewers show him little mercy. Thus, Ralph Straus, an early twentieth-century biographer of Edmund Curll, wrote:

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[473] Peter Wagner, 'The Pornographer in the Courtroom: Trial Reports about Cases of Sexual Crimes and Delinquencies as a Genre of Eighteenth-Century Erotica', in *Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. Paul-Gabriel Boucé (Manchester, 1982), p. 123.
[474] *Mist's Weekly Journal*, 5 April, 1718.
[475] *The Weekly Journal*, 4 December, 1725; 28 January, 1726; 20 January, 1728.

The man was an impudent pest, and if amongst the hundreds of books that he

published one or two were not without merit, there never lived a rogue who better

deserved the appalling reputation that has always been his… He was called

impudent liar, and accused of forgery, theft, immorality, and even something like

murder.[476]

Indeed, the rise of scandalous publications would not occur without shameless

publishers. Edmund Curll was such a barefaced one in the eyes of his contemporaries

such as Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift. His name on the title page promised

potential readers 'a certain alluring naughtiness in the book'.[477] Daniel Defoe created

a new term for his characteristically lurid and scandalous publications: 'Curlicism.'

From him the Crime takes the just Denomination of *Curlicism*: The Fellow is a

contemptible Wretch a thousand Ways: he is odious in his Person, scandalous in

His Fame, he is mark'd by Nature, for he has a bawdy Countenance, and a

debauch'd Mein, his Tongue is an Echo of all the beastly Language his Shop is

fill'd with, and Filthiness drivels in the very Tone of his Voice.[478]

'Curlicism was above all an art of effrontery'; but far from being ashamed of this

pejorative tag, Curll seemed to 'embrace it as a compliment'.[479] He published

Curlicism Display'd (May 1718) as a response to Defoe's criticism; instead of trying to

vindicate or refute something, Curll turned the book into an advertisement, in which he

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[476] Ralph Straus, *The Unspeakable Curll, being Some Account of Edmund Curll* (London, 1927), pp. 3-5.

[477] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[478] *Mist's Weekly Journal*, 5 April 1718.

[479] Betty A. Schellenberg, 'The Practice and Poetics of Curlism: Print, Obscenity, and the Merryland Pamphlets the Career of Edmund Curll', in Ina Ferris and Paul Keen (eds), *Bookish Histories: Books, Literature, and Commercial Modernity, 1700-1900* (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 233.

listed numerous titles of books displayed in his shop hoping to entice readers to purchase his obscene books.[480] In 1725, fearing that the authorities would charge him under the libel law for publishing the erotic book *The Nun in Her Smock*, Curll printed a public apology in the newspaper, but he apparently felt little shame, and once again took this opportunity to advertise his new books:

> I hereby most humbly ask Pardon for these Offences; but being resolved never more to offend in the like Manner, I give this Notice, that so soon as two Books, now in the Press, are finish'd, (viz. 1. The Miscellaneous Works of the Memorable Patriot *Andrew Marvel* esq.; in Prose and Verse. 2. The *Case of Seduction*; being the late Proceedings at Paris against the Rev. Abbé des Rues, for committing Rapes upon 133 Virgins. Written by himself) I am resolved to retire from all Publick Business.[481]

Making a living by publicising scandalous literatures, Curll was surely aware of the danger he confronted. He justified the publication of impotency and adultery trial accounts by asserting that these texts were authentic, either drawing on legitimated and existing sources, or based on the true account of the trial which exhibited in open court.[482] In *Case of Divorce for Several Causes*, he defended this book as being 'nothing more than a faithful Relation of Facts'.[483] In view of his sensational and lurid

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[480] 'Curll, Edmund', in *Oxford DNB*; [Edmund Curll], *Curlicism Display'd: Or, an Appeal to the Church* (London, 1718).
[481] Straus, *The Unspeakable Curll,* p. 106.
[482] For example, he claimed that 'The trial of the Marquis de Gesvres was publicly printed at Paris; the Trial of the Duke of Norfolk, authorised by the House of honourable Peers; the Trial of the Earl of Essex was drawn up by the Archbishop Abbot, and printed from his manuscript; the Trial of Fielding, Mrs. Dormer, &c, all authorised by our Judicial Courts.' *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[483] [Edmund Curll], *Case of Divorce for Several Reasons* (London, 1715), preface.

publications, Curll highlighted his moralising intention, asserting that his accounts were 'directly calculated for Antidotes against debauchery and Unnatural Lewdness, and not for Incentives to them'.[484] On other occasions, Curll simply claimed that he intended to leave judgements up to the conscience of the reader.[485]

The advent of criminal conversational trial offered writers and publishers like Edmund Curll a goldmine, which enabled them to make a profit out of the shame of the upper classes. It was against this background that the early eighteenth century witnessed a rise in scandalous publications and the commodification of shame. But it is wrong to exaggerate the degree of this change. Since moralising was still regarded as a crucial part of the crime and scandal literature, the sensational tone of these prints was somewhat restrained, and it seems that the detailed description and public exhibition of sexual matters were still considered improper. In her latest research on the aristocratic vice, Donna Andrew finds that 'through the first almost seven decades of the eighteenth century, there was a real reluctance in the periodical press to extensively report these affairs in the particular, or to give any specific details.'[486] Of the 23 recorded cases of crim. con. trial between 1680 and 1740, only 7 cases were subject to detailed coverage in pamphlets.[487] But even these accounts of well-reported trials, as Andrew observes, 'tended to be shorter in length and unadorned by the colourful, imaginary illustrations

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[484] [Edmund Curll], *Curlicism Display'd*, p. 26.
[485] Turner, *Fashioning Adultery*, p. 181.
[486] Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*, p. 136.
[487] Lawrence Stone, *Road to Divorce: England 1530-1987* (Oxford, 1990), p. 430. Stone therefore sees the period before 1760 as 'an era of stagnation' in the development of crim. con. in comparison with the final decades of the eighteenth century wherein the number crim. con. cases skyrocketed. *Ibid*., p.240. These 7 cases are: *Norfolk v. Jermaine* (1692); *Dormer v. Jones* (1715); *Abergavenny v. Lyddel* (1730); *Gouldney v. Harvey* (1732); *Cibber v. Sloper* (1738-9); *Biker v. Morley* (1741); *Morice v. Fitzroy* (1742).

enhanced later pamphlets.'[488] The news of a trial was often a single sentence long, such

as *The Gentleman's Magazine* report in 1757, 'At the court of King's Bench at Guildhall,

the cause came on wherein Admiral K— was plaintiff, and Capt. G—r defendant in an

action for criminal conversation, when the fact being fully proved, the jury gave a

verdict for the plaintiff with a 1000 *l.* damage.'[489] The newspaper reports of scandals

were also selective. When the Biker versus Morley case was brought to trial in 1741,

only one of the ten magazines and newspapers commented on it; noting that it was 'a

remarkable Case' and that the hearing 'had lasted twelve hours', the *Daily Gazetteer*

merely reported that the jury 'brought in a Verdict for the Defendant'.[490] In addition,

accounts of trials were usually patched together with 'historical' cases such as the

scandals of the Earl of Essex and Lady Howard and the trial of the Earl of Castlehaven,

as represented in Curll's 1715 pamphlet *Cases of Divorce for Several Causes*, while the

more recent crim. con. trials and scandals made up only a very limited proportion.

Furthermore, it is notable that the content of these scandalous publications was not as

sensational or prurient as their titles suggested, and that their writers had put more

emphasis on issues such as judgement, punishment, and moral lessons than the details

of the shameful incident itself.[491] And what had potentially prevented Curll's books

from attracting more audience was that many crucial parts of the accounts such as the

trial of the Duchess of Cleveland were entirely in Latin.[492]

The avoidance of reporting details of scandal is also reflected in these earlier

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[488] Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*, p. 133.
[489] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol.27, p. 286.
[490] Cited in Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*, p. 135.
[491] *Ibid.*, p. 133; 'Curll, Edmund', in *Oxford DNB*.
[492] Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*, p. 134.

publications in a reluctance to name offenders. The prosecution for libel certainly deterred writers and publishers from naming scandalous protagonists, especially those drawn from the upper social classes.[493] But it is also true that this unwillingness was to a large extent attributed to the moralising tradition of early modern crime and scandal literature, in which, as the previous section suggests, the identity of individual and the fact of transgression functioned primarily as an exemplary basis for decrying sin and vice, and were therefore considered relatively less important than the moral message that writers intended to deliver. The press in the first half of the eighteenth century inherited this tradition: regarding moral and social values as the central concern, it aimed to censure negative actions more than to expose particular individuals. For example, in John Dunton's *Night-Walker* (1696-7), a monthly magazine characterised by its journalistic realism, lewd women and rakes are all anonymous figures because, as Dunton claimed, 'our design is to reform, not to expose'.[494] Other forms of publications such as satires and novels also refrained from naming wrongdoers. William Hogarth seldom named those he ridiculed or accused of bad behaviour in his satirical paintings. In the caption of his *Midnight Modern Conversation* (1732), a caricature that attacked men of rank for indulging themselves in a shameful state of inebriation, Hogarth wrote: 'Think not to find one meant resemblance there. We lash the vices but the persons spare.'[495] In his *Verses on the Death of Dr Swift* (1739), Johnathan Swift also wrote that 'Yet, malice never was his aim, He lashed the vice but spared the

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[493] Robert B. Shoemaker, *The London Mob: Violence and Disorder in Eighteenth-Century England* (London and New York, 2004), p. 271.
[494] [John Dunton], *The Nightwalker: or Evening Rambles in Search after Lewd Women* (London, 1696-7), September 1696, p. 1.
[495] Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, p. 173.

name'.[496] Similarly, Henry Fielding in *Joseph Andrews* (1742) asserted that what he targeted was 'not men, but manners, not an individual, but a species.'[497]

The moral messages were often directly expressed by writers. Periodicals in the first half of the eighteenth century continually reinforced the notion that adultery was so shameful that any people, including social elites and aristocrats, who were guilty of it deserved a shaming punishment and the forfeiture of reputation. 'Adultery is not honourable,' the *Covent Garden Magazine* remarked, 'A Magistrate or a Clergyman who lies with his Neighbour's Wife, may be justly esteemed as infamous as he who picks his Neighbour's Pocket, and therefore might with no Impropriety suffer that same Punishment which the Mob inflict on the latter Crime, viz. ducking in a Horsepond.' It further claimed that the offender, after suffering from the shaming punishment, 'shall henceforth forfeit all Claim to the Respect; nor shall it be lawful afterwards for any Man to call such ducked Person, Honourable, Worshipful, or Reverend… And tho' a lady may after ducking appear in Public, and visit and be visited as before, yet shall it not be lawful for her ever to mention the Word *Honour*.'[498] Aiming to emphasise the shameful nature rather than the shameful details of sexual transgression, this text not only reflects the general attitude of contemporary papers towards sexual liberty in the upper classes, but explains why writings about divorce, adultery, and crim. con trials were usually more lengthy and detailed, in the form of commentary rather than reportage in the periodical press of the time.

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[496] Jonathan Swift, *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift, D.S.P.D. Occasioned by Reading a Maxim in Rochefoulcault* (London, 1739), p. 43.
[497] Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*, ed. John Berseth (Toronto, 2001), p. 128.
[498] *Covent Garden Magazine*, no. 68, ed. Gerard Edward Jensen (New York, 1964), pp. 122-3.

The rise of scandalous publications in the first half of the eighteenth century reflects that private shame – especially that of the superior ranks – had great commercial value and could be reached by wider publics through the dissemination of print. Shame provided unabashed publishers like Edmund Curll with a business opportunity; through advertising the sensational title page and representing lurid facts of transgressions, scandalous publications not only catered for, but also widened, the audience who were curious about the private lives of errant social elites. It was in this widening public sphere of print that personal shame was turning into a commodity, which could be exploited by writers, sold by publishers, and consumed by readers. But the degree of the rise of scandalous publications in the first half of the century should not be exaggerated. In an era when moralisation and didacticism were continually regarded as an important function of crime and scandal literature, the sensational tone and the detailed representation of shame in these accounts were still, to some extent, restrained.

Aristocratic Shame and the Carnival of Scandal Journalism, c. 1750-1800

The 1760s may be seen as the watershed for the development of scandal journalism. The final four decades of the eighteenth century witnessed the spectacular increase of criminal conversation cases. Between 1680 and 1740, there were only 23 recorded cases of crim. con., but in 1790s the number increased significantly to 74.[499] In line with this explosion was the unprecedented rise of popular press. The daily newspapers, which emerged in the 1760s and 1770s, quickly became a strong competitor of other forms of

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[499] Stone, *Road to Divorce*, p.430.

print media in reporting and commenting on the news of higher ranks.[500] Periodicals

such as *The Town and Country Magazine* which appeared in 1769, and its famous

successors *The Rambler's Magazine; or, The Annals of Gallantry, Glee, Pleasure, and

the Bon Ton* published in 1783 and *The Bon Ton Magazine; or, Microscope of Fashion

and Folly* in 1791 all concentrated to the stories and scandals of the world of fashion.

Pamphlets, novels and satires likewise flourished in this period; focusing on the sexual

improprieties of the upper classes, they satisfied the audience's appetites for watching

the private lives of high and mighty people, and made the shame of their social betters

a popular subject of discussion and a source of entertainment. Among the numerous

criminal conversations cases brought to trial in the second half of the century, perhaps

the most extensively reported were scandals of the Duke of Grafton, the Duke of

Cumberland, and Lady Worsley. The ways of reporting these infamous cases provide

good examples of how personal shame was brought into the public domain and

exploited for commercial, moral, and political purposes.[501]

In 1768, when the third Duke of Grafton became George III's chief minister, his

wife, who had lived apart from him for nearly five years after a period of unhappy

marriage, was found pregnant with a child by her lover, the Earl of Upper Ossory. The

cuckolded Duke launched a criminal conversation charge against him, and petitioned

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[500] For the history of the eighteenth-century newspapers, see Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1987), and Michael Harris, *London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole: A Study of the Origins of the Modern English Press* (London, 1987); Joad Raymond (ed.), *News, Newspapers and Society in Early Modern England* (London and Portland, 2002); Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and English Society, 1695-1855* (Abington and New York, 2014).
[501] In the fourth chapter of her *Aristocratic Vice*, Donna Andrew has examined the contemporary news reports on the scandals of Grafton, Cumberland, and Worsley in detail. I am much indebted to Andrew's work in this section.

for a complete Parliamentary divorce. But instead of becoming an object of sympathy, Grafton was himself accused of sexual immorality. By the time his third child was born in 1764, the Duke had already established a relationship with the courtesan Nancy Parsons, who lived with him in secret at Woodford in Essex. In 1768 Grafton even kept Parsons in his London residence and accompanied her to the opera.[502] The gossip and scandal made Grafton the target of attack in regards to a set of anonymous letters written under the name of Junius. In a letter addressed to the *Public Advertiser* in June 12, 1769, Junius wrote 'Did not the duke of Grafton frequently lead his mistress into public, and even place her at the head of his table, as if he had pulled down an ancient temple of Venus, and could bury all decency and shame under the ruins?'[503] While it was an open secret that many aristocrats kept mistresses, what enraged Junius in particular was that Grafton not only openly consorted with Parsons without any sense of shame, but also defended his adulterous behaviour, a behaviour which Junius condemned as 'a certain outrage to decency and violation of public decorum'. Thus, ten days later, Junius wrote that:

> It is not that he kept a mistress at home, but that he constantly attended her abroad. It is not the private indulgence, but the public insult, of which I complain. The name of Miss Parsons would hardly have been known if the first lord of the treasury had not led her in triumph through the opera house, even in the presence of the queen. When we see a man act in this manner we may admit the shameless

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[502] Peter Durrant, 'FitzRoy, Augustus Henry, third duke of Grafton (1735–1811)', *Oxford DNB*, October 2008.
[503] *Junius* (London, 1797), vol.1, p. 98.

depravity of his heart, but what are we to think of his understanding?[504]

Another fact that enraged Junius was that Grafton, beyond all expectations, abandoned Parsons after his divorce was announced and married one of Ossory's cousins. 'Is there not a singular mark of shame set upon this man, who has so little delicacy and feeling as to submit to the opprobrium of marrying a near relation of one who had debauched his wife?'[505] Perhaps the only explanation of the Duke's marriage was, as Junius implied in a satirical tone, that Ossory would not be likely to seduce his own cousin, and therefore, Grafton would not be cuckolded again:

> He marries a first cousin of the man who had fixed that mark and title of infamy upon him which, at the same moment, makes a husband unhappy and ridiculous. The ties of consanguinity may possibly preserve him from the same fate to a second time; and, as to the distress of meeting, I take for granted the venerable uncle of these common cousins has settled the etiquette in such as a manner that, if a mistake should happen, it may reach no farther than from 'Madame ma femme' to 'Madame ma cousine'.[506]

Besides sexual immoralities, the Duke was also condemned for his perfidy and betrayal of friends. 'Was not lord Chatham the first who raised him to the rank and post of a minister, and the first whom he abandoned? Did he not join with Lord Rockingham, and betray him? Was he not the bosom friend of Mr. Wilkes, whom he now pursues to destruction?'[507] Accusing a man of lying or betraying his companions could seriously

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[504] *Ibid.*, p. 105.
[505] *Ibid.*, p. 100.
[506] *Ibid.*, p. 106.
[507] *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

damage his credit and reputation, since loyalty and good faith had long been regarded as important characteristics in constructing male honour. Therefore, it is not surprising that Junius seriously attacked Grafton's sexual debauchery and his lack of honesty. While the moral function of Junius' letters is undeniable, we should be aware that an important reason lurking behind these letters was political. Junius aimed at the dismissal of Grafton from the position of ministry. And his real opposition to Grafton was that the latter arbitrarily appointed Henry Lawes Luttrell to the MP for Middlesex, rather than the duly elected Wilkes. Junius claimed that this appointment infringed upon the foundation of the law and constitutional rights and liberty of Englishmen.[508] The message that Junius intended to deliver was that a person who betrayed his wife and friends and abandoned his mistress was unreliable, dishonest, and therefore could not be trusted: 'it is possible the young man may in time grow wiser, and reform; but, if understand his disposition, it is not of such corrigible stuff that we should hope for any amendment in him before he has accomplished the destruction of his country.'[509] The public letters written by Junius successfully corroded the Duke's reputation and made him unpopular enough to end his ministry in January 1770.

While Junius exploited the Duke's private shame for explicit moral and political purposes,[510] other forms of print paid more attention to unusual or juicy details of the scandal. *The Gentleman's Magazine* published two letters; the first one was believed to be written by Grafton to the discarded mistress, the other was Nancy Parsons' reply. In

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[508] *Ibid*., p. 117.
[509] *Ibid*., p. 108.
[510] For other examples see *The Oxford Magazine*, 4 January, 1770, pp. 24-5.

the first letter, the Duke forced Parsons to leave England and settle in the Continent, so that he could enter into 'chaster connections' with his new wife without any disturbance from her, and the Duke would pay for her living cost in the Continent quarterly.[511] Parsons' reply was full of depressed discontent: 'You inform me, in the close of your letter, "of your speedily entering into chaster connections." – I am resigned! – And may your future lady love like me, but never meet with such returns! – May every hour of your life be bright – ended by prosperity.'[512] Shortly after Grafton married his second wife, a caricature appeared in *The Oxford Magazine*, satirising the Duke for choosing the cousin of the man who had cuckolded him. (figure 1) In 1769, a fictional account of the sex-life between the Duke and Parsons was made public under the title *Memoirs of the Amours, Intrigues, and Adventures of Charles Augustus Fitz-Roy, Duke of Grafton, with Miss Parsons*.

The final year of the 1760s and the following year witnessed a carnival of scandal journalism. Only several months after the completion of Grafton's divorce trial, the notorious adultery case of the Duke of Cumberland with the Countess of Grosvenor came to light. Unlike Grafton, who was criticised mainly by political opponents for his public immorality and corruption, the Cumberland case, which 'gave pleasure to the whole nation', attracted much wider attention among the contemporary media.[513] Soon after the exposure of the scandal in December 1769, *The Gentleman's Magazine* reported that 'An assignation at the White Hart at St. Albans, between Lady G – and a

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[511] In the *Town and Country Magazine*, we are told that Parsons' living stipend was 'eight hundred a year upon her for life, conditionally, that she should pass the remainder of her days abroad.' See *The Town and Country Magazine*, April, 1769, pp. 181-2.
[512] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 39, p. 196.
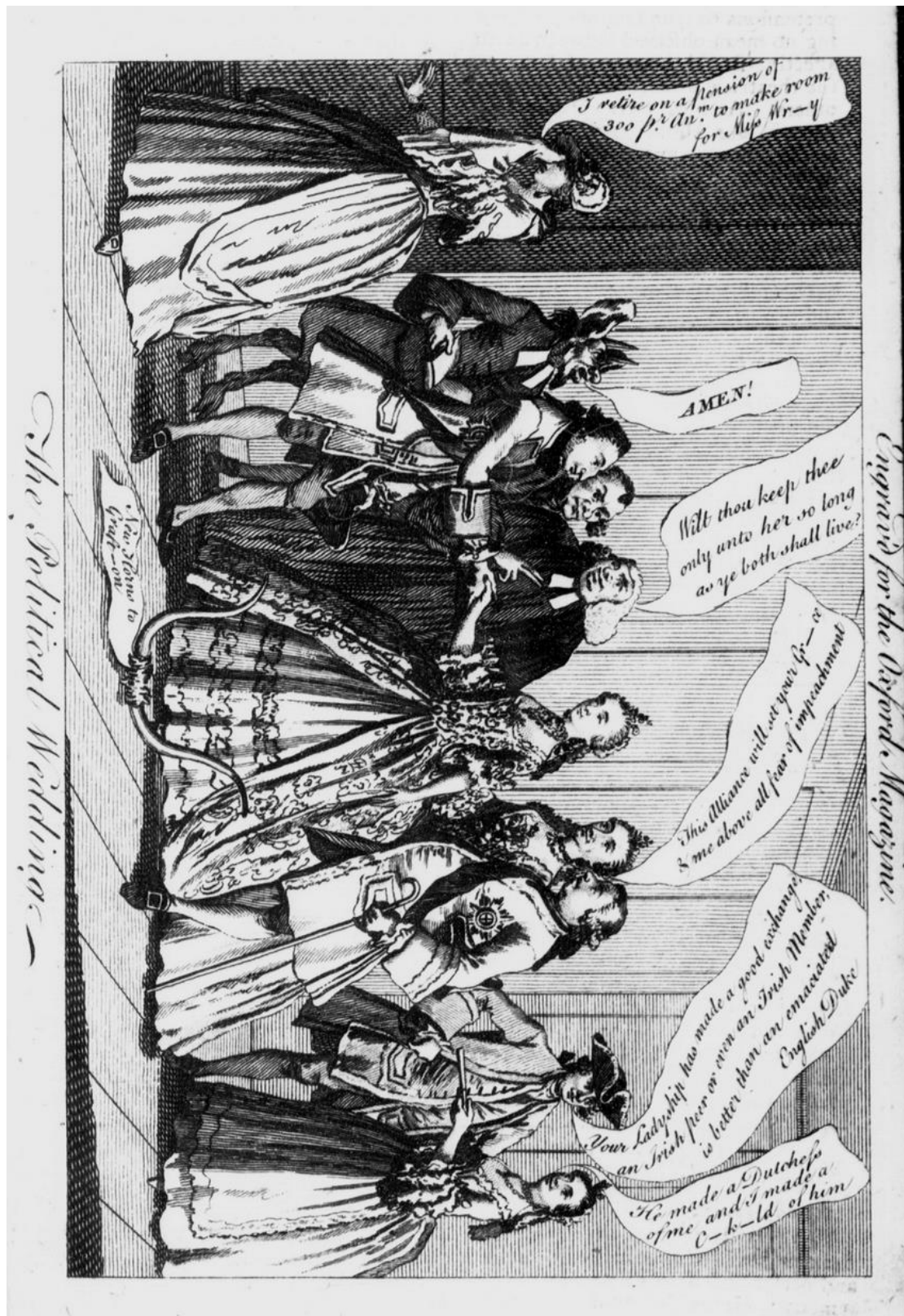[513] *Bingley's Journal*, 10 August, 1771.

Figure 1: 'The Political Wedding', *The Oxford Magazine*, July, 1769, p. 18.

certain great D—e, was disconcerted by the forcible intrusion of my lord's gentleman, who about two o'clock in the morning burst the chamber door open, and found the lovers sitting together in close conversation.' [514] The *Supplement* to *The Gentleman's Magazine* for that year provided addition information about the scandal, noting that Cumberland disguised himself 'in a black wig' and presented himself in 'an extraordinary appearance' in order to make the inn's servants believe that he was coming to visit 'an eminent mad Doctor in the town' rather than 'the fatal cause he was prosecuting'. When the Earl's men broke into the Countess's apartment: 'Her Ladyship and her Lover, were discovered seated by the fire; the Lady endeavoured to fly into a room… He – in his confusion having gained the outside of the door, cried, "I am not found in her Ladyship's apartment." But the people had been called upon, and recognized both the lady and his –, notwithstanding this little evasion.' When the discovery of the adultery had been made, it was reported that the Earl drove his wife out of their house, deprived her of motherhood, and launched a criminal conversation against Cumberland. [515] More unusual details were published by the press. In February 1770, *The Town and Country Magazine* published the Earl's reply to the Duke of Cumberland who had written Grosvenor two letters 'proposing an accommodation with Lady G – '. In his reply the Earl refused Cumberland's shameless request, and delivered a message to society that he had received 'a sense of injuries', and would 'bring the perpetrator to justice'. [516]

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[514] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 39. p. 607.
[515] *Ibid.*, p. 621.
[516] *The Town and Country Magazine*, February, 1770, p. 110.

