

Honour, Pride and Shame in Rural Ireland

The Case of the Kerry Babies

Introduction

The theoretical debate on how to overcome the micro/macro divide in sociology needs to be supplanted with case studies which put some of the abstract generalisations into practice (Knorr-Cetina & Cicourel 1981; Alexander *et al.* 1987; Collins 1981). The problem is to combine an understanding of the everyday life of ordinary people – their emotions and feelings, the way they read, understand, and interpret the world – with a realistic analysis of structures, discourses, institutions and long-term historical processes.

It may be, however, that the task is not so much in the theorising, as in the writing; how to capture the feelings and emotions of interpersonal relations and, at the same time, to see them as constituted within social fields, movements and processes. There have been some notable achievements. Through a careful examination of contemporary manners, Wouters (1989; 1992; 1999) has shown how, in a process of informalisation and a controlled decontrolling of emotions, people in Western society want, and are expected, to show their feelings.

Thomas Scheff (1990; 1997) has devised a system of part/whole analysis which enables him to make links between social encounters of individuals as emotionally embodied selves with large scale social events. He argues that social emotions of pride and shame play a major role in social bonding and social conformity. I agree with Scheff that the micro/macro problem can be overcome through capturing the emotionally embodied self, showing how the self is realised in the events and contexts of everyday life, and linking the self to broader institutions and long-term processes. While Scheff is right to focus on pride and emotion, I believe that there is much to be learnt from anthropological writings on honour and shame (see Peristiany 1965; Gilmore 1987). Honour is closely linked to pride and shame, but because it is a more objective social

condition, it moves the analysis to a more abstract, higher level. Moreover, focusing on honour helps us see pride and shame as a part of strategic struggle for power (Bourdieu 1965). It forces us to look at shaming strategies – at how people are dishonoured – and to move beyond Scheff's more structural-functional approach.

Carlo Ginsburg (1989) has advocated an historical method which is compatible with Scheff's part/whole analysis. Ginsburg claims that a microscopic analysis of a single event can help illuminate the structure, context and content of a whole society at one point in time. I argue that a detailed analysis of what became known in Ireland as the Case of the Kerry Babies, helps reveal the structure of Irish society in the 1980s and the social transformations that took place in the last half of the twentieth century. It also provides important insights into the connection between the microworld of honour, pride and shame and the macroworld of the Irish state.

The Case of the Kerry Babies

On 14 April 1984 the body of a newborn baby boy was found on a beach near Cahirciveen in County Kerry on the south-west coast of Ireland. The baby had multiple stab wounds. There was a major police investigation. Six detectives from the Murder Squad in Dublin became involved, including its three senior members who were originally from Kerry. This involved one of the most comprehensive police investigations into the morals and lifestyles of vulnerable and alternative women who were potentially, or known to be, sexually active. Two weeks after the investigation began, Joanne Hayes and members of her family, who lived fifty miles away near Tralee, were brought in for questioning. Twelve hours later they signed detailed confessions as to how Joanne Hayes had given birth to a baby boy, and how she had stabbed the baby to death with a carving knife. Her sister and two brothers confessed to helping place the body into a plastic bag, to putting the bag in the family car, and to driving fifty miles across the mountains to Slea Head on the Dingle Peninsula where, they said, they threw the bag into the sea. Her mother and her aunt confessed to being witnesses and being involved in these events. The body of the baby was then, supposedly, washed up on the beach in Cahirciveen some hours later.

This neat conclusion to the investigation was disrupted the following day when the body of another baby (the Tralee baby) was found on the Hayes's farm. Joanne Hayes had tried repeatedly to persuade her interrogators that, about the same date as the Cahirciveen baby had been found, she had given

birth to a baby boy in a field at the back of the family home. She said that the baby had died shortly afterwards. Forensic examination showed that there were no stab marks on the baby found at the Hayes farm. Moreover, because its lungs had not fully inflated, there was doubt that it had achieved an independent existence. The police now had two dead newborn babies on their hands. However, they claimed that because Joanne Hayes and members of her family had already voluntarily confessed to their involvement in the murder of the Cahirciveen baby, the discovery of the Tralee Baby meant that she must have given birth to twins. It was decided to press ahead with the murder charges in relation to the Cahirciveen baby. But there was a snag. Forensic tests carried out by the state laboratory showed that the Cahirciveen baby was blood group A. This posed a major problem for the police. Both Joanne Hayes and her lover Jeremiah Locke were blood group O. So too was the Tralee baby found on the Hayes farm. This indicated that Joanne Hayes could not have been the mother of the Cahirciveen baby. But the police insisted that Joanne Hayes and her family had confessed voluntarily to their involvement in its murder.

