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Chapter VIII

Television as an Art: On Humiliation-TV

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If I had found an existing film—a secret film because that was forbidden—shot by an SS officer and showing how 3,000 Jews, men, women and children, were dying together, asphyxiated in the gas chamber of Krema 2 in Auschwitz, not only would I have not shown it, but I would have destroyed it. I cannot say why. It goes by itself. (Claude Lanzmann, *Le Monde*, 3 March 1994)

1. Introduction: Registration's Moral Dilemma

The talk show is our paradigm example of humiliation television: people causing embarrassment in others as well as themselves in front of the camera. Often, fits of rage ensue, and the enraged will find themselves doing things they would not dream of doing in full daylight, so to speak. The humiliation that I will be addressing does not only concern the embarrassing nature of the

events that are being broadcast. Every *type* of event or experience deserves representation, I believe, so why not the embarrassing ones as well? Yet experiences ought not to be represented in whatever way. Speaking generally, any subject somehow constricts the way it should be represented. A documentary about lions requires the types of angles and movements of the camera and different ways to edit the shots differ from a fiction film about two parents divorcing. Humiliation-TV is a subset of programs within the genre of emotion-television, the shows that convey real people's emotional lives. Not all TV-programs belonging to this genre are as such cases of humiliation-TV, nor are all programs about humiliating experiences. The way in which the relevant emotional lives are represented is decisive. The locution "humiliation television" describes a moral aspect of televised representing—not just of its subject matter. To address it, I will start with an example that is connected with the phenomenon, although not quite an instance of it. The example is meant to introduce the moral dilemma of registration.

Imagine you are in a football stadium watching your favorite team, just as when suddenly all hell breaks loose. People around you start screaming and pushing you around. Before long, you are running with the crowd, or it is taking off with you-- you cannot seem to tell the difference. Then, suddenly, you are stuck. Your face is pushed against a fence. You feel its wires cutting your cheeks. An enormous pressure builds up against your body and it keeps rising. You find you can no longer breathe. Your eyes are frantically looking around for a way out when you notice how on the other side of the fence a cameraman is bending his knees to get a better shot of your face.

Something like this may have happened on 29 May 1985, when during the European Cup final in Brussels the Heysel-stadium collapsed. Thirty-nine football supporters, most of them Italian, were crushed to death by falling debris or fellow supporters desperate to get away from the area. At first, neither the referee nor the teams (Liverpool and Juventus) realized what was happening, but television crews broadcast the disaster live to many homes. We saw individuals being crushed and imagined their last breaths

to mix with fearful perspiration. Like many events of this kind, this was “news” in the real sense of the word: everybody has a right to see what is happening. Or so we assume. Nobody seems to think that it would be better for some events not to be seen through televised representation.

In those who were in the stadium that day, we would expect strong and pressing feelings of obligation. In all probability, bystanders felt impotent because they were incapable of providing the help which, they felt, was needed. Only such a complex awareness of obligation, incapacity, and powerlessness in people might turn their observing into an empathetic perception which respects and honors what the other person is going through. It seems devious to be standing there watching without experiencing this impetus to act, and to enjoy your incapacity rather than feel powerless because of it. Such an attitude reduces the other’s humanity to a means for your own satisfaction. Yet, as Kant saw in his Practical Imperative, any person’s humanity should always also be treated “as an end and never merely as a means” (Kant, 1786, p. 429). Watching someone die, in a detached and disinterested manner, means putting humane intimacy at risk. Existential events can perhaps be shared, but, I submit, only through the intimacy of an implicating empathy. The human aspect of real-life events is under threat once these events are broadcast on television. When represented on television, the events are cut off from their original, obligatory aspects, so that the beholder’s response to such representation acquires a quasi-character. (See Walton, 1990, for a subtle elaboration of this—wrongheaded—commonsensical view.) The deeply tragic nature of the Heysel broadcast demonstrates the full pertinence of the moral dilemma of the news on television. The dilemma is that some events must be shown for truth’s sake, but they may not be shown for the sake of their moral psychology. Aesthetics can help out with this conflict between the truth of the matter and the dignity of human life, which basically is a conflict between epistemological and ethical values. The dilemma in our example does not transfer to just any kind of representation that aims at telling the truth about matters, but it

primarily affects representations that are founded in technological registration, such as photography, film, and television, because these, of their essence, co-exist with the events they represent.