Indeed, compared to the early eighteenth-century scandalous publications which were somewhat reluctant to offer detailed description of the shame itself, it is noteworthy that print media in the second half of the century showed more interest in reporting the shameful and salacious details of the scandal, and turned the private shame into a public mockery and entertainment. After the ecclesiastical divorce trial and the criminal conversation suit were made in March and July 1770, more sensational facts of the scandal were dredged. A pamphlet entitled *The Trial of His R.H. the D. of C. July 5th, 1770 for Criminal Conversation with Lady Harriett G – r* (1770) told readers that when the Earl's brother broke open the door at the inn, 'the D. of C. sitting on the bed-side along with Lady G – , with his waistcoat loose, and the lady with her Dress unbuttoned, and her breasts wholly exposed.' When the Duke escaped into the next room, he reminded others 'to take notice' that he was 'not in Lady G's Room' and that he 'would take his bible oath' to what he said.[517] In July 1770 *The Public Advertiser* reported that the rooms chosen for rendezvous were usually marked with a piece of chalk by the Duke so that the Lady could find them, and that the Lady referred to choose less commodious rooms, 'even having broken paynes in the window and otherwise out of Repair'. It also revealed that Cumberland 'went under different Names, and once gave out that he was insane, and under the Direction of a Physician travelling with him, and who, upon Examination, turn'd out to be a common Porter.'[518] *The Gentleman's Magazine* provided an anecdote about the 'mad Duke', writing that Cumberland 'used

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[517] *The Trial of His R.H. the D. of C. July 5th, 1770 for Criminal Conversation with Lady Harriett G – r* (London, 1770), p.11; *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 40, p. 314; *The Oxford Magazine*, July 1770, pp. 16-24.

[518] *The Public Advertiser*, 7 July , 1770.

to be called at the inns the Fool, particularly at Whitchurch, where a noise being heard in passing from one room to the other, it was disregarded by the people of the house; who said, it was only the Fool.'[519] Love letters which was said to be written by Cumberland were also exposed and circulated by the press:

> I got to supper about 9 o' clock but I could not eat, and so got to bed about 10 – I then prayed for you, my dearest love, kissed your dearest little hair, and laye down and dreamt of you; had you on the dear little coach ten thousand times in my arms, kissing you, and telling you how much I loved and adored you, and you seemed pleased; but, alas, when I awoke I found it all delusion! – no body by me but myself at sea.[520]

Not surprisingly, the Duke's idiosyncrasies in his trysts with the Countess, his mawkish and ill-written love letters, and his assertion that he would 'take a bible oath' that he was not 'in my Lady's room' made Cumberland a laughing-stock and his shame the subject of public entertainment.[521] In August 1770, *The Lady's Magazine* published correspondence written by a female reader, who satirically praised the Duke's service and sacrifice for the woman he loved:

> Though many noisy people have made a scoff at a great duke's love-letters, yet, I think, he is to be had in the highest honour and esteem, for where is there one in twenty among you men that would undergo the difficulties he did for our sex: he turned squire, fool, horse-stealer, farmer, nay, and cook (for I am told he fry' d

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[519] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 40. p. 314.
[520] *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, vol. 47, 1770, p. 40. *The Scots Magazine*, vol. 32, 1770, p. 409.
[521] Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*, pp. 141-2.

bacon and eggs at St. Alban's); and what is still more, turned those pretty red locks

of hair of his into a black wig.

She then ridiculed the Duke for swearing by his bible oath: 'But as these good men love

only married women, the next time I trouble you will be with an article for a sober

husband, not one of your mad sort, that break open doors, and disturb and frighten the

gallant, to make him swear by his *bible oath* to a falsity.' After mocking the Duke's

foolish disguising and false swearing, the correspondent then wrote a satirical poem in

order to shame his ill-writing and his tutor Dr Charles who taught the Duke spelling:

To my dear angel now at land,

Her love at sea doth write;

But first would have her understand,

I never could indite,

Tho' Dr Charles, great pains he took,

Yet I ne'er learnt my spelling book.[522]

In August 1770, *The Town and Country Magazine* published a correspondence from a

member of the 'Society of Female Coterie'; it suggested that the Society would provide

financial support to publish 'a new ROYAL SPELLING-BOOK' for those polite lovers

'who propose carrying on an amorous correspondence.'[523] A month later, *The Oxford*

Magazine printed a letter full of spelling and grammar mistakes, and claimed that it was

written by Cumberland's language tutor Dr. Charles.[524] In August *Bingley's Journal*

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[522] *The Ladies Magazine, or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex*, August 1700, p. 31. It was reported that the Duke used different names, including 'Squire Morgan', 'Squire Jones', 'the Famer', to disguise his real identity. See *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 40, p. 314.
[523] *The Town and Country Magazine*, August, 1770.
[524] *The Oxford Magazine*, September 1770.

published a song, which ridiculed the young Duke for paying the dearest £10,000 for 'a lock of her (Lady Grosvenor) dear little hair':

Ye Captains and Admirals mighty and brave,

Who rear Britain's Standard, and traverse her Wave,

That each Cruize may prove glorious, be sure you take Care,

To carry a Lock of *her dear little Hair*.

Your future high Admiral bids you do this,

As something to play with, and something to kiss;

Tho' his highness expressly does not tell you where,

He cropt his sweet Lock of her *dear little Hair*.

This Lock was the *dearest* that ever was found,

No less did it cost him than Ten Thousand Pounds;

Such a Circumstance surely may serve to declare,

Its Right to the Title of DEAR *little Hair*.[525]

Contemporaries did not believe that Cumberland would resolve to reform himself. *The Public Advertiser* claimed that the Duke would return to his adulterous lifestyle very soon: 'We hear that Squire John, alias Squire Morgan [both were aliases that Cumberland had used in order to associate with Lady Grosvenor], who played the Part of the Fool so naturally at Whitchurch, and other Parts of the Country, has taken his Bible Oath that he will endeavour to divert the Town this Summer in the same Character.' It therefore advised inhabitants of the town 'receive the Squire kindly, as his little heart

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[525] *Bingley's Journal*, 18 August, 1770.

flatters for the Approbation of the Public.'[526] Similarly, *The Oxford Magazine* remarked that the Duke could have played the fool perfectly simply because he himself was a fool; but if a fool pretended to be wise by taking bible oath, he would be extremely awkward: 'I can venture to take my Bible Oath that he could have performed the character he appeared in to the highest perfection, without departing from his original character. When a man has been in one particular walk in life for twenty-five years, he cannot avoid being extremely awkward when he attempts to go out of it.'[527]

Between 1769 and 1770, both Dukes were bombarded by the popular press. While it was Grafton and Cumberland who brought disgrace upon their own heads, the mercenary and indefatigable scandalmongers undoubtedly played a crucial role in exposing and spreading their shame. Publishers and writers must have profited handsomely from trading on both Dukes' shame. And their readers were able to obtain with more detailed reports of the sensational and salacious facts of upper-class immoral privacies than they had ever imagined possible. The increase of sensationalism in the second half of the eighteenth century does not mean that the moral function of scandalous publications was altogether abandoned, since the reportage and comments centring on the Grafton and Cumberland cases functioned as trial by media, which not only exposed upper-class immoralities and corruption, but also made the reading public aware of their own moral superiority. However, the latter half of the eighteenth century witnessed a change in ways of representing shame in scandalous publications. If crime and scandal texts before the 1750s was characterised by their somewhat didactic tone,

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[526] *The Public Advertiser*, 27 July, 1770.
[527] *The Oxford Magazine*, August 1770, p. 75.

which was presented in the fact that the shameful nature and consequence of transgression were always seriously and explicitly pronounced by writers, in the latter half of the century, as the Cumberland case revealed, they were becoming more satirical and light-hearted in tone, aiming to ridicule or shame wrongdoers rather than to make a direct condemnation. Highlighting the foolishness of Cumberland and making him the subject of public ridicule and laughing-stock, the growing satirical and entertaining ways of representation increased and spread the shame of the Duke, but whether these prints evoked a moral sense of shame among readers was nevertheless ambiguous.[528]

Publisher's greed, however, knew no bounds, nor did the reading public's curiosity about the world of fashion. The 1760s and 1770s witnessed a notable increase in the coverage of aristocratic sexual transgressions, but it was not until the final two decades of the eighteenth century that, as Donna Andrew remarks, 'the age of a mass readership for adultery cases had arrived.'[529] Among the numerous scandals that happened during this period, the Richard Worsley's case was no doubt the most sensational and notorious one. [530] Several facts made this sexual scandal particularly fascinating for the contemporary print media and reading public. For example, Sir Richard Worsley's wife Seymour Dorothy Worsley was rumoured to have 'no less than twenty-eight' lovers.[531] In 1782, Sir Richard launched a crim. con. trial against one of her wife's many paramours, George M. Bisset, a Hampshire militia officer and a neighbour of Worsley

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[528] How scandalous publications influenced readers' senses of shame is a question that the next section will focus on.

[529] Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*, p. 154.

[530] For the most recent and substantial historical research on the scandal of Worsley, see Hallie Rubenhold, *Lady Worsley's Whim: An Eighteenth-Century Tale of Sex, Scandal and Divorce* (London, 2009).

[531] *The Public Advertiser*, February 1782.

on the Isle of Wight, and demanded £20,000 damages from him. However, it was reported that 'the jury returned with a Verdict for the Plaintiff, giving him only *One Shilling Damages*' due to Richard Worsley's collusion in the adultery as a witness testified that in Maidstone Sir Richard 'had absolutely raised the Defendant upon his Shoulders to view his naked Wife while bathing', and that his wife 'joined the Gentlemen' and 'they all went off together in a hearty laugh'.[532] Undoubtedly, the unnatural incident of Maidstone quickly became the focus of print media.

Although publications centring on Worsley's scandal, like those of the Grafton and Cumberland cases, seldom mentioned the word 'shame' or directly taught readers 'what was shameful' as many seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century scandalous accounts always did, their extensive coverage and trade in the salacious and shameful details of the scandal did reflect a real shift in the way of representing shame. The author of a poem entitled *Variety, or Which is the Man? A Poem dedicated to Lady W-sl-y* (1782) represented Lady Worsley as a woman who, after long 'pursuing luxury' and being 'a universal lover', decided to search for real love but 'not to stop carnal pleasures' and not until she met Bisset did she feel 'Love's true surprise'. The author described Lady Worsley as a hypocrite, who was not ashamed of, but rather enjoyed, being spied upon by Bisset: 'Gave him full time when mounted high, To gaze, and feast his ravish'd eye; That nothing should obstruct his peep, I, cautious, went but ancle deep.'[533] In another

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[532] *The Trial between the Rt. Hon. Sir Richard Worseley, Bart… Plaintiff and George Maurice Bissett* (London, 1782), p. 11, 20. Cited in Wagner, 'The Pornographer in the Courtroom', p. 129; Also see Cindy McCreery, 'Breaking all the Rules: the Worsley Affair in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain', in Pat Rogers and Regina Hewitt (eds), *Orthodoxy and Heresy in the London eighteenth Century* (Lewisburg, 2002), pp. 69-86; Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*, pp. 152-4.
[533] *Variety, or Which is the Man? A Poem dedicated to Lady W-sl-y* (London, 1782), pp. ii, 4-11.

satirical poem entitled *The Whim!!! or, the Maid-Stone Bath* (1782), Lady Worsley was

represented as a nymphomaniac, who owned 'a Male Seraglio' wherein she was, as the

author wrote, 'amidst a circle of the Apollos of all Nations', and 'engaged in the

delightful ceremony, of *throwing the Handkerchief!*' [534] *An Epistle from L[ad]y*

W[orsle]y to S[ir]r R[ichar]d W[orsle]y Bart (1782) was even more sensational in tone.

According to its author, Richard Worsley was the very author of his own shame, his

wife eloped with Bisset simply because he could not satisfy his wife's sexual appetite:

> Long time, alas! unsatisfy'd I rang'd,
>
> Now pleas'd with W – M, now for G – M chang'd
>
> At length with B – T stope, for he could give
>
> What from thine arms I never could receive.
>
> From him no teizing titillations came;
>
> He rais'd those passions which he well could tame.
>
> Dissolv'd in thrilling extacy we lay,
>
> Kiss'd till the morn, then curs'd the coming day.
>
> Oh! had you seen me on his breast recline'd;
>
> Lips glu'd to lips, and limbs with limbs entwin'd …[535]

In the final part of the *Epistle*, the author also ridiculed Worsley's habit of showing his

naked wife to other men, and at the same time affirmed Lady Worsley's willingness to

exhibit her body to Bisset: 'Without a blush I gave him time to gaze, And set his

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[534] *The Whim!!! or, the Maid-Stone Bath. A Kentish Poetic. Dedicated to Lady Worsley* (London, 1782), p. iii-iv.
[535] *An Epistle from L[ad]y W[orsle]y to S[ir]r R[ichar]d W[orsle]y Bart* (London, 1782), pp. 6-7.

youthful spirits in a blaze.'[536]

The shame and scandal of Worsley also provided a rich source of inspiration to caricaturists. James Gillray, for example, produced several mildly erotic caricatures, which represented the absurdity and shamelessness of the protagonists in the Maidstone case, and exposed the corruption and licentiousness of Lady Worsley and social elites.[537] Other caricatures intended to represent the moment of shame that Richard Worsley must have experienced in the crim. con. trial. In *The Shilling or the Value of A P – Y C – R's Matrimonial Honor* (1782), for example, James Wallace stands on one side of the table and tosses Worsley a shilling, saying that 'They would not believe you possess any of your contrivance for his peeping has ruined your cause'. Worsley, who looked too fat to be a military officer, almost faints to the ground upon knowing that he was awarded only one shilling damages. This was undoubtedly a shameful moment for the baronet; 'O lord O lord no more than one shilling for my lost honour,' Richard exclaims while dropping his cap and sward on the ground. A cluster of horns sprouted from his head, with each branch bearing the name of his wife's paramours who had borne witness in the court. Above the scene is Lady Justice, who points her sword at Robert's red military uniform, and warned that: 'Take away that badge of Distinction, Shame may transfer the colour to his face.'[538] (figure 2)

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[536] *Ibid.*, p. 8.
[537] In *A Peep into Lady!!!!! Y's Seraglio*, published by William Humphrey, 29 April, 1782 (BM Satires 6112), James Gillray described Lady Worsley as a public whore. Gillray's other satires about the Worsley case mainly concentrated on the incidence of Maidstone, including *Sir Richard Worse-than-sly, Exposing His Wifes Bottom; O Fye!* published by H. Brown, 14 March, 1782 (BM Satires 6109); *Lady Worsley, Dressing in the Bathing House, 1782* (BM Satires 6111); *A Bath of the Moderns*, 1782 (BM Satires 6106); *Maidstone Whim*, published by William Wells, 8 March, 1782 (BM Satires 6107).
[538] Cited in McCreery, 'Breaking all the Rules', p. 80. *The Shilling or the Value of A P – Y C – R's Matrimonial Honor*, published by Hannah Humphrey, 27 February, 1782 (BM Satires 6105).

Figure 2: *The Shilling or the Value of A P – Y C – R's Matrimonial Honor*, published

by Hannah Humphrey, February 27, 1782, (BM Satires 6105).

The extensive coverage and representation of upper-class sexual scandal was familiar to contemporaries. What was new to the contemporary publishing industry was the use of advertisements to promote the sale of scandalous publications. The advertising campaign centred on Worsley's scandal demonstrates the great social impact and commercial value of the shame of the superior ranks, and once again reflects the commodification of shame in the eighteenth-century context of print culture. On March 4, 1782, a puff under the guise of the news appeared in *The Public Advertiser*; claiming that the accounts of the crim. con. trial between Sir Richard Worsley and Captain Bisset had sold out 'in a few Hours' after the publication and that 'a great Number of Purchasers were consequently disappointed'; it informed readers that in order to 'prevent a Repetition of this Inconvenience, two Presses are now employed in working off a sufficient Quantity to gratify the Curiosity of the Public.'[539] Before the publication of the satirical poem *The Whim!!! or, the Maid-Stone Bath*, *The Morning Chronicle* also published an advertisement and cited a sentence from *Hudibras* to entice its readers into buying that satirical poem.[540] One month later, *The White Evening Post* posted another advertisement which told readers that *The Whim* would reveal the secrets of who was the real seducer in Maidstone:

Notwithstanding a late Decision, it appears yet a matter of doubt, whether Lady W– seduced the Gentlemen, or they seduced her Ladyship? At any rate it is obvious that there was a seduction somewhere; for it is not always the case that

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[539] *The Public Advertiser*, 4 March, 1782. Next day *The Morning Chronicle* published the same advertisement .

[540] *The Morning Chronicle*, 2 March, 1782.

more than a score of Witnesses are ready to swear to the truth of their own

misconduct. This matter will be best explained by a perusal of the *Whim…* which

is the production of Genius, assisted by the best information.[541]

In the first week of May, 1782, the publisher of *An Epistle from L[ad]y W[orsle]y to*

S[ir]r R[ichar]d W[orsle]y Bart placed a set of advertisements in *The Morning Herald*

and Daily Advertiser. On 1 May 1782, an item, disguised as a correspondence written

by a high-minded reader, condemned the recently published *Epistle* as 'the most

licentious and immoral productions that has been issued from the press for some time'

since in this book 'vice is painted in such specious colours, and morality and virtue so

totally ridiculed'. This letter persuaded the audience 'who is not totally lost to every

degree of decency, will… by any means deign to read it.' In the second day, *The*

Morning Herald posted another advertisement, claiming that it was Lady Worsley who

wrote this *Epistle* and therefore she 'leaves us at a loss to know which we are most to

detest: the very extraordinary supineness of the husband; or the libidinous and

insatiable passions of the wife.' The best puff for the *Epistle* was posted on 6 May. First

lamenting that 'the great and alarming increase of licentiousness cannot be more

conspicuous than in the very extensive circulation, amongst all ranks, of the new

publication, entitled an *Epistle from L–y W–y to S–r R–d'*, the author of this

advertisement continued:

> The uncommon popularity of this pamphlet is infinitely to be dreaded, not only
>
> from the abandoned morals and severe scandal it contains, but on account of the

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[541] *The Whitehall Evening Post*, 30 March, 1782.

singular elegance of the language, which is so truly infatuating, that while it steals

on the senses by the beauty of the poetry, it pictures in such irresistible colours,

that it cannot fail rooting from the mind every sentiment of virtue and morality.

Yet so strange is the depravity of the age, that it is no less extraordinary than true,

that a capital bookseller, at the West end the town, has actually orders to send 500

copies to a neighbouring kingdom – a number quite sufficient to corrupt the

minds of all its inhabitant.[542]

Obviously not everyone appreciated the *Epistle* and its immoral, titillating ways of advertisement. A reader with apparently strong moral principles complained to the printer of the *Public Advertiser* that his 'brain is tortured with a perpetual Repetition of mercenary Puffs in almost every Papers of that contemptible Performance yelped an Epistle from Lady W – y'. The correspondent then cautioned printers and writers that 'a good Book will recommend itself, but a bad one require Puffing', and argued that those 'unprincipled R – s, who laugh at the good-natured Englishman's Credulity, and both insult him, and pick his Pocket' should be punished by 'a manual Chastisement'.[543]

That personal shame could make money was known not only by publishers, but also by fallen women who had lapsed from chastity or social norms. The second half of the eighteenth century witnessed an increase in the number of memoirs written by courtesans and mistresses. These autobiographies served different purposes. They

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[542] *The Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser*, 1, 2, 6 May, 1782. All of these three examples are cited in Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*, pp. 153-4.
[543] *The Public Advertiser*, 1 June, 1782.

offered the author a chance to repent of their debauchery and beg forgiveness from the public and her family, to represent herself as a victim of male perfidy, to express a desire for virtue and vindicate her innocent nature, to mitigate the shame inflicted on them, and to name and shame the males who had led them to present notoriety. Although these memoirs offered repentance, and claimed their moral and instructive functions, they all capitalised on shame and were written for money.[544] If a courtesan grew old and was unable to find a faithful keeper, publishing an autobiography, or simply blackmailing her former lovers and clients (who were usually those coming from the world of fashion) by threatening to expose their names in memoirs could be an effective way of bettering her economic fortune.[545] Economic interest was the primary reason for women such as Laetitia Pilkington and Teresia Constantia Phillips publishing their memoirs.[546] These scandalous autobiographies, which were always sensational in tone and popular among the reading public, constituted a part of the contemporary 'shame economy' of the publishing industry.

The popularity of such scandalous memoirs relied on their detailed, and indeed sensational, representation of the shame and scandal of the fashionable world and the consequent voyeuristic pleasure which was delivered to the audience. When Ann Sheldon's *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs* was published in 1788, *The World* posted an item warning that the memoirs 'contain a very ample store of modern anecdote, and

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[544] See Kirsten Pullen, *Actresses and Whores: On Stage and in Society* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 59-73; Jane Moody and Daniel O'Quinn (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to British Theatre, 1730-1830* (Cambridge, 2007), p.162; Thompson, *The 'Scandalous Memoirists'*, pp. 127-8; Binhammer, *The Seduction Narrative in Britain,* p. 63.
[545] Brewer, *Sentimental Murder*, p. 98.
[546] Dabhoiwala, *The Origins of Sex*, p. 338; Thompson, *The 'Scandalous Memoirists'*, Chapter 1 and 2.

a long catalogue of amorous histories, in which the principal personages of this kingdom will make their appearance'.[547] This advertisement also listed the names of more than one hundred 'big figures', including those of the richest and most powerful in the kingdom, and promised readers that these persons would appear in Ann Sheldon's memoir. Like many scandalous memoirists of the time, Sheldon claimed her writing had positive effects, but felt no shame in offering accounts of her own sexual transgressions and aristocratic scandals. For example, she described in detail how the Marquis of Granby seduced and raped Sophia, a virtuous maid and the fiancée of Mr. Hudson.[548] She also recounted her service to Lord Grosvenor, who asked her to 'furnish novelties for his seraglio', and exposed Grosvenor's taste for women of colour and poor girls who were dirty and shabby in dress.[549]

The increase and popularity of such scandalous memoirs in turn made their heroines celebrities of the time. Although their 'honour' or fame was gained through shame, it did not prevent famous harlots and courtesans or what John Cleland termed 'women of pleasure' such as Kitty Fisher, Ann Sheldon, Fanny Murray and Nancy Parsons from being portrayed by eminent painters.[550] In the second half of the eighteenth century, their images were remarkably popular in London. At the price of one penny to one shilling, as Dabhoiwala writes, these portraits were affordable to a large population, and 'allowed thousands of viewers to feel familiar, even possessive,

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[547] *The World*, 6 March, 1788.
[548] Ann Sheldon, *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs of Miss Ann Sheldon* (London, 1787), vol. 1, pp. 1-5, 57-60.
[549] *Ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 202-7.
[550] John Cleland, *Memoirs of A Woman of Pleasure* (London, 1766).

towards her.'[551] Like the explosion of the press and pamphlets in reporting upper-class transgressions, the popularity of scandalous memoirs and their authors once again demonstrated the spectacular rise of scandal journalism and the commodification of shame. What, then, was the contemporary attitude towards scandalous prints? How did their barefaced representation of the shame and scandal of social elites influence the contemporary perception of shame? It is to these questions the next section now turns.