Never doubting the veracity of the confessions they had obtained, the police were adamant that she had twins, and pressed ahead with the murder charges. They devised a range of theories to overcome the forensic evidence and substantiate this claim. One theory argued that the blood samples used in the forensic analysis had been contaminated and this had to false blood group identifications. Another theory was that there was a third baby, stabbed to death by Joanne Hayes in a similar fashion to the Cahirciveen baby, which was dumped at sea as described in the confessions, but never found. This became known as the Azores baby.

However, the main theory was that as well as having sex with her lover Jeremiah Locke, Joanne Hayes had sex with another man who was blood group A. She did this within ninety-six hours of having sex with Jeremiah Locke, thereby becoming pregnant with twins of different blood groups. This became known as the Superfecundation Theory.

After months of deliberation the charges against Joanne Hayes were withdrawn by the Director of Public Prosecutions. When the case came to court, the state announced that it was not proceeding with it. But a journalist from a national newspaper had been following the case closely. He had obtained a copy of the police file. His detailed expose in *The Sunday Independent* led to considerable publicity in the media. The central issue was how Joanne Hayes and members of her family had confessed to a crime which the state's own forensic evidence indicated they could not have committed. After an internal police inquiry had failed, the Government announced that there would be a

Public Tribunal of Inquiry held into the case. The Tribunal began in January, 1985. It lasted eighty-four days. It generated widespread media coverage, public debate and political protest. Much of the Tribunal was devoted to the police trying to substantiate their superfecundation thesis. Towards the end of the Tribunal hearings, one of their own expert witnesses, specially brought in from London, testified that Joanne Hayes could not have given birth to a baby of blood group A as there was no anti-A serum in her blood.

Justice Lynch, the High Court Judge who presided over the Tribunal and wrote its report, concluded that Joanne Hayes had only given birth to one baby, the Tralee baby found on her farm. However, he concluded that she and members of her family were so ashamed about what had happened to this baby that, when they were brought in for questioning, they made up the confessions about the Cahirciveen baby, mainly out of a sense of shame and guilt about how they had treated the Tralee baby. The problem which was never satisfactorily explained by Justice Lynch was how members of the Hayes family had given graphic descriptions about a journey of fifty miles over the mountains and down along the Dingle Peninsula. A journey which was necessary if the Hayes family were to be connected to the Cahirciveen baby's death and yet, which Justice Lynch concluded, never took place.

The unintended consequence of the Tribunal hearings, the report and the numerous books and articles written about the case was that they produced a wealth of ethnographic detail about life in rural Ireland in the second half of the twentieth century. As part of a wider study, I have read the transcripts of the Tribunal hearings, the Tribunal report, and the books, journal and magazine articles that have been written about the case.¹

The case raises important questions, at a micro level, the nature of honour, about pride and shame in Irish society and, at a macro level, about the transitions that took place in Irish society during the last half of the twentieth century. How was it that in one of the most conservative corners of Catholic Ireland in the 1980s, where over nine in ten people were Catholics, and where over eight in ten went to Mass every Sunday, a young single woman, brought up within a strict moral code of self-denial, had enough self-confidence and pride to have an affair with a married man, become pregnant by him, give birth to a daughter, and live openly as a single mother?

1 See, for example, Hayes 1985; McCafferty 1985; O'Halloran 1985; Kerrigan 1985; O'Mahony 1992; Inglis 1998c; *Report of the Tribunal of Inquiry into the Kerry Babies Case* 1985.

