

## Cooley and Goffman on the Ubiquity of Shame

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**Abstract.** This essay proposes that shame may be one of the hidden keys to understanding our civilization: shame or its anticipation is virtually ubiquitous, yet, at the same time, usually invisible. C. H. Cooley's idea of the looking glass self implies that shame and pride can be seen as signals of the state of the social bond. Theoretical work by Cooley and Erving Goffman imply ubiquity, and empirical studies by Norbert Elias and by Helen Lewis provide support. Elias's and Lewis's findings also suggest that shame is usually invisible; Elias stated this proposition explicitly. Like other emotions, such as fear, shame can be recursive, acting back on itself (shame about shame). In some circumstances, limitless recursion of shame may explain extreme cases of silence or violence.

The psychologist Gershen Kaufman is one of several writers who have argued that shame is taboo in our society:

American society is a shame-based culture, but ...shame remains hidden. Since there is shame about shame, it remains under taboo. ....The taboo on shame is so strict ...that we behave as if shame does not exist (Kaufman 1989).

Kaufman's phrase, shame about shame, turns out to have meaning beyond what he intended: just as fear can lead to more fear, causing panic, shame about shame can loop back on itself to various degrees, even to the point of having no natural limit. Recursion of shame will be discussed further below<sup>1</sup>. Suppose that shame is usually hidden, as suggested by the idea of taboo. What difference would it make? Before taking up this issue, it will first be necessary to what is meant by the term shame.

### Definitions of Shame

A linguistic way of hiding shame would be to misname all but the most intense or obvious occurrences. The word shame is defined very narrowly in English: an intense crisis response to inadequacy or misbehavior. In English also, unlike most other languages, shame is kept distinct from less intense siblings, notably, embarrassment. Other languages treat shame as a family of feelings that extends into everyday life. In Spanish, for example, the same word *verguenza* is used to mean both shame and embarrassment. And in French, the term *pudeur*, which is translated into English as modesty, is considered a part of the shame family.

There is a social definition of shame in maverick psychoanalysis and in sociology that defines shame broadly, in a way that includes both embarrassment and guilt, and many other shame variants. Erikson (1950) rejected Freud's assumption that guilt was the primary moral emotion for adults. He argued instead that shame was more elemental, in that it concerned the whole self, not just one's actions.

This idea was expanded by the sociologist Helen Lynd (1958), who outlined the crucial importance of shame in the constitution of the self and in social life. She was the first to recognize the need for a

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the recursion of thought, see Corballis, 2007;

CONCEPT of shame that would be clearly defined, in order to avoid the misconceptions of vernacular usage.

The next step was taken by the psychologist Silvan Tomkins, who proposed that shame plays a central role in behavior. In his volume on the “negative affects” (1963, V. II) he devoted almost 500 pages to a detailed discussion of shame and humiliation. This treatment dwarfs his discussion of the other emotions. His examples of shame imply a broad conception. Indeed, he argued explicitly that embarrassment, shame, and guilt should be recognized as members of a single affect family, as I do here. How does this family enter into the daily life of modern societies?

### The Looking Glass Self

In his first and most general book, Erving Goffman made a surprising claim:

There is no interaction in which participants do not take an appreciable chance of being slightly embarrassed or a slight chance of being deeply humiliated. (1959, p. 243).

This statement occurs only in passing toward the end of the book. Like most of his generalizations, there is little further development, not directly at least. This one asserts that ALL interaction carries with it the risk of exposure to a painful emotion. One of Goffman’s main ideas, impression management, has a similar implication. The reason we spend such time and care managing our impressions, Goffman argued, is to avoid embarrassment as best we can. Cooley had laid the groundwork for the idea that human life is haunted, if not controlled, by shame, although Goffman doesn’t cite him in this regard,

In two brief statements, Cooley (1922) implied that both inner and outer human life produces emotions, and that both social and self process ALWAYS leads to either pride or shame.

A. “We live in the minds of others without knowing it.” (p. 208)

B. “[The self] seems to have three principal elements:

1. The imagination of our appearance to the other person
2. The imagination of his [or her] judgment of that appearance
3. Some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or [shame].” (p.184)

Sentence A describes the basis for all social relationships, a theory of mind. Intersubjectivity is built into human nature, yet modern societies make it almost invisible. Small children learn to go back and forth between own point of view and imagining that of the other(s). By the age of five or six, they have become so adept and lightening quick that they forget they are doing it. In Cooley’s words, it’s like “the ground that bears us up when we walk,” taken for granted. The intersubjective bond to others becomes invisible, at least in Western societies.

