Gender and the Politics of Shame: A Twenty-First-Century Feminist Shame Theory

CLARA FISCHER

This special issue explores the relevance of shame to feminist theory and practice. Across a number of contexts, theoretical frames, and disciplines, the articles collated here provide a stimulating engagement with shame, posing questions and developing analyses that have a direct bearing on feminism. For, the significance of shame to feminists lies in the complex and often troubling implications it holds as a feeling that may be experienced differently by people of certain genders (and none), and in its relation to power. Indeed, as the contributions to this special issue highlight, shame may play a role in our moral development, but given its often readily acknowledged harmful effects, shame is frequently put to politically problematic and morally questionable ends. In patriarchal societies the outgrowths of this regularly entail gendered consequences, as gendered shame may form a disciplining device operating through structures of oppression, such as gender, but also class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, and related intersectional categories. The question of *a politics of shame* therefore arises in the context of a consideration of the social and political deployment and manipulation of shame, and the reported divergence in the shame experience itself, which feminists have attributed to its manifestation through, among others, gender.

In following Elizabeth Spelman's comments on there being "a politics of emotion," which she outlines with regard to anger, I maintain, and the authors of this issue persuasively illustrate, that there is a politics of shame, which similarly involves gendered subordination and insubordination.[1] When conceiving of the proposal for this special issue, then, one of its primary envisaged aims was to establish and thoroughly interrogate this politics of shame and its connection to gender. I am pleased to say that the contributions to the issue have exceeded my expectations in this regard, drawing out many of the complexities involved in theorizing this difficult topic of the relation between gender, power, and shame. Work on shame can be challenging, not least because of the "slipperiness" of shame, which makes identifying, defining, and analyzing this feeling a necessarily inexact science, but also because of the affective

toll it may take on the researcher. Shame is, notoriously, a painful emotion, and a sustained engagement with shame—even if this is at an academic, scholarly "re-move"—can leave one vulnerable, even hurt, in its wake. This makes me appreciate all the more the work and affective effort contributed by the authors in their respective philosophical investigations of shame presented here.

The second motivator for "Gender and the Politics of Shame" lay in the conspicuous absence of such a collation of essays in a feminist academic journal. Although there were already some important examples of feminist scholarship on shame (some of which will be discussed below), a systematic journal collection on the theme was, until now, sadly missing.[2] Hence, in light of the strong linkages between gender and shame already identified in existing feminist work, it seemed to me an oversight that needed to be redressed. Following a surprisingly popular conference on the theme,[3] which formed part of a British Academy-funded fellowship on "The Politics of Shame: Containment, Gender, and Embodiment,"[4] I felt sufficiently bolstered and compelled to submit a proposal on an important, but hitherto underexamined theme. The result is, I think, a rewarding and unique set of essays that meets my two aims of establishing and examining the gendered politics of shame, and ameliorating the lack of a dedicated, feminist scholarly space reserved for doing so. "Gender and the Politics of Shame" thus hopes to form a productive and lasting resource to consolidate shame as a topic with deep and persistent significance for feminists, articulating a distinctly *feminist* shame theory that draws on current trends in feminist thought, as well as on feminist canonical expositions of gendered shame.

SITUATING GENDERED SHAME IN CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN FEMINIST THOUGHT

The work featured in this special issue must be understood in the wider context of current developments in feminist thought. Notably, what has been termed a "turn to affect" has prompted a critical, feminist engagement with work on feeling while spawning feminist analyses focused particularly on the promise of affect for metaphysical questions beyond social constructionism and deconstruction.[5] The affective turn and the related turn to materiality—which, together, I deem characteristic of a "new school" of feminism made up of affect theorists and new materialists (Fischer 2018) —highlight ongoing concerns with materiality and the body, affect, and emotion, and generally present feeling-states as embodied phenomena. This emphasis on embodied feeling, in particular, is conducive to analyses of shame, as shame is often described in terms of that most telling of bodily responses—the blush (see Probyn 2005)—and, indeed, several authors have drawn on affect theory to theorize shame in their contributions to this special issue.

