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Back to Main Page

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1. Bardon 2018 should be Bardon, 2019

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Science, Shame, and Trust: Against Shaming Policies

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Abstract

Scientific information plays an important role in shaping policies and recommendations for behaviors that are meant to improve the overall health and well-being of the public. However, a subset of the population does not trust information from scientific authorities, and even for those that do trust it, information alone is often not enough to motivate action. Feelings of shame can be motivational, and thus some recent public policies have attempted to leverage shame to motivate the public to act in accordance with science-based recommendations. We argue that because these shame policies are employed in non-communal contexts, they are both practically ineffective and morally problematic: shame is unlikely to be effective at motivating the public to behave in accordance with science-based

policy, and shaming citizens is an unethical way to get them to comply. We argue that shame-based policies are likely to contribute to further distrust in scientific authority.

1. Introduction

In the context of a democratic society, scientific beliefs matter because they often influence the way that people act AQ1. If someone doesn't believe that, for example, a face mask is an effective tool in preventing the spread of infectious disease, they will likely balk at a rule that requires them to wear one. Because motivating public action requires that the public have certain beliefs, and because beliefs are notoriously resistant to change, some have recently suggested the application of epistemic paternalism, which involves interfering with the public's acquisition of information for their own good. The idea is that, by withholding information or presenting it in a particular light, the public's biases can be avoided and potential misunderstandings circumvented before they have a chance to negatively affect the belief formation process. However, aside from being potentially morally problematic, it isn't clear that epistemic paternalism is a very effective strategy either. In our view, it is doubtful that information alone, even of the paternalistic sort, is enough to motivate people to act: people need to not only trust the information they are given, they must also accept the recommendation to act on this information. Thus, something above and beyond raw information is needed—something that will provide the motivation to act in accordance with policy recommendations. As we will see in what follows, certain emotions, such as shame, have been leveraged to play this motivating role in the public arena.

To further elaborate, shame has been utilized both implicitly and explicitly by communities, governments, and institutions as a way to alter the public's behavior. The idea is that by exposing an individual's or a group's undesirable behavior, their reputation is thereby damaged, and thus the individuals or groups in question are (presumably) motivated to change this behavior. However, while shame can be an effective motivator, we will argue that there are significant practical and moral costs that come with the use of shame as a means of motivating public behavior.

First, while shame may help to promote behaviors in some, it does not work when the individuals or groups being shamed do not trust or respect the ones who are doing the shaming. And often, the people who need the most convincing are those who are the least likely to have this level of trust and respect. Thus, the technique of shaming, in these instances, is likely only to create resentment for and backlash against the message being conveyed. In what follows, we will support this claim by drawing upon real-life examples of both effective and ineffective uses of shame in public policy. From these examples, we will develop two models of shaming via public policy, communal and non-communal, and argue that the latter cannot motivate behavioral change effectively. Because the shame-based policies put forth by Western liberal democracies are examples of non-communal shame, we argue that such policies will not have the desired practical effect.

Second, we will argue that the use of non-communal shame is morally problematic because it not only violates trust and respect but also involves an inaccurate appraisal of the person being shamed and disrupts democratic deliberation. As such, it violates some of the central aims of liberal democracy. In sum, we will argue that shame-based policies are not a practically or ethically sound way to motivate public behavior.

Before we begin, we'd like to emphasize that the paper's focus is not on the moral and political dimension of shaming in general, but rather on the use of shame in public policy by governmental agencies and local communities specifically. Accordingly, we will not discuss the issue of private citizens shaming other individuals, corporations, or governmental agencies.

2. Against Epistemic Paternalism

There are many reasons why scientific communication, and in particular, communication between scientific experts and the non-expert public, is difficult. A prominent example of this pervasive difficulty in communication involves the issue of anthropogenic climate change. Despite broad consensus in the climate-science community regarding such change, there is far from this level of consensus in the public realm. This example raises the more general question of why non-experts often do not trust experts when it comes to scientific matters. There are potentially many reasons for why this kind of mistrust occurs, such as a lack of scientific literacy and ideological bias (see Bardon Should be Bardon, 2019 , 2018, ch. 1). AQ2 However, for many issues like climate change, deliberate misinformation campaigns are a substantial cause of the public's distrust of science. These campaigns are funded by industries that stand to suffer financial loss if the public were to understand the actual state of the science and change their behaviors as a result (Oreskes & Conway, 2010).