Human communication is built upon intersubjective guessing because actual speech is complex, fragmented, contextualized, and therefore, if considered literally, usually misunderstood or uninterruptable. To try to understand, the listener must move back and forth between own point of view and the imagined point of view of the speaker. G. H. Mead (1934) called it “role-taking,” although it is not about roles, but points of view.

Occasionally role-taking will be referred to in ordinary conversation, but only casually and in passing. For example, one might say to a friend, “We both know that (such and such...).” Even here,

in the very act of imaginative mind reading, we usually are not conscious of it.

Paragraph B proposes a looking glass self, the way in which social relationships give rise to a self, which in turn leads to pride or shame. Cooley's approach implies that **all** social interaction produces either pride or shame, and that these emotions are social as well as psychological. They signal the state of the relationship: either **connectedness** (pride) or **disconnect** (shame). It further implies that the degree of solidarity or alienation (connect/disconnect) determines the prevailing emotional states in a society.

The paragraph also suggests how, in three steps, either pride or shame might be present all of the time, whether one is alone or with others. The two passages together imply a basis for what will be called the Elias-Lewis conjecture: shame or its anticipation is ubiquitous in modern societies, yet it also has become largely invisible. But what about pride?

Cooley's and Goffman's treatment of the looking glass self are quite parallel. Cooley's few concrete examples all concern shame rather than pride. Goffman provided hundreds of examples of impression management, but none ending in genuine pride. Searching the text of PSEL (1959), I found 16 mentions of either shame or embarrassment, but only three of pride. Moreover, all three of the pride mentions were in long quotes by other authors, in which pride was largely incidental. Goffman himself considers only shame, not pride. Why did both authors omit it?

Though neither Cooley nor Goffman name the kind of civilization they analyzed, it is clearly the current one, a modern, rather than a traditional society. Perhaps modernity gives rise to their single focus on shame. Shame is a signal of disconnect, alienation. Relationships in modern societies strongly tend toward alienation, and therefore to the ubiquity of shame.

Modernity is built on a base of individualism, the encouragement to go it alone, no matter the cost to relationships. Persons learn to act as if they were complete in themselves and independent of others. This feature has constructive and creative sides, but it has at least two other ones: alienation and the hiding of shame.

Emphasis on individual rationality is a key institution in modern societies. Another is the suppression of the social-emotional world in favor of thought and behavior. One of the many outcomes of this suppression is that emotion vocabularies in modern languages are ambiguous and misleading, so that they tend to hide alienation. For example, in the English language, love is defined so broadly that is often used to hide disconnection (Women Who Love Too Much), which is about women who are so passive that they allow their husband to abuse them and/or their children. There are also many other ambiguities, confusions and deceptions. Since shame is elaborately hidden and disguised, a close examination of the verbal, gestural, and contextual details may be needed to uncover it.

In traditional and Asian societies, the central importance of shame is taken for granted. Indeed, in some Asian societies, such as Japan, it is seen as the central emotion. In a traditional society like the Maori, shame (they call it whakamaa) is also treated as the key emotion. The whole approach to shame and relationships in this essay would be seen as platitudes by the Maori, news from nowhere (Metge 1986). But in Western societies, treating shame as highly significant in everyday life is counter-intuitive and even offensive.

Western societies focus on individuals, rather than on relationships. Emerson, because of his emphasis on self-reliance as an antidote to blind conformity, was one of the prophets of individualism: "When my genius calls, I have no father and mother, no brothers or sisters." In extreme contrast, in a traditional society, there is NOTHING more important than one's

relationships. Freeing up the individual from the relational/emotional world has been at the core of modernization. Since one's relationships and emotions don't show up on a resume', they have been de-emphasized to the point of disappearance. But shame and relationships don't disappear; they just assume hidden and disguised forms.

Individualism is the dominant theme of all relationships in Western societies. This focus disguises the web of personal and social relationships that sustain all human beings. The myth of the self-sustaining individual, in turn, reflects and generates the suppression and hiding of shame and pride. Since pride and shame, or at least their anticipation, are the predominant emotions in social interaction, suppression supports the status quo, the myth of the self-contained individual. But the obverse is that as we become aware of the massive amounts of emotions and disguising of emotion that occur in social interaction, we can make visible what is otherwise invisible, the state of any given relationship or set of relationships.