In addition to this, some recent, important feminist work on shame has been emerging, including monographs that add to the sporadic, but notable, examples of feminist theoretical work on the topic. Jill Locke's book, *Democracy and the Death of Shame* (Locke 2016), reviewed in this special issue, is an example of this, as is Luna Dolezal's *The Body and Shame* (Dolezal 2015). Shame seems also to have captured the

imagination of scholars working in related, critical scholarly areas, including cultural studies, political theory, and critical race theory, again, with prominent recent works by Christopher J. Lebron (*The Color of Our Shame*) and Myra Mendible (*American Shame*) reviewed as part of this special issue (Lebron 2013; Mendible 2016). The timeliness of "Gender and the Politics of Shame" is therefore not in doubt, as the special issue showcases new and original work on shame while evincing a contemporary, nascent interest in shame's potential for social and political analysis, advanced by critical theorists working across the disciplines on shame, but also on affect and emotion more generally. The contributions collected here thus reinforce the current, invigorated theoretical engagement with feeling, and solidify shame's status as a topic that can be fruitfully explored by feminists and critical theorists in a variety of fields.

Contextualizing "Gender and the Politics of Shame" through Existing Feminist Work on Shame

It is important to point to these contemporary trends that have recently seen some theorists preoccupied with shame and, to a greater extent, with the political purchase of feelings as such, however, one must also be careful here not to elide earlier, pioneering work on emotion, as well as on shame.[6] There is a long-standing feminist interest in the affective dimension of our lives, with theories and analyses developed to ascertain how social, political, epistemological, and metaphysical questions can be addressed when one takes emotions and affects seriously.[7] This includes a specific—albeit, as noted, sporadic—feminist canonical focus on shame, in relation to which this special issue positions itself. One influential example is Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, which had already outlined the close relationship between embodiment and shame as experienced by the girl child, and detailed the pained experience of shame during puberty. Noting the importance of "social context," Beauvoir points to the significance of gendered social meanings attached to the different experiences of adolescent development, which, for the girl, establish menstruation as "a curse" (Beauvoir 1997, 341). As the symbol of femininity, "and because femininity signifies alterity and inferiority," menstruation's "manifestation is met with shame" (341). Beauvoir's work brings together themes that continuously resurface in feminist theorizations of shame: the relation of shame to femininity, the body, women's sexualized bodies, and power. Forming a sort of feminist leitmotif of shame, these themes recur not only in important twentieth-century feminist thought on shame—Iris Marion Young, for instance, takes up Beauvoir's discussion of shame and menstruation in her essay "Menstrual Meditations" (Young 2005)—but also find a home in the present issue on "Gender and the Politics of Shame." In "Domesticating Bodies: The Role of Shame in Obstetric Violence," Sara Cohen Shabot and Keshet Korem thus explore the operation of shame in a context where gendered bodies are often susceptible to coercive and degrading treatment. For Cohen Shabot and Korem, gendered shame reinforces strict codes of femininity that diminish women's role in the birthing process, sexualize their bodies, and prescribe a self-sacrificial conception of motherhood,

thereby effectively erasing birthing women's agency and entitlement to respectful care. As such, Cohen Shabot and Korem maintain that the only way to interrupt the "alliance" between gendered shame and obstetric violence is to "creat[e] new models of femininity and motherhood" (this issue, 395).

This linkage between gender, the body, and violence is similarly examined by other contributing authors in this special issue. Bonnie Mann distinguishes, in her essay "Femininity, Shame, and Redemption," between two types of shame: one termed "ubiquitous shame" (which is typical of "feminine existence as such"), the other "unbounded shame" (a more devastating kind that may follow from ubiquitous shame). By exploring the contemporary phenomenon of "sexting" and the exploitation of adolescent girls' vulnerability in the context of a technologically driven "modalit[y] of sexual value-extortion" (this issue, 407), Mann sets out how ubiquitous shame descends into unbounded shame. In an analysis of the tragic case of Amanda Todd, Mann develops a feminist political phenomenology of shame that sheds light on the contradictory and damaging dynamic between ubiquitous shame, from which adolescent girls seek redemption through "culturally prescribed forms of sexual self-display" (this issue, 415), and unbounded shame, perpetuated endlessly through new media, and resulting in the violent, "logical conclusion" of suicide.