To combat mistrust and misinformation, some philosophers have suggested that it would be prudent to engage in some form of epistemic paternalism, that is, to filter the information the public receives in a way that promotes positive behavioral outcomes (Axtell & Bernal, 2020). The idea here is that if scientific information is presented in its original form, the public could misunderstand the data because they do not comprehend the scientific methods used in gathering it, leaving room for industry-endorsed skeptics to further encourage this misunderstanding. Hence, it is argued that, in non-ideal conditions like this, science communicators might need to disseminate information in a way that lacks transparency, openness, sincerity, and honesty in order to overcome epistemic obstacles and promote positive behaviors (John, 2018).

Nonetheless, ~~we think that~~ there are at least three problems with this approach. First, many will find such an approach morally unsavory, arguing that it constitutes a form of deception (see Moore, 2018). Second, we are skeptical concerning~~of~~ the effectiveness of approaches to motivating public action that rely on a lack of openness and transparency. The United States' debacle surrounding the effectiveness of masks early on in the COVID-19 pandemic illustrates this concern: in order to prevent mask shortages for healthcare workers, Americans were told by public health officials that masks were not effective at preventing disease spread. When public mask use was later mandated, the juxtaposition to the earlier recommendations led to confusion, distrust, and backlash. Third, even on the assumption that this approach is morally acceptable and that the information would be well-received, it still might not provide the desired outcomes, as there is often a significant gap between information and motivation: as Bennett (2020) argues, people might accept the facts that justify a policy, and even in some sense judge that the policy is good, yet still lack the motivation to act according to the policy. Thus, in our view, a more preferred method of motivating public action should be one that is less morally problematic and more motivationally effective.

3. Shame and Policy

3.1. Shame Introduction

In the previous section, we saw that epistemic paternalism is morally problematic, and it isn't clear that it motivates action. A more ethically sound and effective solution to change public behavior may thus be to instead aim for a type of *emotional paternalism* in our science-based public policies and messages. Creating public policy that elicits moral emotions might avoid the ethical traps of epistemic paternalism and also more effectively motivate behavior. Emotions have a motivational force that pure information lacks—you can know about the statistics linking, say, cigarette smoking to lung cancer, but until you see the frightening images of cancerous lungs on the packet of cigarettes, you might not be motivated to quit.[1]

Thus, there are good prima facie reasons for believing that evoking the emotions of the public could effectively motivate them to comply with science-based policies. But which emotions should science communication attempt to elicit? Although there are several promising candidates, we will focus here on policies that attempt to elicit shame, as shaming tactics have become increasingly commonplace with the rise of social media (social media~~Twitter~~ hashtags have become a common means of public shaming; see

Ronson, 2015), and there have been several recent popular and philosophical defenses for the use of shame in enforcing policies related to public health and climate change (see Aaltola, 2021; Jacquet, 2015). Shame is also a particularly salient emotion to consider in the context of public policies and recommendations because it is often evoked by social norm violations, as will be discussed below.

Shame is an emotion that is felt when one feels exposed to public scrutiny and disapproval. There doesn't need to be anyone actually present to evoke it either—simply imagining how others view you can be enough. When we feel shame, we do not just feel bad about a particular behavior—shame makes us feel bad about *ourselves*.[2] We feel that we have been exposed to others as being deficient in some way. As psychologists Tangney et al. have put it: "In shame, an objectionable behavior is seen as reflecting, more generally, a defective, objectionable self…With this painful self-scrutiny comes a sense of shrinking or of 'being small' and feelings of worthlessness and powerlessness" (1996, 1257). Shame is considered to be one of the "moral emotions"—emotions that are tied to the "interests and welfare" of others (Haidt, 2003, 853). The moral emotions, in general, are thought to have played an important evolutionary role in promoting group living, as they help to motivate prosocial behavior (and provide disincentives for anti-social behavior) that is required for people (or early hominids) to trust one another enough to live together and exchange resources. Shame, in particular, may have evolved because it can motivate an individual to abide by group norms: by exposing an individual's undesirable behavior, that individual's reputation is damaged, and thus individuals are motivated to abide by social norms in order to avoid such a punishment. When we feel shame, we are made aware that we are not seen in a positive way by others. We are thus motivated to either change our behaviors to be more acceptable to others or to hide the objectionable aspects of ourselves from others, so they are not out in the open.