Scandalous Publication and the Rising Culture of Shamelessness

In her recent book *Aristocratic Vice*, Donna Andrew highlights the positive impact of the popular press, arguing that these publications not only heightened public awareness about fashionable vice, but also 'fostered a growing sense of resentment and irritation among the public, a feeling that the lives of the great and powerful were not what they should be, and that reformation was necessary.'[552] Indeed, the increasing coverage of the crim. con. cases and the spectacular rise of scandal journalism in the eighteenth century made contemporaries, especially 'godly' authors, believe that they were living in a society in which the fashionable males and females no longer considered adultery a shameful sin. In 1754 a preacher lamented that 'the Sin of Fornication and Uncleanness was too much encouraged and justified by some of the greatest men in the Heathen World'.[553] In the preface of the account of the Cumberland trial, the editor wrote that 'adultery is become so fashionable, and Divorce so frequent, that it may

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[551] Dabhoiwala, *The Origins of Sex*, pp. 308-10.
[552] Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*, p.42; also see her '"Adultery à-la-Mode": Privilege, the Law and Attitudes to Adultery 1770-1809', *History*, Vol. 82 (January, 1997), pp. 5-23.
[553] Alexander Jephson, *The Heinous Sins of Adultery and Fornication* (London, 1754), p. x.

admit of some debate, in the polite world, whether the first is criminal or the latter dishonourable.'[554] *The Town and Country Magazine* noted many fashionable men held the view that 'a man of taste must have a mistress' in order to establish reputation. Several years later, the magazine noted that for those of higher rank, love was no longer a reason for marriage: 'if a man were weak enough to acknowledge that the amorous passion had any way influenced him in the choice of a wife, he would be laughed at by all his acquaintance, and held up as the *butt* of ridicule in every circle where the *ton* was supposed to prevail.'[555] In 1780, *The London Magazine* wrote that adultery was so prevalent in high circles that 'there may remain no distinction between the house of the countess and brothel.'[556] Contemporaries called for severer punishment to combat upper-class promiscuous sexuality, but they lamented that legislators could not be trusted, because those sitting in parliament were 'conscious that themselves deserve the lash of it'.[557]

What made contemporary people particularly worried was that aristocratic immoralities might corrupt the lower ranks and the entire society. In 1771, an author under the name of 'Civilian' noted that 'fashion is so favourite, so powerful, an idol, that few have resolution enough to restrain from bowing down at the shine of idolatry.'[558] Another book published in 1771 remarked that 'when the Rulers have no Bars either of Shame or legal Restraint, their vicious Examples excite a much more

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[554] *The Trial of His R.H. the D. of C*, p. iii.
[555] *The Town and Country Magazine*, July 1776, p. 346; December 1783, p. 645.
[556] *The London Magazine*, June 1780, p. 254.
[557] *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 13 April, 1779.
[558] Civilian, *Free Thoughts on Seduction, Adulter*y*; with Reflections on the Gallantry of Princes, Particularly Those of the Bloody-Royal England* (London, 1771), p.196.

general Imitation throughout the slavish Multitude, than the evil Precedents of

Individuals can occasion in a Common-Wealth.'[559] In March 1786, *The Times* likewise

claimed that 'the example of the great is more prevalent than any laws… if we look

into the families of the nobility and opulent gentry, we seldom find an example, the

imitation of which is not dangerous. Their servants are almost proverbially idle, lazy,

[and] profligate.' [560] The scandal journalism that shaped popular anxieties and

resentment of aristocratic vice in turn 'created repeated demands for positive action'.[561]

Thus, the eighteenth century saw a significant increase in the publication of sermons,

conduct books, treatises, pamphlets and countless newspaper commentaries, which

aimed to redress upper-class immoralities and their harmful social influences. Some of

them emphasised the importance of religion in curbing sexual laxity, while others

proposed the application of severer and more enforceable punishments. Many asserted

that 'the great and wealth' should set 'the virtuous example' to the society. Some

publications aimed to reinforce 'the powerful restraint of shame' and particularly

inculcate female readers with 'bashfulness and modesty'. Others pointed out that it was

those 'nominal' and 'indifferent' husbands that led to female infidelity, and thus urged

that 'the husbands should be honest themselves'.[562]

    While moralistic publications from different perspectives expressed ideas about

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[559] John Andrews, *Reflections on the too Prevailing Spirit of Dissipation and Gallantry; Shewing Its Dreadful Consequences to Publick Freedom* (London, 1771), p. 54.
[560] *The Times*, 27 March, 1786.
[561] Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*, p. 42.
[562] For example: *The Times*, 27 March, 1786; Maurice Morgann, *A Letter to My Lords the Bishop, on Occasion of the Present Bill for the Preventing of Adultery* (London, 1779), pp. 48-9; Francis Foster, *Thoughts on the Times, but Chiefly on the Profligacy of Our Women, and It's Causes* (London, 1779), pp. 70-1; *The Times*, 1 September, 1789; *The Town and Country Magazine*, August 1777, pp. 407-8; *The London Magazine*, June 1780, p. 255.

the way of combating fashionable vice, the popular press and news pamphlets insisted

that in order to discourage upper-class corruption, shaming wrongdoers through

exposing their transgressions were necessary. In 1761, *The London Evening Post*

argued for its legitimacy of criticising immoral upper figures: 'admonitions well

founded are of great Use, and appear no where so properly as in News-Papers; which

passing through many Hands, have the best Chance of producing sometimes or other,

a good Effect.'[563] In a correspondence addressing to the *Town and Country Magazine*,

the author, quoting Alexander Pope's words that 'people who were not afraid of being

wicked, were ashamed of being made ridiculous', praised the shaming function of its

Tête-à-Tête series.[564] Another author argued that infidelity 'is a Crime so scandalous'

that it 'behoves every one to lend his Assistance in exposing those equally dangerous

and ignominious Consequences that necessarily flow from the shameful and guilty

connivance'.[565] In *Trials for Adultery: or, the History of Divorces, Being Select Trials*

at Doctors Commons, For Adultery, Fornication, Cruelty, Impotence, a multi-volume

collection of crim. con. accounts published in 1779, the editor claimed that 'this

publication may perhaps effect what the law cannot: the transactions of the adulterer

and the adulteress will, by being thus publickly circulated, preserve others from the

like crimes, from the fear of shame, when the fear of punishment may have but little

force'.[566] Perhaps the most explicit expression of advocating print as a mechanism for

shaming particular wrongdoers comes from *The Devil Divorced* (1782), in which the

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[563] *The London Evening Post*, 3 December, 1761, cited in Shoemaker, *The London Mob*, p. 252.
[564] *The Town and Country Magazine*, April 1769, p. 181.
[565] Andrews, *Reflections on the too Prevailing Spirit of Dissipation and Gallantry*, pp. 76-7.
[566] *Trials for Adultery: or, the History of Divorces* (London, 1779-80), vol. 1, preface.

author asserted that 'this work is meant as a kind of satire, not altogether on the vices of the age, but rather of individuals… My principal aim has been to arraign and lash their vices, and at the same time to ridicule and expose their follies'. Responding to the opinion that 'a man may both lash the vices, and laugh at the follies of the age, without descending to personalities', the author of *The Devil Divorced* refuted that 'this would be, for the most part, unattended with the desired effect', because:

> Many there are who persist in the course in which they have entered, merely because their evil practices are hid from the eye of the world. Many there are, who, in private, or with a chosen few, scruple not to doing things, of which, in a public assembly, they would speak in terms of the utmost abhorrence… I am not without hopes that this exposition of them may be attended with some salutary effects. My desire throughout is to serve the cause of good manners and virtue, and to put vice to the blush.[567]

In a society where aristocrats and social elites who had indulged in illicit behaviours could often evade prosecution or harsh punishment, trial by journalism provided a potential, and perhaps the only effective, tool to curb and discipline upper-class vice. The popular press and pamphlets functioned as a court of public opinion. By placing the wicked in 'a literary pillory', they exposed and shamed the wrongdoers among social betters. Thus in 1791 when Lord Chief Justice Lloyd Kenyon vowed that if any prosecutions against gambling 'are brought before me, and the parties are justly convicted whatever may be their rank, or station in the country, though they should be

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[567] *The Devil Divorced; or, the Diabo-Whore* (London, 1782), preface.

the first ladies in the land, they shall certainly exhibit themselves in the Pillory', all eyes turned to Albinia Hobart, Countess of Buckinghamshire, and her friend Lady Sarah Archer, who were notorious gamblers of the time. [568] Albinia and Archer were convicted of running a faro table and cheating. But due to their aristocratic status, both of them were merely fined. Two noble ladies who had escaped from being punished by the pillory were nonetheless pilloried by the press. In James Gillray's *Faro's Daughters, or The Kenyonian Blow up to Gamblers*, Albinia and Archer were depicted standing in the pillory under the shower of rotten eggs, dead rats, and vegetables thrown by the mob. On the platform of the pillory was attached a notice which read 'Curing for Gambling, published by Lord Kenyon in the Court of King's Bench.' (figure 3) This caricature exhibited the vices of the aristocracy, and shamed not only two of the most notorious 'Faro's daughters', but also the cowardly, if not hypocritical, Lord Kenyon.

Donna Andrew is obviously right in arguing for the positive role of the popular press in combating aristocratic vice and promoting moral reform, but what she fails to consider is the other side of the coin of scandalous publications – their unabashed concentration on shame and vice and the consequent social anxieties over the loss of the moral sense of shame. While it is true that many scandalous accounts condemned upper-class corruption and claimed their moralising function, we should be aware that most of them capitalised on sensationalism and were produced as a product of commercial entertainment. Indeed, many scandalous publishers and writers were neither radically critical, nor interested in reforming the world. Satirical artists did not

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[568] John Ashton, *The History of Gabling in England* (London, 1898), pp. 77-8.

Figure 3: James Gillray, *Faro's Daughters, or The Kenyonian Blow up to Gamblers*,

published by Hannah Humphrey, May 12, 1796, (BM Satires 8876).

aim to influence the common people or to subvert the monarchical principle; as Vic Gatrell argues, their caricatures which exposed princely transgressions were created mainly for elite or sophisticate's consumption.[569] Although scandalous and satirical prints could shame wrongdoers and arouse popular objections to the fashionable vice, it would be wrong to assume that the reading public had always experienced, or been inculcated with, the moral sense of shame. Nobody would have missed out reading the titillating details that followed the didactic preface of these publications, and it is true that what fascinated readers was not moral instruction, but the voyeuristic thrill these prints offered. All of this suggests that scandalous publications did not offer readers a coherent way of thinking about shame, and that their influence was double-edged. The rise of scandal journalism in the eighteenth century brought a new way of representing shame, in which, as has already been alluded to in the previous sections, the details of conventionally shameful matters, which early modern writers had long been ashamed to mention, were becoming the main subject of representation. This changing way of representing shame in turn gave rise to growing criticisms of scandalous and satirical prints, and aroused anxiety regarding their potentially negative social impact.

The changing way of representing shame in the eighteenth century is evidenced by the remarkable increase of sensational and pornographic elements in scandalous prints. As we have already seen, Edmund Curll's mercenary and unscrupulous publishing activity and his publications of the infamous impotence, adultery, and

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[569] Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, pp. 328-31. For the discussions on number, readership, and impact of satirical prints, also see Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven and London, 1996), chapter 1; Eirwen Nicholson, 'Consumers and Spectators: The Public of the Political Print in Eighteenth-Century England', *History*, vol. 81 (1996), pp. 5-21.

divorce cases of noble couples promoted the initial increase of sensationalism in the first half of the eighteenth century. But it was not until the latter half of the century that sensationalism and eroticism became the main features of scandalous publications. Publishers and writers continually boosted their moral and instructive intentions, but they were all preoccupied with a shame economy. It is clear that many of them were not ashamed to advertise the entertaining purpose of their books, or to make detailed description of the upper-class sexual transgressions, which seventeenth-century and many early eighteenth-century writers were ashamed, or dared not, to write about. Thus the author of *The Midnight Spy, or, a View of the Transactions of London and Westminster* (1766) claimed that he 'presumes to offer the following sheets to public notice, not doubting of their tendency both to instruct and entertain, which are the principal ends of all literary productions.'[570] In 1773, *The Covent Garden Magazine* told a story about how selfish parents ruined their daughters by marrying them to old, aristocratic libertines. Despite its critical and moralistic purpose, the account nevertheless put a special emphasis on representing sexual matters. When the protagonist, Huron, a young visitor to London, was seduced by a prostitute – the victim of arranged marriage – and entered her bedroom:

> She clasped me in her arms, pressed her breast to mine, and kissed me a hundred times. She threw herself upon the bed! – I was all on fire; she was warmer if possible. Never did the thirsty earth drink the rain with so much pleasure as she did the effusions of love. One while she lay as if she had been dead; at another,

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[570] *The Midnight Spy, or, a View of the Transactions of London and Westminster, from the Hours of Ten in the Evening, till Five in the Morning* (London, 1766), pp. 5-6.

she practised such wantonness as would astonish the most amorous of our women.[571]

In view of the obscene content of *Nocturnal Revels: or, the History of King's-Place, and other Modern Nunneries* (1779), a two-volume account of the London's top brothels and the anecdotes of their aristocratic clients, its editor was 'sensible that [readers] are very far from being a rigid Cynic, and that you can relax the brow of Severity'.[572] Another blunt editorial comment came from John Cleland, who justified the publication of *Memoirs of a Women of Pleasure*, a notoriously pornographic novel, by claiming that 'the greatest men, those of the first and most leading taste, will not scruple adorning their private closets with nudities, though, in compliance with vulgar prejudices, they may not think them decent decorations of the stair-case or saloon.'[573]

Worse still is the tendency that in the latter half of the eighteenth century many publishers of scandalous prints openly defended and advocated conventionally shameful sexual transgressions such as prostitution and adultery. A typical example comes from *Harris's List of Coven-Garden Ladies*, an erotic annual directory and advertisement of prostitutes working in Georgian London. In 1789 its editor, without any sense of shame, claimed: 'why shall the victims (prostitutes) of this natural propensity, the volunteers of Venus, the fairest of creation, be hunted like outcasts from society, be perpetually griped by the hand of petty tyranny? Do they not sacrifice their health, their lives, nay their reputations, at the altars of love and benevolence?'[574] The

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[571] *The Covent Garden Magazine* (London, 1773), vol. 2, p. 257.
[572] Monk of the Order of St. Francis, *Nocturnal Revels: or the History of King'-Place, and Other Modern Nunneries* (London, 1779), vol. 1, p. 1.
[573] Cleland, *Memoirs of A Woman of Pleasure*, p. 2.
[574] *Harris's List of Coven-Garden Ladies* (London, 1789), p. iii. Second researches on *Harris's List*

content of *Harris's List* was unsurprisingly bawdy and obscene. The 1764 entry offered

a salacious account of Miss Wilmot and her sexual encounter with George III's brother,

the Duke of York:

> He gazed on her a while with eyes of transport and fondness, and gave her a
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> world of kisses; at the close of which, in a pretended struggle, she contrived
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> matters so artfully, that the bed-cloaths having fallen off, her naked beauties lay
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> exposed at full length. The snowy orbs of her breast, by their frequent rising and
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> failing, beat Cupid's alarm-drum to storm instantly, in case an immediate
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> surrender should be refused. The coral-lipped mouth of love seemed with kind
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> movements to invite, nay, to provoke an attack; while her sighs, and eyes half-
>
> closed, denoted that no farther resistance was intended. What followed, may be
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> better imagined than described; but if we may credit Miss W-lm-t's account, she
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> never experienced a more extensive protrusion in any amorous conflict either
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> before or since.[575]

The crim. con. trial accounts in the final decades of the eighteenth century turned

into a form of erotica. This period witnessed the publication of several epoch-making

collections, including the seven-volume *Trials for Adultery* (1779-81), the two-volume

A New and Compleat Collection of the Most Remarkable Trials for Adultery (1780),

and the remarkably twelve-volume *The Crim. Con. Biography, or Celebrated Trials in*

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can be found in, for example, Elizabeth Campbell Denlinger, 'The Garment and the Man: Masculine Desire in "Harris's List of Covent-Garden Ladies," 1764-1793', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, vol. 11 (July, 2002), pp. 357-94; Hallie Rubenhold, *The Covent Garden Ladies: Pimp General Jack the Extraordinary Story of Harris's List* (Stroud, 2005).

[575] *Harris's List* (1764). The similar, barefaced representation of sex could be found in *Nocturnal Revels*, vol. 2, pp. 128-9.

the Ecclesiastical and Civil Courts for Adultery and other Crimes Connected with Incontinency (1789). These publications, as well as many trial accounts in the popular press and pamphlets, were characterised by particular interest in sexual matters. Their publishers and writers no longer treated sex as something unfit for description as their predecessors had done in the first half of the century. Even judges were accused of being 'the worst pornographers': 'if the witness had not described a doubtful situation with sufficient accuracy, magistrates never wearied of digging out the most obscene details by plying the often very naive witness with questions.'[576] With the help of the lewd justices, writers and publishers would of course not be ashamed to offer lurid details in their publications. Thus, the testimony given by a bricklayer in the crim. con. trial between Mr. Foley and the Earl of Peterborough was recorded and published verbatim by the author of *The Life and Amours of Lady Ann F-l-y*:

> [H]e first heard Lady Ann cry out, two or three times, 'O dear! you hurt me!' which induced him to look that way; and, going towards the pales, he look over them, and saw Lord Peterborough and Lady Ann together. That his Lordship had Lady Ann round the middle, and that her Ladyship's coats were up; and, at the same time, he saw her Ladyship's naked legs and thighs round Lord Peterborough's hams; and her arms round his Lordship's neck.[577]

A more undisguised representation of sex can be found in the narrative of the life and trials of the notorious nymphomaniac: Mrs. Elizabeth Draper. It was recorded that after

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[576] Ivan Bloch, *A History of English Sexual Morals*, translated by William H. Forstern (London, 1936), p. 74.
[577] *The Life and Amours of Lady Ann F-l-y: Developing [sic] the Whole of Her Intrigues, from the Time of Her Marriage with the Hon. Edward Foley* (London, 1782?), p. 8.

Mrs. Draper married her husband, a rich merchant who was unfortunately impotent, she 'took intense pleasure in watching the mating of mares and stallions', and soon after that 'she began to lead a dissolute life'. Mrs. Draper was charged of seducing over a dozen of men, including her apprentice, coachman, postilion, neighbours and her husband's friends during her seven-year marriage. One of her victims, William Penfold, a young apprentice, testified at the trial: 'the next Sunday being alone with her in the same room after dinner, she kissed him, put her hand to his breeches and unbuttoned them, and asked him to enjoy her, and pulled up her petticoats; he then at her desire had carnal knowledge of her, and committed adultery with her.' Prurient representations of Mrs. Draper's sexual adventures continued in the rest of the account, even noble rhetoric, which had always been used as a splendid disguise or defence of the sensational content, was omitted.[578] It is evident that the late eighteenth-century publishers of scandalous prints began to treat didactic messages as something tedious and redundant. For example, the editor of *The Cuckold's Chronicle* omitted moral instructions, claiming that his object was to 'supply an inexhaustible fund of amusement, and afford a species of relaxation, conveying more instruction for the use of domestic life, than the most austere dogma of morality can offer'.[579] In another trial account, the editor remarked that 'there has been so much morality in the course of this trial, through the channel of the counsel's speeches, and the judge's charge, that anything more of that kind would be superfluous'.[580]

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[578] *A New and Compleat Collection of the Most Remarkable Trials for Adultery* (London, 1780), pp. 222-31.
[579] *The Cuckold's Chronicle; Being Select Trials for Adultery, Incest, Imbecility, Ravishment, & c.* (London, 1793), vol. 1, p. v.
[580] Cited in Wagner, 'The Pornographer in the Courtroom', p. 132.

While scandalous literature was not ashamed to offer the prurient details of sexual transgressions, while writers and publishers were not ashamed to openly defend unchaste and sexual liberty, and while the editor of *Harris's List* was not ashamed to celebrate that 'what was formerly seen in the eyes of our world a disgrace, is now considered pleasure, delightful, and honourable', it would be not surprising to find that readers seemed not ashamed to devote their time and money to obtain scandalous and pornographic prints.[581] If we look back to the mid-seventeenth century – a period when the popular press and scandalous publications remained undeveloped, and Protestantism and moralising prints played a dominant role in shaping contemporary ideas about sex – we would see how far the public notion of shame had changed in the late eighteenth century. In January 1668 Pepys considered buying a book for his wife but gave up because he found the book too 'bawdy' and 'lewd'. Pepys seemed unable to resist the temptation and on 8 February, he returned to the booksellers on the Strand and bought that 'idle, rogueish book, "*L'escholle des filles*"', but resolved to burn it as soon as he had read it, because he felt that 'it may not stand in the list of books, nor among them, to disgrace them if it should be found.' The next day after he had dinner with friends, Pepys stayed in his chamber, read this lewd book 'for information sake', masturbated, and finally burned it since 'it might not be among my books to my shame'.[582]

But it seemed that people in the late eighteenth century did not scruple to read scandalous and erotic publications. And it is evident that the growing sensationalism

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[581] *Harris's List* (1788), p. 164.
[582] Pepys, *Diary*, 8 and 9 February, 1668.

in prints made the sense of shame as something contemporaries were losing rather than gaining. 'The most scandalous literature in London', remarked a German visitor, 'consists of the reports of Crim. Con. and Divorce Cases which are printed without expurgation. No book is asked for so frequently in the lending library, and the editions, reprints and extracts from them prove their popularity.'[583] Fashionable periodicals such as *The Town and Country Magazine* were popular among both London and provincial readers. Women and young girls constituted the main readership of its scandalous *Tête-à-Tête* column. In a correspondence addressed to the editor of *The Town and Country Magazine*, 'Astrea Brokage', a teenage girl of Bristol, said that she liked deciphering the dashes in each month's *Tête-à-Tête* as a means of alleviating the boredom of her confinement in a boarding school. In Goldsmith's comedy *She Stoops to Conquer*, the provincial Mrs Hardcastle claimed that reading 'every *Tête-à-Tête* from the Scandalous Magazine' made her 'enjoy London at second-hand'.[584] By the end of the eighteenth century, as Dabhoiwala observes, lewd prints were so accessible that even schoolgirls and rural clergymen were able to obtain pornographic materials that represented 'naked men and women in carnal connection with each other; in different situations, standing, lying, sitting, all of the most indecent kind'.[585]

The increase of scandal prints and the unblushing audience gave rise to anxieties over the negative influences of scandalous publications. Beneath these anxieties was a real fear that readers who had indulged themselves in such prints would one day lose

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[583] Bloch, *A History of English Sexual Morals*, p. 76.
[584] Both examples are citied in McCreery, 'Keeping up with the Bon Ton', p. 224.
[585] Dabhoiwala, *The Origins of Sex*, p. 348.

their sense of shame, and turn into shameless rakes or harlots as the figures they had read.[586] Moralists complained that 'Adultery and elopements constitute a material part of our news, and, being commonly retailed with numerous and minute circumstances, help to inflame the passions, and abate our horror for the crimes. No paragraphs are more greedily read than those which relate to business of this kind'.[587] The author of *The Evils of Adultery and Prostitution* (1792) attributed the increase of sexual debauchery in the late eighteenth century to the rise of sensationalism in prints. He claimed that the popularity of scandal news in the popular press produced 'shameless and barefaced' readers, who in turn made publishers believe that in order to accommodate the tastes of a mass audience, it was necessary to 'pollute their pages with the relation of lewdness and debauchery'. The author lamented that even 'the most chaste and the best regulated' newspapers were compelled to give scandalous reportage a place, otherwise 'a number of their readers would consider the omission as a great defect, and might be tempted to withdraw their encouragement'. In order to reverse this trend and to suppress the lewd and immoral prints, the author appealed to the power of the law: 'The courts of law certainly have some power to prevent these publications… and certainly the legislature ought to interfere to prevent the great injury done to the morals of the people.'[588]

Other forms of scandalous genres such as novels were also coming under attack. Contemporaries worried that novels centring on the sexual intrigues of fashionable

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[586] *A Modest Defense of Chastity* (London, 1726), p. 34.
[587] Cited in Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice*, pp. 154-5.
[588] *The Evils of Adultery and Prostitution, with An Inquiry into the Causes of Their Alarming Increase* (London, 1792), pp. 48-50.

society would lure lower-class males and females into imitating their decadent social betters and make them immune from the moral sense of shame. In 1779 Francis Foster, a moral writer, complained that 'Novels are full of warm Descriptions, run entirely on the subject of Love, convey very loose Ideas and represent vicious Characters'. He argued that 'Novels should never enter the Doors for they give wrong Turns of Thinking, lead young Minds to form absurd Ideas of Characters, to expect to meet with those, which do not exist, and to act romantically, in order to Copy the Painting that is drawn *out of Nature*.'[589] The author of *Free Thoughts on Seduction, Adultery, and Divorce* (1771) compared novels to 'the school of gallantry', which taught readers 'impudence' and deprived them of the 'natural modesty of the sex'.[590] The author of *The Evils of Adultery and Prostitution* (1792) lamented that 'the example of men of rank and fortune, the prodigious increase of novels and of the loosest kind, all help to render men familiar with these vices, and to abate the horror we should entertain against such practices.' Readers who became 'devoid of all sentiments of justice and honour', as the author claimed, would 'make no scruple in confessing their criminal connections, and feel no shame in acknowledging their lewdness.'[591] In 1799, Hannah More criticised novels for making 'those crying sins so familiar, and the wickedness of them so disguised, that even innocent girls get to lose their abhorrence, and to talk with complacency of *things which should not be so much as named by them*'.[592]

The second half of the eighteenth century also witnessed growing attacks on

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589 Foster, *Thoughts on the Times*, pp. 42-4.
590 Civilian, *Free Thoughts on Seduction*, p. 272.
591 *The Evils of Adultery and Prostitution*, pp. 55-7.
592 Hannah More, *Cheap Repository. The Two Wealthy Farmers* (London, 1799), p. 18.

graphic satires. As a major genre of print that had been heavily involved in scandal journalism, satirical prints were always condemned for spreading immoralities and producing shameless readers. One could easily tell at a glance the differences of satirical prints before and after the mid-eighteenth century. In William Hogarth's decades, satires had explicit moral purposes, they seldom targeted particular individuals nor gave detailed descriptions of sex. But during the second half of the eighteenth century, and especially in its closing decades, the contrary became their very features.[593] Although mainly produced for middle- and upper-class consumption, caricatures exhibited at the printshop windows were available to be seen by a wide range of people. The audience, as Vicesimus Knox wrote, 'loiter at a window, with a burden on their backs, and gape, unmindful of their toil, at the comical productions of the ingenious designer.'[594] Moralists feared that caricature shops, which blatantly exhibited scabrous matters such as filth, nudity, the sexual organs, and upper-class promiscuous activities, would publicise vice rather than chastise it.[595] 'As to these here print shops', a character in a novel thus complained, 'I see no manner of use they are of, except to make people spend their time in gaping at what does not belong to them; our legislature would do well to consider their pernicious effects – the morals of our youth may well be degenerated, when such scenes of immorality are daily presented to their view.'[596]

Contemporary writers condemned satirical prints for abusing their ability as a

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[593] See Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, part 2 and 3.
[594] Vicesimus Knox, *Winter Evenings: or, Lucubrations on Life and Letters* (London, 1795), vol. 1, p. 140.
[595] Peter Kingsley Elkin, *The Augustan Defence of Satire* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 181-3.
[596] *Terentia; A Novel. By the Author of The Platonic Guardian* (London, 1792), vol. 1, p. 41.

weapon of shame, and claimed that satires were losing their morally corrective function and degenerating into ridiculous burlesque and commercial entertainment. As critics observed, many satirists and caricaturists shamed what they should not shame, such as virtue, religion, personal appearance, and the reputation of the great and innocent, and at the same time failed to shame what they should have done: immorality, vice and crime. 'Wit and satire, originally intended to benefit mankind, by correcting their vices and follies, are so egregiously misapplied', wrote an essayist in the 1790s, 'caricature-makers direct their satire more against virtuous than even vicious characters…and too often ridicule personal defects or the unavoidable misfortunes of human nature. Thus wit and humour degenerate into buffoonery, – lose the effect they would otherwise have of correcting the vicious, – and only serve to wound the bosom of virtue, and to deprive those of their peace of mind who sensibly feel the pinion of the world.'[597] Similarly, Knox charged satires with their malevolent and slanderous purposes: 'Hogarth is certainly worthy of imitation, as an excellence; and of honour, as having been made a vehicle of great good to society… his imitators have not reached his excellence in art, they have scarcely aimed at his morality, but have abused their petty talents in lowering everything great and venerable.' Knox also condemned caricaturists for ridiculing personal deformity and clergymen, and claimed that such satires were 'so ungenerous' that would 'not only injure the public… but cruelly invade the peace of families, and distress the bosom of an unoffending individual.' He therefore urged satirists to 'confine their ridicule to vice and villainy', so that they would 'add to the praise which

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[597] *The Ranger, A Collection of Periodical Essays* (Brentford, 1795), vol. 1, p. 170, 172.

is due to them, as men of skill and genius, the praise of benevolence, and the virtue of doing good in their generation.'[598]

Like scandalous pamphlets and the popular press, satirical prints constituted an integral part of contemporary shame economy and contributed to the commodification of shame. While it would be wrong to deny the critical and moral functions of satires, we should be aware that in the second half of the eighteenth century, it was the desire for profit, rather than the 'pure love of virtue' or the 'honest detestation of vice' that became the primary reason for producing satires.[599] No matter whether an individual deserved to be publicly humiliated, or whether the ridicule served to chastise vice and promote virtue, as long as the incidence was sensational enough, it would be the subject of satires. As the author of *The Folly and Guilty of Satyrical Slander* (1763) observed, these 'base and disingenuous' artists, by pretending to so 'service to the Cause of Virtue', 'picked up private Scandal, and, with proper Improvements and Embellishments, have published and circulated the Faults and Failings of particular Persons possessed of many good Qualities' for commercial and entertaining purpose.[600] Another author condemned satirists for 'picking up invidious anecdotes of *domestic misfortune* and *private imprudence*', and 'murdering the human reputation for bread'.[601] An artist recalled how he worked for a publisher and scraped a living as a caricaturist:

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[598]   Knox, *Winter Evenings*, vol. 1, pp. 142-3.
[599]   John Tottie, *The Folly and Guilt of Satyrical Slander* (Oxford, 1763), pp. 16-7.
[600]   *Ibid.*, pp. 2-17.
[601]   *Literary Liberty Considered* (London, 1774), pp.14-7, 25. Also see C.D. Piguenit, *An Essay on the Art of News-Paper Deformation, in A Letter to Mr. William Griffin, Printer and Publisher of the Morning Post* (London, 1775).