### Pride, Shame, and Alienation

The confusion of English vernacular is obvious in the case of pride, since dictionaries and usage both imply two contradictory meanings. The first meaning is negative: pride is interpreted as egotism. ("Pride goeth before the fall"). When we say that someone is proud, it is likely to be condemnatory. False pride might be a better name for this kind of self-feeling, to distinguish it from true pride.

The second meaning is positive: a favorable view of self, but one that has been earned. This kind of pride is genuine, authentic, justified and instinctive. When a mother says to her baby in her arms "What a strong little baby you are," with the right inflection, even a very young baby is likely to swell with pride. However, even adding positive adjectives doesn't completely eliminate the negative flavor for most adults. In English, the word pride is often tainted by its first meaning, no matter how impressive the justification.

Individualism also causes endless obfuscation about shame. The primary confusion is the practice of leaving out the social component that arises from the looking glass self: viewing ourselves negatively because we imagine that we are viewed that way by another person or persons.

Both in vernacular and scholarly usage, shame typically is assumed to be only an internal matter, condemning oneself. But the looking glass self contains both the internal result and the external source. The typical definition of shame in psychological studies involves gross dissatisfaction with self. Cooley's usage includes this part, but also the social component, imagining, correctly or incorrectly, a negative view of self by others.

Cooley's idea of the social source of shame and pride suggest that these emotions are signals of the state of a relationship. As indicated above, whatever the substantive basis for shame, the actual violation or occasion, a more general component is the state of the bond: **true pride signals a secure bond (connectedness), shame a threatened one (disconnect)**. This definition virtually always includes the substantive cause of shame, whatever it might be, since the causes of shame themselves are usually shared with most of one's whole society.

Since modern societies produce alienation at many different levels, emotions and relationships are deeply hidden. Shame, in particular, becomes invisible, even for most social and behavioral researchers. A taboo is implied in the many studies of shame that do not use the forbidden word at all. Instead, the focus is on one of the many shame cognates (Retzinger 1995, lists hundreds). One such cognate is the word awkward, as in "it was an awkward moment for me." A further way of hiding

shame is to behaviorize it: there are many studies of feelings of rejection, loss of social status and the search for recognition.

I have just begun to study the occurrence of shame and other emotion terms in millions of digitalized books in five languages from 1800 to 2000. This data is called Ngrams by its makers, Aiden and Michel (2011). My initial finding is that the use of the word shame has decreased three-fold during the two hundred years covered by the Ngrams in four of the five languages. The Chinese data is difficult to interpret because of what may be a mixing of classical and modern Chinese. Further, the issue is somewhat complex even in the four languages, since there phrases that use the word which don't refer to actual shame: "What a shame!" means exactly the same thing as "What a pity." "I will describe all of the findings in a later report.

Lewis's study of shame in psychotherapy sessions, to be discussed below, has received many citations, yet they usually ignore or misinterpret her main findings. She complained to me once that people praise her book but don't read it. Similarly, groups headed by Paul Gilbert (1998) and George Brown (1995) have published several studies of shame, but with little response.

On the other hand, Evelin Lindner has been able to organize a worldwide following for the study of themes identical to those discussed here. Her success may be due, at least in part, to avoiding the s-word, especially in titles, not only for her organization (Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies), but also her books (2000; 2006; 2006a). In her most recent book (2010) she has begun to use the s-word in conjunction with humiliation. Another instance is the work of Robert W. Fuller (2003; 2006; 2008). He has been able to speak to large audiences all over the world using title words like Lindner's and avoiding the s-word.

The taboo on shame seems to have weakened in the last ten years among researchers. The downward slope for the word shame has slowed in the Ngrams. But it continues to exert a powerful influence in the vernacular and even in research: shame is still close to being unspeakable and unprintable. The next section will outline a theory that can be used to explain this taboo and the possibility that it can have destructive effects.

#### Cooley's Brief Examples and Goffman's Lack of Explicit Theses

Cooley offered only brief explication of his two propositions, as in this passage that introduces his idea that we usually don't know that we are living in the minds of others and producing emotions. We only realize it, he states, in extreme or unusual situations:

Many people of balanced mind...scarcely know that they care what others think of them, and will deny, perhaps with indignation, that such care is an important factor in what they are and do. But this is an illusion. If failure or disgrace arrives, if one suddenly finds that the faces of men show coldness or contempt instead of the kindness and deference that he is used to, he will perceive from the shock, the fear, and the sense of being outcast and helpless, that he was living in the minds of others without knowing it, just as we daily walk the solid ground without thinking how it bears us up. (1922, 208).