Social media are also presented as a platform for the public shaming of feminized and racialized Kurdish populations in Fulden İbrahimhakkıoğlu's article, "'The Most Naked Phase of Our Struggle': Gendered Shaming and Masculinist Desiring-Production in Turkey's War on Terror." İbrahimhakkıoğlu establishes the circulation of violent and threatening images of the conflict in southeast Turkey as an "aesthetic (re)construction of militarized masculinity" (this issue, 418), and interrogates representations of the masculinist nation-state through the prism of shame and in its relation with gender, race, and ethnicity. For İbrahimhakkıoğlu, the sexualized, feminine body is central to the production of a particular masculinity through shaming, but also to the marking of Kurdish bodies as gendered and "racially inferior." İbrahimhakkıoğlu counterposes gendered shaming with women's peace activism and the liberatory potential of "politicized, critical art" that "could offer a retraining of sensibilities," enabling "new economies of desire" to emerge (this issue, 426).

In "Humiliation as a Harm of Sexual Violence: Feminist versus Neoliberal Perspectives," Dianna Taylor draws on Foucault's account of "the relation of self to self" and work by Avishai Margalit and Lisa Guenther to differentiate shame from humiliation. By examining the 2012 Steubenville case of the gang-rape of a teenager, Taylor argues that humiliation itself forms a harm of the sexual violence committed against women. Taylor's article constitutes a rare discussion of the relationship between shame and humiliation, and continues the familiar themes of power and embodiment (in this case with regard to humiliation and its effects on how one relates to oneself) that usually also feature as part of the feminist leitmotif of shame. Assessing recent discussion of "resilience" as a way of dealing with harm, and the attendant individuating, neoliberal framing of sexual violence and risk, Taylor ultimately maintains that, although tempting, resilience does not further feminist projects against sexual violence. Instead, such projects, to her, must form public, shared, inclusive responses of feminist solidarity.

The connection between gender, feeling, and violence has important precedent in feminist work on shame, especially as it pertains to the embodied vulnerability we share —however unequally—as a result of being in this world in certain ways, and the implications this holds for us in societies where embodied vulnerability is negotiated via strict prohibitions on the performance of particular masculinities and femininities. Bonnie Mann's work on "sovereign masculinity" in the context of the "war on terror," for example, sets out the close relationship between the construction of a particular notion of manhood and gendered shaming's role in producing "morally complicit and relatively thoughtless" subjects—that is, subjects who are produced precisely to service "a nation committed to a policy of preemptive war" (Mann 2014, 117). Via the "shame-to-power conversion," Mann's "sovereign man" emerges from being shamed and vulnerable to form a powerful subject integrated into the community of his peers. The conversion involves the spectacle of violence, or at least threatened violence, as it requires "a *visible sign* of the victim's vulnerability and the sovereign man's power" (125).

Similar theorizations of shame in the context of the nation and the transgression of strictly policed gender and sexual norms can also be found in my own work. In "Gender, Nation, and the Politics of Shame: Magdalen Laundries and the Institutionalization of Feminine Transgression in Modern Ireland," I've explored Ireland's pervasive system of institutionalization in terms of gendered shame and the formation of a postcolonial national identity that depended on the stringent enforcing of a femininity of moral, sexual purity (Fischer 2016b). The mass institutionalization of gendered Others in Ireland was thus reflective of a politics of shame that excised transgressive women and children to satisfy the demands of a national imaginary in which Irish identity was premised on the superior virtue of the Irish (and Irish women in particular), when compared to the former colonizer. In an article published in this journal, "Revealing Ireland's 'Proper' Heart: Apology, Shame, Nation," I trace this politics of shame to the present day in an analysis of the Taoiseach's (Irish Prime Minister's) recent apology to Magdalen Laundry survivors (Fischer 2017). I show that the state apology, while proclaiming national self-assessment and regret, again involves that classic mechanism of shame—hiding—to present Ireland as a morally progressive, magnanimous nation while covering the contemporary shaming of single mothers. In her book *Queer Attachments: The Cultural Politics of Shame*, Sally Munt had previously also examined ideas of the nation, and how such ideas relate to Irishness, shame, and homophobia in New York's St. Patrick's Day parades. Munt's work, more generally, is an important example of the queering of shame, as she examines "the shame *habitus*, embodied in the subcultural histories of the poor, the queer, and the Irish Catholic diaspora" (Munt 2008, 16).

