Series: Moral Psychology of the Emotions

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How do our emotions influence our other mental states (perceptions, beliefs, motivations, intentions) and our behavior? How are they influenced by our other mental states, our environments, and our cultures? What is the moral value of a particular emotion in a particular context? This series explores the causes, consequences, and value of the emotions from an interdisciplinary perspective. Emotions are diverse, with components at various levels (biological, neural, psychological, social), so each book in this series is devoted to a distinct emotion. This focus allows the author and reader to delve into a specific mental state, rather than trying to sum up emotions en masse. Authors approach a particular emotion from their own disciplinary angle (e.g., conceptual analysis, feminist philosophy, critical race theory, phenomenology, social psychology, personality psychology, neuroscience) while connecting with other fields. In so doing, they build a mosaic for each emotion, evaluating both its nature and its moral properties.

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Chapter 10

Shame, Gender and Self-Making

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Although moral philosophers have argued that shame is a valuable moral emotion, feminist philosophers are often sceptical. They have pointed out that women are far more likely to feel shame than men, and that feelings of shame are often marshalled to reinforce women's subordinate position in a patriarchal world.[1] As pervasive as this claim is, it is also more mysterious than it appears. A survey of empirical work in psychology calls this conclusion into question: it is not in fact clear that women do feel more shame or feel shame more often than men (Ferguson and Eyre 2000; Rodogno 2013). At the same time, feminists also insist that shame on which moral philosophers focus is not the kind of shame that they care about. The shame found in psychological studies and in most moral philosophy is what we might call *episodic shame*. This sort of shame is usually identified as a brief and intense emotional experience that arises because of some specific incident. Lehtinen, for example, argues that the kind of shame found in moral philosophy is usually theorized from the perspective of 'privileged, white, European or North American, middle-class academically trained men' (1998, 62–63). Likewise, Bartky describes the shame of the moral philosopher as the shame of someone who 'has escaped the characteristic sorts of oppression on which modern hierarchies of class, race, and gender rely so heavily' (1990, 97). Feminist philosophers identify a different kind of shame that would not be so easily captured by empirical data, what we might call *shame-attunement*. How, if at all, is shame-attunement related to the episodic shame of moral philosophy? If it has no relation to the episodic emotion, then what precisely makes it shameful?

In this chapter, my aim is to try to make some headway into these questions. I begin with a sketch of the shame-attunement that feminist philosophers identify. I then try to determine how this shame might be related to the

episodic emotion of shame. Drawing on the work of Frantz Fanon, I argue that shame-attunement and episodic shame have one commonality: they both involve a vulnerable sense of self. I sketch an account that might help explain why shame-attunement feels shameful.

WOMEN'S SHAME AS SHAME-ATTUNEMENT

Feminist literature on women's shame identifies what Bartky calls 'a pervasive affective attunement' (1990, 85). According to these arguments, shame is not to be understood solely as individual episodes of the emotion, but instead a shameful way of being in the world.

Lewis' work on shame and neurosis is one of the seminal articulations of women's shame. She begins with a discussion of studies on field dependence (1971, 127). Field dependence studies involve perception and orienting oneself in space. The famous study by Witkin involved two perceptual tests (Witkin 1949, 22–24; Lewis 1971, 128–129). First, subjects in a dark room were asked to place a luminous rod in a vertical position. The rod was suspended in a tilted frame. Second, subjects were led into a small room with a chair. Either the chair or the room (or both) were tilted, and the subjects were asked to adjust themselves upright in the chair. The results of both tests showed that some subjects depended on the 'field' (either the tilt of the frame or the tilt of the room) to determine what counted as vertical. Those subjects were considered field-dependent, and Witkin observed that women in the studies tended to be more field-dependent than men (Witkin 1949, 24–25; Lewis 1971, 130). Lewis extends that work to argue that there is a correlation between field dependence and shame-proneness. Shame-proneness is the disposition to feel episodes of shame either (a) more frequently than average or (b) more intensely than average (Rodogno 2013, 156).[2] For example, subjects who are field-dependent are more likely to see an interconnectedness between the self and others, which is also a characteristic of shame-proneness (Lewis 1971, 139). Lewis then uses this connection to support sex differences in shame-proneness. Since women are in a subordinate social position, Lewis suggests that their self-organization is dependent on their cultural contexts and relations with others (1971, 145–147). They are, in other words, field-dependent not just in perception, but in self-formation as well. As Lewis puts it, 'The "self" in women is more vulnerable than in men' (1971, 148).[3]