In his service my duty was to write palpable puns, ready for his use, and to ornament his rooms with caricatures on subjects of his own choice; to gain articles of scandal for his evening's entertainment; and to mimic everything which ought to have been revered and admired. Thus, those talents which might have made me eminent in a profession, are employed within the walls of a loathsome prison, in etching caricatures of the human race, and ridiculing the miseries of my fellow creatures, to gain a precarious subsistence, by the sale of them to the print shops.[602]

Once again, this evidence suggests that the real motive for producing and publishing scandalous literature was profit rather than moralising, and it indicates why such prints became so scandalous in the eyes of its opponents.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the rise of scandalous publication and its implications for the culture of shame in the long eighteenth century. Between the mid-seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, printed materials about crime were characterised by their explicit moralising and didactic purposes. Criminal accounts in this period targeted general vice more than the particular perpetrator or transgression, and aimed to inculcate readers with a notion that shame was the very nature and unavoidable result of crime. In the eighteenth century, criminal publications expanded, and became more interested in reporting sexual transgressions of the fashionable world. The rise of

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[602] *The Ranger*, vol. 1, pp. 178-82.

scandal journalism was paralleled by a gradual change in the ways of representing shame. The sensational and prurient facts of one's shame became a subject worthy of detailed description. Publishers and writers continually claimed their moralising intentions, but their noble rhetoric always functioned as a splendid disguise of, or excuse for, the real sensational content and the entertaining purpose of their prints. Scandalous publications would not develop without capitalising on shame. Entrepreneurs of the publishing industry such as Edmund Curll and his successors must have profited greatly through turning the private shame of elite figures into news merchandise and putting them on the reading market. Inquisitive readers purchased these news products to satisfy their seemingly insatiable curiosity for the private lives of their social betters. In this burgeoning culture of print, shame became a commodity of great commercial and entertainment values. Scandalous publications did bring personal shame to the surface to be more accessible than ever before, and heighten public awareness of and aversion to upper-class corruption, but they also played a counter-reformative role. The increase of scandalous publications and sensationalism to some extent promoted a culture of shamelessness, in which conventionally shameful matters such as sex and nudity were represented by publishers, and could be easily accessed and freely talked about by unblushing readers. In the second half of the century, satirical prints were abusing and losing their ability as a powerful shaming weapon, and descended to a form of erotica and ludicrous entertainment. All of these reveal a print culture which was continually criticised by anxiety-ridden writers, and at the same time exploited and enjoyed by unashamed publishers and readers.

Chapter Five

Rethinking Shaming Punishments: Ideas, Ideologies, and Problems

Introduction

The previous chapters have explored how people experienced, interpreted, and represented shame in a secular context in the long eighteenth century. They demonstrated the predominantly socially-constructed nature of shame in the contexts of polite society and the publishing industry, and showed how the moral characteristic of shame had become more ambiguous under the influence of the rise of polite culture and scandalous publications. The present chapter considers shame as social and legal practices, and explores the culture of shame from the perspectives of crime and punishment. It provides a further example which shows the importance of social factors in interpreting and deciding shame, and the ambiguity of the moral and disciplinary power of shame. A phenomenon which has been neglected by historians, namely why the pillory – the most typical form of shaming punishment – primarily targeted offences relating to sexual depravity, marital disloyalty, and various deceitful and fraudulent doings, is the key to understanding shame in the judicial context. In order to answer this question, I offer an analysis of the correlation between concepts of infamy and shame in both legal and civil contexts, and of the interaction between the popular judgement of shame and the official shaming sanction. I then analyse the problems and crisis encountered by eighteenth-century shaming punishments, and examine the contemporary discussions about shaming sanctions and the role of shame in the broader

penal system. In this chapter, I pay less attention to the individual experience of shame; instead, I adopt an intellectual and theoretical approach, and focus mainly on pamphlets and books written by legal writers and commentaries published in newspapers and magazines. I argue that there existed an implicit causal relationship between the nature of crime and the form of punishment in the early modern penal context. More specifically, the use of shaming techniques were not indiscriminate; crimes that were 'infamous' or 'shameful' in the eyes of the populace were more likely to incur shaming penalties. However, in the eighteenth century, and particularly in London, the infliction of shame on offenders whose transgressions were not customarily deemed 'infamous' or 'shameful' degraded public shaming into a violent, pointless, and counter-productive exercise. The excessive and stigmatising use of shaming techniques could not evoke a moral sense of shame, it was said, but might create hardened and indifferent criminals and spectators. The debate over such views made shame a heated subject. Commentators still regarded shame as an important part of the penal system. What they were really concerned with was how to effectively use shame to punish and reform offenders, without turning them into shameless monsters.

The Patterns of Shaming Punishments: A Brief Overview

Our first question is, what were shaming punishments? In pre-modern Britain, shame occupied a central place in the penal regime; it was exploited by both the authorities and communities as a means for regulating personal conduct and punishing individuals who offended legal and social norms. The drunkard was locked in the stocks, the

dishonest shopkeeper and perjurer were set in the pillory, adulterer clad in a white sheet confessed sins in the church, all of them were shamefully exhibited in public, ridiculed by the crowds, and had to bear their shame for an even longer time after the punishment. Shame was equally associated with other forms of penalty, including not only the severest and most spectacular sanction, public hanging, but also those involving a relatively small amount of publicity such as imprisonment and indoor whipping.[603]

While virtually all penalties entailed an element of shame, modern historians are inclined to identify some non-capital, publicly implemented judicial sanctions such as public penance, the stocks, the pillory, branding, carting, and public whipping as 'shaming punishments'. This conceptualisation is based on the idea that shame was not only a method, but also a primary goal of punishments. Through exposing an offender to the public and labelling him or her as a deviant unworthy of trust or respect, shaming punishments aimed to damage the reputation of the culprit, and also served to deter spectators and potential offenders, and ensure consent among the populace to the communal and legal norms.[604] Early modern legal writers identified shame-based

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[603] Although capital punishment aimed to deprive the criminal of life, the sanction pronounced the infamous and shameful identity of the criminal. As Blackstone asserted, 'sentence of death… sets a note of infamy upon him (offender)… He is then called attaint, attinctus, stained or blackened. He is no longer of any credit or reputation. Sir William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, vol.4 (London, 1783), p. 380. Besides, as we have already seen in the previous chapter, condemned criminals should confess in shame and remorse before the public execution, and the spectators were expected to be impressed by the shamefulness of criminals and their death. Besides, imprisonment also entailed shame. According to Paul Griffith, early modern Londoners regarded Bridewell as 'a place of shame' that left prisoners with 'long-lasting stains'. Paul Griffiths, *Lost Londons: Change, Crime, and Control in the Capital City, 1550-1660* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 214. Other discussions of the link between shame and death penalties can be seen in, for example, Muravyeva, 'Litigating for Shame and Dishonour', p. 22; Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, pp. 11-2; Randall McGowen, 'The Body and Punishment in Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 59 (1987), pp. 651-79; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, esp. part one.
[604] J.A. Sharpe, *Judicial Punishment in England* (London, 1990), pp. 19-24; J.M. Beattie, *Crime and Courts in England, 1660-1800* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 461-9, 490-2; Frank McLynn, *Crime and Punishment in Eighteenth-century England* (London, 1989), chapter 15, especially see pp. 280-5; Jody Greene, 'Public Secrets: Sodomy and the Pillory in the Eighteenth Century and Beyond', *The*

penalties in a similar way. John Stow, for example, included 'pillorizing, carting, riding, whipping' in a list of what he called 'customary punishments of shame or pain or both'.[605] William Blackstone claimed that 'whipping, hard labour, the pillory, the stocks, and the ducking-stool' are punishments that 'consist principally in their ignominy'.[606] According to Jeremy Bentham, although 'a certain degree of infamy or disrepute is what necessarily attends on every kind of punishments', 'the stocks, the pillory, and the carcan' are 'ignominious punishments' because they 'reflect a much larger portion of infamy than others'.[607]

Historians have discussed pre-modern public shaming punishments at length, but it is worth reviewing the patterns and characteristics of such punishments before we can look further into their logic and underlying ideology.[608] Public penance, which was commonly imposed by the church courts, was 'a punishment of the ignominious kind' that depended entirely upon public exhibition without the infliction of physical pain.[609] It commonly took place in the parish church during Sunday service; offenders had to stand or kneel within sight of the congregation, clad in a white sheet, and have a paper

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Eighteenth Century, vol. 44, 2003, pp. 203-32; Marianna Muravyeva, '*Vergüenza, Vergogne, Schande, Skam* and *Sram*, Litigating for Shame and Dishonour in Early Modern Europe', in Judith Rowbotham, Marianna Muravyeva and David Nash (eds), *Shame, Blame and Culpability, Crime and Violence in the Modern State* (London, 2013), pp. 17-31, esp. pp. 21-2, 28; Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, esp. chapter 4, pp.68-87; Martin Ingram, 'Shame and Pain: Themes and Variations in Tudor Punishments', in Simon Devereaux and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Penal Practice and Culture, 150-1900: Punishing the English* (London, 2004), pp. 36-62; Robert Shoemaker, 'Street of Shame? The Crowd and Public Punishments in London, 1700-1820', in *Penal Practice and Culture*, p. 232.

[605] John Stow, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster: Containing the Original, Antiquity, Increase, Modern Estate and Government of Those Cities*, vol. 1 (London, 1720), p. 257.

[606] Blackstone, *Commentaries*, vol. 4, p. 376.

[607] Jeremy Bentham, *The Rationale of Punishment* (London, 1830), pp. 228-9. Carcan was an iron collar used for punishing blasphemers in mediaeval and early modern period.

[608] For an overview of the patterns of pre-modern public and shaming punishments, see Sharpe, *Judicial Punishment in England*, pp. 19-24, 47–9; Ingram, 'Shame and Pain', pp. 37-62; William Andrews, *Old-Time Punishments* (London, 1890).

[609] Bentham, *The Rationale of Punishment*, p. 406.

listing details of their offence in capital letters attached to their forehead. They were

also expected to atone for their sins with sorrow and tears, and seek the forgiveness of

God and neighbours. For the culprit, doing penance was no doubt a moment of shame.

The intensity of shame and infamy was largely decided by the degree of publicity; as

Bentham said, 'the larger or smaller concourse of spectators will render the punishment

more or less severe.' [610] However, penance was arguably not mainly designed to

humiliate offenders. The use of shame was associated with the reformative nature of

the sanction. The church authorities aimed to invite wrongdoers to feel shame because

they regarded this emotion as a prerequisite for reformation and reintegration with the

community and church, a notion that reflects the religious sense of shame as has been

discussed in the first chapter.

While public penance emphasised the invitation for offenders to feel shame, other

shaming penalties attempted to humiliate them more directly. A traditional form of this

sort was the stocks, a restraining device made by wooden boards with holes between

them, whereby culprits, usually drunkards and petty thieves, were fixed and publicly

exposed. Another punishment that entailed humiliation was to put offenders in a cart or

on horseback, and to parade them around busy streets and markets like a form of 'riding

skimmington'.[611] In order for the culprit to feel maximum shame, signs and symbols

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[610] *Ibid.*, p. 407.
[611] For the history of 'riding skimmington' and 'rough music', see E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common*, (London, 1991), 'Rough Music Reconsidered', *Folklore*, vol. 103 (1992), pp. 3-26; Martin Ingram, 'Ridings, Rough Music and the Reform of Popular Culture', *Past and Present*, vol. 105 (1984), pp. 79-113, 'Scolding Women Cucked or Washed: A Crises in Gender Relations in Early Modern England', in J. Kermode and G. Walker (eds.) *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1984), pp. 48-80, 'Shame and Pain: Themes and Variations in Tudor Punishments', In Griffiths and Devereaux, *Penal Practice and Culture, 1500-1900* , pp.36-62; Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, chapter 1 and 2.

were always employed. John Stow recorded that Richard Dichar, who was convicted for running brothels, was 'put into a cart, cloathed in a party-colour'd coat, and so drawn through the publick streets of the City, with the sound of basons and bells and other noises to expose the more to mockery and shame'.[612] In 1556, 'bawds and whores' who were carted in London were 'taken naked together'.[613] Being stripped could intensify the severity of shame, but so could being clothed in symbolic ways, especially when the offender had a higher social standing. In 1563, Dr. Langton, convicted of taking 'a Bed with two Young Wenches at once', was ordered to wear 'a Gown of Damask lined with Velvet, and a Coat of Velvet, and a Cap of the same, but having a blue Hood pinned over his Cap which was a Customary Mark of Guilt' when he was parading in cart through Cheapside on a market day.[614] This sanction was clearly intended to shame Langton – by advertising the doctor's superior status but also his offence through the use of a 'blue hood', the ritual satirised his corrupted, hypocritical character, making him appear ridiculous, and publicly rendering him infamous.

Shaming punishments could be rendered more severe by combining public humiliation with physical pain. The ducking stool, a device used to dip the offender in water, and the branks (or 'scold's bridle'), commonly an iron mask with a spur to hold the tongue, were exclusively employed to chastise scolding women or female offenders who violated patriarchal or moral rules.[615] A more frequently used corporal shaming

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[612] Stow, *A Survey of the Cities of London,* vol. 2, p. 317.
[613] *Ibid*., vol. 2, p. 258.
[614] *Ibid*, vol.1, p. 258.
[615] Anne-Marie Kilday recently discusses the scold's bridle and its link to shame in the context of early modern Scotland, see Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, chapter 2; Anne-Marie Kilday, 'Hurt, Harm and Humiliation: Community Responses to Deviant Behaviour in Early Modern Scotland', in Rowbotham, Muravyeva, and Nash (eds), *Shame, Blame, and Culpability*, pp. 124-40.

punishment was that of branding. Clergyable felons were burned on the thumb as proof of a first conviction so that they could not escape from a severer sanction once being captured again. As the mark on the thumb was difficult to see, the effect of shame was limited. However, when the stamp was made on the cheek or forehead, branding became a sentence of humiliation for life. In certain crimes, branding was obviously seen as a carefully designed shaming weapon. William Prynne, a puritan lawyer, convicted of seditious libel in 1634, was sentenced to be 'branded in the forehead, slit in the nose, and ears cropt', because the shame would force Prynne, as a member of the Privy Council said, to 'get a perriwig, which he now so much inveighs against'.[616] At the end of the seventeenth century, branding was often used to stigmatise, rather than simply to mark off offenders. The 1699 Shoplifting Act ordered that branding should be made on the 'most visible part of the left cheek nearest the nose', but facial branding lasted for only seven years before it was banned in 1706, since people were anxious that a visible, indelible mark of infamy on the cheek would create hardened, shameless criminals.[617]

Whipping was also regarded as shameful, especially when it was carried out in public. Public whipping was systematically used to penalise a variety of crimes such as vagrancy, assault, and theft. The offender was usually tied to 'the cart's tail' and whipped along busy streets in order to attract the biggest crowds and to intensify the effect of shame. For the same reason, the culprit would be whipped near the scene of

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[616] T.B. Howell (ed.), *A Complete Collection of State-Trials, and Proceedings for High Treason, and Other Crimes and Misdemeanours,* vol. 3 (London, 1816), p. 585.
[617] Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, p. 490.

the crime, or the residence of the offender or victim. The requirement that male and female offenders should be stripped to the waist during punishment also served to increase the power of shame. In July 1708, Mary Price, convicted of 'a notorious conspiracy, fraud, and misdemeanour', was ordered to be 'stripped naked from the middle upwards, and publicly whipped at a cart's tail from the Savoy Gate, in the Strand, to Charing Cross, until her body be bloody'.[618] As Ingram says, 'in a society in which clothes were so important as a mark of status and identity, being stripped in public was clearly intended to humiliate.'[619]

The pillory was a typical form of shaming punishment. This was a set of stocks fixed to the top of a post, whereby the prisoner was exhibited with his hands and head confined within holes on a board. In order to guarantee the severity of shame, offenders were required to remove their hat, carry a placard to proclaim the offence, and stand in the market place or places related to the nature of the crime for one or two hours at noon. The success of the pillory relied on the cooperation of the crowd; it functioned as a powerful shaming weapon only if the audience expressed sentiments of shame and anger at the culprit. (figure 4 and 5) While judicial authorities employed the pillory as a means of pure humiliation without inflicting additional corporal pain, it was the crowd of onlookers who decided on the intensity of shame and pain imposed on the offender. Thus, in 1719 Mary Terry and Elizabeth Bourne pilloried at Charing Cross for 'keeping notorious bawdy houses' were 'treated with the highest resentment of the mob in

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[618] W. J. Hardy (ed.), *Middlesex County Records, Calendar of Sessions Books 1689-1709* (1905), p. 72. Accessed at British History Online: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=66125#s5. (MCR: CSB hereafter)

[619] Ingram, 'Shame and Pain', pp. 56-7.

Waller pelted to Death by the Mob.

Figure 4: 'Waller Pelted to Death by the Mob' as depicted in *The Newgate Calendar: comprising interesting memoirs of the most notorious characters who have been convicted of outrages on the laws of England since the commencement of the eighteenth century*, eds, Andrew Knapp and William Baldwin (4 vols, London, 1824-8, vol. 1, p. 313). This illustration shows the highwayman and perjurer John Waller being pelted by the enraged crowd when he was standing in the pillory for giving false information to the court in 1732. It was recorded that Waller was killed in the pillory by Edward Dalton, whose brother was sentenced to death because of Waller's perjury. The details of the trail and punishment of John Waller can be seen in the next section of this chapter, and *The Newgate Calendar* as shown above.

Figure 5: *Trying and Pilloring of the Vere Street* Club (1810). Accessed at Rictor

Norton's online source: 'The Vere Street Coterie', *The Gay Subculture in Georgian*

England. Updated 28 May 2012 http://rictornorton.co.uk/vere.htm. This illustration

depicts the spectacular scene of the pillory of members of the Vere Street club being

severely pelted by a furious crowd when they were in the pillory.

showers of rotten eggs and dirt'.[620] The mob justice at the site of the pillory would even threaten the life of the prisoner if his or her crime evoked public fury. On 3 April, 1763, 'a man stood in the pillory at Stratford for sodomy was killed by the populace.'[621] In some circumstances, however, the popular attitude would sometimes work in the offender's favour. It was recorded by *Weekly Journal* that in August 1718 'Robert Harrison, tried and convicted the last Sessions at the Old Baily, for crying out King James for ever, stood in the pillory at White Chappel, and one man throwing dirt at him, the mob obliged him to go down on his knees, to ask him forgiveness, and several gave him money'.[622] If the officials failed to correctly judge the popular mood, the shame intended for the culprit would backfire on the authorities. A celebrated example of this was the pillory of Daniel Defoe, who was pelted with flowers while standing in the pillory on account of having published a satire *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* in 1701.[623]

From this brief overview of early modern shaming penalties, it is clear that the dimension of shame was two-fold: it not only functioned as a means of punishment, but was intended to be the very purpose of it. A certain degree of violence could intensify the severity of shaming, but physical pain was insignificant or, if more accurately, secondary to the humiliation and shame that the authorities intended to inflict on offenders. What made shaming punishment distinctive was that it aimed to publicise the infamy of offenders and to damage their reputation more than to impose physical

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[620] *Weekly Journal, or, British Gazetteer*, 27 June, 1719.
[621] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 3 April, 1763.
[622] *Weekly Journal, or, Saturday's Post*, 2 August, 1718.
[623] David Nash and Anne-Marie Kilday have discussed the case of Daniel Defoe and its correlation with shame in detail, see Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, pp. 81-7.

pain. In this sense, of the forms of shaming punishments, the pillory could be regarded as the most typical one. It was not only a punishment that 'promised a kind of pure humiliation and exhibited the extraordinary power of shame as a penal weapon', but essentially a quasi-official, negotiated form of justice that 'allowed a number of important messages to be exchanged between authority, miscreant and onlookers'.[624] This means that in the pillory, one could discern the differences between popular and elite perceptions of what constituted shame and crime. The following section, therefore, focuses primarily on the pillory, and aims to explore motives and ideologies behind it.[625] It will examine what kinds of crimes were more likely to be punished by the pillory, and how public shaming was linked to the infamous nature of crime and contemporary notions of shame.

Shaming Those Shameful: Ideologies of Shaming Punishments

The pillory had long been used to punish offences associated with fraud and cheating. In London, for example, of the 225 sentences involving punishment by the pillory made by the court of the Old Bailey between 1674 and 1800, 139 were directed against crimes of deception, among them 52 forgeries, 43 frauds, and 43 perjuries.[626] Indeed, deceitful

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[624] Greene, 'Public Secrets', p. 211; Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, p. 69.

[625] Besides the characteristics of the pillory as mentioned before, another reason for researching the pillory is that it is a punishment which was systematically and constantly used throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Other forms of shaming sanctions such as ecclesiastic penance, the stocks, the branks, the ducking stools, and carting were rarely used by the middle of the seventeenth century. Branding was occasionally employed to stigmatise political and religious dissenters, but its main purpose was to mark those who had successfully pleaded benefit of clergy. Whipping was increasingly moved indoors; although shame and infamy were still the consequence of public whipping, the purpose of carrying out the punishment in public was more likely to deter than disgrace.

[626] *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 7.1, April 2013). Tabulating punishment subcategory against offence subcategory where verdict category is guilty and

practices by shopkeepers and tradespeople, such as bakers who gave bread short weight,

butchers who sold rotten meat, or weavers who did not return cloth of honest weight,

were customarily punished by the pillory as early as the Middle Ages.[627] In 1560, a

person selling 'meazle bacon' at market was sentenced to ride 'with his face toward the

horse tail' and to stand in the pillory the next day with 'two great pieces of his meazle

bacon over his hear, and a writing set up, showing his crimes'.[628] Perjury was a major

form of deception that was regularly punished by the pillory till the punishment was

formally abolished in 1837. It was a crime that could arouse a high degree of public

indignation since perjury was perceived by contemporaries as nothing short of

deliberate murder, especially in the eighteenth century, where so many offences were

punishable by death.[629] Thus perjurers like John Waller, who was convicted of false

accusation for the sake of reward, could expect little mercy at the pillory. It was

recorded that when Waller was placed in the pillory, 'the mob began to pelt him in a

most outrageous manner; and he had not continued there above eight minutes before

they pulled down the pillory… As he lay on the ground, they stamped so hard upon his

body that they broke his ribs, and he had certainly been trampled to death.'[630] Although

murder in the pillory was rare, popular attacks on perjurers, especially within the

metropolis of London, were not uncommon throughout the eighteenth century. In 1728,

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punishment category is pillory, between January 1674 and December 1799. Counting by punishment.
[627] Blackstone, *Commentaries*, vol. 4, p. 159; George Robert, *The Social History of the People of the Southern Counties of England in Past Centuries* (London, 1856), p. 158.
[628] Stow, *A Survey of the Cities of London,* vol. 1, p. 258. In the same page Stow recorded another case of shaming punishment against a dishonest baker.
[629] *The Times*, 5 April, 1787; 22 July, 1788.
[630] *The Life and Infamous Actions of that Perjured Villain John Waller* (London, 1732), p. 29; also see *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 2, p. 774. Another typical case that led to the death was the pillory of a perjured informer John Middleton in 1723. See Beattie, *Policing and Punishment in London*, p.129.