On the heels of the notable collection *Gay Shame* (Halperin and Traub 2009); Michael Warner's *The Trouble with Normal* (Warner 2000); Bogdan Popa's recent *Shame: A Genealogy of Queer Practices in the 19th Century* (Popa 2017); and Judith Butler's articulation of shame as the product of "the stigma . . . of queerness" (Butler 2014, 233), contributors to this special issue also explore shame in relation to the heteronormative circumscription of desire and queer sexual relationships. In "Sunsets and Solidarity: Overcoming Sacramental Shame in Conservative Christian Churches

to Forge a Queer Vision of Love and Justice," Theresa Tobin and Dawne Moon draw on their qualitative study of LGBTI conservative Christians to develop the concept of "sacramental shame." This type of shame, "dispens[ed] … as a sacrament" (this issue, 451), poses as love and comes with the continuous demand for a proving of shameful self-denial or repentance in order to avoid the severing of community bonds. As Tobin and Moon put it: "it makes being recognized as a person—in the eyes of God and others—contingent on constant displays of will to change … instilling shame as an enduring, conscious mental state" (this issue, 452). For LGBTI conservative Christians to emerge from this, Tobin and Moon recommend "cultivating nonhubristic pride" (this issue, 451).

Emma McKenna's article, "'Everything Being Tangled Up in Every Other Thing': Class, Desire, and Shame in Michelle Tea's *The Passionate Mistakes and Intricate Corruption of One Girl in America*," provides an analysis of the third chapter of Tea's text to draw out how shame figures in the life-writing of a queer, working-class woman author. McKenna examines the potentially productive nature of shame through a reading of how class and desire reinforce each other in Tea's memoir and builds upon a theorization of shame advanced by queer, feminist, and affect theorists. Described by McKenna as a "catalogue of love and labor" (this issue, 470), Tea's work brings to the fore the complex entanglements between "desire, identity, shame, and class" (this issue, 470). This is particularly evident in her discussion of the text's treatment of sex work and the stormy, even abusive, relationship Tea had with a bisexual woman, Liz. McKenna argues that Tea's writing—and the writing of shame—can itself be viewed as transformative, as memoir involves the translation of private experiences into public ones.

Several other contributors to this special issue also focus on how shame features in particular artworks to examine the politico-aesthetic work that shame, or indeed art, can—or cannot—do. In "*Free Lunch with the Stench Wench*: Toward a Synaesthetics of Poverty and Shame in Catherine Hoffmann's Performance," Alexandra Kokoli continues the theme of classed shame by exploring Hoffmann's provocative performance art. Kokoli vividly describes some of the scenes Hoffmann sets: a dead rat presented by mouth, cat-like, to the audience; the donning of "austerity pants"; and the reappearance of the rat in hot chocolate, to name but a few. For Kokoli, the symbolic value of props such as the rodent lies in the associations they evoke in audience members: "the rat, infestation, and deprivation … this was the (perceived) stench of poverty" (this issue, 487). Kokoli thereby interprets *Free Lunch* as "a synaesthetic portrait of poverty and its psychosocial fallout" (this issue, 485). Following Hoffmann's insistence that the shameful stories of poverty revealed in the performance are not unique, "but the experience of millions in Britain" (Hoffmann), Kokoli makes the case for "re-weaponiz[ing] shame" against those who first "inflict it," and points to "the failure to make a connection" (this issue, 486) as a potentially shameful failure in creative work as such.