The basic structure of Lewis' argument is echoed in Bartky's explanation of shame as a 'pervasive affective attunement' (1990, 85). Bartky accepts the definition of shame as 'the distressed apprehension of the self as inadequate or diminished' (1990, 86). She then provides detailed observations of her experience teaching an extension course to suburban high school teachers (1990, 88). Bartky notes how the women in class tended to be quieter and more self-denigrating than their male counterparts (1990, 88–89). She characterizes their behaviour as a kind of shame, but not the same kind as an episodic experience. According to Bartky, the kind of shame her students exhibit stems in part from negative classroom experiences in general: studies show that teachers (both male and female) are more likely to pay more attention to male students and interrupt female students more often (1990, 90–93). As Bartky puts it, 'Women, more often than men, are made to feel shame in major sites of social life' (1990, 93). The kind of shaming that happens in the classroom is subtle, and women often cannot explicitly articulate their feelings of shame in these contexts. Bartky argues that what women experience is 'not so much a belief as a *feeling* of inferiority or *sense* of inadequacy' (1990, 94, emphasis original). Women do not, according to Barkty, consciously believe that they are lesser than or inferior. Instead, what they grasp is 'nothing less than women's subordination in the hierarchy of gender, their situation not in ideology, but in the social formation as it is actually constituted' (Bartky 1990, 95). The shame that women exhibit is a nascent feeling of their subordinated status in the world.

More recently, Harris-Perry explicitly draws on field dependence to discuss Black women's shame. She begins her chapter 'The Crooked Room' with a description of the field-dependence studies (2011, 29). Harris-Perry explains that field dependence can act as a metaphor for confronting stereotypes. As she puts it, 'black women are standing in a crooked room, and they have to figure out which way is up' (ibid). Harris-Perrys arguments parallel Lewis' points about self-formation. Since Black women are confronted with distorting stereotypes about who they are and who they can be, they are forced to build an identity within the distortions. Understanding these stereotypes is important because, according to Harris-Perry, identity formation takes place within the political structure of recognition (2011, 35). Drawing on Hegel, Harris-Perry argues that recognition of one's humanity is a key feature of political life, and fair political systems are those that afford citizens proper recognition in the public sphere (2011, 36–37). Yet marginalized groups in society 'face fundamental and continuing threats to their opportunity for accurate recognition' (38). These threats – negative stereotypes among them – partially comprise the 'crooked room' in which Black women must learn how to stay straight. When someone is constantly confronted with distorted images of who she is, she feels shame about her inability to meet desired ideals. As Harris-Perry puts it, 'When we feel ashamed, we assume the room is straight and the self is off-kilter. Shame urges us to internalize the crooked room' (2011, 105).

To summarize, women's shame-attunement is the persistent and pervasive feeling of one's vulnerability or diminished status. Since women are in a subordinated position in social and political life, they are routinely forced to

contend with misrecognition, negative stereotypes and the interfering judgements of others. This steady feature of women's lives leads to the shameful way of being in the world that feminist philosophers identify.

GENDER DIFFERENCES, SHAME-ATTUNEMENT AND SHAME

Now that we have a better sense of shame-attunement, we are in a better position to examine its relationship to episodes of shame. There are several possibilities. First, perhaps shame-attunement makes women more disposed to experience episodes of shame. In this way, shame-attunement may function the same way as shame-proneness. If shame-attunement functions this way, we would expect that women will feel more episodes of shame or feel shame more intensely than men do.

If we think that shame-attunement leads to more episodes of shame, this is an empirical question that can be tested. The results of such studies are mixed. On one hand, studies that use the Test of Self-Conscious Affect (TOSCA) found a higher degree of shame-proneness in women (Rodogno 2013, 158–159). TOSCA presents subjects with scenarios and then asks how they might feel if they were in such a scenario.[4] For example, one of the scenarios is the following: 'You make a big mistake on an important project at work. People were depending on you, and your boss criticizes you' (Tangney and Dearing 2002, 211). One of the options for an answer is 'You would feel like you wanted to hide', which would indicate a shame response. Subjects who choose answers like this will have a higher shame-proneness score, and according to studies that use the TOSCA, women tend to score higher. As Tangney and Dearing write, 'Whether we considered elementary school-aged children, lower middle-class adolescents, college students, parents and grandparents of fifth grade students, or adult travelers passing through an airport, female participants consistently report *greater* shame and guilt than their male counterparts' (2002, 154, emphasis original). Yet, studies that used a variety of methods beyond self-attribution did not find a higher degree of shame-proneness in women, and some of them found a higher degree of shame-proneness in men (Rodogno 2013, 158; Ferguson and Eyre 2000, 266–269). Empirical work does not unequivocally support the conclusion that women's shame-attunement leads to more frequent or intense episodes of shame.