A pertinent example of the motivational power of shaming can be seen in the recent trend of online shaming campaigns. Today, we frequently see examples of individuals (or groups of individuals) informally "calling-out" a particular transgressor online over behavior that is deemed unacceptable. This is typically done by individuals sharing the objectionable content with an accompanying expression of disapproval. Online shaming is also a way to signal to one's social media followers which norms the shamer adheres to. For example, recent online shaming about COVID-19 related behaviors (e.g. mask-wearing, social distancing) can be both an attempt to change the behavior of people who do not adhere to public health advice as well as a way of showing support for that public health advice. Shaming can thus serve both as a way of motivating others to adhere to norms and as a way of showing personal acceptance of those norms.

3.2. Shame-Based Policy

Given that shame can be a highly effective motivator, it is not surprising that authority figures sometimes use it to motivate the general public's behavior. Shame-based punishments, such as mandated brightly-colored license plates for drivers convicted of drunk driving violations, are currently used in many places for various crimes, as they are believed to function as deterrents to crime and as a way of conveying rules to the community. Shame is also sometimes used in order to motivate people to comply with science-based policies and recommendations, and it is easy to see why one might think this is an effective strategy: after all, such recommendations are an attempt to establish a norm, and shaming is a way to get people to comply with norms (cf. Harris & Darby, 2009).

Authority figures and agencies sometimes use direct shaming messages to motivate behavioral changes, but such outright shaming can be difficult to incorporate into policy. However, people do not need to be directly shamed in order to feel shame: simply drawing attention to the way others view an individual can be enough to arouse feelings of shame in that individual. This kind of indirect shame can thus work more subtly as a behavioral "nudge." Nudging involves structuring the environment in a way that predictably alters behavior without forbidding options—nudges simply make people more or less likely to choose a given option or behave a certain way AQ3 (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008). An example of a nudge would be to put healthier food at eye level in a work cafeteria so that it is easier to see than the junk food options. In doing

so, individuals are given a free choice as to whether they want to eat healthy foods, but the environment is structured in such a way as to influence their behavior. When someone is "nudged," the desired behavior is not achieved through rational persuasion or restriction; rather, it is achieved via changes to the "choice architecture" that might attach minor inconveniences or negative associations to a particular option.

One thing that can increase compliance with a recommendation is emphasizing that a person is not doing what the majority of people are doing—this functions as a nudge and is likely modulated by subtle feelings of shame. For example, some utility companies include~~have begun including~~ a comparison of how a household's energy consumption compares with the average household in their neighborhood in order to reduce energy use and combat climate change. By calling attention to the discrepancy between one household's use compared to the norm, that household may feel ashamed about their overconsumption and thus take steps to reduce energy usage. Such a policy does not restrict people from using as much energy as they want, nor does it directly shame them for their usage—instead, it may nudge them into changing their behavior by attaching a minor negative association to overconsumption.

Antismoking campaigns and laws have also leveraged the motivational power of shame to nudge people into not smoking. Policies and laws that create designated "smoking zones" for smokers make smoking more physically inconvenient and thus can nudge individuals into smoking less. However, such policies may also have worked to nudge the public as a whole into smoking less by attaching shame to smoking: as Eyal (2014) has argued, such areas effectively banish smokers from the rest of the community, thus attaching a stigma to smoking and causing feelings of shame in those who are forced to physically distance themselves if they wish to smoke. Indeed, antismoking ads that call attention to the idea that smokers are viewed as "outsiders" work particularly well in motivating smokers to quit (Amonini et al., 2015). Such messages may work on viewers by evoking the shame smokers feel when isolated from others.