Robert R. Shane's article, "'I longed to cherish mirrored reflections': Mirroring and Black Female Subjectivity in Carrie Mae Weems's Art against Shame," provides an in-depth reading of four photographs by the renowned visual artist Carrie Mae

Weems. Shane interrogates Weems's "tactical use of mirrors to counter shame" (this issue, 501) and draws on work by Kelly Oliver, Helen Block Lewis, and bell hooks to tease out how "the mirror, shame, and black female subjectivity" (this issue, 500) are configured in Weems's art. Shane explains that Weems presents and confronts racist and sexist depictions of black women's bodies, and the shame such depictions usually rely on. By developing alternative, "counter-hegemonic images" involving mirrors as "a visual metaphor," Weems, according to Shane, rejects the racialized and gendered shame attendant in representations of African American women. Moreover, given the linkage of mirroring to the development of subjectivity and to shame itself—which is often understood to entail an imagined onlooker in whose eyes one is revealed as shameful—Shane shows that Weems asserts an alternative black female subjectivity that rejects shame "as a way of seeing the self" and instead develops "a way of seeing the self lovingly" (this issue, 502).

The role of mirroring in the shame experience is also taken up by Kimberly Love in "Too Shame to Look: Learning to Trust Mirrors and Healing the Lived Experience of Shame in *The Color Purple*." Love notes that in Alice Walker's work, "mirrors … symbolize histories of black representation" (this issue, 522), with the shame attendant in injurious misrepresentation constituting, in Silvan Tomkins's words, a "sickness of the soul" (this issue, 522). According to Love, Walker addresses such racialized shame by facing it head-on, that is, by "look[ing] in the mirror" and "fac[ing] collective shame at the risk of further humiliation" with a view to "achiev[ing] wholeness" (this issue, 522). In an exploration of the aesthetic, epistolary structure of Walker's text, Love draws on Sartre's existentialism and theories of emotion to examine Celie's (the main character's) development of self-consciousness, which ultimately issues in Celie's refusal to look away from the mirror. Love frames her essay by situating the analysis of *The Color Purple* in the wider context of an imagining of a "love ethic for the building and sustaining of communities" (this issue, 523) to counter racialized shame, which she considers at the time of the novel's publication during the Cosby/Reagan years.

These innovative articles on shame's representation in art, and art's potential to interrupt or reconfigure shame in some way, stand against a backdrop of existing feminist work on shame and aesthetics. Feminists have examined shame in its relation to art with contributions ranging from topics such as feminist shame in the reading of romance novels (see Burnett 2013), to the role of shame in feminist and queer film (see Johnson 2004). Moreover, Love's and Shane's articles in this special issue should be viewed in the wider context of existing feminist scholarship examining shame at the intersection of race and gender. A prominent example of this is Melissa Harris-Perry's *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America*, which asserts that "blackness in America is marked by shame" (Harris-Perry 2011, 109), and sets out how this manifests itself specifically in its interrelation with gender in the lives of black women. By examining various stereotypes, including the Jezebel, Mammy, and Sapphire tropes, Harris-Perry shows that the shaming of black women has distinct consequences for black women's citizenship in the United States. Similarly, bell hooks has pointed to stereotypes and "the fact that from slavery to the present day

we are likely to be portrayed as mammies, whores, or sluts" to argue for a "liberatory, black female body politics" that resists sexist, white-supremacist shaming of black women's bodies (hooks 2001, 65–74 and 67).

All of the essays presented here grapple with the question of what shame is: how it manifests itself, how it is mobilized, performed, felt, experienced—across different contexts, bodies, images, and texts. The authors draw on prominent feminist definitions or develop their own conceptualizations of shame in order to shed light on how we ought best to think about shame and the different feelings, sensations, and thought processes it might involve, and to what extent it intersects with gender and (inter)related structures of oppression. One feminist canonical exposition of shame that is constantly returned to throughout the special issue is Sandra Bartky's formulation of shame, which, according to her, is experienced by women as a "pervasive, affective attunement to the social environment" (Bartky 1990). Mann's "ubiquitous shame" takes its cue from this definition, as does Cohen Shabot and Korem's understanding of gendered shame in relation to obstetric violence. Bartky's work on shame also features in Gail Weiss's contribution to this special issue, "The Shame of Shamelessness." In developing the concept of "secondhand shame," Weiss draws on Bartky, but also on Sartre, Fanon, and Tomkins, to examine whether shame can be felt vicariously, that is, on behalf of somebody else. Specifically, Weiss sets out to show that shame may be experienced precisely when another person acts shamelessly. Assessing the moral and political implications of the gendered and racialized "displacement of shame," Weiss ultimately argues that "secondhand shame" has the potential to transform through its shared, community-building capacity, a phenomenon Weiss identifies in the large, coalitional resistance "of millions of outraged and ashamed Americans" and "concerned citizens from all over the world" (this issue, 549) to the shamelessness of Donald Trump.