In the following passage, Cooley explains how the looking glass self generates shame:

The comparison with a looking-glass hardly suggests the second element, the imagined judgment, which is quite essential. The thing that moves us to *pride or shame* is not the mere mechanical reflection of ourselves, but an imputed sentiment, the imagined effect of this

reflection upon another's mind. This is evident from the fact that the character and weight of that other, in whose mind we see ourselves, makes all the difference with our feeling. We are *ashamed* to seem evasive in the presence of a straightforward man, cowardly in the presence of a brave one, gross in the eyes of a refined one and so on. We always imagine, and in imagining share, the judgments of the other mind. A man will boast to one person of an action—say some sharp transaction in trade—which he would be *ashamed* to own to another. (1922, 184-85, emphasis added).

This discussion suggests less abstract situations. In the following passage, Cooley refers to particular, though fictional, events in novels, but without quoting any of them in detail:

In most of [George Eliot's] novels there is some character like Mr. Bulstrode in Middlemarch. . . whose respectable and long established social image of himself is shattered by the coming to light of hidden truth (1922, 208).

Cooley's statement, since it is abstract, gives only a slight sense of how catastrophic the shattering of the social image is, and how far it reaches. In the novel, Bulstrode's wife, Dorothea, although blameless, stands by her disgraced husband. The novel provides detailed particulars so that the reader is alerted to the full force of public humiliation.

Here for example, is a quotation showing one way Bulstrode's disgrace reaches to his wife. Cooley could have used to illustrate the particulars of his thesis:

When she had resolved to [stand by her husband], she prepared herself by some little acts which might seem mere folly to a hard onlooker; they were her way of expressing to all spectators visible or invisible that she had begun a new life in which she embraced humiliation. She took off all her ornaments and put on a plain black gown, and instead of wearing her much-adorned cap and large bows of hair, she brushed her hair down and put on a plain bonnet. . . . (Eliot, 1900, 338).

Dorothea prepares for a public stripping of her dignity by discarding her socially acceptable appearance, replacing it with what might have been prison or funeral clothing. By only referring to events like this one, rather than quoting them, Cooley was unable to describe the full force of his ideas. Moreover, most of the examples he offers involve intense shame, rather than the everyday kind.

Goffman, on the other hand, freely used a great multitude of concrete examples, mostly about everyday shame and embarrassment. His wealth of detailed events may be the key to his popularity and his importance. They remind readers of their own instances: "That's like me!" They can also be used to illustrate many of Cooley's theses.

Here is an example of a Goffman instance that illustrates Cooleyean themes, with numbers added to help the reader keep track:

Knowing that his audiences are capable of forming bad impressions of him [1], the individual may come to feel ashamed [2] of a well-intentioned honest act merely because the context of its performance provides false impressions that are bad. Feeling this unwarranted shame, he may feel that his feelings can be seen [3]; feeling that he is thus seen, he may feel that his

appearance confirms [4] these false conclusions concerning him. He may then add to the precariousness of his position by engaging in just those defensive maneuvers [impression management] that he would employ were he really guilty. In this way it is possible for all of us to become fleetingly for ourselves the worst person we can imagine that others might imagine us to be. (1959, p. 236, numbering added)

This instance is somewhat difficult to understand because it is so complex. It would have helped if Goffman had been even more detailed. Suppose a jokester colleague at the office creates a forbidden sound by pressing a whoopee cushion just as you sit down at your desk. You are embarrassed (2), because you imagine that your colleagues think it was you who made the sound (1). Even though you are not the culprit, you blush (3) because you imagine the others in the office think it was your inappropriate action (4).

In this paragraph, Goffman suggested 4 very brief internal steps, three of which involve living in the mind of the other. Perhaps it was examples like these that led Bourdieu (1983) to call Goffman “the discoverer of the infinitely small.” The minuteness about Goffman’s particulars like this one is the time scale: perhaps portions of a second for each event that is described. So far the discussion has been about theories of shame. Next comes two studies that seem to support the theories.

#### Elias on European History

In an extraordinary study over hundreds of years of European history, the sociologist Norbert Elias analyzed etiquette and education manuals in five different languages (The Civilizing Process 1939. First translated from German into English in 1978, it will be referred to henceforth as TCP.) There are two main themes; 1. As physical punishment decreased, shame became increasingly dominant as the main agent of social control. 2. As shame became more prevalent, it also became almost invisible because of taboo.