Alternatively, the relationship between shame-attunement and episodes shame might flow in the opposite direction. That is, rather than shame-attunement leading to more episodes of shame, perhaps experiencing repeated episodes of shame leads to shame-attunement. Harris-Perry, for example, suggests that shame is what causes Black women to 'internalize' the standards of the 'crooked room' (2011, 105). Bartky provides the literature on gender dynamics in the classroom as a way to illustrate how shame inculcation might happen: women received less praise and more criticism from teachers, and they are more likely to be interrupted (1990, 90–92). If we think of these incidents as moments of shame, then women might begin to internalize the idea that they are not capable students. Additionally, Ferguson and Eyre review psychological studies showing that parents tend to provide more negative feedback to girls and also tend to praise them less (2000, 257). Women are also more likely to assume that any of their failures are due to pervasive or global features of themselves – they fail because they are simply worse overall (ibid). If women, from a young age, tend to be dismissed, ignored, criticized and not praised as much as men, they are socialized to both expect harsh judgements from others and to assume they are at fault for those harsh judgements. As Ferguson and Eyre put it, women may experience 'societally inculcated feelings of passivity, helplessness, and reliance on others for their own self-definition' (2000, 256). Rather than thinking that shame-attunement leads to more episodes of shame, perhaps the direction is reversed: repeated episodes of shame would lead women to develop shame-attunement.

If this explanation is to be plausible, we need to know whether women do in fact feel shame when they are confronted with messages of subordination. There seems to be plenty of evidence to suggest that women are socialized to internalize the feelings and judgements of others, to assume that they are less capable or less intelligent than men, and to see themselves as passive or helpless. But do they become socialized this way because others repeatedly make them feel shame? Not every harsh judgement or experience of failure gives rise to feelings of shame. Young women who are interrupted by their teachers could feel angry or indignant about such treatment. Feminists have sometimes responded to suggestions like these by saying that members of subordinate groups lack a strong sense of self that would be required to respond with anger (Lehtinen 1998, 59). The trouble is that the origin of this weak sense of self is precisely what is at issue. If the weak sense of self is caused by repeated feelings of shame, we still need to understand why those feelings of shame arise in the first place.

It is simply not clear how episodes of shame are related to shame-attunement. If there seems to be no relationship between feelings of shame and shame-attunement, then why is shame-attunement shameful? If some empirical research does not support the claim that women feel more shame than men, how do we square this fact with feminist arguments and with the self-attribution that we see in TOSCA studies? My aim in what follows is to offer an account that might help us understand why shame-attunement is shameful.

SHAME-ATTUNEMENT AND SENSE OF SELF

I want to suggest there is at least one aspect that episodes of shame and shame-attunement share: both involve our sense of self. In most feminist work on shame, explanations of shame-attunement appear in the context of women's self-formation. This link is most explicit in the work of Beauvoir where we see shame interwoven through the early experiences of women in childhood and adolescence (1948/2009, 283–382). Mann makes similar claims about the way gendered expectations arise in adolescence (2018, 403–404). Harris-Perry uses the metaphor of learning to stand up straight in the crooked room to illustrate the challenges of self-formation in the face of negative stereotypes (2011, 29–35). As moral philosophers and psychologists have long argued, the sense of self is also present in episodes of shame. Different scholars account for this in different ways, but we can say without much controversy that episodes of shame take some aspect of the self as their object. Some philosophers, for example, have argued that we feel shame when we fail to live up to our values or ideals.[5] On accounts like these, the object of shame is the failed self. Alternatively, some philosophers argue that episodes of shame occur when we violate important social norms.[6] On views like these, the object of shame is the socially unacceptable self. If shame-attunement has something to do with women's self-formation and episodes of shame take the self as their object, perhaps this similarity can help explain how shame-attunement might be shameful.