The final article contribution to this special issue continues the theme of feeling shame on behalf of and with another, and returns us, in a mirroring of Cohen Shabot and Korem's opening article, to questions of motherhood and embodiment. In "Shatter not the Branches of the Tree of Anger: Mothering, Affect, and Disability," Susan Gabel explores the mobilization of shame against nonnormative bodies, and her experience of mothering disabled children. In a highly creative intervention, Gabel presents a first-person account of shaming encounters with ableist social and economic structures in a sharing of her affective Story, which is prompted by the common opener of "I have a friend who . . ." to allow her to "break her silence" (this issue, 554). Gabel's paper utilizes critical disability theory, feminist theory, Foucault's work, and literary devices to highlight the construction of disabled children and their mothers as shameful. Her contribution examines competing conceptions of motherhood that are affectively produced in ableist and patriarchal contexts, and interrogates anger's role in "vigilante" motherhood to resist shame.

The personal voice of Gabel's piece is replicated in the first Musing of this special issue, a poem by Nita Mishra titled "And Stigma Followed Me Everywhere." Given poetry's strong power to evoke feelings, and to explore affective experiences in ways that straightforward academic analyses cannot, this contribution is both illuminating and apt

for a special issue such as this. Mishra's poem traverses racialized, gendered stigma—stigma being an affective phenomenon related to shame in complex ways. Mishra deftly describes that awareness of being seen—of being "looked [at] in awe" and of the "gaze" that "followed" (this issue, 569)—to highlight the centrality of visual exposure both to shame and to stigma. This theme of visibility also features in the second Musing piece. In "Gender, Shame, and the Pantsuit," Mary Edwards examines clothing and its relation to women's embodiment, shame, and being seen. True to the feminist leitmotif on shame, Edwards notes that the sexualization of women's bodies means that they are rendered visible in specific ways. For Edwards, this "suggests that clothing could be an important trigger of shame for women, as it can fail them in ways it cannot fail men" (this issue, 572).

"Gender and the Politics of Shame" and Shame Theory

Edwards, again, draws on Bartky and on Dolezal's work on embodied shame, which itself utilizes existing work of the phenomenological tradition (Dolezal 2015). Indeed, shame—if not gendered shame—has long been theorized by philosophers, and the authors of this special issue make ample use of such existing resources. Jean-Paul Sartre's work on "The Look" makes an appearance (Sartre 1992), as does Frantz Fanon's treatment of racialized shame (Fanon 1967). Dan Zahavi's phenomenology of shame is drawn on (Zahavi 2010), as is Martha Nussbaum's influential work on shame, disgust, and the law (Nussbaum 2004); and Lisa Guenther's contribution on the relationship between shame and humiliation (Guenther 2011). Moreover, shame theorists working in disciplines other than philosophy also feature throughout this special issue. The well-known work of sociologists Thomas Scheff and Erving Goffman is utilized by contributors (Goffman 1990; Scheff 2000), as is the psychological treatment of shame by Silvan Tomkins (recently championed by theorists Sedgwick and Frank; see Sedgwick and Frank 2003 and Sedgwick, Frank, and Alexander 1995) and Helen Block Lewis (Lewis 1987). Sara Ahmed's influential book on the cultural politics of emotion, which includes a chapter on shame, also constitutes a critical resource for contributing authors (Ahmed 2004).