The following excerpt gives the flavor of Elias's study. It is from a nineteenth-century work (von Raumer 1857) that advises mothers how to answer the sexual questions their daughters ask:

Children should be left for as long as possible in the belief that an angel brings babies.... If girls should later ask how children come into the world, they should be told that the good Lord gives the mother her child... "You do not need to know nor could you understand how God gives children." It is the mother's task to occupy her daughters' thoughts so incessantly with the good and beautiful that they are left no time to brood on such matters.... A mother . . . ought only once to say seriously: "It would not be good for you to know such a thing, and you should take care not to listen to anything said about it." A truly well brought-up girl will from then on feel shame at hearing things of this kind spoken of. (1978:180)

Elias first interprets the repression of sexuality in terms of hidden shame:

An aura of embarrassment...surrounds this sphere of life. Even among adults it is referred to officially only with caution and circumlocutions. And with children, particularly girls, such things are, as far as possible, not referred to at all. Von Raumer gives no reason why one ought not to speak of it with children. He could have said it is desirable to preserve the spiritual purity of girls for as long as possible. But even this reason is only another expression of how far the gradual submergence of these impulses in shame and embarrassment has advanced by this time. (1978:180)

Elias raises a host of significant questions about this excerpt, concerning its motivation and its effects. His analysis goes to what may be a key causal chain in modern civilization: denial of shame and of the threatened social bonds that both cause and reflect that denial.

Considered rationally, the problem confronting him [von Raumer] seems unsolved, and what he says appears contradictory. He does not explain how and when the young girl should be made to understand what is happening and will happen to her. The primary concern is the necessity of instilling "modesty" (i.e., feelings of shame, fear, embarrassment, and guilt) or, more precisely, behavior conforming to the social standard. And one feels how infinitely difficult it is for the educator himself to overcome the resistance of the shame and embarrassment which surround this sphere for him. (1978:181)

Elias's study suggests a way of understanding the social transmission of the taboo on shame and the social bond. The adult teacher, von Raumer, in this case, is not only ashamed of sex, he is ashamed of being ashamed. The nineteenth-century reader, in turn, probably reacted in a similar way: being ashamed, and being ashamed of being ashamed, and being ashamed of causing further shame in the daughter. Von Raumer's advice was part of a social system in which attempts at civilized delicacy resulted and continue to result in an endless chain reaction of hidden shame.

Elias understood the significance of the denial of shame to mean that shame goes underground, leading to behavior that is outside of awareness:

Neither rational motives nor practical reasons primarily determine this attitude, but rather the shame (*scham*) of adults themselves, which has become compulsive. It is the social prohibitions and resistances within themselves, their own superego, that makes them keep silent. (1978:181)

Like many other passages, this one implies not only to a taboo on shame, but the actual mechanisms by which it is transmitted and maintained.

#### Helen Lewis's Study of Psychotherapy Sessions

Helen B. Lewis, a research psychologist, used a systematic method (Gottschalk and Glaser 1969) to locate verbal emotion indicators in many transcriptions of psychotherapy sessions. She seems to have been unaware of Elias's study. She found, to her surprise, that shame/embarrassment was by far the most frequent emotion, occurring more than all the other emotions combined. She also found that these instances of shame/embarrassment, unlike joy, grief, fear, or anger, were virtually never mentioned by either the client or the therapist. She called the unmentioned instances "unacknowledged shame." Her findings provide support, at the word by word level, for Elias's thesis of the prevalence and invisibility of shame at the historical level.

She also found that the shame in these episodes seemed to be hidden in two different ways. Overt, undifferentiated shame (OUS) involved painful feelings that were hidden behind terms that avoided the s-word (Elias used the word "circumlocutions). Bypassed shame involved rapid thought, speech, or behavior, but little feeling. OUS is marked by pain, confusion, and bodily reactions such as blushing, sweating, and/or rapid heartbeat. One may be at a loss for words, with fluster or disorganization of thought or behavior, as in states of embarrassment.

Many of the common terms for painful feelings appear to refer to overt, undifferentiated shame: feeling peculiar, shy, bashful, awkward, funny, bothered, or miserable; in adolescent vernacular, being freaked, bummed, or weirded out. The phrases "I felt like a fool," or "a perfect idiot" are

prototypic. Some of the substitute terms involve phrases. The example used earlier, “an awkward moment:” It’s not me that embarrassed (denial), but the moment that is awkward (projection). As indicated above, Retzinger’s article (1995) lists over a hundred substitute words and phrases.