But whatever pride Joanne Hayes had in becoming a single mother, this quickly turned to shame when she became pregnant with the Tralee baby. She realised that her family would not accept her having a second child by a married man (1985: 34). This time she did not tell anyone she was pregnant. She did not go to a doctor. She did not apply for maternity leave. She wore loose clothes to conceal her condition. She did not tell her lover about her condition until she was five months pregnant. He did not show much interest or concern and told her that his wife was also pregnant. In April 1984, months of silence, denial and concealment came to an end when the Tralee baby was born.

It must be remembered that, at this time, contraceptives were only legally available to *bona fide* married couples who, having obtained a doctor's prescription, could then purchase them from a pharmacy. But, if they had personal moral objections, pharmacists were not obliged to sell contraceptives, and many in Tralee refused to do so.

But there was more at play than the difficulty in obtaining contraceptives. There was an absence of a contraceptive culture. In her own explanation of what happened, Joanne Hayes insisted that neither she nor Jeremiah Locke considered using contraception. 'I was deeply in love and to use contraceptives merely to have sex would have been placing a barrier where emotionally I felt none. My commitment was total and unlimited' (Hayes 1985: 34).²

But there were other processes at work. The accusation of obtaining false confessions was an attack on the honour and integrity of the Irish police. Did the strategy of defending their honour necessarily involve strategically impugning the honour of Joanne Hayes and her family? Did they deliberately set to characterise her as a wanton woman, and did Justice Lynch willingly allow them to do this during the Tribunal?

To answer these questions, we need to disentangle the intricate weave of shame, pride and guilt. This brings us into the micro-world of emotions. The problem, of course, is how to develop a hermeneutic understanding of the subjective meaning and experience of these emotions, and link them to the macro-world of the police, the judiciary and the Irish state.

2 Most of Joanne Hayes's book (1985) is taken up with her description of the Tribunal. Only the first forty pages deal with her family background and love affair with Jeremiah Locke.

Shame, guilt and pride

Scheff (1990: 79) argues that shame exists in modern societies just as much as it does in traditional ones. The difference is that in traditional societies they have a language to express shame. In modern societies, the language to express shame has disappeared and, consequently, it remains hidden, bypassed and unacknowledged (1994: 49-50). Joanne Hayes was caught in the transition from traditional to modern Irish society. If there was a language to express shame it was heavily influenced by Catholic Church teaching. It was not until the Catholic Church's monopoly over Irish morality was broken that the shame of a woman giving birth outside marriage began to disappear.

Shame is the intense pain that comes when one's whole sense of self, self-esteem, and sense of belonging has been diminished, or is under attack. It is a fear of social rejection, of being avoided, shunned, or laughed at. Shame is the personal emotional feeling that is at the heart of social bonding. People conform to social norms because they find it emotionally difficult being different, being the focus of attention. Non-conformists like Joanne Hayes feel the conflict of being different, but are able to overcome this.

Social bonding is, in effect, more solid and less rigid when a group, family, community or society is confident enough to see non-conformity not as an act of betrayal or disloyalty and, therefore, not as threat to social unity. In this scenario, individual agency is tolerated and conditionally accepted. On the other hand, social bonding is weaker when non-conformity is seen as a threat and is immediately sanctioned or punished.

In some respects, then, the reaction of Joanne Hayes's family, her fellow workers and the local community when she became pregnant and gave birth to her daughter Yvonne, could be seen as an indication of the strength of the social bond. She may have felt the conflict of being a non-conformist, but she did not feel ashamed. She said that her family were 'very upset at first' and wanted her to have the baby adopted. She refused. She told them they could throw her out, but they 'never threatened such extreme action and they accepted her (Yvonne) happily when she was born' (1985: 32). The social bonds in her family, village and workplace were sufficient to prevent any major shaming strategy over what might have been deemed a major sexual transgression at the time. But it might have been different if her father and uncle had been still alive. They might have seen her sexual transgression as an attack on the honour of the family.