There are at least two ways to understand the relationship between shame-attunement and women's sense of self: what I will call the *abject interpretation* and the *vulnerable interpretation*. These two possibilities are often not separated in feminist writing on shame-attunement, but I think it is important to distinguish them. First, I will explain the differences between them. I will then argue that the vulnerable interpretation fairs better in explaining how shame-attunement could be shameful.

The abject interpretation invokes an account of shame as the emotional experience of one's unwanted self. That is, in experiences of shame, we perceive ourselves (or some part of ourselves) as abject – lesser, lower, diminished, worthless or bad in some overarching way. The idea of the unwanted self is a staple in the psychological literature on shame.[7] As Ferguson and Eyre describe it, 'Shame involves a focus on one's global self – who I am and who I do not want to be' (2002, 254). Some feminist accounts of shame-attunement seem to draw on this same understanding of shame. Bartky argues that shame-attunement is 'a *feeling* of inferiority or *sense* of inadequacy' (1990, 94, emphasis original). They are grasping (perhaps not fully consciously) their 'subordination in the hierarchy of gender' (Bartky 1990, 95). Likewise, Mann links women's shame to the 'embodied awareness of [their] prescribed social deficiency' (2018, 404).[8] Finally, Purvis reminds us that what is considered disgusting is often also considered shameful (2019, 50–51). Women and women's bodies are seen as more disgusting or threatening – for example, menstrual blood is generally considered more abject than semen (2019, 53–54). Feminine embodiment, therefore, becomes a kind of unwanted self, which would cause the shame-attunement that women experience. In sum, on the abject interpretation, shame-attunement is shameful because it is a pervasive perception or feeling of femininity as the unwanted self.

There are some aspects of this account that seem plausible, but it also raises several questions. First, it requires us to accept the claim that women – as a class or group – must have internalized the perception that some part of themselves is lesser or diminished (Thomason 2018, 36–38). That is, they must to some extent accept or agree with the judgement that they are abject in some way. To see why this might be unsatisfying compare it to a similar case. Feelings of shame about physical disability or deformity are common. One tempting way to explain those feelings is to assume that the people who have this kind of shame must believe that they are in some way defective. Yet this conclusion forces us to attribute persistent inner self-loathing to disabled people, and there are reasons to be sceptical of this conclusion. Put broadly, there is a specious tendency for a dominant social group to pathologize a marginalized social group. If the account of shame-attunement we give requires us to assume that anyone who has shame-attunement is self-loathing, it is possible we are falling into this pathologizing trap. In the case of disabled people, we see this reflected in what is sometimes called the 'disability paradox'.[9] The disability paradox occurs when people who are not physically disabled assume that people who are disabled must be unhappy, even though people with disabilities report otherwise.

Similar problems arise in shame-attunement for marginalized racial groups. For example, there is controversy over (what is called) Black self-hatred: the persistent assumption that Black people are psychologically damaged and harbour feelings of inferiority toward their racial identity.[10] If it is true that marginalized groups have shame-attunement, must we explain that shame-attunement in terms of self-loathing? Surely it is true that living under conditions of oppression can do psychological harm, but this plausible conclusion does not then licence the stronger conclusion that such harm takes the form of constant self-loathing.

Additionally, the abjection interpretation also makes pride movements somewhat mysterious. As Purvis correctly argues, most pride movements do not undo painful feelings by changing them into positive feelings. Instead, they function by allowing marginalized people to 'locate resources for political action' (2019, 62). She provides examples of art and activist work, such as the women who published and distributed *Our Bodies, Ourselves* and

Judy Chicago's 'The Dinner Party' (2019, 54). According to Purvis, 'Rather than accepting the terms of pollution and defilement, abjected bodies protest their status as "other". . . and depict and expose objectifying and abjecting logics' (2019, 55). Yet, undertaking these sorts of protests would require some sort of psychological resources that would resist the self-loathing of shame-attunement. Shame-attunement, according to at least some feminist arguments, is a deep feature of feminine subjecthood: to perceive myself as feminine is to perceive that aspect of myself as abject. If that perception is pervasive and arises early in a woman's life, it is unclear how it occurs to women to protest their abjection. It seems that there would have to be some part of their subjecthood that resists the idea that being a woman is abject. What then becomes of the self-loathing that explains shame-attunement? At the very least, that self-loathing cannot be so total or so pervasive that it crowds out psychological resistance.