Direct shaming and the use of nudges that induce shame may thus be an effective way to get people to act in accordance with policies and science-based recommendations, as shame not only motivates, but motivates actions that adhere to norms—and norms are precisely what such policies and recommendations aim to establish. Shame-based tactics have an additional advantage in that they avoid many ethical issues raised by epistemic paternalism, as they do not involve withholding information from the public, but instead focus on drawing attention to how others view those who do not abide by the policy or recommendation. We'll now consider the ethical case for the use of shame in this way before arguing against it.

4. Shame and Normativity

As discussed above, shame is currently incorporated into some science-based public policy messaging, and there is some evidence that the use of shame in this way can be effective at motivating behavioral changes. In this section, we will discuss two arguments that can be used to support the claim that shame-inducing public policy messaging is an ethical way to motivate the public to act in accordance with science-based recommendations.

4.1. Shame and Positive Consequences

The most straightforward justification for the use of shame in public policy messaging is that it will promote positive consequences. In her defense of the use of shame to combat climate change, Aaltola (2021) argues that recent instances of "climate-shaming"—like those employed by Greta Thunberg in her address to the United Nations' 2019 Climate Action Summit—are not only a morally acceptable way to motivate individuals and corporations into changing their behaviors to be more climate-conscious, but also that we may in fact have a moral duty to shame *more* because shame is effective at motivating behavioral change. Aaltola points out that when we feel shame, we are confronted with the fact that others find our behavior objectionable. When we are "climate-change shamed," our self-centered ways of living in the world and disregarding the environment are placed under public scrutiny. Thus, shaming people for their harmful actions against the climate can motivate those people to critically examine their behaviors and the ways in

which those behaviors affect others. When we hear, for example, Thunberg proclaim “How dare you!” (Thurnberg, 2019) about our dismissiveness of climate change, and when we see others on social media boycotting air travel because of the carbon footprint it leaves, Aaltola argues that we are led to ask important questions about how our behaviors reflect upon ourselves, and the shame we feel can redefine our attitude towards the world around us.

The use of shame in public policy messaging can thus be justified because it can bring about positive social change (Aaltola focuses on the specific case of climate change, but the argument can easily extend to other science-based practices that promote overall social good, like encouraging vaccines, lessening smoking and junk food consumption, and promoting good sanitation practices). The use of shame in such cases may also have the additional positive effect of promoting moral learning. Because shame is connected to social norm violations, when we feel shame, we are alerted to the fact that we are violating some communal value. Thus, feeling shame can teach us that our behaviors are not in accordance with the community's~~ies'~~ accepted values (Williams, 1993). The shamed agent is thus in a position where they can reflect upon their behavior and the reasons why society views it as a norm violation, and then internalize that norm, if, upon reflection, they deem it to be a good one.

Aaltola acknowledges that shame policies could potentially be counterproductive, since being shamed can cause people to become defensive and angry, and they could also cause psychological harm, as shame makes us feel bad about ourselves. However, she maintains that neither of these worries is sufficient to outweigh the positive consequences. The former worry can be overcome with moral maturity, as shame experiences can be viewed as opportunities for moral growth (Aaltola, 2021, 15; Velleman, 2001). The latter worry can be overcome with basic consequentialist reasoning: given the enormous costs of allowing climate change to continue uninhibited, we can justify the psychological harms of shame to motivate behavioral change (Aaltola, 2021, 17). Similarly for other science-based recommendations that have the potential to mitigate much suffering and loss of life, it can be argued that the benefits gained vastly outweigh any psychological harms caused by policies and messages that utilize shame to change the behavior of the public.

4.2. Shame and Fittingness

Shame can also be argued to be a morally acceptable means to motivate behavioral changes because it can help us understand that a particular situation is moral in nature in the first place. It is possible that situations exist in which we have a moral duty to do something, or there are moral violations that we should recognize, but the moral dimension of such situations, for whatever reason, fails to register with us. Climate change is a plausible candidate for such a situation (Gardiner, 2011), as is vaccination in the COVID-19 pandemic: failing to act in these situations contributes to the suffering of others, but there is widespread resistance to viewing these situations as moral in nature. Causing people to feel a moral emotion such as shame in response to these situations may thus help bridge the gap between the moral nature of the situation and the public’s awareness of that moral nature, since moral emotions can play an important role in “alerting” us to the fact that there could be a moral dimension to the eliciting situation.