The Kerry Babies Case is an encapsulation of the shift from traditional to modern Irish society. In traditional Ireland, society was relatively undifferen-

tiated. The balance between individual and the group favoured the group. The individual was often engulfed in the group (Scheff 1990: 179). In modern Ireland, the balance has shifted away from the group towards the individual. Families are not strong enough to prevent individuals doing what they want. These individuals have strong personalities and a high level of self-esteem that enables them to be different.

But, especially in a period of cultural transition, unless there is support, strong personalities can become fragile. Joanne Hayes was almost five months pregnant with the Tralee baby before she told Jeremiah Locke about her condition. He effectively disowned her, telling her that night that his wife was also pregnant for a second time. But even before this, the strong pride she took in being a single mother had turned to shame. Maybe she made a major miscalculation in the game of making love and having babies with a married man. Maybe she realised she could no longer expect to receive sympathy for being an innocent girl who, first time out, got caught out through having an affair with a married man. Despite her initial self-confidence, Joanne Hayes does not appear to have been a successful player in the Irish game of love, sex, and marriage as played in Kerry in the early 1980s. Her pride turned to shame. She did everything to keep up appearances, to deceive herself and others. She devised various mechanisms to conceal and hide her shame. She left the modern world and returned into the traditional norms and values of the Irish family and played out the shameful role of the fallen woman.

The traditional Irish family engulfed everyone, and did not allow individual difference, especially in relation to sex. Daughters who became pregnant outside of marriage had to hide themselves away. Single women lived in fear of what would happen to them if they became pregnant (Raferty & O'Sullivan 1999: 316-317). The social bond in the Hayes family was weakened by Joanne continuing her affair with Jeremiah Locke after Yvonne was born. The modern world began to collapse and her family, particularly her mother, became intent on saving face. They refused to recognise Joanne's pregnancy. They said nothing about it. It was this unacknowledged sense of shame, which built up over eight months, which so easily turned to rage after her baby was born, leading her to abuse and abandon it.

Honour and Pride

Pride can be seen as the personal estimation of being a good moral person; it produces an emotional sense of well-being. Honour is the objective side of the

same coin. It is the way one perceives oneself and, on the other hand, the way one is perceived by others. Unlike shame and pride, honour is not an emotion or sentiment (see Stewart 1994: 129). Honour is given when people say good things about and do good things for you, your family, community, people or nation. Public honour makes one feel proud. However, if one's honour is undermined or attacked, the point of contact is one's pride; one feels ashamed.

Studies of honour have shown that a woman's honour is closely linked to her modesty, purity and chastity (Campbell 1965: 146; Schneider 1971; Gilmore 1987: 4; Davis 1987: 26; Delaney 1987: 36). Pitt-Rivers argued that a 'woman is dishonoured, loses her *vergüenza*, with the tainting of her sexual purity' (1965: 42). He argued that when a woman commits adultery, her husband's manliness is attacked. It brings dishonour not just to him, but his family, and 'to all the social groups who are involved reciprocally in his honour' (1965: 46). This may help explain why leaders of the Murder Squad, the national elite of Irish detectives, became so involved in a case of infanticide. The chief and his two second-in-command officers were from Kerry. It may be that they saw the murder of a newborn baby as a breakdown of the sexual moral order and an attack on the honour of Kerry women. In his Tribunal report, Justice Lynch castigated the sympathy that was extended to Joanne Hayes and contrasted it with a lack of sympathy for Jeremiah Locke's wife. But he too felt that there was a breakdown in moral order. While many people claimed that the Case hinged on the coincidence of two dead babies, Justice Lynch did not see any coincidence. He asked: 'What is so unbelievably extraordinary about two women in County Kerry in one of the weeks in 1984 both deciding to do away with their babies?' (Report of Tribunal 1985: 148).

In rural Irish communities honour is closely tied to one's family. There is a demand to keep up good appearances, to save the family name and face. It is family honour that produces a sense of acceptance and belonging, a sense of pride and well-being. If one member of the family behaves badly, the honour of the family can be undermined, and this can bring shame on all its members. But the Hayes family was vulnerable. Since the death some years earlier of Joanne Hayes's father Paddy and her maternal uncle Maurice Fuller – who lived with the Hayes family and who had amassed considerable social, cultural and political capital – there had been no male figure to defend the honour of the family. Indeed, Joanne Hayes recognised this: 'I have no doubt that if he (her father) and Uncle Maurice had lived just a few years longer I would never have found myself in the trouble which has blighted all our lives' (1985: 27). In other words, if the two patriarchal heads of the Hayes family had been around

to protect the honour of the family by protecting the virtue of Joanne Hayes, the Kerry Babies Case would never have happened.