Without wanting to isolate a film's imagery from its sounds, I submit that the dilemma does not affect recorded sounds in isolation from accompanying imagery, whereas it does affect images without sounds. We don't seem to think that sounds faithfully *represent*, like images do, even though both may share similar causal histories. Written reports, next, have little, if anything, to fear from the dilemma. And painters may paint from memory, particularly if they are trying to capture a certain "moment", for the obvious reason that that moment will not outlive the duration of the process of painting. The same applies to music of a non-Cagean kind (some of Cage's works are, characteristically, recordings—rather than representations—of everyday sounds), literature, poetry, theater, sculpture, and dance. Nothing in the nature of these arts requires the production of a representation to be contemporaneous with the happening of its subject matter. In contrast, photography, film shots, and live television must, of their essence (see Scruton, 1983), share their spatio-temporal context with the events depicted, in the initial stage when the reflected light enters the camera and maps the events onto the relevant material. The acts and means of registration belong in the very context where a depicted person's direct moral claims hold. Registration can impinge on these moral claims. First, taking a picture prevents a response to the obligations issuing from the portrayed event, and second, the camera that the photographer is seeing through effectively shields the photographer's empathy by withholding any serious reciprocity with the person photographed.

We can approach the moral dilemma of registration in one of two ways. We can either analyze these two impingements within the agential context of the representation's inception, and ask: Does the photographer's agential response measure up to the needs of the other person, does it respect that person's mental life? Or we can start from the meaning of the resultant picture, and ask: Does the representation give us a respectful insight into the other's mental life? In both approaches, a measure of humane respect is to be assessed, which grounds in empathy, even though quite different types of respect may be involved in either case. In real life, it may be the most respectful to try to rescue the victim once your understanding of the other's suffering is reckoned to be

adequate. Or, for a photographer, it may seem the most respectful thing to do to try to convey the victim's suffering for what it is so as to enable the viewer of the photograph to empathize with it. The considerations of the depicter as a person, lastly, can be seen either as forming an integral element of the representation's moral origins—the angle at which the camera is held or the lighting conditions, for instance, which may both impinge on the portrayed's experience—or as being realized in the resultant representation.

Not just because the “contextual” approach may incite speculation will I concentrate on the “representational” approach. I will be looking at how the representation sustains (and respects) the empathetic efforts of its beholder. One last argument deciding against addressing the original moral context of the registration is this: this context cannot of itself decide for us whether it is morally most compelling to portray the events or, instead, to intrude in them. Only external considerations can outweigh the moral interest of direct responses. For instance, whether or not Claude Lanzmann would show a film made by an SS officer showing Jews die in the gas chambers seems also to depend on the context within which he has the film at his disposal. I am sure he would have shown such a film had he had it at his disposal in 1943, even though at present he would have destroyed it—and defendably so. I do not think Lanzmann would be contradicting himself by, assumably, making these two contradictory decisions. It is just that in 1943 an external and bigger interest overrides the internal representational ones.

The issue which I address here pertains strictly to the representing and abstracts both from the agential context of the registration and the larger historical considerations to do with the possible use of the picture. My question is whether the humane respect demanded by a real-life subject matter translates into moral dimensions of the representation. I will argue that we can plausibly require a representation that pretends to be telling the truth

about human matters to match the respect to which its real-life subject has a claim. The missing out on this requirement turns so many of our emotion-TV programs into instances of Humiliation-TV.

2. Montage and the Shot

Up to now I have been using an example from the news. The news is meant to register reality, and most of the time we will have our need for truth override our moral modesty of respecting the intimacy of people's experiences. In contrast with this, another phenomenon confronts us on television which can be seen as a mixture of the power to tell the truth that we know from the news and the power to move us, with which we are acquainted from full-length fiction films. Many programs on television mix these two powers. Real people are shown in them, for the sake of truth, but they are shown as experiencing deep emotions, for the sake of moving us. Think of talk-shows and reality-TV; we will look at the examples later.