Bypassed shame is manifested as a brief painful feeling, usually fleeting, followed by obsessive and rapid thought or speech. A common example: one feels insulted or criticized. At that moment (or later in recalling it), one might experience a very brief jab of painful feeling, followed immediately by imaginary replays of the offending scene. The replays are variations on a theme: how one might have behaved differently, avoiding the incident, or responding with better effect. One is obsessed.

It seems to me that Lewis’s use of a systematic method to detect emotion terms and cognates might have led to underreporting of shame episodes. Her finding of episodes of bypassed shame would be one reason, since the method she used would be better at locating OUS terms, sometimes missing the obsessive talk and/or thinking that characterize bypassed shame.

Elias’s method was unsystematic, and for that reason, probably much broader than Lewis’s. He examined all topics that frequently occur in the books he examined: sexuality, body functions, modesty, delicacy, manners, embarrassment, and what he named “sociogenetic fear.” By the last phrase he was not referring to fear in the sense of a response to physical danger. Rather, he used it as another way of referring to shame. This kind of sidestepping of the s-word occurs frequently in everyday conversations: “I fear rejection” has nothing to do with physical danger: it usually means “I anticipate shame.”

Both the study by Elias and the one by Lewis can be seen as hinting that shame might be ubiquitous yet invisible in modern societies, but neither makes that point explicitly

#### How Secret Shame Can Lead to Silence or Violence

Goffman also added a further thesis to the looking glass self, a fourth step to the three proposed by Cooley: managing (such as hiding) shame that could not be avoided. Furthermore, there is a fifth step barely hinted at by Goffman: hiding shame during the fourth step can generate a fifth step in the form of behavior. Helen Lewis (1971) noted that shame may result in withdrawal or even depression, on the one hand, or anger and aggression, on the other. The work of Retzinger (1991), the psychiatrist Gilligan (1998; 2011), and the sociologist Websdale (2010) follow up on the latter direction. These four studies show how the escalation of anger and violence is caused by hidden shame.

The emotion of shame is the primary or ultimate cause of all violence... The different forms of violence, whether toward individuals or entire populations, are motivated (caused) by **secret** shame (1998, pp.110-111).

Gilligan’s theory is of great interest, since it proposes an emotional cause for both interpersonal and mass violence. Websdale’s (2010) study of 211 cases of familicide found strong support for Gilligan’s thesis. A finding of particular interest in his study was the sizeable minority of perpetrators who had what he calls a civic-respectable style (CR), in contrast to the majority whose style was angry and aggressive.

The C-R killers had no history of violence and little evidence even of anger. They were almost all middle class men (and a few women) who had lost their jobs. They hid the fact by continuing to leave the house every weekday as if going to work. What they did during their absence was to plan in detail the killing of their family, and often, themselves. Proud of their abilities as a breadwinner, they

apparently couldn't bear the humiliation of being jobless.

This C-R style of violence, it seems to me, has deep parallels to the preparation of nations for wars of revenge, as was the case of France preparing to make war on Germany in the period 1871-1914 (Scheff 1997). Especially for the leaders, both shame and anger are carefully hidden behind a veil of rationality. The Bush administration may have been deeply embarrassed by the 9/11 attack during their watch, and their helplessness to punish the attackers. The invasion of Iraq on the basis of false premises might have served to hide their shame and anger. The idea of the looking glass self, especially when it is expanded to at least five steps, can serve to generate a large group of general propositions about both interpersonal and collective behavior.

Neither Cooley nor Goffman dealt with the idea of justified pride, nor have many others. Cooley discussed pride and vanity (1922, 230-237), but his version of pride confounds it with egotism, the usual case in vernacular English. Tracy et al (2009) have recently noted this confound, distinguishing between authentic (justified) and hubristic pride (egotism).

## Conclusion

This essay has reviewed four master studies of shame and its place in human life. Two of the studies, by Cooley and Goffman, were essays that imply a theory of shame as the master emotion in modern societies. Two were empirical studies which seem to support the theory. In its most general terms, it proposes that shame or its anticipation is virtually ubiquitous, yet usually invisible in modern societies. This idea seems to be strongly supported by the substantial empirical studies made by Elias of macro-history, and Lewis of the micro-world of social interaction. The theory needs to be further and more directly tested. If further studies support it, perhaps social-behavioral science and psychiatry need to proceed in a new direction.

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