It is possible, then, that shame can be a *fitting* emotion to feel in response to one’s behaviors. Feeling fitting emotions can demonstrate an appreciation of a normative fact, just as our aesthetic responses can demonstrate an appreciation of a fine piece of art (Srinivasan, 2018). Similarly, our experience of shame can be fitting when our behavior is a genuine moral violation, and the feeling of shame demonstrates an appreciation of the fact that our behavior was wrong. Thus, developing policies and messages that evoke shame may develop us epistemically by allowing us to properly understand the moral nature of the situation and the fact that certain behaviors are moral violations.

5. Against Shaming Policies

As noted in the introduction, the target of this paper is not shaming generally, but rather the implementation of shame in Western democratic scientific policy messaging. We can distinguish between two possible types of shaming via public policy, depending on the relationship between the policymakers/implementors and the people the policy is meant to regulate. The first type, communal shaming, occurs in a small group in which the people know each other, share values, and ideally, trust, and respect each other. In contrast, non-communal shame occurs in a large group in which the people don't know each other, don't necessarily share values, and intimate trust and respect are not possible or practical.[3] Because modern democratic societies involve large groups of people with a plurality of values and interests, it simply isn't possible for them to intimately connect with the people developing and implementing science-based policies; thus, the shame policies in such a society will mostly be non-communal. We argue that non-communal shaming faces two problems: (1) it is unlikely to be effective long-term, and (2) it is ethically problematic.

5.1. Practical Concerns

As discussed above, one of the major arguments in defense of shame-based policies is that they lead to significant positive consequences. However, we are skeptical that non-communal shame policies are effective long-term, and, despite the responses to the claim that shame leads to anger and defensiveness, we worry that the way shame is used in the cases at issue here—motivating people to behave in accordance with science-based policies in Western democracies—involves precisely the conditions under which we can expect shaming to be met with counterproductive backlash.

One reason to doubt the long-term effectiveness of shame-based policies comes from recent arguments that draw a distinction between the effectiveness of "pure nudges" versus "moral nudges." Pure nudges involve adjusting defaults or salience, whereas moral nudges leverage positive or negative emotions (e.g. fear, shame, pride) to encourage correct behavior (Carlsson et al., 2021). A pure nudge would be placing healthy food at eye level, while a moral nudge would be notifying individuals that they used more energy than their neighbors in similar-sized houses since this triggers a shame response. Speaking about moral nudges, economists Carlsson et al. write that moral nudges "trigger a conscious psychological response" that makes them "more prone to backlash… because the intended behavior is not in line with the preferences of the individual or because the individual objects to being nudged at all" (2021, 219). Thus, we can expect nudging people via shame to lack effectiveness, as the individuals being nudged are likely to *notice* they are being nudged, and then attempt to counteract it.

If moral nudges, which are quite negligible and innocuous, can be counterproductive, it seems likely that more robust forms of shaming can backfire as well. We hypothesize that shame is likely to be more effective if a group member has internalized the group's set of values and respects and trusts the group. This is because the purpose of the shame isn't to develop a set of values from without; instead, the feeling of shame merely directs one's attention to how one failed to live up to one's own standards (which are shared amongst the group). In addition, if there is genuine respect and trust in the group, then there is less of a chance for the individual to feel stigmatized or ostracized, and thus they will be less likely to harbor resentment. Indeed, defenses of shame often argue that moral maturity, shared values, and trust are required (see Aaltola, 2021; Deonna et al., 2012, 239–243; Jacquet, 2015, ch. 6; Nussbaum, 2004, 212–213).