George Cotton set in the pillory at Charing Cross for 'wilful and corrupt perjury' was 'severely pelted by the populace'.[631] On 18 April 1752, Lingard, a perjurer sentenced to stand on the pillory near St George's Church in Southwark, was 'severely pelted with mud, stones, and sticks' and 'cut in the left side of his head, and the blood run down his face'.[632] In 1785, Richard Cope stood in the pillory at Charing Cross for 'falsely charging a gentleman with attempting to commit an infamous crime', and was 'severely pelted by the populace'.[633] Despite general hostility to perjury, it is worth noting that the crowd had its own understanding of justice in deciding whether to pelt the cheat on display. In 1748, John Everett was 'severely pelted' at the pillory in the Hay-Market for 'uttering false and counterfeit money'; on the same day, however, Samuel Duck 'was not pelted by the mob' when he was standing on the pillory at Charing Cross for 'wilful and corrupt perjury'.[634]

Deceitful practices such as fraud and forgery also attracted shaming punishments. Fraud was an offence that included, as John Beattie writes, cheating at games in order to obtain money, or pretending to be a servant or employee sent to collect goods from a shop or warehouse.[635] Forgery was a specific form of fraud, carried out by means of 'the fraudulent making or alteration of a writing to the prejudice of another man's right'.[636] Both crimes could incur a variety of punishments, such as fines, imprisonment, and mutilation or disfigurement, but they were more often used in

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[631] *London Evening Post*, 30 July, 1728; for similar case, see *London Evening Post*, 3 August, 1728.
[632] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 22, p. 190.
[633] *The Times*, 11 April, 1785.
[634] *Whitehall Evening Post, or London Intelligencer*, 23-5 July, 1748.
[635] Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, pp. 190-1.
[636] Blackstone, *Commentaries*, vol. 4, p. 247.

combination with the pillory. In 1650, captain Nicholas Greenway was set in the pillory in the new palace yard at Westminster with his right ear being cut off, for, as the paper set upon the pillory indicated, 'forging warrants, and counterfeiting hands to bills of exchange, whereby he with others hath procured three thousand pounds.' In the following week, Greenway stood on the pillory near the old Exchange, where he lost his left ear. He was then sent to the House of Correction for one year of hard labour.[637] In May 1695, Reginald Bucknall, convicted of 'forging and publishing a letter of attorney, and the will of Jacob Jacobson', was fined, put in the pillory three times, and confined in New Prison.[638] Like perjury, fraud and forgery could evoke popular resentment and violence. In 1756, Richard Fielding 'met with rough treatment from the populace' when he was standing on the pillory in Smithfield. His crime was 'defrauding a country girl of a box, wherein was contained 7 *l.* in money, and clothes to the value of 9 *l.*'.[639] Throughout the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, public shaming rituals against frauds, perjurers and counterfeiters were regularly staged.[640] It was believed by contemporaries that as a Justice of the Peace claimed, 'the pillory is the punishment for the cheat.'[641]

The use of the pillory and other shaming techniques to penalise sexual crimes was also prevalent in early modern society. Crimes involving brothel-keeping, the attempted

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[637] *Several Proceedings in Parliament* (1694), 28 March, 1650 – 4 April, 1650, issue 27, p. 382.
[638] MCR: CSB/521, p. 41.
[639] *London Evening Post*, 6 March, 1756. Other examples see *The Times*, 7 January, 1785.
[640] Although forgery legislation was becoming severe from the Glorious Revolution, McGowen argues that 'the vast bulk of this legislation resulted in very few prosecutions', and the death sentences 'seem to have been selected to make a signal example of some notorious offender.' Randall McGowen, '"Making the 'bloody code"? Forgery legislation in eighteenth-century England', in Norma Landau (ed.), *Law, Crime and English Society, 1660-1830* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 135-7.
[641] Howell (ed.), *A Complete Collection of State-Trials,* vol. 5, p. 418.

rape of children and homosexuality would almost invariably lead to outbreaks of hostility among the crowd. In 1747, a woman convicted of 'keeping a disorderly house and seducing young women and girls' was ordered to stand in the pillory facing the French Change in Monmouth Street, and was 'severely pelted by the populace'.[642] In January 1750, a man was attacked in the pillory by the raging mob for 'assaulting with an intent to ravish a girl of eight years old'.[643] There were more reports of popular assaults upon sodomites. A sailor named George Briton sat in the pillory on the market place in Portsmouth for 'attempting to commit, on the body of a boy under twelve years of age, the heinous and detestable sin of sodomy' was, according to the *Whitehall Evening Post* on 18 March 1749, 'pelted so much the first few minutes, that the Constables were obliged to get a Guard of Soldiers to prevent him from being killed by the Mob, who were so much exasperated against him, especially the Sailors, who threw eggs, turnips, oranges, lemons, apples, and several stones besides Mud and other Filth.'[644] In 1762, a clergyman, who had been 'greatly esteemed by all his neighbours' was treated by the populace 'with great severity' when standing on the pillory in the market-place of Lincoln city for a sodomitical attempt.[645] In the same year, the crowd almost killed a 60-year-old sodomite at the pillory, as *Gentleman's Magazine* reported:

> The populace fell upon the wretch, tore off his coat, waistcoat, shirt, hat, wig, and
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> breeches, and then pelted and whipped him till he had scarcely any signs of life
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> left; he was once pulled off the pillory, but hung by his arms till he was set up

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[642] *Whitehall Evening Post*, 28 November – 1 December, 1747.
[643] *Ibid.*, January 4-6, 1750. A similar case sees 2-4 August, 1750.
[644] *Ibid.*, 16-8 March, 1749.
[645] *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 32, p. 386.

again, and stood in that naked condition, covered with mud, till the hour was out.[646]

These examples indicate that the judicial authorities considered popular violence to be a somewhat premeditated or acceptable part of the pillory when dealing with homosexual offenders. It seems that officials were certain that 'the justice of the sentence would be fully accepted by the crowd around the pillory', and that 'only the infliction of shame through the participation of the community as a whole could both prevent and cure this most public of secret crimes'.[647] Although the murder of two sodomites Theodosius Read and William Smith in the pillory in 1780 drove Edmund Burke to give a speech in parliament proposing its abolition, the authorities continued to expose sodomites to the reaction of the crowd. Popular violence around the pillory continued sporadically in the following decades. In 1810, for example, Cook and Amos, two sodomites from the Vere Street coterie, were severely pelted by a furious crowd with 'mud, dead cats, rotten eggs, potatoes, and buckets filled with blood, offal, and dung'; after the ignominious exhibition in the pillory, it was recorded that both of them 'were so thickly covered with filth, that a vestige of the human figure was scarcely discernible'.[648] (figure 5)

Why, then, were the above-mentioned crimes more likely to incur the sanction of the pillory? In order to understand this phenomenon, it is worthwhile looking at the

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[646] *Ibid.*, p. 549.
[647] Beattie, *Crime and Courts*, p. 466; Greene, 'Public Secrets', p. 224.
[648] *The Times*, 28 September, 1810. For the history of the Vere Street Gang, see R. Holloway, *The Phoenix of Sodom, or the Vere Street Coterie* (London, 1813) and Rictor Norton's online source 'The Vere Street Coterie', *The Gay Subculture in Georgian England*. Updated 28 May 2012 http://rictornorton.co.uk/vere.htm.

characteristics they share. These offences appear at first sight very diverse, ranging from various forms of deception and slander to sexual crimes. However, we should keep in mind that the use of the pillory was by no means random or indiscriminate; rather, it was closely connected with the nature of crime and contemporary perceptions of it. Offences mostly connected to the pillory clearly possessed similar features, and perhaps the most suggestive feature was that these crimes were customarily deemed 'infamous' and 'shameful' by the law and the community.

In pre-modern Britain, as well as in other parts of the Europe, a wide range of misdemeanours and felonies were subject to legal infamy, but the judicial authorities were inclined to associate infamy with deception and sexual crimes.[649] Edward Coke and Blackstone claimed that people convicted of perjury should be punished with 'perpetual infamy', imprisonment, fines and infamous punishment such as the pillory. Meanwhile, any person who 'by cheating at play shall win any money or valuable things shall be deemed infamy, and suffer corporal punishment as in case of wilful perjury'.[650] The English legal writer Thomas Edlyne Tomlins (1762-1841) in his *The Law-Dictionary* wrote that 'treason, forgery, perjury, or subornation thereof, and all offences

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[649] According to the book *Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe*, in medieval Spain, sexual transgressors such as 'prostitutes, pimps, and men who submitted to anal intercourse' and those who 'gave false testimony' or 'deceived others in business dealings' or 'tampered with the will of a dead person' were marked with infamy. In medieval France, where reputable (*bonne renomee*) people were required to be 'reliable, truthful and respectful of the rights of others'; failure to confirm these rules by doing fraudulent practices would lead to the loss of good name (*mal renomés*) and incur public humiliation. In the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries Italy, those who committed crimes such as prostitution, pimping, adultery, bigamy and sodomy were pronounced infamous by law (*infamia iuris*). See Thelma Fenster and Daniel Lord Smail (eds), *Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe* (New York, 2003), chapter 4, 5; Antonella Bettoni, '*Fama*, Shame Punishments and the History of Justice in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in *Shame, Blame and Culpability*, p. 34.

[650] Sir Edward Coke, *The First Part of the Institutes of the laws of England* (London, 1788), pp. 158, 259; The *Third Part* (London, 1797), pp. 162-8; Blackstone, *Commentaries*, vol.4, pp. 138-9, 172, 247.

which involve the charge of falsehood', and crimes 'in cases of barratry, praemunire, bribery of witnesses, or conspiracy at the suit of the king to accuse another of a capital offence, and for fraudulent gaming' should be marked guilty with infamy.[651] From time to time, infamy and shame were used to describe sexual offences, especially those relating to sodomy and buggery. Coke wrote that 'buggery is a despicable and abominable sin amongst Christians'; Blackstone, likewise, stated that sodomy was 'the most detestable' and 'the infamous *crimes against nature*, committed either with man or beast'.[652] People who were sentenced as guilty of infamy had to suffer a series of legal disabilities; for example, they were prevented from becoming a juryman, making an accusation, or giving testimony in court. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, legal writers tried to narrow the list of offenders who were disqualified from testifying as a witness down to cheats only, arguing that 'unless a man be put in the pillory, or stigmatized, for *crimen falsi*, as for perjury, forgery, or the like, it infers no blemish on his attestation'.[653] It is no coincidence that offences clustered around deception were more likely to incur infamy, and on that basis, legal incapacity. Underlying this was a contemporary perception that people committing such crimes demonstrated themselves to be unreliable and could not be trusted.

For the populace, similarly, few figures were more infamous than cheaters, traitors and sexual offenders. Unfaithful husbands or wives betrayed their spouses. Notorious bawds seduced young women into prostitution. Frauds, forgers and dishonest

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[651] Sir Thomas Edlyne Tomlins, *The Law-Dictionary: Explaining the Rise, Progress, and Present State of British Law* (London, 1820), vol. 2, witness I and II.
[652] Coke, *The Third Part*, pp. 58-60; Blackstone, *Commentaries*, vol. 4, p. 215.
[653] William Eden, *Principles of Penal Law* (London, 1771), p. 55.

shopkeepers obtained money and valuable things by cheating. Perjurers, slanders and corrupted informers betrayed their neighbours and deceived the justice in making false accusations. Sodomy was regarded by the law and populace as an abominable, disgusting and infamous crime, since it was 'so unnatural and unmanly' that it could 'vitiate the morals of the whole community'.[654] While virtually all types of crime against property and persons would lead to public abhorrence and indignation, popular sentiment about 'infamous crimes' was not altogether the same as their sentiment about other offences. Although people convicted of crimes such as theft, assault, robbery and homicide would equally forfeit their reputation and incur infamy, we should be aware that popular sentiments toward these violent crimes were more likely to involve feelings of fear and anxiety, because they directly put people at risk of property loss and physical injury. In contrast, offences such as prostitution, adultery, sodomy and a variety of deceptions had been customarily despised as acts of baseness, vileness and depravity; popular sentiment about these crimes involved apparent moral judgement, and was associated with feelings of distaste, contempt and shame. What evoked public disgrace and the community's disdain for cheaters, traitors, and sexual malefactors was their vicious or immoral intentions and the dishonourable way in which they carried out offences. More importantly, these crimes threatened not only the safety of individuals, but also the cohesion, stability, and reputation of the whole community. Licentious conduct on the part of married persons violated the basic moral values, and threatened the established marriage institution. Hoarding, speculation and dishonest tricks in trade

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[654] *The Morning Post*, 14 April, 1780; William Cobbett (ed.), *Parliamentary History of England*, vol. 21 (London, 1814), p. 389.

damaged the rules of day-to-day business. Perjured informers disturbed peaceful coexistence within the community. Forgery offended the reputation and machinery of systems of authority. Offences relating to homosexuality not only challenged the law of human nature, but were in danger of infecting the rest of the population. These crimes entailed less violence, but they scandalised the name of the entire community, and threatened the homogeneity of values and the principles of mutual trust between person and person – aspects which were fundamental to the preservation of moral order, social integrity, and the economic interests in the commonwealth. In comparison with violent and property crimes, these offences more directly questioned the culprit's morality and his or her qualification as an honest, trustworthy member of the community. In a society where good morals and creditability were so important in shaping one's reputation, it is not strange to see that people engaging in sexual and fraudulent acts were most frequently esteemed infamous.

A miscreant who was deemed infamous by the community would be isolated as a deviant and common nuisance, lose his or her good reputation, and become an object of public reproach. An infamous identity was not automatically created by one's bad conduct; rather, as we have seen, it was the product of the community's judgement. Infamy was socially constructed, and could be conceived as a communal knowledge of or a 'public talk' about one's ill character that was formed by, and disseminated within, the community.[655] Committing 'infamous crimes' could always lead to a social scandal, and a high level of individual notoriety. Identifying an offender as infamous, or

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[655] Fenster and Smail (eds), *Fama*, pp. 3-4, 10.

describing his or her offences as 'notorious', 'ignominious', 'disgusting', 'despicable' and 'abominable' was thus not merely an expression of a general sense of disapproval, but a practice that reflected a deeply rooted sense of shame. This practice, in a social and psychological context, drew a distinction between two opposite groups within the same community: on the one hand was the unpopular or 'abnormal' minority, and on the other, the honest or 'normal' majority. This division evoked a painful sense of shame, which was experienced by the culprit knowing that he or she had been seen as a disgraceful person in the eyes of others. Here, the emotion of shame was socially constructed, and intimately involved an awareness of a damaged social identity of the self. Moreover, shame was a collective condemnatory sentiment toward the offender, experienced and expressed by the populace which was scandalised and shocked the offender's 'infamous crimes'. In this sense, shame could be seen as a synonym for infamy: that is, being infamous was seen as intrinsically the same as saying that an individual was shameful. Both words represented a popular moral judgement, carried out by the community to describe and condemn those of bad reputations.

While both the authorities and the communities were able to sanction an offender as 'infamous', an important question remained, namely how popular judgement influenced, and interacted with, the authorities in making decisions about judicial sanctions. In other words, what was the relationship between the popular expression of shame and the official use of shaming punishments? We know already that public support was crucial for the success of shaming penalties. At the pillory, the populace was called upon to provide an audience and expected to participate in it by

demonstrating their hatred and opprobrium at the culprit. It required a decision made

by the judicial authorities not only to represent the popular perceptions of the crime,

but also to act in accord with the norms of the community. As Jody Greene puts it, 'the

authorities turned to the pillory only in cases where they believed they could rely

completely on the community's cooperation with the system of social and moral norms

on which this branch of the penal system relied.'[656] This means that while the legal

authorities had the ultimate power to make decisions regarding the pillory, it was the

popular judgement – the judgement that sentenced infamy and dishonour of a

crime/criminal according to communal moral values – that legitimised and strengthened

the administration of the formal punishment. Community involvement in labelling an

action or a person as infamous or shameful thus played a crucial role in the official

sentencing process. In this way, as the historian Judith Rowbotham claims, shame

expressed by the populace 'describes essentially emotionally grounded and publicly

revealed moral judgements that are invoked to add texture to a legal decision, aiding

the explanatory and justificatory processes that are an essential part of the law's public

performativity [and]… bringing both the legal and the societal – or popular moral –

elements to a point of agreement.'[657]

Jeremy Bentham, in his *The Rationale of Punishment*, discussed the correlation

between the communal sanction of infamy and official shaming punishment in great

detail, arguing that the popular identification of someone as infamous – a practice which

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[656] Greene, 'Public Secrets', p. 212.
[657] Judith Rowbotham, 'The Shifting Nature of Blame: Revisiting Issues of Blame, Shame and Culpability in the English Criminal Justice System', in *Shame, Blame and Culpability*, pp. 65-9.

he termed 'the moral sanction' – was the basis for judicial decisions. For Bentham, the punishment of moral sanctions was an informal one; it was essentially a public disapproval of those who violated the established moral values, implemented 'altogether by the persons to whom it belongs ultimately to dispense it, unassisted and uncontrolled by the political'.[658] People convicted of any offence which the community was accustomed to mark with displeasure would naturally suffer the punishment of moral sanctions, and incur a certain degree of infamy.[659] In order to bid for popular support and guarantee the power of shaming punishments, Bentham stressed that the judicial authorities should consider and respect the moral sanction made by the populace.[660] Here Bentham's trust in the moral sanction was largely attributed to its 'certainty' – a characteristic which not only made the moral sanction a barometer of public opinion, but made its 'punishment' an immediate and inescapable consequence of committing any infamous act. As Bentham put it, in a passage that discussed the significance of the extra-legal, community-based form of justice:

> [The moral sanction] receives a degree of force which is often wanting in the political sanction, form the *certainty* of its action. There is no offending against it with impunity – an offence against one of the laws of honour, arouses all its

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[658] Bentham did not elaborate on the specific patterns of the punishment belonging to the moral sanction. Instead, he described the consequences caused by these punishments; these were, for example, 'he has forfeited his reputation, his honour, his character, his good name; that his fame has been tarnished; that his honour, his character, or his reputation has received a stain; that he stands disgraced; that he has become infamous; that he has sunk under a load of infamy, ignominy, or disgrace; that he has fallen into disgrace, into disesteem, into disrepute; that he has incurred the ill-will, the aversion, the contempt of the neighbourhood, of the public; that he is become an object of aversion or contempt.' All of these expressions reflected the social nature of the moral sanction, illustrating that infamy and shame were the purpose and the natural consequence of the community judgement. See, Bentham, *The Rationale of Punishment*, pp. 213-5.
[659] *Ibid.*, p. 242.
[660] *Ibid.*, pp. 237-8.

guardians. The political tribunals are subjected to a regular process, they cannot pronounce a decision without proof, and proofs are often defective. The tribunal of public opinion possesses more liberty and more power; it is liable to be unjust in its decisions, but they are never delayed on that account. Trial and execution proceed with equal steps, without delay or necessity for pursuit. There are everywhere persons ready to judge and to execute the judgement…. Thus…the punishments of the moral sanction…by the certainty of their operation, their frequent recurrence, and their accumulation, from the number of those who have authority to inflict them, possess a degree of force which cannot be despised by any individual, whatever may be his character, his condition, or his power.[661]

Besides stressing the importance of society's role in the process of making decisions on shaming punishment, Bentham further argued that moral sanctions were advantageous in preventing crime and reforming offenders. The person that violated the communal rules and became infamous in the eyes of others would always experience a strong feeling of shame:

I have done an immoral act: I am discovered…. I feel the painful sense of shame, the pain of ignominy; I experience, in a word, the characteristic evil of the moral sanction as the punishment of my misbehaviour. This sense of shame stamps the marks of guilt upon my deportment. This being the case, either out of despair I avoid my acquaintance, or else I put myself in their way. If I avoid them, I by that means already deprive myself of their good offices: If I put myself in their way,

the guilt which is legible in my countenance, advertises and increases their aversion: they either give an express denial to my request, or what is more common, anticipate it by the coldness of their behaviour. This reception gives fresh keenness to the sting of shame.[662]

For Bentham, this painful sense of shame was important because it functioned as a powerful means of deterrence. When a man was marked with infamy, 'he can only refer the evil he experiences to its true cause; the more sensible he is to shame, the more he will fear to increase it: he will become either more prudent that he may avoid detection, or more careful to save appearances, or he will in future submit to those laws which he has been unable to break without suffering.'[663] Offenders sentenced to infamy by the community would not necessarily suffer the official punishment, for the moral sanction itself could in some cases function as an effective means of reforming and chastising, in the form of either collective contempt or more elaborate community actions, such as public humiliation and 'rough music'. However, in most cases, the culprit subjected to judicial shaming punishment should first or spontaneously be deemed to be infamous and shameful by society. The societal decision on the shamefulness of an action or a person was an authentic indicator of public mood, based on which the authorities could assume that the pillory and other forms of shaming punishment would receive wider acceptability amongst the populace. As the extra-legal sentence of infamy was crucial to the justification and the success of official shaming sanctions, Bentham thus argued that 'the punishment of infamy or forfeiture of reputation' derived its origin from the

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[662] *Ibid.*, pp. 206-8.
[663] *Ibid.*, p. 219.

moral sanction.[664]

Having discussed the correlation between the popular judgement of infamy and the official shaming punishments, we can now explore why both the community and judicial authority were inclined to shame 'infamous' offenders. As crimes of an infamous and shameful nature were generally acts that violated communal moral norms and peaceful coexistence within the community, dealing with these crimes was often regarded as a public affair. People convicted of infamous crimes would incur infamy. It was the mark of the public disapprobation which deprived the convict of all consideration in the eyes of his fellow citizens, of the confidence of his country, and of that fraternity which existed between members of the same society.[665] The judicial authorities felt the need to deprive the reputation of infamous offenders because they were deemed to be unworthy of it. Moreover, the infliction of the pillory was designed as a degradation ceremony that officially and publicly pronounced or, more accurately, re-confirmed forfeiture of reputation of the convict, making his or her ignominy and the shameful crime – the knowledge which circulated before only in the courtroom or within the immediate circle of the culprit's relatives and neighbours – a matter of much wider public record. In this process, we can find a causal and symbolic link between the nature of the crime and the form of punishment: the person who was no longer considered to possess a reputation should, indeed, be exposed to suffering from its loss. In a word, the infamous/shameful crime deserved the infamous/shameful penalty.

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[664] *Ibid.*, pp. 222-3.
[665] Voltaire Cesare Marchese Di Beccaria, *An Essay on Crimes and Punishments* (London, 1767), p. 85.

The behaviour of onlookers at the location of the pillory is another area where we may identify this symbolic link between the shameful crime and the associated shameful punishment. Pelting by the crowd was a usual scene at the pillory. Sometimes spectators would throw stones and bricks in order to express their severest hostility to the offender, yet in most cases, the traditional missiles that people needed at the site of the pillory were mud, excrement, rotten eggs, decayed vegetables and dead animals. In contrast to stones and bricks, filth and dirt were clearly seen to be powerful weapons of shame. Pelting with such disgusting things as rotten refuse should not be merely understood as a presentation of indignation, but an action that represented deliberate attempts by members of the community to disgrace and stigmatise offenders, reflecting a very strong sense of shame felt by the crowd toward those who had committed 'infamous' and 'shameful' crimes. Cockburn claims that 'popular culture in the early modern era endorsed the notion of retributive justice'.[666] Indeed, for contemporaries, the punishment – no matter whether it was initiated by law or by the populace – should represent the content and nature of crime; just like the physical pain applied to those who committed violent crimes, individuals who acted despicably should be subject to degradation. In this degradation ceremony, filth and dirt gained symbolic and explanatory importance. People perpetrating shameful crimes were seen as polluted and debased, and might contaminate the reputation of the whole community. The visible stains of rotten eggs, animal blood and excrement covering the faces of offenders on display may thus be seen not only as a metaphor of loss of beauty and a shameful sign

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[666] Cockburn, 'Punishment and Brutalization', p. 164.

of their defiled, corrupted souls, but also as the retaliation that these miscreants deserved for engaging in impure or filthy actions, and tarnishing the reputation of the community.

Another reason for shaming 'infamous' criminals by means of the pillory was to make public the fact of what had been implemented before only in secret – an idea which, again, represented the close correlation between the nature of the crime and the form of the punishment.[667] In comparison with corporal shaming punishments such as the ducking stool, public whipping, and facial branding, the pillory could be seen as a kind of pure humiliation. Without considering the capricious physical violence produced by the crowd of onlookers, the severity of the pillory depended entirely on the level of publicity. Secretiveness was a striking feature of 'infamous' and 'shameful' crimes. As we have already seen, offences relating to fraudulent dealing, confidential trickery and sexual immorality were commonly carried out in a furtive or deceitful manners, which made these crimes not only dishonourable and shameful in the eyes of contemporary people, but also potentially difficult to detect and prevent. In seeking to bring to light the offender and his or her hidden indecency, the judicial authorities assumed not only that the spectators would be more scandalised by the offender whom they had trusted before, but that the criminal standing in the pillory would suffer a very intense sense of shame and ruined reputation.