The questions raised by the abject interpretation allow us to introduce an alternative understanding of shame-attunement, namely the vulnerable interpretation.[11] According to this interpretation, marginalized people have a self-conception that is vulnerable to powerful influences in social life. Shame-attunement is the feeling or sense of this vulnerability. Both Lewis and Harris-Perry can, I suggest, be read as offering a version of the vulnerability interpretation. Both of them rely on studies about field dependence to explain the challenges that women face in the process of self-formation. Recall that field dependence studies purport to show that women (more so than men) rely on their perceptual surroundings to orient themselves and objects in space. Researchers posited that field dependence would correlate to personality traits (Lewis, 129–134; Haaken 1988, 314–315). Lewis argues that one of these traits is a sense of self that is more dependent on social relations. Harris-Perry's reliance on field dependence is more metaphorical. She uses the construct of the 'crooked room' to describe the way that Black women must confront negative stereotypes as they try to form a sense of self (2011, 29). This metaphorical use of the field dependence studies helps illustrate the vulnerable interpretation of shame-attunement.

Making a self is a task that all agents undertake. As I will explain shortly, there are several types of raw materials, so-to-speak, that we use to make a self. People in subordinated social positions have a set of raw materials that those in dominant social positions do not have, namely the distorted images of their group. For example, as women try to engage in self-formation, they must contend with the proscriptions of patriarchy in that process. Regardless of how they might feel about themselves, they face strong social pressure to build themselves according to the dictates of these distorted images. As Harris-Perry puts it, women (and Black women in particular) 'face fundamental and continuing threats to their opportunity for accurate recognition' (2011, 38).[12]

Now that we have a sense of what the vulnerable interpretation means for shame-attunement, we need an account of episodes of shame that might dovetail with it. Elsewhere I have argued that shame is a felt tension between one's self-conception and one's identity (Thomason 2018, 87). To get a sense of what this means, suppose that there are two ways of answering the question: What makes up a self? One way to answer is to focus on the aspects of ourselves that are up to us. I choose a career, I take up taekwondo or I like Marx Brothers movies. I think of myself as stubborn, loyal, soft-hearted or quirky. On my view, all these things would fall under what I call a self-conception: the way I see myself and the choices that I make to be one sort of person rather than another (Thomason 2018, 88–89). A different way to understand what makes up a self is to focus on all the things that are part of who we are, but that we do not necessarily choose. As Williams would put it, our agency is 'surrounded by and held up and partly formed by' things that are not up to us (1981, 29). I was raised in California, I am the daughter of Irish immigrants, or I have to wear glasses. In spite of what I might tell myself, I am selfish, impatient, sentimental or fearful. I classify all these sorts of aspects of a self as part of our identities: those features of ourselves that we do not choose, yet we also recognize as possibly saying something about who we are (Thomason 2018, 89–91). Making a self is in part a process of negotiating the balance between our self-conceptions and our identities. I might think that being raised in California says a lot about who I am or I might think it says very little. I might change my view about that over time. I might also be wrong about the conclusion that I draw: I might think that being raised in California is a deep feature of myself, but others might be able to see that this is just a fantasy I have created (Thomason 2018, 92–98). Who we are is not always transparent to us. Sometimes we think things about ourselves that are not true, and sometimes we are confused about who we are. We often make self-discoveries only after much reflection, learning from others, and finding ourselves in situations that reveal something to us that we did not see before. In the messy and complicated process of making a self, there will be times when our self-conceptions and our identities do not align.

Feelings of shame arise in these times of misalignment. As I have argued, in episodes of shame, we feel as though some part of our identity overshadows or looms large over our self-conception (Thomason 2018, 101–103). We need not, on my account, assume that the feature of our identity is one that we reject or view negatively. I might be perfectly indifferent to the fact that I was raised in California, or I might even be proud of it. Suppose, however, someone finds out I was raised in California, and for whatever reason, has a very exaggerated reaction to this fact. It might be an overtly negative reaction: 'Ugh! Everyone from California is a smug vegetarian, I bet you eat your weight in tofu'. It could also be an overtly positive reaction: 'Oh, I love