The Honour of the Hayes family

Joanne Hayes's honour was derived from the honour of being a member of a well-established family. Her father, Paddy Hayes, had married Mary Fuller. The Fuller family were politically and socially well-connected. Ned Fuller had been headmaster in the local school. In the 1980s he was still referred to as 'the Master Fuller'. Maurice Fuller, Joanne Hayes's uncle who had lived with the family was involved in politics and the local football club. He was President of the local branch of Fianna Fáil, the largest political party in Ireland. He was also the Peace Commissioner for the area. This meant that when Joanne Hayes was growing up, the local policeman used to be a regular visitor to the Hayes family farm, getting Maurice Fuller to witness and give 'his seal of approval' to various documents.

Maurice Fuller had four sisters. Mary had married Paddy Hayes, Joanne's father. The other Fuller sisters had high status positions. The eldest, Kitty, trained as a teacher and then became a nun in the Mercy Order. Joan also trained as a teacher, but gave up for health reasons. She worked as a priest's housekeeper. Bridie, who lived at home with the Hayes family, had trained as a nurse, worked in Malaysia after the war for a number of years, returned home and worked in the local hospital. She was the only woman in the village, and one of the few single women in 1950s Ireland, to own a motor car.

The honour of Joanne Hayes was tied in with the public honour accumulated by previous generations of her family. Her personal honour came from having been educated by the Mercy nuns in the local convent school, having attained her Leaving Certificate and, then, having secured a good job in the Sports Centre in Tralee. But personal honour in rural Ireland in the 1980s was closely linked to sexual honour. The logic of the Irish game of female sexual honour had its origins in practices of self-denial developed after the Famine (1845-1848). While these practices pertained to all aspects of personal behaviour, they pertained specifically to sex and marriage (see Inglis 1998a: 158-177). The honour and economic well-being of the family depended on nobody having sex outside marriage. For the daughters of the family who did not marry, this meant a life of celibacy.

This is what had happened in the Fuller family. Of the four daughters, only Joanne's mother Mary had married. She had four children, none of whom

married. The Catholic Church was the primary mechanism by which the stem family practices were inculcated in bodies. Obeying Catholic Church teaching was central to maintaining the purity and chastity of one's children and the honour of the family. The normative expectation was that single women did not look for or engage in sexual intercourse.

Changes in Irish Honour

To understand the changes that occurred in Ireland during the second half of the twentieth century and, specifically, what happened to Joanne Hayes, we need to appreciate the changes that took place in attitudes and feelings about women, the body and sexuality. At a macro level, these processes can be seen as the slow collision between the forces of, on the one hand, traditional, legal, fundamentalist Catholicism and, on the other, pluralist, democratic, liberal individualism. The concepts of what was right and wrong, good and bad, honourable and shameful behaviour had been changing dramatically since the 1970s (see Inglis 1998a; 1998b).

At a structural level, the monopoly that the Catholic Church had developed over morality was being challenged. An increasing number of women no longer accepted the Church's definition of what it was to be a good woman (Hug 1999). There was similar resistance to what the Church regarded as good and evil about the body and sexuality. At a personal level the Church's monopoly over morality was being challenged by young women like Joanne Hayes. When Joanne and her colleagues, mostly female, went out for a drink after work they were challenging men, the traditional Catholic understanding of a good woman, and the dominant conception of women's honour and sexuality. When Joanne Hayes began her affair with Jeremiah Locke and became serially pregnant by him, she was breaking the traditional Catholic principles of purity, chastity and self-denial. In this respect, she was an agent of social change. She may have followed her emotions, she may have been romantically swept off her feet but, as Bourdieu (1977: 17) argues, she also probably weighed up 'the costs of transgressing the official norm and the gains in respectability accruing from respect for the rule'.