A more practical intention of publicising the insidious and deceitful miscreant was,

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[667] The meaning of 'secret' was twofold. On the one hand, it referred to offences that were implemented 'in the dark', in a furtive way or in private places, in the hope of escaping observation from others. On the other hand, it related to acts that were carried out by deceitful and fraudulent means, which made the criminal nature of acts uneasy to discern. In many cases the two categories overlapped with each other.

as Beattie claims, to make the culprit's identity known, so as to forewarn potential victims.[668] A good example of this intention may be seen from the judicial authorities' uncompromising insistence on the public exposure of homosexual offenders.[669] Early modern people agreed that sodomy was so dangerous and seductive that, in order to prevent this epidemic vice from polluting the morals of the whole society, its name and detail were not fit to be mentioned in legal proceedings or press accounts. Like his predecessor Edward Coke, who suggested that 'the shamfull sin of Sodomy' should not be named,[670] Blackstone felt himself unable to name this crime in English:

> I will not act so disagreeable a part, to my readers as well as myself, as to dwell any longer upon a subject, the very mention of which is a disgrace to human nature. It will be more eligible to imitate in this respect the delicacy of our English law, which treats it, in its very indictments, as a crime not fit to be named; '*peccatum illud horribile, inter christianos non nominandum*'.[671]

Similarly, in his short essay concerning the public prosecution and punishment of sodomites, Daniel Defoe advised the British legal authorities to imitate the Dutch to 'make both the Trials and Punishments of such sort of Criminals to be done with all the Privacy possible', for 'the open Trials of such Cases are accompany'd with so many publick Indecencies, such immodest and obscene Expressions, as are both offensive to the Ears of the Virtuous, and serve but to excite and gratifie the corrupted Appetites of

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[668] Beattie, *Crime and Courts*, p. 464.
[669] Jody Greene has researched the ideology behind the use of the pillory in chastising homosexual offenders. See Greene, 'Public Secrets'. (I am indebted to Greene's work in this chapter, especially this paragraph.)
[670] Coke, *The Third Part*, p. 58.
[671] Blackstone, *Commentaries*, vol. 4, pp. 215-6.

the Vicious'.[672] Despite the fact that both legal authorities and social commentators

agreed that details of sodomy should be better kept secret from the populace,

punishments associated with sodomy were continually carried out in front of the

multitude throughout the period, in the form of either public execution or open

exhibition in the pillory.[673] Public exposure was designed to humiliate violators and

deter the crowd, but an even more important motive was to set convicts apart from the

populace, reflecting an assumption that only if insidious deviants were widely known

and isolated by the inhabitants, would innocent people be prevented from becoming a

victim in the future. In her research on punishing early modern homosexual offenders,

Jody Greene argues:

> The only way to stop the epidemic is to bring the remaining populace together to
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> condemn and to shame, to stamp the offenders with the enduring mark of their
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> difference. By so doing, of course, the persistence of sodomy is assured, since

[672] In the following part of this essay, Defoe, being disgusted with 'a Rapsody of filthy and nauseous Language' in a satiric ballad that intended to have been distributed when a sodomite named Captain Edward Rigby was standing in the pillory, stated that many press accounts were responsible for the spread of sodomy because they exposed the population to the detailed description of sodomitical vice. Here, Defoe continually lamented and pleaded: 'the publick Prosecution and Punishment of these hellish Creatures makes it but too public, that there are such Monsters among us; *O tell it not in Gath, nor publish it Ascalon*; smother the Crime and the Criminals too in the dark, and let the World hear no more of it.' See: Daniel Defoe, *A Review of the State of the British Nation*, Thursday, 27 November 1707, vol. 11, no. 124. Cited in, and available as a digital source from, Rictor Norton, ed., 'Daniel Defoe, On the Public Prosecution and Punishment of Sodomites, 1707', Homosexuality in Eighteenth-Century England: A Sourcebook, 8 August 2002, updated 15 June, 2008, <http://www.rictornorton.co.uk/eighteen/defoe.htm>.

[673] Sodomy was a non-clergyable felony; anyone proved to be guilty of it would be executed publicly. In the case of attempted buggery (or in case the sodomitical behaviour was difficult to prove) heavy fines and imprisonment might be imposed, but they were more often applied in combination with the pillory – what McLynn describes as a 'first base' punishment that suspected sodomites almost had no chance to escape. Blackstone had made it clear that it was 'the voice of nature and of reason, and the express law of God' that determined the punishment directed at offenders convicted of sodomy to be capital. And in cases of attempted buggery, Blackstone asserted that 'besides heavy fines and imprisonment, it is usual to award the pillory.' See, Blackstone, *Commentaries*, vol. 4, pp. 216-7; McLynn, *Crime and Punishment*, p. 283.

those designated sodomites now have nothing to lose by continuing on in their

monstrous ways, cut off as they are from any possibility of returning to the ranks

of the population at large.[674]

A person guilty of lesser offences might be merely sentenced to give bonds to guarantee

future good behaviour or pay fines to repair the damage they had done to neighbours.

But for 'infamous crimes', especially those implemented in darkness such as sodomy

and fraud, if punishments were not carried out in public, or if offenders were merely

punished by fines or indoor treatment, we may speculate that many inhabitants would

still be unaware of the existence of potentially dangerous offenders, that violators would

escape from a devastating loss of reputation, and that while the punishment was over,

incorrigible miscreants might return to their former careers without worrying about

being recognised by others. In this sense, therefore, the real intention behind the

insistence on exhibiting infamous offenders was that the perpetrator should be set apart

forever as a person 'polluted and debased' that 'not fit to be trusted, but to be shunned

and avoided by all creditable and honest men'.[675]

Some historians assert that one objective of public shaming punishments such as

the pillory was to pave the way for repentant offenders to get back into the fold of the

community again. For example, Nash and Kilday claim that 'shame punishments

demonstrated that [offenders] had lapsed from community, but could be restored to it

with remarkable swiftness', without providing evidence of reconciliation between the

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[674] Greene, 'Public Secrets', p. 225.
[675] T. Talfourd, 'Brief Observations on the Punishment of the Pillory', in Abraham John Valpy (ed.), *The Pamphleteer: Respectfully Dedicated to Both Houses of Parliament* (London, 1814), vol. 4, p. 536; Howell (ed.), *A Complete Collection of State-Trials,* vol. 1, p. xxxvi.

inhabitants and the person being pilloried.[676] But this section presents a less sanguine view. In fact, many examples reveal that in the contemporary mind, offenders exhibited in the pillory could not purge the stigma attached to them, and that they would be socially and psychologically rejected by both the communities and the authorities as outcasts disqualified from bearing testimony in court, and unsuitable to do business with or be employed.[677]

In 1725, in a discussion about whether or not to keep Mary O' Bryan bound over on account of suspected theft, one person said that Bryan was 'an old offender and was pilloried at Charing Cross in the late Queen's reign for forgery', even if this punishment was more than 10 years ago.[678] In another case, when James Boswell said that he observed a gentleman standing in the pillory was 'not dishonoured by it', Samuel Johnson replied 'Aye, but he was, Sir. He could not mouth and strut as he used to, after having been there. People are not willing to ask a man to their tables who has stood in the pillory'.[679] In 1785, *The Times* commented that 'the punishment of the pillory consists in the perpetual disgrace it reflects upon the culprit, who is thereby marked like Cain, that all mankind may avoid him'.[680] This evidence indicates that the real intention and the actual consequence of the pillory was not to reintegrate, as many historians have suggested, but rather, to banish and excommunicate.

To sum up, committing infamous crimes directly rendered the convict infamous,

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[676] Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, p. 71.
[677] The pillory was so devastating to one's reputation that even the merest mention of it might lead to a negative consequence. For example, a person said that a woman's threat to 'have my ears in the pillory' had resulted in significant loss of trade for him in his local community. *Ibid.*, p. 76.
[678] Cited in Shoemaker, 'Street of Shame', p. 232.
[679] James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (London, 1791), vol. 2, p. 241.
[680] *The Times*, 30 November, 1785.

and this constitutes a primary reason for the infliction of shaming penalties. The logic

of the early modern penal code was that crimes or criminals of an infamous/shameful

nature deserved an infamous/shameful punishment. As Antonella Bettoni says, 'a

failure to maintain *fama* by a failure to behave honestly opened up the individual to the

"infamy" of shame punishment in what was, for contemporaries, a well-defined

process.'[681] The infamous nature of a crime could be defined either by the court on the

basis of state-imposed law, or by ordinary people according to local discipline, but we

should not draw a sharp line between judicial infamy and the popular one. On the one

hand, as 'the infliction of ignominious punishment is an appeal to the tribunal of the

public', public opinion could not be ignored by legal institutions.[682] On the other hand,

the incorporation of popular views through verdicts manipulated by local juries and

judges meant that most early modern criminal punishments represented a broad popular

consensus.[683] Both officials and the populace found deception and sexual offenses to

be particularly infamous and shameful, because these crimes were immoral in nature

and potentially dangerous to the stability of the whole society. Inflicting shaming

penalties like the pillory formally confirmed the infamy of the culprit, and symbolically

shifted the burden of shame to him, making the offender responsible for violating shared

moral values and damaging the reputation of the community. It also alerted local

inhabitants to the existence of previously hidden miscreants in their midst, and in doing

so, prevented them from suffering potential injury in the future. Therefore, the use of

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[681] Bettoni, '*Fama*, Shame Punishments and the History of Justice', p. 33

[682] Bentham, *The Rationale of Punishment*, p. 237.

[683] Susan Dwyer Amussen, 'Punishment, Discipline, and Power: The Social Meanings of Violence in Early Modern England', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 34 (1995), p. 12.

shame as a penal weapon was not random; rather, it reflected a notion that the form of punishment should always fit the nature of the crime. In his *Principles of Penal Law* (1771), William Eden, latter the first Baron of Auckland and a British diplomat, made it clear that:

> Corporal punishments, immediately affecting the body, and publickly inflicted, ought to be infamous in the estimation of the people; so should degradation from titles of honor, civil incapacities, brandings, and public exhibition of the offender: all which penalties should be applied with great caution, and only to offences infamous in their nature.[684]

'Shaming those shameful', as this section demonstrates, reflected the tradition and ideology of the administration of shame-based penalties. However, judicial authorities also awarded public shaming such as the pillory for offenders whose crime was not ordinarily among those that created shame or infamy in the eyes of the populace. As we shall see in the next section, the excessive use of shaming techniques and inflicting shame on customarily less- or non-shameful offences not only sparked public protests and violence, but also undermined the legitimacy and power of shaming sanctions.

The Dilemma of Shaming Punishments

In the early modern period when theories of penology had yet to develop, shaming punishments such as the pillory demonstrated themselves to be a powerful restraint on individual conduct.[685] The fear of shame and potential physical injury imposed by the

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[684] Eden, *Principles of Penal Law*, pp. 51-2.
[685] Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, p. 68.

audience made the pillory both a dreadful punishment and a deterrent. Many convicts spoke of their dread of the 'ignominious punishment of the pillory', and pleaded for other chastisements in order to avoid it. In 1731, for example, the notorious bawd 'Mother Needham' said that what most affected her was the terror of standing in the pillory. In 1738, Katharine Smith, who was found guilty of wilful and corrupt perjury against persons for selling spirituous liquors, 'begged for any chastisement rather than the pillory.'[686] Some offenders even attempted suicide since they were unable to bear the brunt of the shame inflicted by the penalty. It was also recorded that a sentence to the pillory threw a gentleman convicted of sodomy 'into despair, and so great was his dread of the pillory that the night before the sentence was to be put in execution, he took poison'.[687] Although public shaming always faced the danger of failure if the populace sympathised with the prisoner, or disagreed with the verdict, disorder at the site of the pillory was not frequent before the eighteenth century. Martin Ingram claims that far from 'appearing a risky proposition', shaming punishments in the Tudor period 'seem to have positively recommended themselves to the higher authorities as a means of bidding for popular support by associating crimes against the state with crimes against the commonwealth.'[688] Beattie argues that popular resistance to public punishments was 'rarely demonstrated or expressed', and that 'little disapproval appears to have surfaced in the late seventeenth century concerning the punishment of the mainstream offenses against property and against the person dealt with at the assizes

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[686] *Whitehall Evening Post*, 5 May, 1731; *London Evening Post*, 6 April, 1738. For other examples see Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, p. 76, n. 32, 33; Beattie, *Crime and Courts*, p. 466, n. 43.
[687] Cobbett (ed.), *Parliamentary History of England*, vol. 21, p. 392.
[688] Ingram, 'Shame and Pain', pp. 50-1.

and quarter sessions.'[689] The absence of disorder around the pillory could be seen as a result of the authority's respect for the tacit, yet generally understood principle that shaming punishments should be directed at offences which were considered by the populace as shameful and infamous in nature.

But the pillory was not without problems. Magistrates had the ultimate authority to inflict shame on an offender according to the state-imposed law without considering whether the verdict was in accord with the community's standards. Antonella Bettoni argues that 'shame punishments are badly suited to such a top-down system because they entail a high degree of active community participation in resolving the issue.'[690] Although Bettoni's viewpoint is primarily based on the legal history of continental Europe, her proposition rings somewhat true, particularly when the judicial authority punished political or religious dissidents through public shaming such as the pillory. In contrast to moral or violent crimes, some ideologically-motivated transgressions – notably illegal publication or speaking seditious words against a public figure or the government – were not always seen as 'shameful' or 'infamous' in the eyes of the populace as long as such offences did not violate the moral values of the local community or represented a local custom or a contested public will. According to David Nash and Anne-Marie Kilday, the pillory was ineffective in punishing ideological opponents of political and religious authorities not only because spectators might symphysis and support the prisoners and turn punishment into an anti-judicial victory, but also due to the fact that ideological dissenters always presented themselves as

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[689] Beattie, *Crime and Courts*, p. 469.
[690] Bettoni, '*Fama*, Shame Punishments and the History of Justice', p. 36.

undeterred or unmoved by shame the punishment intended to inflict.[691] Thus, in 1637,

the Puritan minister Henry Burton, who was convicted of writing seditious pamphlets

against Archbishop William Laud and the Church, was unyielding and unafraid when

he was standing in the pillory at Westminster, without showing any sign of shame or

guilt for the charge and punishment imposed on him. It was recorded that when Burton

was set in the pillory, he said to the crowd:

> I stand here to undergo the Punishment of a Rogue, yet except to be a faithful
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> Servant to Christ, and a loyal Subject to the King, be the Property of a Rogue, I
>
> am no Rogue. But yet if to be Christ's faithful Servant, and the King's loyal
>
> Subject, deserve the Punishment of a Rogue, I glory in it, and I bless my God, my
>
> Conscience is clear, and is not stained with Guilt of any such Crime as I have
>
> been charged with.

The audience was moved by his word; they sent Burton a cup of wine and asked about

how he felt, to which Burton replied 'never better'. Before having his ear cut off, Burton

made an impassioned speech: 'I hid not my face from shame and spitting, for the Lord

God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my Face like

a Flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.'[692] One year later, John Lilburn, another

well-known puritan of the time, was tried in the court of Star Chamber for publishing

seditious books, and sentenced to be whipped with two hundred stripes with both hands

tied to the rear of an ox cart, stand in the pillory for two hours, and be imprisoned until

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[691] Nash and Kilday have well demonstrated the ineffectiveness of public shaming in chastising ideologically motivated offenders, and provided many eighteenth-century examples, including the most widely celebrated one of Daniel Defoe. See Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, chapter 4.
[692] Howell (ed.), *A Complete Collection of State-Trials,* vol. 3, pp. 711-55.

he admitted his guilty. Like Burton, Lilburn refused to acknowledge the conviction, and apparently felt no shame for the public shaming inflicted upon him. When Lilburn was standing in the pillory, he 'scattered some forbidden books among the people', and 'addressed the people, affirming his innocence'. His speech 'met hearty sympathy from many of the assembled multitude gathered near the spot', and received 'applause instead of derision' from the crowd.[693]

Besides political and religious dissenters, it was evident that the pillory and other forms of punishments were ineffective in chastising offenders convicted of what historians termed 'social crimes' such as smuggling.[694] In a trial of a smuggler, as *The Gentleman's Magazine* recorded in 1753, when a justice gravely declared that 'the Smuggler was as great, if not a greater Criminal, than a Highwayman', the convict seemed not at all convinced by it, replying that 'A Smuggler only steals, or rather conceals what is truly his own, as being fairly purchased by him for a valuable Consideration; whereas the Highwayman takes by Violence what belongs to another. For which reason he could not help thinking that he ought to have been treated with a little more lenity.' The smuggler had good reason to justify his transgression and refute the verdict; as he stated, 'Since I and my Family must be ruined by this Sentence, I will speak what I think upon it: the High Taxes make Living dear, dear Living ruins Trade, the Ruin of Trade puts many upon robbing and stealing, and robbing and stealing brings them to the Gallows.'[695] The offender's words represented the voice of some 20,000

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[693] *Ibid.*, pp. 1315-21.
[694] See James A. Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England, 1550-1750* (2nd edition, Oxford and New York, 2013), chapter 6.
[695] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 23, pp. 654-5.

full-time smugglers out of a population of eight millions in England at the time.[696] High

levels of import and export duties, coupled with the profits gained from smuggling,

provided an excuse to commit this crime. It was common to see that in many sea-coast

villages, a large proportion of population were engaged in this business, and, in the

struggle with authorities, inhabitants shielded each other in order to protect their

common interest. Moral values and local customs were influenced by social-economic

situations. If a legally-culpable behaviour was supported by the local populace at large,

the convict and inhabitants would not, and indeed had no reason, to feel ashamed about

it.

In spite of smuggling being an offence that could severely damage the trade and

revenue of the state, contemporary writers distinguished smugglers from morally

corrupted offenders, arguing that smuggling was a crime not among those that

transgressed against 'natural justice'. Adam Smith, for example, claims that a smuggler

was 'a person who, though no doubt highly blameable for violating the laws of his

country, is frequently incapable of violating those of natural justice, and would have

been, in every respect, an excellent citizen had not the laws of his country made that a

crime which nature never meant to be so.' Smith treated those who took a high moral

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[696] For the history of smuggling in early modern Britain, see, for example, Platt Richard, *Smuggling in the British Isles: A History* (Stroud, 2007); Graham Smith, *Smuggling in Essex* (Newbury, 2005); Neil Holmes, *The Lawless Coast: Smuggling, Anarchy and Murder* (Dereham, 2008); Euan Macpherson, 'The Golden Age of Smuggling', *Scots Magazine*, vol. 146 (1997), pp. 130-5; Mary Waugh, *Smuggling in Devon and Cornwall, 1700-1850* (Newbury, 1991); S. M. Jarvis, *Smuggling in East Anglia, 1700-1840* (Newbury, 1987); David Phillipson, *Smuggling: A History, 1700-1970* (Newton Abbot, 1973); F. F. Nicholls, *Honest Thieves: the Violent Heyday of English Smuggling* (London, 1973); W. G. Cole, 'Trends in Eighteenth Century Smuggling', *Economic History Review*, vol. 10 (1958), pp. 395-409; George Daniel Ramsay, 'The Smuggler's Trade: A Neglected Aspect of English Commercial Development', *Transactions of the Royal History Society*, vol. 5 (1952), pp. 131-57.

tone on contraband with scorn, saying that 'to pretend to have any scruple about buying

smuggled goods would in most countries be regarded as one of those pedantic pieces

of hypocrisy.'[697] Since many contemporary writers like Adam Smith realised that

smuggling was not always deemed infamous by the populace, they doubted whether

shamed-based punishments would be the proper choice to chastise smugglers. Thus,

Beccaria argued that 'smuggling is a real offence against the sovereign and the nation;

but the punishment should not brand the offender with infamy, because this crime is not

infamous in the public opinion. By inflicting infamous punishments, for crimes that are

not reputed so, we destroy that idea where it may be useful.' Beccaria explained why

smuggling was not seen as infamous in the eyes of the populace: 'I answer, that crime,

which men consider as productive of no bad consequences to themselves, do not interest

them sufficiently to excite their indignation.'[698] David Hume also doubted 'whether

infamy ensues on the undergoing of punishment, though in itself ignominious, such as

whipping or the pillory, if it happen that this has been inflicted for an offence not of an

infamous nature.' He agreed with Beccaria's argument that an infamous penalty was

not suitable for non-infamous crimes or popular accepted acts, claiming that 'the crime

is the act of the pannel [accused criminal], and the stain of infamy must attach to him,

if such is the natural character of his crime'.[699]

Another problem of shaming punishments (and public execution), which was

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[697] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, eds R.H. Campbell and A.S. Skinner (Oxford, 1976), vol. 2, p. 898.
[698] Beccaria, *An Essay on Crimes and Punishments*, pp. 139-41.
[699] David Hume, *Commentaries on the Laws of Scotland Respecting Crimes,* vol. 2, chapter 17: Of Sentence and Execution (Edinburgh, 1986), p. 490. Cited in Nash and Kilday, *Cultures of Shame*, p. 100.

similar to the problems of contemporary scandalous publications as we have seen in the previous chapter, is that in the eighteenth century, and especially in London, they were losing their power to arouse the moral sense of shame in the audience. In 1695 a pamphlet writer accompanied his female friends to watch a public execution of a man who was convicted of the murder of his wife. 'We got as near the gallows as we could, and heard and saw all that past', he wrote, 'and when the cart drew off, the women in our coach ask'd, is this all?' The ladies' insensitive and callous words shocked the writer, who thus lamented 'Hanging is nothing at all… it do's not deter the People; 'tis made a kind of Jest, a Game, a Rendezvous of Mob, Shouting and Hallowing, a sort of Holy-day, at least an Idle-Day'.[700] Similarly, in a letter sent to *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1737, the author recollected that his friends invited him to watch 'some exquisite Rope-dancing', and promised him that he would be 'satisfied with the Entertainment'. When the author was surprised to find that it was a public hanging, his friend said: 'O, you will have Reason to thank me for bringing you hither, the Comedy is to begin immediately.'[701]

In his *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Frequent Executions at Tyburn* (1725), Bernard Mandeville urged that public execution be kept in order and solemnity, so that not only should the condemned prisoner be 'in a deep Sense of Sorrow, with all the Signs of a thorough Contrition, and the utmost Concern; that either Silence, or a Sober Sadness', but also that the spectators 'should be grave and serious, and behave

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[700] *Solon Secundus or, Some Defects in the English Laws with Their Proper Remedies, By a Hearty Lover of his Country* (London, 1695), p. 6.
[701] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 7, pp. 168-9.

themselves with common Decency, and a Deportment suitable to the Occasion.'[702]

However, he observed that the public execution had degenerated into 'a carnival' or 'a species of festive comedy', where the last vestiges of solemnity and the sense of shame had evaporated.[703] Cheaters, pickpockets and prostitutes did their business in the floating multitudes of the procession all the way from the Newgate to Tyburn. For those undisciplined armies Mandeville recorded that:

> As they have no particular Enemies to encounter, but cleanliness and good manners, so nothing is more entertaining to them, than the dead carcasses of dogs and cats, or, for want of them, Rags, and all Trumpery that is capable of imbibing Dirt. These, well trampled in Filth, and, if possible, of the worst sort, are by the Ring leaders, slung as high and as far as a strong Arm can carry them, and commonly directed where the Throng is the thickest: Whilst these ill-boding Meteors are shooting thro' the Air, the joy and Satisfaction of the Beholders is visible in every Countenance and Gesture; and more audibly express'd by the great Shouts that accompany them in their Course; and, as the Projectiles come nearer the Earth, are turn'd into loud Laughter, which is more or less violent in Proportion to the Mischief promis'd by the Fall. And to see a good Suit of Cloaths spoiled by this Piece of Gallantry, is the tip-top of their Diversion, which they seldom go home without enjoying.[704]

It is clear that the spectators were not deterred, and that their sense of shame for the

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[702] Bernard Mandeville, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Frequent Executions at Tyburn* (London, 1725), p. 18.
[703] Laqueur, 'Crowds, Carnival and the State', p. 323.
[704] Mandeville, *An Enquiry*, p. 19.

crime and the shameful punishment failed to be evoked. Instead of giving a warning, public execution hardened onlookers, encouraged what it aimed to deter, and descended to a counter-productive exercise, in which even 'the best disposed Spectator' could seldom 'pick out any thing that is edifying or moving.'[705] The disorder at the site of the gallows observed by Mandeville was not unusual in eighteenth-century London. In his *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers* (1751), Henry Fielding wrote with great disappointment:

> [The design of public execution] was to add the Punishment of Shame to that of Death… but to unite the Ideas of Death and Shame is not so easy as may be imagined… I will appeal to any Man who hath seen an Execution, or a Procession to an Execution; let him tell me… whether the idea of Shame hath ever intruded on his Mind? Much less will the bold daring Rogue who glories in his present Condition, inspire the Beholder with any such Sensation.[706]

In contrast to public execution, the pillory required the active involvement of the spectators. People were not only called upon to witness, but allowed to throw dirt, excrement, and rotten eggs at the culprit. However, it is evident that in eighteenth-century London the authorities began to lose their control over the site of the pillory.[707] Popular violence leading to injury and even death of prisoners or spectators were familiar to contemporary Londoners. The suffering of John Lowther, a woollen draper and 'sodomite', at the pillory in Cornhill was a typical example. According to the

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[705] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[706] Henry Fielding, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers, with some Proposals for Remedying this Growing Evil* (London, 1751), p. 122.

[707] Cockburn, 'Punishment and Brutalization', p. 171; Shoemaker, 'Streets of Shame', p. 245.