Let us first look at the distinct ways in which film and television present the emotions of their protagonists. Television can be recorded and broadcast in real time, whereas film cannot. Film's celluloid images need to be developed and processed before they can be projected. One advantage of this elaborate processing is that it provides film editors with the opportunity to cut and paste images as extensively and calmly as they deem necessary for activating the viewer to empathize with the antagonists of the fiction. Television directors assume a different role from their cinema colleagues (Lüdeking, 1996). For them, there is no sense in trying to edit the images according to a narrative motivation. (I am not referring to drama series, since these are modeled after cinema and make use of cinematic narratives). Instead, television directors switch between their cameras/monitors in order to keep our attention, or because they want to show us what is happening at a different location for mundane, cognitive reasons: the sorts of overriding considerations I have just excluded from my approach be-

cause they are external to the issue. Television montage is motivated by cosmetic considerations pertaining to how the representation is presented to us, whereas in film the montage is motivated representationally with an eye on the story to be told. Therefore, the apparent switching of shots on television does not inform the viewer; it does not generate any extra meaning beyond what is shown within the shots. If a quiz participant starts crying and the camera cuts away, viewers are left empty-handed; no story-line guides their imagination toward empathizing.

Ample means to represent the mental lives of fictional characters have been developed, but we are far behind in developing means with which to respectfully convey the mental lives of real people on television. The cinematic means are developed to depict actors presenting fictional characters, who do not possess the same kinds of properties that real life persons have (Currie, 1995, pp. 7-12), and whose (fictional) minds too must be construed, must be suggested. In contrast, on television there is no such doubling up of minds; television presents us the real person rather than someone acting someone else, and this real person does not represent a fictional life but his or her own.

On television, these real people are sometimes caused to feel exceptional emotions which they find hard to control. These comprise deep anger, distress, rage, the delight felt at being reunited with a person with which they had lost touch, the confusion ensuing from a severe accident or from being caught violating traffic regulations. We think that watching this on television should automatically also convey what these people are going through (I am assuming a benevolent interpretation of our motives to watch these shows). There is no denying the power of recorded imagery to prove that what is in the image once really existed (*cf.* Barthes, 1980). In a work of fiction too, the existence of the filmed actors is unchallenged; there, what is challenged are the lives of the characters they represent. The implied argument for finding it unproblematic that real people present their own selves on television is that people normally should have no trouble presenting their own selves in real life either, and that television is somehow transparent to reality.

Although we do see actual people appear on the TV-screen, it is an unwarranted assumption that the registration of their outward appearance equally conveys the way they feel. Why? For this, let us look at how in real life the “natural” (as opposed to “represented”) expression in a person’s face and gestures relates to natural empathy.

3. Expression and Empathy

To experience what it is like to be in a specific predicament is to have a phenomenally conscious mental state of it. Phenomenally conscious states of mind must be possessed by someone, and other people, if they are to fully understand them, must be sure to take the perspective of that consciousness into account (Tye, 1995). I do not mean to imply that we can only gain full, certain, and incorrigible knowledge of our inner life through introspection (see Sellars, 1956, and McDowell, 1994, for criticism of this “Cartesian Myth”). These characteristics of phenomenal consciousness identify a first-personal privilege that is *experiential*, not cognitive, in nature. People know and understand what is going on “in” their own minds much like they know and understand what is going on “in” other people’s minds. Yet, although others may understand perfectly well what I am going through (better even, sometimes, than I do), I am the one going through it. It is my consciousness. I am its proprietor, and it holds my perspective.