Honour as a strategic struggle

Honour is at stake in almost every social encounter (Bourdieu 1965: 204). A rude word or gesture, an immodest act, at an important moment, could seriously undermine one's honour. Bourdieu (1977: 15) points out that all the players in the game of honour have an automatic, intuitive, second-nature understanding of the rules, how they apply to specific contexts, the extent to which they can be stretched and, generally, what is possible and permissible. However, it is a different matter when the struggle for honour is moved out from a rural village or town, into the judicial field and into a public inquiry. Local strategies are no longer effective. One cannot resort to the honour of the family name. Lies told to protect one's honour are exposed. Any expectation of abiding by rules such as 'live and let live' has to be abandoned.

The game of honour is about making challenges about someone's character, and responding to these challenges. But the game of honour is generally played at a local level with one's own people. Joanne Hayes's affair with Jeremiah Locke was not subjected to a public challenge. It was in the public domain, but it was deemed to be a private matter to be dealt with by the family. But once the state became involved, first through the police, then through the Tribunal, there was an open, public and very serious challenge made to the personal honour of Joanne Hayes and the public honour of the family. The game was far more subtle and complicated, and played for much higher stakes.

Once a challenge is made to one's own honour, or that of one's family, then the stack of symbolic cards that has been carefully constructed over the years, can come tumbling down. Of course, it all depends on who makes the challenge. As Bourdieu (1965; 1977) repeatedly wrote, many disputes and conflicts between local inhabitants are rooted in struggles for honour. There are rules how the struggles should be enacted, fought out, and resolved. But if the challenge to one's honour comes not from a social equal, but from a powerful figure or, worse still, a group or institution, then the chances for responding and avoiding humiliation are limited. For example, challenges made about one's honour by the Catholic Church in Ireland could, certainly in the past, be socially damning. But its capacity to shame has been reduced considerably. But it is a different matter when the challenges come from state organisations and are made by police, lawyers, and judges.

Shaming Strategies

To understand shame, then, we have to understand not only how it emerges as a spontaneous feeling in people, but also how it emerges in power and dependency relationships, particularly as part of an overall strategy of demeaning. Most of the examples Berke (1986) gives of shaming strategies suggest that they take place in personal relationships, particularly within families when parents shame their children. But if shame is a mechanism for maintaining social conformity, we need to broaden the focus to include larger social groups and identify and describe the different strategies that are used to demean and demoralise. Shaming strategies can be unconscious, spontaneous, or automatic reflex mechanisms. This is particularly the case in interpersonal relations. However, others strategies, particularly those employed by the police and their lawyers in the Kerry Babies Case, can be extremely rational and calculated. What is required, then, is a thick anthropological description of the way people in power do and say things to make people feel ashamed. More importantly, if we are to make a connection between the micro-world of emotions and the macro-world of structures, we need to take shame out of the world of interpersonal relationships and identify how institutions make people feel ashamed. The strategic attempt to shame Joanne Hayes and her family, did not come from the local villagers. It came from the state.

Shamers often belong to institutions and organisations which, because they protect morality, specialise in bringing shame. In Ireland, the power of shaming has rested primarily with policemen, lawyers, judges, priests, teachers and journalists. The traditional power of the priest in Ireland centred on shaming strategies, particularly denouncing people from the altar. But again it would be wrong to think that the priest was acting as a private individual. The institutional church helped devise and implement the shaming strategies for transgressing its moral rules and regulations. Up to 1980s, orders of Irish nuns, particularly the Good Shepard Sisters, ran Magdalen asylums for unmarried mothers (Finnegan 2001). These asylums were part of the institutional strategy of shaming and saving honour.