London Evening Post on 15 October 1761, the prisoner was well protected and received

little injury from the crowds during the first half hour; however, the mob eventually

over-powered the officers, and 'got on the Pillory, and tore his Great Coat, and almost

all his Cloaths off his Back; and one Fellow turned him round in the Pillory so violently,

that had the Board over his head not been loose, his Neck Must have been broke; he fell

down, and lay for some Time as dead, but they reared him up, and set him on again.'[708]

Were the violent actions of spectators a real demonstration of their resentment and

opprobrium for the culprit? While it is difficult to tell what the audience had in mind

when they were watching the punishment, we do know, at least, that many of them who

rushed to the pillory were driven by curiosity or entertainment, rather than righteous

indignation. As the report on the pillory of John Lowther revealed: 'the concourse of

People on this Occasion was the greatest ever known, The Windows and Balconies

were full of Spectators, and there were some Hundreds of People on the Top of the

Exchange, who paid Sixpence each, to gratify their Curiosity.'[709] In another case, when

William Holdbrook stood in the pillory in Bloomsbury Market in 1719 for attempted

sodomy, *The Original Weekly Journal* reported that he was severely pelted with rotten

eggs, cucumbers and dead cats, and that 'the mob had certainly murdered him could

they have got him in their power, for a hackney coach was tore to pieces that took him

up to carry him to Newgate.'[710] We should not deny that many spectators were ashamed

of, and enraged by, the pilloried culprit, especially when the offender was guilty of

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[708] *London Evening Post*, 15 October, 1761.
[709] *Ibid*.
[710] *The Original Weekly Journal*, 25 July, 1791.

infamous offences such as sodomy. However, not all violence was evoked by shame and anger. In the pillory of Holdbrook, Richard Burg observes that 'the tormentors were more entertained than enraged by the would-be sodomite.'[711]

It is also evident that many people who engaged in the violence at the site of the pillory simply wished to satisfy their bloodthirsty appetites. What attracted them was the opportunity for pelting and injuring, and failure to do so could lead to great disappointment. A French tourist recalled that one day when he passed by the Seven Dials in London, he found that 'the place was crowded with people, waiting to see a poor wretch stand in the pillory.' After being told that the punishment was deferred for another day, the rabble, 'provoked at this disappointment, vented their rage upon all that passed that way, whether a-foot or in coaches; and threw at them dirt, rotten eggs, dead dogs, and all sorts of trash and ordure, which they had provided to pelt the unhappy wretch.'[712] When Eagan, a thief-taker, was stoned to death at the pillory in Smithfield in 1756, *The Gentleman's Magazine* condemned what it saw as a taste for blood, rather than resentment of the crime that tempted the spectators to kill the prisoner:

> [T]he mob is ever disposed to worry any thing that is thrown into its reach, and find just the same pleasure in battering a malefactor to death, as in the destroying of any unhappy animal. It is not so truly the greatness of the crime which inflames them, as the scent of carnage; and now, by one murther, they have got a taste for blood, it is high time that they should be considered as dogs of that carnivorous

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[711] B. R. Burg, *Sodomy and the Perception of Evil: English Sea Rovers in the Seventeenth Century Caribbean* (New York and London, 1983), pp. 35-6. Cited in Shoemaker, 'Streets of Shame', p. 244.
[712] Pierre Jean Grosley, *A Tour to London; or New Observations on England, and Its Inhabitants*, vol. 1 (London, 1772), p. 88.

property, and that no more victims should be exposed to their resentment.[713]

Before exploring the contemporary debate about the shaming punishments and the judicial concept of shame, let us summarise the main problems according to the examples we have already seen. The pillory did not always have the desired effect on both offenders and onlookers, especially when it was used to punish ideological dissenters, and offenders who were customarily not 'infamous' in the eyes of the populace. Even when the pillory was applied to generally hated, shameful crimes, it is evident that both convicts and onlookers usually presented themselves as being unashamed of the crime and humiliation the offender suffered; sometimes they even took justice into their own hands and turned the pillory into a triumph. A more serious problem regarding the shaming sanctions and other public punishments in the eighteenth-century London was the repeatedly staged brutality and violence in the arena of the pillory and the gallows. These problems made not only shaming punishments, but also the concept and the use of shame within the penal system a major subject of legal debates. What we find, from comments in the press, pamphlets, and influential works written by theorists, is the contemporary uneasiness about the abuse of shaming punishments and the anxiety about their destructive effects on the minds of both offenders and spectators.

Debating Shame in a Judicial Context in the Long Eighteenth Century

One of the most frequent complaints against the early modern penal system, of which

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[713] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 26, p. 166.

the shaming punishment constituted an important part, was the disproportion between crime and punishment. A proportional sanction meant that the punishment should be decided according to the nature and severity of crime. In 1727, an anonymous pamphlet argued that punishments should be 'adapted to the quality of the offences, and clothed with the same character; so a Distinction of Crimes, and consequently of Punishments, into capital and non-capital, is reciprocal, dependent, and necessarily ally'd'.[714] Montesquieu, in his widely disseminated book *The Spirit of Laws*, argued that in a liberal society 'criminal laws derive each punishment from the particular nature of the crime, There are then no arbitrary decisions; the punishment does not flow from the capriciousness of the legislator, but from the very nature of the thing'.[715] He categorised crimes into four groups, these being 'species prejudicial to religion', 'to morals', 'to the public tranquillity', and 'to the security of the subject', and argued that moral offences, especially those relating to sexual misbehaviours or what he termed 'the violation of public or private contingency', deserved 'shame, public infamy, expulsion from home and society, and all such punishments as belong to a corrective jurisdiction'. According to the principle that 'the punishment ought to proceed from the nature of the thing', Montesquieu wrote that crimes that disturbed the public tranquillity should be inflicted by punishments 'relative to this tranquillity', including 'imprisonment, exile, and corrections'; while for violations of the public tranquillity and at the same time the security of the subject, 'a kind of retaliation' was needed.[716]

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[714] *An Essay Concerning the Original of Society, Government, Religion and Laws, especially those of the Penal Kind* (London, 1727), p. 63.
[715] The English version of Montesquieu's book was first introduced to Britain in 1748. Baron de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, vol. 1 (New York, 2007), p. 185.
[716] *Ibid*., pp. 185-7.

Here Montesquieu did not directly discuss shame in particular. But a significant implication was that the use of shame and humiliation as a penal weapon should not be indiscriminate, but rather directed at offenders against morality.

While Montesquieu argued that the decision of punishment should be in accord with the nature of crime, other writers such as Cesare Beccaria added that the nature of the crime was decided by a collective opinion or what he termed 'universal morality' rather than law or reason, and that the sanction of infamy could be applied only if the crime was infamous and shameful in the eyes of the populace, otherwise the power of shame would be undermined and the sanction would damage the authority of the law:

> It is necessary that the infamy inflicted by the laws should be the same with that which results from the relations of things, from universal morality, or from that particular system, adopted by the nation, and the laws, which governs the opinion of the vulgar. If, on the contrary, one be different from the other, either the laws will no longer be respected, or the received notion of morality and probity will vanish… If we declare those actions infamous, which are in themselves indifferent, we lessen the infamy of those which are really infamous.[717]

Beccaria's argument affirmed the socially constructed nature of the concept of shame and shaming sanctions, and denied the state monopoly over the power of defining and inflicting shame. Like Beccaria, many legal writers of the period began to challenge the traditional beliefs that 'the idea of shame will follow the finger of law', and that 'whatever species of punishment is pointed out as infamous, will have the

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[717] Beccaria, *An Essay on Crimes and Punishments*, pp. 85-6.

effect of infamy'. They argued that although the judicial authorities could mark an individual with infamy by awarding an infamous punishment, 'it is the crime that creates the infamy, and takes away a man's competency, and not the punishment for it; and it is absurd and ridiculous to say it is the punishment that creates the infamy.'[718] For William Eden, infamous punishments should be applied only to offences that were infamous in their nature. He wrote that 'there are two kinds of infamy, the one founded in the opinions of the people respecting the mode of punishment, the other in the construction of law respecting the future credibility of the delinquent: the law of England was erroneous, when it declared the latter a consequence of the punishment, not of the crime.'[719]

Another area of concern over shaming punishments was that they produced too much violence and brutality. In 1731, the Irish legal writer Sollom Emlyn argued that the pillory was a punishment designed to expose the offender to shame and infamy, and to mark him out to the public as a person that should be shunned and avoided by all creditable and honest people. However, he observed that the pillory had degenerated into a life-threatening punishment: 'it is indeed a surprizing neglect that no effectual cares has hitherto been taken to suppress these practices, especially considering the fatal consequences which have sometimes endured from them, even to the loss of the

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[718] *Pendock v. Mackender*, 2 Wils. 18, in *The English Reports* (178 vols; London and Edinburgh, 1900-32), p. 662. A similar expression could be seen elsewhere in the same collection; it opposed the argument that 'a bare conviction of perjury would take away one's evidence, because it is an infamous crime; but not so of barretry, which was not of an infamous nature, without an infamous punishment as the pillory', arguing that 'he is disabled by the conviction, for it is not the nature of the punishment, but the nature of the crime and conviction, that creates the infamy.' *R. v. Ford*, 2 Salk. 390, *The English Reports*, xci, p. 595.
[719] Eden, *Principles of Penal Law*, p. 55.

poor Man's Life.' Emlyn therefore argued that the law should take the responsibility to protect the prisoner who is in the custody of it from any injurious treatment.[720] Half a century later, when William Smith, a 'sodomite', was killed in the pillory in Saint Margaret's Hill in Southwark in 1780,[721] Edmund Burke gave a speech in parliament proposing that the pillory, a punishment which he described as the 'awkward and ugly instrument', should be abolished. According to Burke, the pillory should be 'a punishment of shame rather than of personal severity', but 'it had been rendered an instrument of death, and that of the worst kind, a death of torment'. Like Emlyn, Burke argued that the purpose of the pillory, even when it was used to chastise 'the most detestable' crime of sodomy, was to 'expose them to public reproach and contempt', rather than 'to popular fury, assault and cruelty'. Although Burke's bill failed to pass, his speech aroused sympathy among the audience sitting in the House, who agreed that 'proper care must be taken' to guarantee the pillory was justly used and kept in order.[722] Unsanctioned violence and even death at the site of the pillory continued in following decades after Burke's speech, but the clamour for abolishing the pillory grew louder and determined. Thus, in a short pamphlet entitled *Observations on the Punishment of the Pillory* (1814), the author complained:

> They [the mobs] are permitted to heighten the sentence, to change its nature, and

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[720] Howell (ed.), *A Complete Collection of State-Trials*, vol. 1, p. xi.

[721] It was recorded that the mobs pelted Smith and his fellow criminal Theodosius Read with all kinds of projectiles including dead dogs, cats and stones. Both of them were severely wounded. Worse still, the pillory was improperly setup and Smith 'could not reach the hole made for the admission of the head' in it, thus he was 'hung rather than walked as the pillory turned round… and soon grew black in the face, and the blood forced itself out of his nostrils, his eyes, and his ears.' In spite of this, 'the mob still attacked him and his fellow criminal with great fury.' Cobbett (ed.), *Parliamentary History of England*, vol. 21, pp. 388-9.

[722] *Ibid.*, pp. 389-90.

to avenge the transgression of the law by a violent infraction of its most obvious principles. A man who has merely been deemed worthy of an open disgrace, whose crime is only termed by the gentle name of a misdemeanour, is given up to the fury of the populace to be pelted until he is nearly expiring. They are to punish him according to their good pleasure. His ultimate judges are those who never heard his trial, who know nothing of the evidence on which he was convicted, and are wholly incapable of coolly estimating the magnitude of his offence. And not only are they entirely ignorant of the merits of the cause thus summarily brought under their cognizance, but liable to be blinded by prejudice, and wrought up to a frenzy by unhallowed passions. The law wisely gives them an opportunity of revenging all their private wrongs, of gratifying all their low malignities, and of embodying their untutored prejudices in deeds which may possibly be fatal to their victims.[723]

Besides criticising the brutality of the pillory, writers also worried about the negative effect of shaming punishments on the mind of both culprits and spectators. They claimed that the frequent and stigmatising use of shaming techniques would exert a long-lasting shame on male and female offenders, which might not only destroy their self-identity and esteem, separating them as an outcast of society, but also make them hardened and lose all sense of shame. In 1700, Ned Ward, after watching a young female flogged in the Bridewell, wrote that the punishment could do nothing but create many whores. Ward argued against whipping female offenders not only because it is 'a

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[723] Talfourd, 'Brief Observations on the Punishment of the Pillory', pp. 544-5.

shameful Indecency for a Women to expose her Naked Body to the Sight of Men and Boys', but also due to the fact that the shame imposed on offenders 'is never to be wash'd off by the most reform'd Life imaginable, which unhappy stain makes them always shun'd by Vertuous and Good People, who will neither entertain a Servant, or admit of Companion under this Disparagement', and that, in the end, the abandoned female would be 'drove into the hands of Ill Persons, and forc'd to betake herself to bad Conversation, till she is insensibly Corrupted, and made fit to all Wickedness'.[724] Similarly, at the end of the eighteenth century, the ducking-stool, which was still used in many local communities, was regarded as an improper punishment for female offender because, as a judge said, it 'would rather harden than cure her, and that if she were once ducked she would scold on all the days of her life.'[725]

Indeed, an overwhelming sense of shame and complete shamelessness were two opposite results of shaming penalties, but there was no insurmountable barrier between them: a stigmatised person found himself an outcast of society would always become insensitive to shame. Stephen Payne Adye, an English military officer, in his well-known pamphlet *Treatise on Courts Martial, to which is added an Essay on Military Punishments and Rewards* (1769) warned that 'to fix a lasting, visible stigma upon an offender, is contrary both to humanity and sound policy. The wretch, finding himself subjected to continual insult, becomes habituated to his disgrace, and loses all sense of shame'.[726] Branding was a punishment that always led its victim to shamelessness. As

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[724] Edward Ward, *The London-Spy Compleat* (London, 1700), pp. 11-3.
[725] George Roberts, *The Social History of the People of the Southern Counties of England in Pat Centuries* (London, 1856), p. 157.
[726] Stephen Payne Adye, *A Treatise on Courts Martial, Also an Essay on Military Punishments and Rewards* (4th edition, London, 1797), p. 260.

William Eden argued:

> In any case, to affix a lasting, visible stigma upon the offender, is contrary both
> to humanity and found policy. The wretch finding himself subjected to continual
> insult, becomes habituated to his disgrace, and loses all sense of shame. It is
> impossible for him to form any irreproachable connection; for virtue, though of
> a social nature, will not associate with infamy.[727]

Therefore, Eden suggested legislators that 'the stamp of ignominy is intrusted to their disposal; and let them use with economy and discretion, this best instrument for the promotion of virtue, and the extirpation of vice.'[728] Adye and Eden's argument that shaming punishments would produce hardened criminals and destroy their senses of shame was repeated by an American legal writer, Benjamin Rush. However, what made Rush's short tract *An Enquiry into the Effects of Public Punishments upon Criminals and upon Society* (1787) distinctive from other works of the period is that he discussed the effectiveness of public punishments from the perspective of human psychology, with particular attention to the interactions between public penalties and human emotions. According to Rush, 'all public punishments tend to make bad men worse, and to increase crimes, by their influence upon society.'[729] It is because public sanctions 'leave scars, which disfigure the whole character; and hence persons, who have suffered them, are ever afterwards viewed with horror or aversion.'[730] In this regard, public sanctions associated with infamy would destroy 'the sense of shame,

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[727] Eden, *Principles of Penal Law*, p. 52.
[728] *Ibid.*, p. 50.
[729] Benjamin Rush, *An Enquiry into the Effects of Public Punishments upon Criminals and upon Society* (London, 1787), p. 4.
[730] *Ibid.*, pp. 27-8.

which is one of the strongest out-posts of virtue':

> A man who has lost his character at a whipping-post, has nothing valuable left to
> lose in society. Pain has begotten insensibility to the whip; and shame to the
> infamy. Added to his old habits of vice, he probably feels a spirit of revenge
> against the whole community, whose laws have inflicted his punishment upon
> him; and hence he is stimulated, to add to the number and enormity of his
> outrages upon society. The long duration of the punishment, when public, by
> increasing its infamy, serves only to increase the evils that have been
> mentioned.[731]

Besides discussing the negative impact of public corporal punishments upon the
psychology of offenders, Rush also examined how offender's emotions during the
punishment affected the minds of the spectators. He argued that people who were
punished by shame would show more 'fortitude, insensibility, or distress', but all of
these sentiments were injurious to the audience and the judicial authorities. If the
criminal displayed fortitude and bravery, the senses of shame and indignation that the
crowds were expected to feel would give way to admiration and praise. 'Insensitivity'
would diminish the terror of punishment, and lead spectators who had secret guilt to
imitate insensitive criminals so as to 'seek an end of their distresses in the same
enviable apathy to evil'. 'Distress' shown by the criminal was also harmful because it
produced sympathy among the audience and made the spectators 'secretly condemn
the law which inflicts the punishment'[732] Rush's analysis explained why public

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[731] *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
[732] *Ibid.*, pp. 5-11.

punishments always failed to evoke the audience's feelings of shame, contempt, and indignation toward the culprit, and why judicial punishments should not be implemented in public. In this regard, Rush claimed that 'the gallows, the pillory, the stocks, the whipping-post, and the wheel-barrow will be connected with the history of the rack and the stake, as marks of the barbarity of ages and countries, and as melancholy proofs of the feeble operation of reason, and religion, upon the human mind'.[733]

Perhaps the most impassionate criticism of the pillory for its destructive effect upon the sense of shame was from Talfourd, an early nineteenth-century pamphleteer. He regarded shame as an emotion which 'always connected with something that is virtuous' and 'one of the last of our nobler feelings which forsakes us in the depths of iniquity' that every legislator should be most anxious to preserve. According to Talfourd, the pillory was not only useless to those already hardened, but also devastating to an innocent or a petty offender who 'has any remnant of character to lose, or any virtuous emotion clinging to his heart'. In the latter situation, as Talfourd wrote:

> No matter how trivial his crime – how deep his anguish – how sincere his
> penitence – how elevated his capacities – he reads, or thinks he reads, contempt
> in the faces of all with whom he converses, and believing himself incapable of
> becoming respectable, he relaxes all his efforts, and crushes his impulses to virtue.
> He is defiled with a stain which even his innocence, if subsequently brought to

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[733] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

light, could not wash away.

In this sense, the punishment of the pillory was not just brutal but 'exceedingly unequal', since it could do nothing but create indelible shame and infamy, which in turn compelled its victim to 'disarm the sufferer of his most sacred defence against the pollutions of the world', and 'strike the ingenuous blush of modesty from his cheek for ever.' Therefore, Talfourd condemned the pillory as being 'the preparation for the scaffold'.[734]

Contemporary concern about shame in a judicial context was not confined merely to public or shameful punishments. Eighteenth-century people observed that the sanction of imprisonment, though it involved few element of shame and publicity, could also render criminals hardened and callous to all sense of shame. William Fuller, an imposter and false accuser, recorded what he had seen during imprisonment. Prisoners 'glory in their Shame', wrote Fuller, 'I remember there was a Lad of about Eighteen Years old, committed for a very small Misdemeanour, and was lodg'd with the Thieves, he was so taken with their Brags of Roguery, and easy picking of Pockets, that he said there, he would follow the Trade as soon as he came out.' Fuller was surprised to see that during Prayer time prisoners 'swear, and tell bawdy Stories', and one of them even put 'his Excrement in another Prisoner's pocket'.[735] The increasing application of imprisonment over the course of the eighteenth century was paralleled by growing anxieties about its deleterious effects upon the minds and morals of offenders. In 1759 *The London Magazine* complained:

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[734] Talfourd, 'Brief Observations on the Punishment of the Pillory', pp. 536-8.
[735] William Fuller, *Mr. William Fuller's Trip to Bridewell* (London, 1703), pp. 14-6.

The misery of gaols is not half their evil, they are filled with every corruption

which poverty and wickedness can generate between them… In a prison the awe

of the publick eye is lost, and the power of the law is spent; there are few fears,

there are no blushes. The lewd inflame the lewd, the audacious harden the

audacious.[736]

Some writers pointed out that female offenders were more likely to be contaminated,

and become shameless in the prison. In his *Mild Punishments Sound Policy* (1778),

William Smith wrote: 'shame is a powerful passion; and in the infancy of vice a woman

retains some sense of it; but in a gaol she soon loses all ideas of shame or decency, that

guard which nature has planted round virtue. Modesty is forcibly driven out of the

female heart, and she is laid open to shameless and abandoned impurity.' Smith

regarded prison inmates who were 'more hardened in iniquity' as a serious threat to the

reformation of a female prisoner, because 'by their lewd and blasphemous arguments,

and by making her the butt of their ridicule, soon stifle those pious thoughts and

virtuous resolutions, and drag her back to the pit of destruction.'[737]

Despite their continual criticism of shaming punishments and the harmful effects

of judicial sanction upon the moral sense of shame of individuals, contemporaries did

not completely deny the value of shame in the penal system. In fact, attitudes towards

shame were not unanimous in the eighteenth century. In order to increase the terror of

punishment, conservative writers proposed that shame should be used in combination

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[736] *The London Magazine, Or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer Microform*, vol. 28 (London,1759), p. 30.
[737] William Smith, *Mild Punishments Sound Policy* (London, 1778), p. 46. Similar criticism on imprisonment for its negative effects upon the moral sense of shame can be found in Bentham, *The Rationale of Punishment*, p. 121.

with pain and torture. For example, in his *An Essay to Prevent Capital Crimes* (1731), George Ollyffe, seeing that 'little concern or fear is produced even at the very time of Execution', argued that death penalties should be attended with more lasting torment, so as to create a far greater sense of awe. As regards shame-based punishments such as branding, Ollyffe complained that 'the old way of marking criminals by burning in the hand or face has been so easily tore or cut out'; therefore he proposed that criminals 'should have a slit burnt by an hot pair of Shears in one of their Ears'. Only in this way, would the irremovable stigma 'answer the purposes of Terror beyond the Marks before used'.[738] In correspondence to the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1750, an author proposed castration for sexual offenders, arguing that 'pain and ignominy in this life will operate much more strongly upon them, than the distant apprehensions of death'. The author also suggested that it was necessary to burn a capital C on the cheek of felons, so that 'their contemptible, infamous circumstance would be known to everyone they meet'.[739]

Besides proposing to increase the severity of shaming punishments, some writers argued for the rational use of shame, proposing that shame-based sanctions should match the specific nature of the crime, and aim to not only effectively punish but also reform offenders. For example, in 1737 the *London Magazine* advised that idle villains should be sentenced to cleaning the streets, 'distinguish'd by a Chain about the Middle and one Leg, follow'd by a smart Driver, who would allow them no idle Minutes.'[740] Labouring in chains in front of the public was obviously shameful, but it was considered

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[738] George Ollyffe, *An Essay to Prevent Capital Crimes* (London, 1731), pp. 7-12.
[739] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 20, pp. 532-3.
[740] *The London Magazine*, vol. 7, p. 386.

to be a proper means of reform; as another writer William Webster claimed in 1750: 'few People can get above all Sense of living in publick Shame; and hard Labour is the most dreadful Thing in the World to Persons habituated to idleness.' Since people could see examples of offenders confined daily to a disgraceful and laborious life, as Webster wrote, the punishment 'might make a great many think how an honest Maintenance in a State of Freedom, and in an useful Way, who are now a Nuisance and a Terror to the Publick.' For Webster, the reformation of offenders should be the outcome of punishments and the goal of all legislators.[741] William Smith also pointed out that 'evils are best remedied by their contraries', arguing that 'idleness and its bad consequences will be most effectually punished and prevented by labour and confinement, joined with shame, which is the next in degree; for the example of suffering guilt… will have a much better effect than the terror of immediate death'. According to William Smith, physical infliction was not the first option of punishment; it could be used only if shame was insufficient to chastise and reform offenders. Here, we can see that shame still played a very important role in judicial punishment, and should be rationally used according to the specific nature and severity of crimes and the goal of reformation.[742]

According to the same principle, Montesquieu argued that shaming punishments were suitable for chastising army deserters and other military offenders. He saw death, a traditional punishment for desertion, as being ineffective because 'a soldier, accustomed daily to venture his life, despises the danger of losing it'. Therefore,

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[741] William Webster, *A Casuistical Essay on Anger and Forgiveness* (London, 1750), pp. 64-5.
[742] Smith, *Mild Punishments Sound Policy*, pp. 39-40.