California! It's so progressive and there is vegetarian food everywhere'. Both of these sorts of reactions could cause me to feel shame (albeit probably a mild form) if I suddenly come to feel that being raised in California now looms too large in my sense of self (Thomason 2018, 103–105). It is tempting to think that we must judge some aspect of ourselves as bad, lesser or unworthy in order for us to feel shame. I have argued, however, that there are cases when people are made to feel shame about an identity they once took pride in and even when they are the object of positive attention from others (Thomason 2018, 105–106). In order to feel shame about something, all that is required is that we are made to feel as though it is the defining thing about us and the first or only thing that others notice about us. Shame, on my view, involves a sort of mini-identity crisis. In moments of shame, parts of our identity are thrown into the spotlight – either because someone else calls attention to them or because something causes us to see them in ways that we had not seen them before (ibid).

If shame-attunement means we have a self-conception that is vulnerable, then people with shame-attunement will be more prone to the moments of tension I describe in shame episodes. To better illustrate what this shame-attunement might be like, I want to turn to a detailed narrative account that supports the view I have constructed. We find that account in the work of Frantz Fanon. Fanon's account helps to show how the shame-attunement might feel shameful.

THE SHAMEFULNESS OF SHAME-ATTUNEMENT: FANON

In the famous fifth chapter of *Black Skin, White Masks*, entitled 'The Lived Experience of the Black', I suggest that Fanon is performatively playing out the challenge of self-making from the perspective of the marginalized subject.[13] He shows the reader the different movements in the process of trying to form a sense of self when faced with the images constructed for him by the white world. There are numerous moments that Fanon details, but I will focus on just a few to illustrate.

When Fanon joins the Free French Army, although he thinks of himself as French, French soldiers and the French people see him primarily as Black (Nielsen 2011, 364). Fanon describes his disorientation upon realizing that this is how people saw him by giving examples of snippets of conversation. He hears comments like 'But do come in, old chap, you'll find no color prejudice here' while at the same time hearing, 'Martinican, a native from one of our "old" colonies' and 'Look a Negro!' (1952/2008, 93). He feels surrounded by the white world, and so unable to think about himself apart

from his race. The fact of his race is presented to him in white hostility as well as white hospitality: 'When they like me, they tell me color has nothing to do with it. When they hate me, they add that it's not because of my color' (1952/2008, 96). In response to the hostility and assumptions of incompetence, Fanon's decides to mount a defence: 'I felt the knife blades sharpening within me. I made up my mind to defend myself. Like all good tacticians, I wanted to rationalize the world and show the white man he was mistaken' (1952/2008, 98). He appeals to human dignity, which 'had gutted prejudice' and to science, which had shown that 'the Negro was identical to the white man: same history, same morphology' (1952/2008, 99). In spite of these rational arguments, Fanon finds no acceptance. Even though the white world might recognize that Black and white people were the same, nevertheless the white man does not 'want any intimacy between the races' (ibid).

When his reasoned defence of Blackness fails, Fanon describes the temptation to embrace rather than reject the mythos of the Black man as 'primitive' or 'in touch' with the Earth. 'As a magician, I stole from the white man "a certain world", lost to him and his kind' (1952/2008, 107). Rather than disavow the so-called primitive nature of the Black man, Fanon embraces it. He accepts the claims that the Black man is more emotionally sensitive and in communion with the 'magic' of the world while the white man 'enslaves' and 'appropriates' it (1952/2008, 106–107). Yet, as Fanon realizes, this too is an image: 'I was soon to be disillusioned' (1952/2008, 108). He imagines the white world saying back to him in reply, 'We have had our back-to-nature mystics as you will never have' (ibid). That is, the image of the Black man as unique and special is not unique and special after all, so Fanon can take no refuge in the image of primitiveness.

Fanon ends the chapter clearly exhausted from the endeavours of self-making, and yet he is also steadfast in how he experiences himself. He has no doubts about his own subjectivity: 'I am not a potentiality of something; I am fully what I am' (1952/2008, 114). At the same time, he recognizes how difficult it is to grasp your sense of self when the world either refuses to let you use its tools in order to do so and also refuses to allow you to craft your own tools. As Fanon puts it, 'From time to time you feel like giving up. Expressing the real is an arduous job' (1952/2008, 116). Faced with refusals, hostility, twists of logic and distorted images from friends and foes alike, he feels as though he can barely move in the world. In spite of this minefield, his sense of his own self is never fully snuffed out nor is it damaged beyond repair. In the final paragraph of the chapter, Fanon writes, 'Yet with all my being, I refuse to accept this amputation. I feel my soul as vast as the world, truly a soul as deep as the deepest rivers' (1952/2008, 119).