Notwithstanding the experiential privilege of the first person, someone’s mental life normally is available to others through its natural expression in looks and gestures. A sad person may have tears running down the cheeks, may produce sniffing sounds, or act in ways such as refraining from dancing or laughing. That such propensities are involved in expression betrays expression’s social background. Persons acquire their natural expression through a developmental process of mutual adjusting of their physiognomy with the image they want to convey to those they value, within their community. We get to know ourselves by

relating what we feel to the responses we get from the others whom we address. The way we express our emotional life is as culturally and socially dependent as are our ways of understanding expression. Still, both are anchored in the first-personal experiential privilege of phenomenal consciousness. This condition explains (1) why a third-personal access of mental life is possible, (2) why the first-personal privilege should not be taken as a cognitive privilege, and (3) why something can be gained from second-personal empathizing through reciprocally addressing.

Simon Blackburn (1995) distinguishes three approaches to empathy, which, by the way, must not be confounded with sympathy (*cf.* Chismar, 1988). In favorable circumstances, when a person's expression seems transparent, empathy is an instance of *observation*. In very unfavorable circumstances, such as when we seek to penetrate the thoughts of historical figures, it is, instead, an instance of *theorizing*. Lastly, empathy consists of dramatically re-enacting or *simulating*, in general cases of persons or of fictional personae. These respective positions—observation theory, theory of theory and simulation theory—and much of the discussion about them, take empathy as a type of receptivity, as if two isolated individuals were involved: one who is going through an experience and an empathizer who has to make sense of that. One is sending, the other receiving, in theoretically controllable circumstances. The question whether empathy must be understood as a theoretical inference or as a process-driven simulation is neutral to the paradigm example of empathy, of a second-personal reciprocal addressing where two persons invest interactively not only their cognitions and beliefs but also their re-enactments, mutual trusting, as well as their wants, fantasies, and fears. Empathy, instead of a mere receptivity, is an agency which apart from a processing of perceptions, thoughts, and simulations, typically consists of a second-personal reciprocal addressing. (*cf.* for the debate on theory theory vs. simulation theory the papers assembled in Carruthers and Smith, 1996, and Davies and Stone, 1995a and 1995b).

Nor is empathy accomplished out of the blue. An empathizer must supply enough relevant experiences of his or her own and be capable of qualifying them in light of the other's responses.

Empathy with a boy's sadness over his father's absence presupposes that the empathizer mobilize types of experiences (of separation) and mould them into a singular experience which, the empathizer feels is attributable to the boy. The empathizer then is no longer a stranger to the boy's mind, nor, however, has the boy's mind become identical to the empathizer's, however successful the empathy may turn out to be. And how well the empathy succeeds will show from the boy's responses to it. The relevant notion of correctness involves the measures of respect and trusting that form the core of this process.

The force of the thesis of the second-personal reciprocal nature of empathy (and expression) is evident in light of the issue at stake, since the empathetic situation changes dramatically once representations chip in. When, for instance, we empathize with a person represented on television, this person is not in the space (or time) we are in, and is therefore in no position to correct our empathy, nor are we in a position to respond. Correspondingly, we the viewers are being addressed not as the actual persons we are, but as a type of restricted perceivers who are not prone to agency. We must reconceive the trust and respect as these are at stake in real-life empathy in the event of an expressor showing emotions to a camera. In that context, it would be unclear who exactly is being trusted and how the viewer is to show his respect while watching the expressor on television. A represented mental life is itself absent from the world that both viewer and representation are in, and, as a result, everyone involved is denied expression's "natural" aspect of reciprocal adjustment. Our powers of empathy are hampered by representation, and television forms no exception, notwithstanding its reality-proving powers. If we think again of the observers present in the Heysel stadium it is obvious that watching a TV screen resembles what the deviant, detached observer is doing rather than the committed and implicated one. TV viewing is characterized by third-personal detached observing, rather than person-to-person respectful second-personal reciprocity.

4. Art and Intimation

Let us now look at art. Mere (third-personal) recognition normally is not a target for *artistic* representation, as little as it is for real-life empathy. Art aims at something which not even psychology, for all its objective knowledge of the human mind, can match, nor aims to match: to implicate the audience in the represented. Our culture's awareness of the moral dilemmas of representation shows in the domain of art as we know it (see Batteux, 1746; Kristeller, 1980; Gerwen, 2000; and for criticism of the idea of a unitary meaning of art, Kivy, 1997).