However, the problem with non-communal shame policies is that there can't be intimate trust and respect since the shame occurs in a large group of unknown people. Furthermore, in countries like the United States, there is often widespread disagreement over the very issue that shame policies would be adopted for, such as climate change and Covid-19, and these disagreements themselves have become tied to group identity. For example, the quality of being skeptical of what academic scientists advise is one among a cluster of qualities that helps define certain current subgroups in the United States, and so any attempt to motivate their behavior to be more in line with recommendations based on scientific data will be coming from outside of their ideological group. For these reasons, we doubt that shame policies will motivate long-term behavioral change; instead, we suspect that they will lead to resentment and counterproductive

behavior.[4] Simply put, though one can leverage shame when there is~~are~~ respect, trust, and shared values, it isn't realistic—or perhaps even possible—for shame to promote respect, trust, and shared values when these qualities are not already present.

5.2. Ethical Concerns

Besides being skeptical about its long-term efficacy, we believe that non-communal shaming is ethically problematic for four reasons. First, non-communal shaming is likely to produce an inaccurate judgment of individuals—one that is overly negative. As noted earlier, the experience of shame involves feeling that some aspect of one's *self*, rather than just one's action, is unacceptable to others (this distinction is what separates shame from guilt). Thus, in non-communal shaming, the person's whole character, not just a single behavior, will be judged. Problematically, however, the ~~entire~~ person's entire character will not be known by those doing the shaming, since the shamers come from outside the person's community. Accordingly, it is unlikely that the person *should* feel shame over their whole character, so causing the individual to feel shame is an excessively negative way to motivate them to change their behavior—there is a mismatch between what is known about the individual and the "punishment" the individual is receiving (that is, shame about their self). In contrast, since individuals will know each other in communal shame, it is at least possible for the shame to match what is known about the person's character.

Second, since non-communal shame doesn't involve a close connection between individuals, there isn't anything to secure that the shame will involve the best interest of the person being shamed. In communal shame, the close connection between individuals makes it possible that the shame can reflect the best interest of the individuals: for example, when loving parents or a group of friends confront an individual about a problem, the parents or friends likely have the well-being of the individual in mind. However, since governmental agencies cannot know citizens on a personal level, it isn't clear that they can express genuine concern for the welfare of individual citizens while they shame them. More troubling, if the shame policy invites the public to shame an individual (by, say, exposing them for non-compliance), it is quite unlikely that the public will express sincere concern about the individual's welfare. Indeed, internet shaming largely functions like mob justice, and this is problematic because, as Nussbaum points out, "it invites the 'mob' to tyrannize over whoever they happen to like. Justice by the mob is not the impartial, deliberative, neutral justice that a liberal-democratic society typically prizes" (2004, 234). Though her point is about shaming punishments, ~~we think~~ it applies to shame policies more generally.

Third, shame policies risk corrupting democratic deliberation, which involves the public weighing of reasons. Democratic deliberation is thought to be essential to respecting citizens, protecting autonomy, and securing political legitimacy and justice (see Quong Please note that this should be Quong 2022. We made the change in the Reference List below.
, 2018). In addition, some philosophers have argued that, besides having ethical value, public deliberation has epistemic value in both its procedure and truth conduciveness (see Estlund & Landemore, 2018). If citizens respond to shame, they are likely not responding to the policy's science-based reason; rather, their reaction probably reflects not wanting to be ostracized or made to feel bad. Not only does this mean that the deliberative process will not really involve the weighing of reasons, but it could also potentially create further distrust of scientific authority. For instance, nudging "bypasses" reason by altering behavior in a way that is typically below the level of conscious awareness, using methods that are not themselves good reasons for changing behavior (e.g. the location of health food vs. junk food is not in itself a very good reason to choose one over the other) (see Schmidt & Engelen, 2020). The scientific community is granted the epistemic authority that it has in large part because its methods for acquiring and analyzing evidence deliberately attempt to adhere to epistemic values. Thus, circumventing rational deliberative processes by arousing shame to motivate public behavior could cause the public to distrust the scientific community. Why should the public trust that the methodology science uses to get to their conclusions adheres to epistemic values if the methodology they use to get the public to accept their conclusions does not? Thus,

although shame policies are not as clear violations of these epistemic values as the forms of epistemic paternalism discussed in Sect. 2, they are still in tension with these values. Motivating citizens to comply with a policy by inducing a negative emotion neither encourages understanding of the science-based reasons behind the policy nor encourages scientific understanding generally. Indeed, it will likely encourage distrust of the scientific community.