Ritual humiliation and shaming was one of the primary tactics the police used in interrogating the Hayes. In her statement of complaint, Joanne Hayes

3 Berke (1986: 265) suggests, wrongly I believe, that shaming strategies do not devolve so much from a struggle for power as from a personality defect on the part of the shamer.

alleged that she was subjected to a series of insults. She claimed that one of the detectives said that her sister Kathleen was stupid. Allegedly he went on to say:

And your ould (sic) Auntie Bridie. It is unknown how many people yourself and herself have killed between the two of you. And your own mother outside there and she like a tramp at the side of the road. Ned, my God, he is awful fond of the drink lately. Is he afraid he will be found out that he did away with the baby? Mike won't be milking a cow for a very long time to come (Report of the Tribunal 1985: 232).

In the Tribunal Report (1985: 80), Justice Lynch argued that if insulting or shameful remarks were made to members of the Hayes family, it was 'of no great importance'. The family were helping the police with a murder investigation. 'It was not a tea party they were at.' This suggests that ritualised insulting and shaming strategies may be an accepted part of the process that police use to 'soften' suspects during interrogation. Used repeatedly on a vulnerable family they could result in members of the family making false confessions.

During the Tribunal hearings the legal teams for the police used a number of strategies to establish that Joanne Hayes was a liar, a sociopath and an immoral promiscuous woman. However, it was not only Joanne Hayes who was constructed as being immoral. There was an attempt to argue that she was a member of group of work colleagues who also behaved immorally. For example, Peggy Houlihan, a cleaner at the Sports Centre where Joanne Hayes worked, was questioned about the morality of her social habits, her drinking, being out on her own with married men, especially going out to the pub with Jeremiah Locke and taking a lift in his car (see O'Halloran 1985: 179).

However, the main shaming strategy used by the police was to claim that Joanne Hayes was a promiscuous woman who having had sex with two different men within ninety-six hours, gave birth to twins of different blood groups. To sustain this claim the legal team for the police produced a scientific journal article which showed that superfecundation was possible. In effect, superfecundation is a freak event; there have only been eight cases documented in medical history. However, because it was known to have happened and it was therefore a possibility, the Judge allowed the police legal team to construct their case around the possibility of superfecundation having taken place. This led to numerous questions being asked about Joanne Hayes's sexual history. It was implied that she slept with one man, Tom Flynn, and afterwards wrote his name on her mattress as if this was a trophy or 'notch' on her gun. It transpired that Tom Flynn was the name of the man who worked in a furniture store, who

delivered the bed to the Hayes household. The superfecundation claim also led to a series of very personal questions about Joanne Hayes's medical history. Joanne's body was measured and weighed. Details of her private parts were laid before the Tribunal. Her pregnancies and fecundity were discussed in great detail. Her character was analysed by two psychiatrists. Her sexual history was examined in minute detail; the dates and times of her menstrual flow since 1982, the width of her uterus after giving birth to Yvonne in 1983, and the kind of catgut used in suturing her afterwards, the state of her vulva and breasts in April 1984 (see McCafferty 1985: 93).

The Tribunal report was the final stage in the process of shaming Joanne Hayes and her family. Justice Lynch declared that the Hayes family were perjurers and liars. More important, he declared, in effect, that Joanne Hayes was a murderer. Although the state pathologist's report and evidence had indicated that there was no evidence that Joanne Hayes's baby had achieved an independent existence, Justice Lynch ruled that she had killed her baby. He said that in order to protect their honour and good name, and to avoid the shame of having done away with a newborn child, the family deliberately lied to their neighbours and friends. It was a mixture of their guilty consciences about what had happened to Joanne Hayes's baby, and a willingness to help the police with their inquiries, that they lied to the police and made up stories which would link them to the murder of the Cahirciveen baby.

The honour of Catholic Ireland and the state police

The Murder Squad was an elite corps which specialised in investigating serious crime. While infanticide and the abandonment of new-born babies was nothing unusual in Irish society, the murder of the Cahirciveen baby was particularly brutal and grotesque. As noted earlier, the three most senior members of the Murder Squad were from Kerry. It could be that they were anxious and willing to go to Kerry to help the local police in their inquiries not just because it was a serious crime, but that they were ashamed that it had happened in their home county. The honour of Kerry people and, in particular, Kerry women had been impugned. But more than this, it may be that the middle-class Catholic men who represented the police case and presided over the Tribunal were ashamed of what had happened. In having an affair with a married man, by giving birth outside marriage, by living openly as an unmarried mother, and by 'doing away with' her second baby, Joanne Hayes had not only behaved dishonourably, she had dishonoured the women of Kerry.