Fanon illustrates in depth the dramatic interplay between the marginalized person's self-conception and identity. On one hand, he experiences himself

as fully a subject, 'as deep as rivers', and trying to live as a self in the world. On the other hand, he is bombarded with images of himself that he both does and does not recognize. When he tries to make some sort of meaning of his own identity as a Black man, that meaning is often twisted or taken from him by the white world. His racialized identity is presented to him over and over again as the first or primary thing people notice about him. White people mention it constantly and yet at the same time deny that they judge him by it. Yet Fanon's lived experience only makes sense if we accept that he feels himself to be a subject prior to his encounter with the white gaze. As Nielsen puts it, 'the very ability to resist presupposes an agent with volitional and rational capacities' (2011, 370). Although his sense of his own agency and self are troubled and shaken by his encounters with the white world, they remain nonetheless intact.

I think Fanon's account gives us the resources to better understand shame-attunement from feminist literature. There is a similar dynamic occurring in shame-attunement and in episodes of shame. As I have argued, when we feel shame, we experience a tension between our self-conception and identity. Some aspect of our identities suddenly looms large or feels as though it is under a spotlight. It causes us, however briefly, to feel our sense of self shaken – we do not quite know who we are in these moments. Someone with shame-attunement has a protracted or repeated experience of this same tension. In Fanon's own retelling, his shame arose from the way his race suddenly took on a new meaning or significance in his sense of himself. For Fanon, that change in meaning was precipitated by reactions from others. Notice that not all of the judgements that others made about his race were overtly hostile. Some people assured him that they harboured no prejudice (1952/2008, 93). They might be self-deceived about this claim, but at least they exhibited no outright hatred or contempt. I suggest that it is not hostility that causes Fanon's shame, but rather the constant feeling of his race as the defining feature of every interaction he has.

There are two ways that the tension between self-conception and identity manifest in shame-attunement, and Fanon helps illustrate both of them. First, in social life he must contend regularly and repeatedly with distorted images of himself. Others interact with him in awkward or hostile ways because of his race. He is also confronted with distorted images of people who look like him in numerous and sometimes surprising moments. Fanon gives the example of going to see a film and being plagued by the thought that 'a black bellhop is going to appear' on screen (1952/2008, 119). He is confronted by racialized stereotypes in advertising (1952/2008, 92) and in children's books (1952/2008, 124–125).[14] In the process of making a self, we are all faced with the socially-mediated parts of our identity. I may think of myself one way, but I may come across to others in a different way: I see myself as

career-focused, yet others see me as selfish. As much as I may disagree with such assessments, making a self is not the sort of activity that I can do in perfect isolation. I cannot, perhaps as much as I would like to, simply ignore the conclusions that others draw about me in social life, in part because they will interact with me in ways that are informed by those conclusions (Thomason 2018, 97–99). Marginalized people navigate the socially-mediated parts of their identities differently than members of the dominant group. The stereotypes they confront are often more clearly defined, are more rigidly enforced and more likely to mark their possessor as subordinate.[15] They must negotiate both how those stereotypes make them feel about themselves and also the fact that others will read those stereotypes into their identities. Additionally, they face sometimes serious social costs for failing to adhere to those stereotypes (e.g., women are punished professionally for being 'too assertive'). For members of marginalized groups, the part of their identities that indicates their marginalization is thrust regularly into the spotlight. As such, it frequently feels as though it overshadows the rest of them or that it is the first or only thing that people notice about them.