Philosophers have defended two opposed views about art's emotional dimension (artistic expression). Nelson Goodman (1985) thinks it is possessed by a work, whereas arousal theory (*cf.* Matravers, 1998) argues that expression consists in the feeling aroused in the audience. I skip for now the many intermittant positions that are discussed in Jerrold Levinson's "Musical Expressiveness". Goodman, to evade the obviously unwelcome conclusion that works are to be seen as sentient beings with an emotional life, submits that the possession in question is metaphorical in nature, not literal. I will not go into the details of this theory but assume that Goodman's suggestion just is not doing the explanatory work it is supposed to do. In particular, it does not explain why we think that artistic expression has to do with emotions. Arousal theory, however, seems to forfeit the power to explain why the emotional life of artistic expression is held by its observer to pertain to the work and not just to the observer's consciousness. Although sometimes we are undeniably touched by films, to name an obvious example, art's ends are more prestigious. In short, an adequate conception of artistic expression needs to explain why mind seems to be *in the representation*, that is, why the *emotions evoked* form a response to *emotions represented*. What is at stake is neither mere possession nor only evocation, but a reciprocity of possession and evocation via projection that is comparable to real-life, second-personal reciprocity. This artistic reciprocity is art's answer to the moral dilemma of the representation of sentient beings.

For reason of comparison, I concentrate on the art of film, fiction film. Here, the play-acting of the actors introduces the bulk of the meaning of most shots. However, this is not the only layer of meaning in film. If it were, than film would be little more than the registration of acting, and whether a character comes to life would depend exclusively on the actor's merits. Apart from the registration of acting, film also has the extra-reproductive means of montage at its disposal. Montage creates ellipses in the narrative structure which are to be filled out by the audience. In one shot you see a woman pack her trunk, and in the next she boards a train. The viewer fills in what was left out. In this example, the ellipsis has the beholder produce a propositional "fictional" truth (for example, "She went to the station"), but sometimes ellipses activate the imagination to engage with experiential dimensions of represented events such as the tension in a scene: the killer behind the curtain creates more fear than a full-fledged display of a murder might. Crucially, in ellipses, the beholder's expectations are guided by what is literally reproduced within the shots.

Let us call "intimation" the strategies of the arts to represent a character's phenomenal consciousness; we will look at an example of elliptic cinematography. In a scene near the end of Robert Bresson's *L'argent* (1983), a man and his wife have an argument over a criminal the woman is hiding in their shack. Previous scenes have already acquainted us with this couple as kind and caring persons, sharing an okay life together. The scene takes place as the woman is taking a cup of coffee to the criminal and meets her husband on the garden path. He tells her to take the criminal to the police; she refuses. He calls her a fool. We see this in a typical shot-counter-shot way, with alternating shots of the two faces. But when the man lifts his arm to slap his wife's face, we see how anticipation materializes in the woman's gaze, Bresson cuts to a shot of the shaking coffee cup she is carrying. We hear the slap, and since the montage is not discontinuous, that is, the shot of the dancing cup is shown as causally connected with the woman being slapped, perceptually speaking, the event is conveyed successfully. Yet the audience expects to not merely perceive the event in whatever way, but to see it, and since the

audience does not see the event, it fills the gaps in the representation with its own associations. But we are not merely making up some experiential event. What our imagination comes up with is what we might expect to get if it were a real-life confrontation. We thus get to grasp what it is like for the antagonists to experience the events represented. We come to realize the impact the slap may have on the lives of these two caring persons. The mental and moral scope of the event become intimate to us the audience. We do not merely recognize what is happening, but actively engage with it; the impact is known by acquaintance. Lastly, these felt moral and experiential aspects are not merely in us, but belong to the work; they are not merely evoked, they are *represented*. Intimation is art's analogue of the second-personal reciprocity of person-to-person communication within the realm of representation. It is, arguably, art's way of respecting the humanity of represented consciousness.