Although this list is by no means exhaustive, it highlights the fact that the articles collated here cut across disciplines, and in their examination of gendered, racialized, classed, and disabled shame also work across different theoretical frameworks, including phenomenology, affect theory, queer theory, critical race theory, critical disability studies, existentialism, and literary theory, while engaging canonical work in feminism (on shame, but also on the emotions more generally). In examining what shame is, how it functions, and what its social and political implications are, the authors describe and elaborate upon shame's harmful consequences, the role of visibility and exposure in the shame experience, mirroring, and shame's distinction from other feeling-states such as humiliation and guilt. Some contributions also point to positive conceptualizations of shame and to the importance of shame for our moral lives. The authors develop recommendations for how feminists should deal with shame, and the words "resistance," "overcoming," and "healing" are central to these

discussions, whether authors think that shame must be surpassed or transcended in some way, or whether they believe shame to have inherent, transformative potential.

A Twenty-First Century Feminist Shame Theory

This special issue, then, presents a diverse set of essays that is contextually, methodologically, and theoretically rich, and that sheds light specifically on the gendered nature of shame. Although more work on shame and transnational feminism is needed, the collection does a good job of bringing together original work on shame while highlighting important existing work in shame theory and, especially, in feminist canonical work. Much of the latter has appeared in the pages of this journal, and I am delighted that the current special issue consolidates *Hypatia*'s engagement with gendered shame. Over the years, influential articles by Jill Locke, Erin Taylor and Laura Ebert Wallace, Luna Dolezal, Jennifer Manion, Anne Drapkin Lyerly, Ellen K. Feder, and Ullaliina Lehtinen have been published by *Hypatia* (Lehtinen 1998; Manion 2003; Lyerly 2006; Locke 2007; Dolezal 2010; Feder 2011; Taylor and Wallace 2012), and the special issue should be read as a continuation of this feminist work on shame, constituting an expressly *feminist* shame theory for the twenty-first century that builds upon and critically extends the feminist leitmotif of shame.

In conclusion, I want to express my thanks to the many people who supported this project. I received an overwhelming number of submissions in response to the call for papers (over sixty articles, four Musings, and three solicited book reviews), and want to thank the *Hypatia* editorial team, especially Sally Scholz, Miranda Pilipchuk, and Shelley Wilcox, for helping me work through these. Their professionalism and enthusiasm for the project made a sometimes daunting task manageable and enjoyable. I am also grateful to the contributing authors, who persevered throughout the review process and produced scholarship that will have lasting value for feminists working on gendered shame. Thanks are also due to the reviewers, many of whom went above and beyond the call of duty by reviewing multiple times and sometimes under considerable time constraints. Without their voluntary work a special issue of this kind would not be possible. Finally, I want to acknowledge support from my past sponsor, the British Academy, and my present funder, the European Commission, for the latter's support of my Marie Skłodowska-Curie project, GENDEMOTION: The Gendered Politics of Emotion in Austerity Ireland. I wish you affectively stimulating and thought-provoking reading as you make your way through the materials of this special issue on "Gender and the Politics of Shame."

Notes

1. The relevant passage in Spelman's text is: "there is a politics of emotion: the systematic denial of anger can be seen in a mechanism of subordination, and the existence and expression of anger as an act of insubordination" (Spelman 1989, 270).

2. Since the publication of the *Hypatia* call for papers, another journal, *Feminism & Psychology*, put out a call for a special issue on "A Politics of Shame" to be published in 2019. This underlines the attractiveness of and the need for greater engagement with the topic of shame as it relates to feminism.

3. A Facebook event page for the conference gained thousands of followers, which presented its own quandary given the necessarily limited space and resources available for such a gathering. It nonetheless highlighted the strong interest in the topic, and reinforced my belief in the desire and need for a sustained treatment of gender and the politics of shame.

4. For further details, see www.gendershame.com (accessed March 16, 2018).

5. For a more detailed discussion of the role of affect and emotion in feminist thought and the current phenomenon of the affective turn, see Fischer 2016a. For examples of work done by affect theorists, see Clough 2010; Gregg and Seigworth 2010.

6. Given the constraints posed by an introduction such as this, what follows will not be an exhaustive account of shame in the relevant disciplines, nor even in feminist theory, but will merely be a highlighting of some existing, important work on shame in relation to which the special issue positions itself.

7. A more detailed discussion can be found in Fischer 2016a. For prominent examples of existing work on emotion, see Lorde 1984; Spelman 1989; Spelman 1991; Jaggar 1992; Meyers 1997. See also Ferguson and Toye 2017.

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