Second, the distorted images that confront marginalized people in the social world make their sense of self unstable. When people have to constantly confront stereotypes about themselves, it is understandable that their sense of themselves is disrupted by self-doubt (Thomason 2018, 98–99). For example, it is frequently assumed that adult women either have children or want children. People will ask 'How many kids do you have?' or 'Do your children go to school around here?' Advertising directed at women pictures them as mothers. Women in film and on television are depicted as mothers. Further, women who do not have children are often presumed to be defective, selfish or sad. If young women claim not to want children, they are told that they will change their minds when they get older. It would be unsurprising if a woman who does not want children begins to wonder whether her desires are normal when faced with this persistent assumption. It is not merely the frequency and the persistence with which marginalized people are confronted with distorted images of themselves, though that certainly plays a role. We do not build a self *ex nihilo*. We must rely on the materials that we have. Our own proclivities and desires are some of that material. The features of our social and political existence, our friends and loved ones, and art or literature also help us (or hinder us) in our process of self-making. As Fanon shows clearly, the raw material he encounters to help construct a self is sometimes wildly at odds with his own sense of who he is. It is difficult for him to find material out in the world that supports the image that he wants to create.[16] Faced with distorted images and awkward interactions with others, it is understandable that marginalized people might wonder 'Is this who I really am, since everything around me seems to say so?'

On the account I offer here, shame-attunement might be shameful in the following sense: In episodes of shame, we feel a mismatch between our identities and our self-conceptions. When we feel shame, we feel our sense of ourselves shaken or called into question. Marginalized people face obstacles in the process of self-formation that can lead them to feel their sense of themselves shaken. Episodes of shame and shame-attunement have in common a troubled sense of self. I suggest that this is how shame-attunement might feel shameful. Notice that the account I offer here does not licence the claim that women feel more shame or feel shame more intensely. It may, however, explain why women *report* more feelings of shame. From the first-person perspective, marginalized people constantly confront the same dynamic that is present in episodes of shame. They experience a long-standing tension between who they think they are and who the world tells them they are. I think this is why people are tempted to describe shame-attunement as shameful. Shame-attunement is the prolonged or repeated feeling of a mismatch between one's sense of self and one's identity.

NOTES

1. See, for example, Lewis 1971, Bartky 1990, Lehtinen 1998, Manion 2003, Harris-Perry 2011, Mann 2018, and Purvis 2019.
2. For an extensive discussion of shame proneness and the empirical psychological literature surrounding it, see Ferguson and Eyre 2000, Deonna et al. 2011, and Rodogno 2013.
3. One might wonder whether this vulnerability is always negative. For instance, perhaps people who are more field-dependent are more sensitive to the concerns of those around them or more open to change.
4. Studies that use TOSCA and support gender differences in shame appear in Tangney and Dearing 2002. There is a broader question about precisely what TOSCA measures, which is discussed in Maibom (2019).
5. For an explanation and survey of these views, see Thomason (2018, 19–22).
6. For an explanation and survey of these views, see Thomason (2018, 40–42).
7. See Markus and Nurius 1986, Lindsay-Hartz et al. 1995, Crozier 1998, Ferguson et al. 2000, and Olthof's chapter in this volume.
8. Mann distinguishes between two types of shame: ubiquitous shame and unbounded shame (2018, 403). The first is the kind of gendered shame-attunement I have been discussing here while the latter is a more protracted shame episode (e.g., when one suffers serious and prolonged social humiliation).
9. This term comes from Albrecht and Devlieger 1999.
10. The term is most clearly outlined in Baldwin 1979. For an extended historical discussion, see Scott 1997. For a helpful survey of the literature in psychology and sociology, see Pyke 2010.
11. I take this term from Lewis: 'The "self" in women is more vulnerable than in men' (1971, 148).

12. Later, Harris-Perry's argument sounds slightly closer to the abject interpretation; she suggests that feelings of shame occur when 'we assume the room is straight and the self is off-kilter' (2011, 105). Nevertheless, we need not follow her to this conclusion to accept that self-formation is particularly difficult for members of marginalized groups.
13. For further explorations of this theme, see Nielsen 2011, Drabinski 2012, and Gordon 2015.
14. Fanon writes of the 'grinning *Y'a bon Banania*' (1958/2008, 92). Gordon points out that this is a reference to a popular French cereal, which had a smiling Senegalese soldier on the box (2015, 50).
15. Certainly, there are strong stereotypes that face members of dominant groups: for example, men must contend with the 'bread winner' stereotype. Dominant group stereotypes are, I suspect, fewer in number. As a result, they are less likely to severely truncate the possibilities for self-building. Thanks to Alessandra Fussi and Raffaele Rodogno for pressing me to clarify this point.
16. This is one of the reasons that the literature from the Négritude movement ends up being important to him (Gordon 2015, 52–56).

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