For this reason she had to be made ashamed and become a scapegoat to save the honour of Catholic Ireland.

But there is another twist to the story. The Squad had been dealing with an increase in violent crimes since the beginning of the 1970s, much of which could be linked to the conflict in Northern Ireland and to outlawed, 'terrorist' groups in the South. The state was under attack. Up until the 1970s it had established a monopoly over the means of violence. With a sudden increase in the number of violent crimes and armed robberies during which a number of policemen were shot. An increasing number of serious crimes were being solved by suspects making 'voluntary' confessing after lengthy periods of interrogation. There were claims that the Murder Squad were engaging in physical and mental abuse and intimidation. These were always strenuously denied. When 'voluntary' confessions were admitted as evidence in the Special (non-jury) Criminal Court, they were accepted in eight in ten cases.

It may be that the shame of having obtained false confessions from Joanne Hayes and her family provoked the state police into a deep-seated resentment against them (see Scheff 1994: 49). In other words, instead of feeling guilt about what they had done, they redirected the anger from their shame back on the family. This suggests that emotions of shame-rage erupted simultaneously among the police. However, while there were undoubtedly feelings of shame among the police, it is more likely that there was a deliberate plan to protect the honour of the state police in Irish society by blaming Joanne Hayes and her family for what happened. In this respect, the tactic of making the Hayes family out to be immoral, uncaring liars who were obsessed with saving face was a shaming strategy used in the strategic struggle to protect the honour of the police.

Conclusion

I have argued that a detailed analysis of an event in Irish social history provides an understanding of the social change that took place in Ireland during the last half of the twentieth century. The advantages of dealing with a specific event is that it provides an opportunity of linking the micro-world of subjective meaning and being, interpersonal relations, and everyday family and community life with the macro-world of long-term historical processes and institutions such as the state, the police, the judiciary, and the Catholic Church. One of the challenges in making such a link is to combine an hermeneutic understanding of what it was like to be a single mother living in rural Ireland in the

early 1980s, with an understanding of the decline of the Catholic Church's monopoly over morality and the challenge to the state's monopoly over the means of violence.⁴ I have argued that to understand what happened to Joanne Hayes, who was caught in the centre of these changes, we have to appreciate her feelings, emotions and sense of self. This brings us into the micro-world of pride and shame. Pride helps explain how a young woman living in small village in the 1980s and working in the local small town, had enough self-esteem and courage to have an affair with a married man, become pregnant by him, give birth, and when her daughter was born, to live openly in her village as a single mother. Shame helps explain how, when she became pregnant a second time, her pride began to erode. She hid her condition as much as possible and withdrew from the world. Soon after giving birth, with only members of her family present and without professional medical assistance, the spiral of shame in which she had been engulfed, turned to rage, leading her to abandon and perhaps abuse her child.

While pride and shame provide key insights to the Kerry Babies case, I have also argued that to make a connection to the macro-world of long-term social processes and social institutions, they need to be combined with the concept of honour. Whereas pride, shame and guilt are primarily personal emotions, honour is a more objective social condition. The competitive struggle in social life revolves around maintaining one's objective social honour and, with this, one's personal sense of pride and well-being. Looking at the Kerry Babies Case, I have argued that not only is personal pride closely linked with family honour in rural Ireland, but that the strength of family honour may deflect or prevent any attempt at shaming individual members. However, as I have shown, while it is possible to deflect shaming strategies at a local level, it is far more difficult when they are instigated by the state's police, legal teams, tribunal and judge, particularly when they are defending the honour of the state and its police force.

4 In September 1999, Sonia O'Sullivan, a world champion and Ireland's most famous female athlete, was denounced from the pulpit of a Catholic Church as being a 'common slut' for the unashamed public manner in which we undermined Catholic values by having a child outside marriage and allowing herself to become the focus of media attention (*The Irish Times*, 4 September 1999).

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