Robert Bresson has made emptying his images of "actorial" meanings into a stylistic element (Bresson, 1975). In *L'argent*, all existentially crucial events are conveyed by intimation. We are shown the impulsive rage of Yvon (the main antagonist) through the sliding of the skimmer he threw away because of being ashamed of his rage. Yvon's attempted suicide is shown through his fellow inmates' watching an ambulance leave the courtyard (after Bresson informed us by a single shot how Yvon did not take his sleeping pills but hid them under his tongue). Yvon's butchering of a whole family is shown through the sound and image of a dog running wildly up and down the stairs, a lamp being kicked over, and a swinging axe. Lastly, his arrest is shown through the people in the pub in which he was arrested, staring after him as he is taken away. Intimation is the type of representation which not only implicates the beholder in an artificially induced reciprocity which nears the second-personal one; it also shows forth the respect which phenomenal consciousness deserves. Intimation, like art itself, is a gradual solution to our moral dilemma. The moral dilemma cannot be fully solved simply because it is an effect of our representing which presupposes the discontinuity of space and time, between the beholder and the

subject matter of the representation. This dichotomy removes the reciprocity characteristic both of empathy and moral constraints.

A film director might also seek to answer the dilemma by keeping the actor (the person) as much as possible in full view, and by introducing as little montage as possible, thus making the antagonist's fictional mental life more identical to the actor's own. Indeed, cutting a shot's continuous flow of imagery apparently does away with its reality-proving factor (Bazin, 1975). Thus, for instance, Chantal Akerman in her 1975 film *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*, has us watch in real-time how Jeanne Dielman (played by Delphine Seyrig) takes a bath and cleans it afterwards, how she peels her potatoes, and so forth. The calm option also made Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* into such an effective film, both in the sense of artistic excellence and of humane respectfulness.

This "calm option" seems unavailable to the news on television. It simply takes up too much time and would forfeit the attention of the average ever-zapping viewer. So we must assume that live television make do with the *intimatory* strategy if it really wants to convey people's feelings. This brings the moral dilemma with which we started into the heart of television. How can we register a real person while at the same time having to rely on imagination-inducing intimacy mechanisms to convey that person's mental life? Does not this reliance on the input of imagination transgress the nature of registration and thus fake the reality of these mental lives? Yes and no. We can view intimation as an intentional, non-technological mechanism, and therefore as a highly manipulative means of conveying the truth. However, something is a fact if and only if it verifies a description. Thus, the stories on the news already tamper with reality—unintended maybe, yet certainly inevitable. Apart from that, photography's evidential capability is under pressure nowadays of the impact of digitalization. Music-videos show photography's detailed manipulability. The way I see it, intimation is our best means available to convey people's mental lives because it implicates the viewer. Neglecting it certainly involves a disrespect for the experiential dimensions involved. I do not assume this proves

the availability of intimation to television; it merely shows the trouble television is in. Alternatively, television ought just to be silent whenever phenomenal consciousness is at issue.

Humiliation television, then, consists of those shows on television that pretend to convey people's heartfelt emotional lives without sufficiently acknowledging the peculiar demands for a successful conveyal of phenomenal consciousness. Assuming that deciding not to represent remains an adequate option whatever alternatives are developed, and that the "calm option" is unavailable for TV in the present era of zapping viewers and the digitalization of photography, television must develop its own means of intimation if it is to stop evading this dilemma. Television must either know when to shut up, or it must become an art. As we can see from Bresson's approach, these two options are not as far removed as they seem.

5. Humiliation Television and *Hamartia*

I should leave you with some examples. In so-called *bloopers*, short videos of real-life accidents at home, human failure is caused by circumstances out of a person's control, plain, physiological circumstances, like tripping. In *Candid Camera*-like programs, where people are deliberately tricked, again the misery is not really of the victims' own doing. All of these programs can be seen as humiliating the participants, but not in any deeply problematic sense. The participants are clearly the victims of circumstances or of a trick, and they are easily forgiven because their failures do not run deep psychologically or morally. So-called *reality television*, where rescue teams and police squads are tracked "on the spot", suffers from television's moral dilemma, but does not psychologically humiliate its subjects, although the active pursuit of other people's misery without the intention to help is a case in point. The camera registers people's expressions of vehement feelings, but these may not be caused by the television-makers—then again, they may. Paradigmatic examples of humiliation television are the many *talk shows*—Jerry Springer's immediately

springs to mind—where people hit each other with chairs in front of the camera in response to avowals of adultery, under loud cheering of a tragic choir, the “live” audience, or shows where people cry in happiness over being reunited with a person thought long lost, who was tracked down by the team responsible for the program.