Montesquieu regarded branding as a better way of punishments because it is nature that a soldier always cherished their honour and feared shame and humiliation.[743] Stephen Payne Adye also applauded the great value of shame used by the military. He claimed that 'shame alone works reformation sooner than severer punishments', and that exposing an offended soldier to public shame by 'degrading him from a higher rank to a lower' or 'marking him stand all supper time' was an appropriate and effective way of disciplining soldiers.[744] The advocacy of shaming penalties was, according to Foucault, not a reflection of the ancient idea of symmetric vengeance, but rather a representation of a quite different mechanism. In this mechanism there existed 'a sort of reasonable aesthetic of punishment', which was presented in the idea that, in order to prevent crimes and reform offenders, punishments should be designed to 'smash the mainspring that animates the representation of the crime, and weaken the interest that brought it to birth'.[745] In this sense, public shaming was more effective than physical pain when it was used to chastise those, for example, who were proud of vanity. As Beccaria argued, 'painful and corporal punishments should never be applied to fanaticism; for being founded on pride, it glories in persecution. Infamy and ridicule only should be employed against fanatics.'[746]

I would like to conclude this section by looking at Jeremy Bentham's discussion on shame in his famous *The Rationale of Punishment* (1827). Although this book was completed in the early nineteenth century, its arguments to a large extent reflected the

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[743] Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, p. 100.
[744] Stephen Payne Adye, *A Treatise on Courts Martial, Also an Essay on Military Punishments and Rewards* (London, 1797), p. 246.
[745] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 105-6.
[746] Beccaria, *An Essay on Crimes and Punishments*, p. 86.

general attitudes towards shame held by the eighteenth-century commentators we have just examined. To begin with, like earlier writers such as Beccaria and William Eden, who argued for the socially constructed nature of shame, and opposed the state monopoly on defining and inflicting shame, Bentham also pointed out that 'shame did not follow the finger of the law', and that 'whatever the legislator professes to disapprove of, the people will disapprove too, is going a degree too far'.[747] For Bentham, there was always disagreement as to what constituted shame between the public and the state, and the populace could reject the legitimacy of the sanction of infamy made by the government if they believed that the sanction failed to agree on the nature of the offence. Political libel was an offence that always aroused such disagreement since the populace would not look upon a libeller as infamous especially when they believed the libeller's act was just. And, as Bentham wrote, 'it is so much the worse' if judges punished a libeller at all events without considering whether his libel is true or false, moderate or immoderate.[748] By taking the examples of Shebbeare, Williams and Beckford, who were sentenced to stand in the pillory for the conviction of libel but applauded by the audience, Bentham claimed that 'the legislator ought never directly to oppose public opinion by his measure, by endeavouring to fix a stain of ignominy upon an act of the description of those in question.'[749]

Moreover, Bentham regarded shame as an important disciplinary weapon against crime, and a virtuous emotion that every judicial punishment should make the effort to

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[747] Bentham, *The Rationale of Punishment*, p. 245, 248.
[748] *Ibid.*, p. 247
[749] *Ibid.*, p. 248.

evoke and protect. Bentham acknowledged that 'ignominious punishments are like those engines which are apt to recoil, and often wound the hand that unadroitly uses them', but he fervently claimed that if they were 'skilfully managed, what important services may they not be made to render!'[750] How, then, might people be protected from the danger of shaming punishments backfiring? Bentham, like most of eighteenth-century writers, argued that combining the use of shame and pain was counterproductive not only because it was ineffective in making offenders ashamed of their transgressions, but also due to the fact that it could risk the danger of making culprits hardened and shameless. For Bentham, an ideal shame-based sanction should be a pure public exhibition, without inflicting any physical pain. As he wrote, 'punishments to which the highest degrees of infamy are understood to be annexed, one can scarcely find any other suffering which they produce.'[751] In addition, Bentham argued that the only way to 'produce any additional degree of infamy' was not by inflicting more physical pain on the offender, but by 'taking extraordinary measures to make public the fact of the offence' or by 'bestowing on the act in question some opprobrious appellation: some epithet, calculated to express ill-will or contempt on the part of him who uses it.'[752] In order to prevent offenders who were punished by public shaming from being refused by the society and becoming callous to shame, Bentham argued that the target of shame should be the offence, rather than the offender – a fairly advanced argument in his period as well as our own, and which could be seen as a

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[750] Bentham, *The Rationale of Punishment*, pp. 237-8.
[751] *Ibid.,* p. 229.
[752] *Ibid.*, p.242.

pioneer for the modern theory of 'reintegrative justice':[753]

> It is of importance to lighten as much as possible the load of infamy he has been made to bear. The business is to render infamous not the offender, but the offence. The punishment undergone, upon the presumption of his being reclaimed, he ought not, if he is returned into society, to have his reputation irretrievably destroyed. The business is, then, for the sake of general prevention, to render the offence infamous, and, at the same time, for the sake of reformation, to spare the shame of the offender as much as possible.[754]

As with eighteenth-century commentators, Bentham opposed branding, in particular, when the punishment was used 'only to mark a conviction of a first offence, and to render the individual recognisable in case of a relapse'. Instead, Bentham suggested that the mark should be better 'impressed upon some part of the body less ordinarily in view', whereby the offender 'will be spared the torment of its infamy, without taking away his desire to avoid falling again into the hands of justice'.[755] He also complained about the negative effect of prison upon the morale of criminals: 'instead of rendering a delinquent better', wrote Bentham, prison would only 'make him worse… and obliterate the sense of shame in the mind of the sufferer: in other words, it produces insensibility to the force of the moral sanction.'[756] However, unlike some eighteenth-century writers such as William Webster and William Smith, Bentham argued that public hard labour renewed shame day by day and might 'render the

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[753] See introductory chapter, p. 10.
[754] *Ibid.,* p.135.
[755] *Ibid.,* p. 88.
[756] *Ibid.,* p. 121.

individuals more depraved than the habit of working tends to reform them', because, as Bentham wrote, 'it is probable that after the notoriety of this disgrace, nobody in the country would like to hold communication with or to employ them.'[757]

Conclusion

This chapter began with a review of patterns and characteristics of shaming penalties in early modernity, illustrating how shame was used as a disciplinary weapon to chastise, deter and reform offenders. It then investigated the motives and ideologies behind the application of the pillory. By discussing the concept of 'infamy' in the contemporary legal and civil contexts, I argue that the use of the pillory was not random; behind it was an often unspoken but shared social and legal tradition that shaming penalties should direct at offenders who were customarily deemed 'shameful' or 'infamous' in nature. Offences associated with sexual immoralities, marital disloyalty, and various kinds of deceitful and fraudulent doings were particularly infamous and shameful in the eyes of contemporaries, and constituted the majority of crimes punished by the pillory. The pillory formally confirmed the shameful identity of culprits, shifted the burden of shame offenders created back to themselves, and warned the community about the existence of a hidden and potentially dangerous criminal in its midst. Shameful crimes deserved shaming punishments; however, if shame was used to punish offences which were customarily not regarded as 'shameful' or 'infamous' such as smuggling and political or religious libel, the punishment would always be at risk of failure. In the

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[757] *Ibid.,* p. 166.

eighteenth century, the pillory and other forms of shaming penalties encountered a crisis. The repeatedly staged popular violence at the site of the pillory undermined the power of shame and the authority of law. It is also evident that the public shaming rituals increasingly found themselves unable to effectively evoke the moral sense of shame among offenders and the audience. These problems discredited shaming sanctions, and made shame a subject of contemporary legal debate. Eighteenth-century writers argued against the excessive and stigmatising use of shame, but they did not deny the essentiality of shame as a part of punishment and the broader penal system. What contemporary commentators were mostly concerned with was how to effectively utilise shaming techniques to punish and, more importantly, to reform offenders, without turning them into shameless and hardened monsters. Thus, this chapter demonstrates the moral significance and the socially-constructed nature of the sense of shame in the context of law and punishment. In addition, it once again indicates that shame was something that needed to be used carefully or reformed in order to prevent the danger of being abused.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

One of the major inspirations for this research project came from the modern non-historical study of shame. In the past few decades, the majority of psychologists, philosophers and anthropologists dedicated to shame have been inclined to define it as a morally problematic, harmful, and social emotion. This pessimistic view of shame has nevertheless come under criticism in recent years. *In Defense of Shame: The Faces of an Emotion* (2011), one of the latest multi-disciplinary studies in this area, brings together authors who rightly demonstrate the great moral value of shame; but they go from one extreme to the other, arguing that shame is entirely an individual, autonomous emotion, immune to social opinion and values.[758] While scholars on both sides have deepened our understandings of shame, I argue that their static and all-or-nothing mode of explanation oversimplify the potentially complex and dynamic concept of shame. Indeed, as this thesis has shown, in early modern Britain the emotion of shame was social as well as personal, morally virtuous as well as morally irrelevant or even bad. Moreover, shame was more than just an emotion; it could be a lasting and collective mental psyche, an outcome of moral judgement, a transgression or scandal, a device of judicial punishment, and even a commodity of great commercial and entertainment values.

In contrast to modern scholars who claim that shame is a socially constructed and

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[758] Deonna, Rodogno and Teroni, *In Defense of Shame*, p. 179.

morally bad emotion, I argue that shame was experienced and interpreted by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Protestants as a private, moral emotion. Religious shame was a feeling arising from an apprehension of personal sins and spiritual laxity, and also a continual psychological state of unworthiness and self-abasement. In most cases, shame was self-imposed through self-examination and prayer in everyday spiritual life. Even if a person's sin or backsliding was not exposed to the public, he or she would still experience intensive shame and confusion because Protestants believed that the omniscient God and his watchman in the human soul, conscience, could discover all hidden sinful thought, word and deed. Of course, this does not mean that social judgement did not play a part in arousing shame. Sermon preaching, public penance, and supervision between Christians within Godly communities all functioned as important means of evoking and inculcating shame. However, religious writers were inclined to regard shame exerted by outside or social judgements as secondary or potentially problematic, and stressed that genuine, penitential shame should be a private emotion, experienced through diligent introspection and sincere repentance.

Despite being a painful emotion, shame was wholeheartedly embraced by early modern Protestants, and was regarded as a means and sign of piety. In order to keep a holy life, the pious not only kept a watchful eye on sins, and brought shame to themselves whenever they committed any sinful behaviour, but also clothed themselves with humility and acknowledged their lowliness of status. Early modern Christian men and women recorded in diaries their feelings of shame for their impiety and their willingness to be abased in order to purge the soul and walk with God. Clergymen and

ministers urged people to fill themselves with deep sorrow and shame, arguing that an outpouring of shame was a precondition for receiving redemption. They also regarded the sense of shame as a powerful moral restraint which severed to resist temptation and sins, and a means of promoting virtue. Besides, religious writers emphasised the necessity of abasing the self and maintaining humility of the heart, and regarded this continual inward state of shame and humiliation as a weapon against the passion of pride and a prerequisite for the receiving of grace of God. In this sense, therefore, shame was not only a basic religious emotion, but constituted a crucial part of the Protestant psyche.

However, the sense of shame varied according to different religious groups. Unlike Calvinists who believed that only a limited number of people could be saved and that the elected could not experience the salvation in this world, Quakers argued that 'Christ has come to teach His people himself' and the Kingdom of Heaven could be experienced immediately by all. Convinced Quakers believed that they were superseded by Christ, and had entered into a state of perfection which was even more perfect than that of Adam before the fall. The denial of self-will and the idea of perfectionism made convinced Quakers believe that they had no sin to be ashamed of, and provided them with a power to overcome feelings of shame and to go naked for a sign. But this state of shamelessness was transient, since perfect Quakers had to go on living in such a depraved world and faced the danger of temptation and sin. Therefore, as with other Protestants of the times, Quakers still regarded shame as an important moral faculty against sin, and self-humiliation and lowliness as the right disposition to

maintain holiness and preserve the inner grace of God. Like seventeenth-century Protestants, eighteenth-century Methodists embraced shame through self-examination and prayer. But it is noteworthy that Methodist preachers devoted much attention to evoking and instilling shame in their followers. While their emotional preaching had to some extent made shame an externally-imposed emotion, critics of Methodist enthusiasms re-emphasised the private nature of shame, arguing that truly sincere devotional affections such as shame, fear, and regret should be felt through self-introspection, rather than outside enforcement. Despite nuanced understandings of shame among Protestant groups, the idea that spiritual shame was a private, moral emotion witnessed little change. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the evangelical revivalists continually emphasised the moral nature of shame and the importance of self-examination as a means of evoking and embracing this holy emotion.

In a more secular and social context, the contemporary senses of shame were complex, and in many respects different from religious understanding. The thesis has demonstrated that the eighteenth-century enlightenment and politeness elevated social factors to a place of significance in interpreting and experiencing shame. Philosophers and enlightenment writers identified shame as a socially constructed emotion. The social construction of shame was theorised by David Hume and Adam Smith who, in developing the theory of sympathy, argued that shame was a feeling which relied on the presence of others or social judgements and communication. Like religious writers, philosophers analysed in this thesis advocated the moral value of shame in promoting virtue and manners and in resisting vice. However, the emotion of shame was not

without problems; it also became a target of refinement in polite society. Polite and conduct writers saw excessive modesty, bashfulness and low self-esteem as impolite and reflections of a false sense of shame, and advised their readers to reject such behaviour because an overly shamefaced, humble disposition not only impeded polite sociability, but also exposed a person's weakness and blocked the path to gaining a good reputation in polite society. Here we find that shame could be an emotion irrelevant to morality when it referred to a timid, diffident psychology. We also find that dispositions such as self-abasement, lowliness, and humility, which had long been considered as the essential parts of the religious sense of shame, were coming under attack in polite society. In addition, this thesis has shown that the moral basis and power of shame was under threat from some of the more superficial and materialistic facets of polite culture. The culture of politeness promoted modern sociable living and material consumption, which in turn made many contemporaries believe that a person's appearance, dress, and wealth, as well as admiration by others, were the very foundation for gaining a reputation. This distorted sense of honour had a direct impact on the understanding of shame. Thus, while conduct writers repeatedly emphasised the fundamental role of moral virtue in shaping the right senses of shame and honour, they nevertheless observed that there were many people who feared the shame of being counted unfashionable. This debate about true and false notions of shame shows that it was not always a moral and positive emotion; rather, under the influence of eighteenth-century polite culture shame was at risk of being reduced to a morally superficial, or even bad conception.

Shame was not just an emotion; it could be turned into news products for moral, commercial and entertainment purposes. The immense expansion of print in the long eighteenth century brought shame, news of which had earlier circulated only in the courtroom or the immediate circle of the wrongdoer's neighbours, to a much wider public domain. Criminal prints between the mid-seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were characterised by their explicit moralising and ideological functions. Although sensational and didactic elements always coexisted in criminal accounts, their authors placed greater emphasis on moral implications than the lurid details of shame. The fact of a transgression was often represented as an exemplary basis for moralising, which aimed to teach readers that shame was the very nature and unavoidable end of crime, and the importance of keeping a moral sense of shame and a watchful conscience in order to prevent sinning and ruin. While crime and scandalous prints served to heighten public awareness and the abhorrence of errant individuals, we should be aware that they could not always succeed in inculcating a moral sense of shame in readers. Rather, as we have seen, the rise of scandalous publications in the eighteenth century reflected, and to some extent contributed to, a culture of shamelessness. Publishers and writers discovered the commercial and entertaining values of the personal shame of social elites. They invested much effort in representing the sensational and titillating aspects of upper-class sexual transgressions, and regarded moral instruction for their readers as a subordinate concern. Scandalous publications could not develop without capitalising on shame; it was in this context that shame became a commodity. Focusing on the most sensational details of the scandals of the high and mighty, and turning their

shame into 'news merchandise', publishers and writers profited handsomely. And it is evident that what fascinated readers was the voyeuristic thrill, rather than the alleged moral messages offered by these accounts. The rise of scandalous prints made the private lives and vice of upper class figures more accessible than ever before, and their immoral sexual behaviours a topic that could be freely talked about by unabashed readers. The extensive, shameless exploitation of sensationalism, as many contemporary writers stated, not only undermined the moral power of prints and reduced them to a form of erotica and entertainment, but weakened readers' moral sense of shame toward issues that they should have treated with abhorrence and shame.

By considering shame as both a communal moral sanction and a device of judicial punishment, this thesis has demonstrated the social and moral characteristics of shame in the early modern judicial context, and has again indicated that shame was something that should be carefully deployed in order to prevent the danger of it being abused or weakened. The social dimension of shame was reflected in the means and purpose of punishing offenders. By exposing a criminal to the public and labelling him or her as infamous and unworthy of trust or respect by the community, shaming punishments aimed to damage the reputation of the culprit, and to impress the shamefulness of both the offender and sanction on spectators, in order to deter them from committing similar crimes in the future. The judicial authorities were clear that the success of shaming penalties relied on the co-operation of the audience, and that such support depended on popular attitudes toward the offence and the manner of punishment. The application of official shaming punishments was not indiscriminate; as we have seen, crimes which

were customarily deemed 'shameful' or 'infamous' by the populace – those relating to sexual immorality, marital disloyalty, and kinds of cheating or fraudulent behaviours – were more likely to incur shaming penalties. The close connection between the nature of offence and the form of punishment not only shows that shame as a disciplinary action was a product of negotiation between the authorities and the communities, but also indicates the significance of mutual trust and social co-operation within a community in shaping popular understanding of shame. It also shows the great impact of this socially-constructed sense of shame on the decision-making process of judicial punishment. However, if the judicial authorities inflicted shame on persons whose offences were not commonly 'shameful' or 'infamous' in the eyes of the populace, the public shaming was at risk of failure. In the eighteenth century, and particularly in London, the repeated popular violence and celebration of offenders at the site of the pillory made public shaming penalties and the role of shame in the broader penal system a subject of heated debate. Reformist writers criticised the excessive and stigmatizing use of shaming techniques, complaining that it not only led to disorder and violence, but also turned offenders and spectators into hardened and callous monsters. Despite the continual criticism of shaming punishments, many commentators still regarded shame as a crucial part of the penal system, and paid more attention to questions of how to use shame to chastise and reform offenders effectively, and prevent them from becoming inured to shame.

Overall, the thesis has made a contribution to existing scholarship on shame by arguing that shame was by no means a static or one-dimensional concept, as has often

been implied by modern scholars. I have demonstrated that in the early modern religious context shame was primarily a self-imposed, private emotion felt through self-examination and repentance. Spiritual shame was not (merely) an instantaneous emotion, but also a lasting disposition towards humility and self-abasement. Yet while religious shame was a sentiment concerned with personal salvation, in more secular and social contexts, especially in the eighteenth-century contexts of politeness, print, and judicial administration, shame was always interpreted and experienced as a socially constructed or externally imposed emotion concerned with a person's public honour or reputation. The distinction between religious and secular senses of shame thus not only refutes the sweeping and over-simplified position that shame is entirely a social conception, but also denies the recent overcorrecting argument that shame is a completely autonomous emotion. Moreover, this thesis has also demonstrated that early modern contemporaries regarded shame as something of great moral value. Religious, conduct and legal writers repeatedly emphasised the significance of internalising a moral sense of shame. They regarded shame as a sign of penitence and piety, an inward restraint that kept people away from sin and vice, a positive factor that stimulated self-examination and reform, and an important means to define and enforce codes of behaviour and shared social or legal values. However, shame was not always just a positively moral phenomenon. As we have seen, shame could be morally-irrelevant and even harmful to personal reputation and polite sociability when it was expressed as a timid, awkward emotion. In addition, social, commercial, and judicial factors which emerged in the eighteenth century could also undermine the moral basis and power of

shame, and reduced it to a morally superficial and even bad emotion. Thus, this thesis has on the one hand denied the traditional explanation of shame as something detrimental to both individuals and the society, and on the other hand, has revealed that the moral characteristics of shame were not immutable, but something which faced the danger of being abused and weakened.

Another contribution of this research is that it has broadened the scope of current historical research on shame. As we have seen in the first chapter, the study of shame thus far undertaken by medievalists is confined predominantly to the themes of chivalry, Christianity, and the (female) body. Research on early modern shame is even more limited in scope and amount. Besides Gail Kern Paster's exploration of the relationship between shame and the body in the light of humoral medical theory, the majority of works – including recently published monographs such as Nash and Kilday's *Cultures of Shame* (2010) and the edited volume *Shame, Blame, and Culpability* (2013) – associates shame predominantly with a social practice and disciplinary weapon rather than an emotion, and examines it primarily in the contexts of law and social control. Therefore, this thesis, by examining shame through the lens of religion, politeness, print culture, and punishment, and treating it as an emotion, a sense of honour, a moral judgement, an entertaining commodity, and penal weapon, has deepened our understanding of the cultures of shame in early modern Britain, and added new themes which might be illuminating for future research. Moreover, this thesis has shown that these contexts in which shame has been explored are not isolated from each other. Examining shame from different perspectives not only allows us to draw a picture of

the general cultures of shame, but helps us to see how the meanings of shame within different historical contexts connected and conflicted with each other.

Moreover, this thesis has offered new perspectives from which to enlighten and deepen our understanding of other historical themes. In particular, while historians of religious psychology have paid much attention to melancholy, despair and madness, and regard them as the distinctive characteristic of early modern Protestant or Puritan psychology, I have sought to demonstrate that shame was a basic religious sentiment and part of the Protestant psyche. Moreover, in contrast to Donna Andrew who applauds the disciplinary nature and moral utility of scandal journalism, my research has presented a less sanguine view of the role of eighteenth-century print culture, arguing that the rise of scandalous and satirical publications, together with their extensive exploitation of sensationalism and eroticism, abused the shaming power of prints and weakened contemporaries' moral sense of shame. This increase in shamelessness thus challenges Norbert Elias's famous conception of a 'civilising process', which suggests that the medieval and early modern period witnessed an increase in shame, disgust, and repugnance as a means of self-restraint and social refinement.

Last but not least, this research has contributed to the burgeoning field of the history of the emotions.[759] In particular, it testifies to the validity of the experimental concepts of 'emotional regime' and 'emotional community' proposed respectively by William Reddy and Barbara Rosenwein. Reddy defines an 'emotional regime' as 'the set of normative emotions and the official rituals, practices, and 'emotives' that express

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[759] For the general introduction of this burgeoning research field, see Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* (Oxford, 2015).

and inculcate them', and argues that such a regime aims to regulate and control people's ways of feeling and their emotional life.[760] 'Regime' is indeed a strong term; according to Reddy, it means a dominant norm of emotional life, and also reflects a set of enforcement machinery, which is operated by powerful authorities or institutions, and functions as a means to marginalise, punish, or exclude people who fail to conform to the prescriptive ways of feeling. Thus, in the early modern religious context shame clearly represented and stood at the very heart of an 'emotional regime', in which the religious authorities – the church, clergymen, and preachers – urged people to embrace devotional feelings of shame in everyday life, and warned that if they failed to do so they would be damned by God. Shame as a constitutive part of an 'emotional regime' can also be seen in judicial and penal contexts, in which the legal authorities and criminal writers put much effort into inculcating people with a notion that shame was the nature and the end of crime; urging offenders to confess with deep sorrow and shame; and impressing on spectators at the site of the pillory the shame of the offenders being punished.

While each historical context examined in this thesis possessed dominant or publicly shared emotional norms or 'styles', we might see some of these 'emotional styles' as reflections of what Barbara Rosenwein would label 'emotional communities', rather than Reddy's 'emotional regimes'. According to Rosenwein, 'emotional communities' are 'groups of people animated by common or similar interests, values, and emotional styles and valuations'. In contrast to 'emotional regime', different

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[760] William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling. A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 129.

'emotional communities' could coexist simultaneously. Besides, an 'emotional community' has less compulsory and coercive elements, and its member might even 'feel quite comfortable' with the norms of his or her community'.[761] According to Rosenwein's theory and the findings of my research, it is arguably true that eighteenth-century polite society can be seen as something constituted by different 'emotional communities', while members of one 'community' regarded politeness as an inward refinement reflecting moral virtue, and treated immoral manners with a sense of shame, persons from another 'community' blushed for virtuous behaviour and feared the shame of being counted unfashionable. 'Emotional communities' can be also found in the context of eighteenth-century print culture. Thus, while in a 'community' there were high-minded readers and writers who complained about the growth of sensational publications and the consequent problems of shamelessness, in another 'emotional community' we find that many booksellers, writers, and readers were clearly not ashamed to represent, read, or talk about conventionally shameful matters such as sexual misbehaviours.

I have sought to investigate contemporary meanings of shame in different historical contexts, and to outline the main characteristics and trends of early modern cultures of shame. However, as is often the case, the restricted time and word limit for a doctoral thesis makes this study lead to more questions than answers. In the third and fourth chapter I discovered the growth of a 'false' and morally-superficial sense of

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[761] Jan Plamper, 'The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein, and Peter Stearns', *History and Theory*, vol. 49 (2010), p. 253, 256; Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions', *Passions in Context*, vol. 1 (2010), p. 32.

shame by examining observations and criticisms from contemporary moral and conduct commentators. It would be worth making a further study of the mental world of individuals such as fops, macaronis, and readers, in order to see how they felt and thought about fashion and the scandalous prints that they encountered or the behaviour in which they indulged. In the fifth chapter I demonstrated the causal relationship between 'shameful' crime and 'shameful' punishments. Since I made my argument mainly by adopting theoretical and intellectual approaches, in future research it would be worth exploring popular attitudes and sentiments toward different crimes by using materials such as ballads and local court records, and investigating the cultural meanings of languages such as 'filth', 'cleanliness', and 'disgust', in order to explore their connections with the concept of shame. Researching these questions would shed additional light on why some sorts of offence were more 'shameful' and 'infamous' than others in the eyes of community, and why 'shameful' crimes were more likely to incur 'shameful' penalties.

In addition to the historical contexts examined in this thesis, there are new and potentially valuable areas that merit further research. For example, it might be worth considering at more length whether Britain witnessed a secularisation of shame over the long eighteenth century.[762] Researching this question would shed light on the

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[762] This is a complex question, however. To begin with, 'secularisation' assumes that for a very long period of time, shame was a religiously-constructed concept. However, my research implied that religion might have never played a hegemonic role in deciding the natures and meanings of shame. While religious shame was a moral emotion concerning personal salvation, shame in a secular or social context was mainly concerned with a person's social reputation. The fact that Christians could not live in complete isolation from society or social opinion means that spiritual shame and secular shame were both important sentiments which could co-exist all the time. The complexity of this question is also reflected in the fact that while in the eighteenth century social and secular factors were elevated to a place of significance in deciding and evoking shame, shame as an essential religious emotion was to some extent enhanced by the eighteenth-century evangelical revival.

interactions between the religious and secular notions of shame, and the change and continuity of the broader culture that shaped these notions.[763] Moreover, given the fact that contemporaries' understandings of shame might have varied dramatically according to their gender, social rank, profession, and location (i.e. urban vs rural, public space vs private space), and that the emotion of shame was closely connected with activities such as homosexuality, duelling, and suicide, researching shame in these specific contexts and themes would deepen our understanding of how shame was experienced and interpreted by different individuals and groups of people in early modern Britain. In essence, this thesis represents one of the first in-depth studies of early modern British cultures of shame, but more importantly, it is hoped that it will illuminate and open up future historical research in this extraordinarily rich, but under-studied field.

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[763] With regard to the change and continuality of the cultures of shame beyond the eighteenth century, it would be worth exploring how the nineteen-century social and religious movements worked to re-imposed older notions of shame and moral norms. Indeed, the scandalous literature was not a permanent feature of print culture but, as Vic Gatrell's study of visual print culture suggests, a temporary trend that was extinguished by Victorian attitudes. The relationship between Victorian and Georgian mind-sets is therefore ripe for further research.

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