Fourth, there is something troubling about how shame policies will likely be applied. Shame policies can operate as an alternative to legal restrictions: where a law might be seen as overly imposing or where its effective implementation is unlikely given the complexity of the issue, moral emotions, such as shame, are leveraged to motivate compliance. For example, rather than making vaccines a legal requirement in the United States, the government could implement policies and messages that shame individuals who are unvaccinated. But in this case, the government would be sending a perplexing message by shaming an individual for an action they have no intention of making illegal and doing so for reasons the individual doesn't themselves accept (see Nussbaum, 2004, 246).

Communal shame can avoid some of these problems because the connection between the individuals in the community can ensure that the policy's reasons are communicated clearly, and the shaming is implemented with compassion. That said, communal shaming poses its own dangers. Losing face in one's inner community carries significant weight; thus, communal shaming done poorly could be seriously problematic. For this reason, alternatives that utilize positive emotions would likely be preferable.[5]

6. Conclusion

Scientific beliefs are important because they shape society's policies and behavior. However, scientific communication faces various hurdles, ranging from simple ignorance to ideological bias. Some have defended epistemically paternalistic policies as a way to overcome these impediments. However, epistemic paternalism faces problems of its own: questions about its efficacy and moral status loom large. Shame policies have an advantage in that they are emotionally laden, making them more likely to be motivational, and they also avoid some of the moral missteps of epistemic paternalism, as they do not involve directly withholding information. Thus, it is thought that shame policies might offer an alternative to epistemic paternalism when more forthright forms of scientific communication fail. However, in this paper, we have distinguished between communal and non-communal shame and argued that this distinction matters when it comes to the acceptability of implementing shame-based policies. Communal shame occurs in groups where the members know each other and share values and interests, thus making genuine respect and trust possible, whereas non-communal shame occurs in groups that lack those features. As we have argued in this paper, the non-communal context in which shamed-based policies are being proposed—Western liberal democracies—makes it such that these policies are practically and ethically objectionable: when trust and respect are not present, shame policies are prone to backfiring and creating further distrust in scientific authorities~~., as well as creating a kind of rule by the mob.~~ In sum, we should avoid shame policies AQ4 .

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Mistake--please delete--added by mistake.

1 In moral philosophy, the idea that reason is motivationally inert without emotion is rooted in the philosophy of Hume and is developed by contemporary non-cognitivists (see Cohon, 2018). The influence that emotions have on reason is well-known by moral psychologists (see Haidt, 2001). With respect to this issue and smoking, see Amonini et al. (2015).

2
–The self versus behavior dichotomy is one of the main aspects that separates shame from guilt: when we feel guilty, we feel bad about something we did, while when we feel shame, we feel bad about ourselves (Tangney et al., 1996; Williams 1993).
3
–Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) would be an example of communal shame; see "(Sanitation Learning Hub, Retrieved 2022)." However, because science-based policy in Western democracies is non-communal, our focus here is on non-communal shame.
4
–Evidence suggests that trust in national public health authorities and scientists is an important factor in acceptance of COVID-19 vaccines (Lindholt et al., 2021), thus suggesting that trust must come before attempts to alter behavior will be effective. Although there are few studies directly linking shame policies with scientific distrust, we believe that related empirical evidence, as well as conceptual arguments, suggest the likelihood of such a link. Empirically, for example, patients who feel they are judged negatively by their healthcare providers about their weight are less likely to report trust in those healthcare providers (Gudzune et al., 2014). Conceptually, feeling shame causes individuals to want to hide, withdraw, and conceal their shameful behaviors from those that shame them—things one does when they do not trust others. Indeed, feelings of shame about COVID-19 infection correlate with lower intentions to comply with public health authorities' guidelines about distancing and reporting infection (Travaglino & Moon, 2021).
5
–For instance, it has been found that dignity and pride are a strong source of motivation in some CLTS programs; see Venkataramanan et al. (2018). Another example, could be littering programs that appeal to pride; such as, "(Keep America Beautiful, Retrieved 2022)" or "(Don't Mess with Texas, Retrieved 2022)."