What the participant of the average talk show presents to the audience is little short of his or her own life, rather than just one single event taken from it. We can best understand this through Aristotle’s notion of “*hamartia*”, which “is the sort of error that a person of [a certain] character would be typically prone to make. In combination with his character, it misleads his action” (Rorty, 1992, p. 10). We can hardly overlook how what these people have experienced, or are experiencing, is not incidental. They “had it coming.” Aristotelian tragedies contain a turning point when their protagonists realize their *hamartia*, upon which a purgation follows. Both turning point and purgation somehow restore the protagonist’s humanity. In the talkshow, there is no such restoration. Turning points do occur, such as when a man confesses to his partner to having been sleeping with her best friend. But no purgation ensues, only more *hamartia*. The partners enrage and start throwing chairs at each other. The failed coping strategies of these persons are integrally exposed to millions of people. The audience merely fixates the *hamartia* of these sorry people. One wonders what is taking the Americans so long to sue these shows for damages—like they do the tobacco industry.

To many people, such programs do not seem much of a problem, either because the persons involved are not even suffering or are supposed to play-act it, or because whatever they are shown to be going through is self-inflicted, or at the least, of their own free choosing. I am skeptical about the nature of this freedom. To sufficiently realize beforehand the possibly damaging effects of partaking in emotion-TV is difficult. The recording situation with its lights and personnel, the cheering audience, the apparent protection of the bouncers present at the scene, the assumption that fame will only come when a person’s barriers are down and hesitations overcome, and, lastly, the cameras, those eyes detached from

judging persons, machines at that, which seem to the participant all the more objective and just—all this makes it easy for someone to let go composure and become enraged. Such a situation is out of the participants' control. People do not freely choose to lose decorum, for everyone to see. How can one choose to be misrepresented? Participants only choose to enroll because they *do not think* they are going to be misrepresented; they have seen the shows before and think, "surely, other people weren't misrepresented." Or, if they are slightly smarter: "I will do better." People who partake in humiliation television think that they are going to be represented adequately, but their thoughts and actions are motivated mostly by sentimental considerations. According to Anthony Savile (1982, p. 241), "a sentimental mode of thought is typically one that idealizes its object under the guidance of a desire for gratification and reassurance." People participate because they believe that, next to possibly dissolving a particular conflict or problem, merely appearing on television is purifying in itself. Walter Benjamin (1936, p. 34) was as sentimental when he cheered the powers of (Russian) cinema to enable people on the street to present an image of themselves. I am suggesting that this was unduly optimistic. The means to acquire a better image are more damaging than participants may gather even from the warnings they probably got beforehand from their relatives. The willful ignorance implicit in the idealization makes humiliation television even more susceptible to the moral dilemma characteristic of technologically registered representation than the Heysel case.

Not all is lost. For instance, in the television series, *Ally McBeal*, the main character (Ally) can sometimes be seen to stick out a lizard's tongue. It can, in general, be hard for a viewer to make narrative sense of such digital, clearly intentional manipulations of technically reproduced imagery, but not in this case, where the story dictates its meaning. Many music-videos contain such manipulations without providing us as many means to make sense of them, they seem to be frivolous *Spielerei*. However, the artistically more interesting music-videos provide the idea that "what you see is what you hear" (and reversely) with an intuitive meaning. Good music-videos develop new means for associating sounds

and vision. Intimation thrives on such non-natural, intentional means which guide our associations. What we need are artistically meritorious television makers. At least their motivation should by now be clear: television is to grow up and to recognize the representation of phenomenal consciousness as a major challenge. Only as an art may television have it in for us.

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