Shame has been called the “master emotion” and the last forbidden topic. Some
degree of shame—the scolding of a child by her parent after an act of mischief--helps us behave respectfully toward others and stay part of a community. Excessive or toxic shame, as experienced by victims of bullying, workplace harassment, or sexual abuse, often leads to feelings of worthlessness, and in the worst case, the perception of the Self as irreparably damaged. Toxic shame that must remain secret may turn to violence against one’s self—cutting behavior or suicide—or violence against others, battering or killing, often with the hope of being hurt or killed one’s self.

This elective course will explore the relationship of shame to violence, as it often appears in social case work (addiction and violence against one’s self), group work (domestic violence, bullying and workplace harassment) and community organization (neighborhood crime, riots, and suicide clusters). We will examine how people accumulate toxic shame, as well as the more and less adaptive ways of managing shame. The epidemiological perspective will also be employed: events that have been recognized in the past as risk factors for violence will be reconsidered as “shame factors,” while determinants such as incidence and prevalence will enhance the students’ understanding of anti-violence policy. Interventions will be discussed that employ reintegrative shaming, restorative justice, and restorative processes systems for restoring dignity and worth to the victim.

Learning Objectives
Students who have taken this course will be able to...
1. Recognize and verbalize the experience of shame in themselves and their clients;
2. Understand the strategies used to avoid shame and the defenses used to deny it;
3. Understand why situations cause shame and why different people have different degrees of sensitivity to shame;
4. Understand the adaptive and maladaptive ways of discharging shame;
5. Understand acts of violence as maladaptive ways of discharging shame;
6. Use the principles of reintegrative shaming, restorative justice, and restorative processes to repair the damage to the self done by shaming acts such as bullying and workplace harassment.

**Required texts**


**Recommended**


**Assignments:**

**Assignment 1 – The Shame Diary (Midterm, due session 7)**

Using an on-line form, students will keep a diary for one entire day a week, of micro-shaming events (MSE) that they are comfortable sharing with the professor and the class. A micro-shaming event is one that is so inconsequential that you *almost* don’t notice it, except that you feel a little (or more than a little) discomfort afterwards. This will require a Zen-like attentiveness to your own behavior and that of those around you. Each MSE should be entered into a form available at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1qBx2FBlrrT-G1I97WsQlj_HRdGe_FAs0rSh-ZkV1M/edit?usp=drive_web

The process of filling out the form will be reviewed in the first class. Due session 7. (Learning objectives 1, 2 & 3)

**Assignment 2 - The “Shame Autopsy” (1 page outline due session 8, completed case study due at last class).**

Students will choose a high-visibility case of planned (predatory) violence, such as a murder, a mass murder, a specific act of domestic terrorism, or a suicide. Enough
information must be available about the perpetrator(s), in books, scholarly articles, magazine and newspaper articles and online so that the factors influencing him or her--social, psychological, and possibly biological--can be reconstructed in broad strokes if not in detail. The case can be current, historical or drawn from a work of fiction (with the professor’s approval). Some appropriate works of fiction are listed at the end of the bibliography.

Please include the following:

- Referring to Nathanson’s compass of shame, use shame theory, shame displacement, and shame management, to analyze the incident.
- Try to explain why the perpetrator could not manage his or her shame in a more healthy way.
- Describe his or her Narcissistic defenses.
- Keep length to less than 8 pages.
- Use APA style including cover sheet, citations, references, etc.
- Include a shame diagram using the shame diagram form available on the Beyond-Bullying website.
- Include a discussion of distal and proximal shame.

Please submit your paper as an email attachment, with the filename **Yourname Assign 2 S&V** (Learning objectives 3, 4 & 5) (Adapted from Rudmin, 2005)

**Grading Criteria**
45% Assignment 1
45% Assignment II
10% Classwork

**Plagiarism, HIPPA alert, confidentiality, plagiarism**, see page 14

**Session 1 & 2 – What is Shame?**

- Guilt vs shame quiz
- MSEs and why they are so important.

**Required Reading**
Fast, J. *Beyond Bullying*. Chapter 1 – About Shame.


**Recommended**
Skim the rest of Scheff & Retzinger.

**Session 3 - Positive and Negative Ways of Managing Shame**
Nathanson’s compass of shame.

**Required Reading:**

- **Attack self:**

- **Withdrawal (Numbing):**

- **Avoidance:**

- **Attack Other:**

**Recommended:**

**Session 4 – Narcissism & BPD as a Defense Mechanism**
Narcissism is often (or always?) a defense against shame. Where would it fall on Nathanson’s compass?

**Required Reading:**


**Sessions 5 - Bullying in Schools**

Think of a child you knew who was continuously bullied in school. Was he a submissive victim or a provocative victim? Did he fit Olweus’s description of a bullying victim? Did the bully fit Olweus’ description of a bully? (1 or 2 pages.)

- Debate: Who is right? Olweus or Regling?
- Watch “Bullied” [short video]

Fast, J. Beyond Bullying, Chapter 2 - Bullying in and Out of School


**Session 6 - Alcoholism & Shame**

In preparation, attend an “open” AA meeting. Write down how many of the speakers mention shaming incidents (watch out for synonyms! How many times do they actually use the word, “shame”?) (1 or 2 pages.) Be prepared to discuss.

**Required Reading:**

Chapter 5, p 125 – 132 in...


**Week 7 – Gay Bashing & Suicide clusters**


**Required Reading:**
Fast, J. (2015) Beyond Bullying, Chapters 3 and 4


**Recommended:**

(See bibliography for a complete listing of Phillips’ work with the “Werther Effect.”)

**Session 8 - Domestic Violence**

Write about three oppressive features of your own culture (e.g. women are not permitted to serve in combat in the army), and three oppressive features of your own religious faith (e.g. women are stoned to death in Muslim countries for dishonoring their families) Discuss whether these practice make sense, or simply keep oppression in place?

**Required Reading**
Fast, J. Beyond Bullying. Chapter 5 – The Bullying of Women by Men.


**Session 9 – Racism**
Who are the “real” Americans? Scapegoating as a form of societal bullying. How structural racism leads to violence. The Minuteman movement and the Sedona Desert crossing.

Required Reading
Fast, J. Beyond Bullying Chapter 6 - The Bullying of Blacks and Hispanics by Whites 129


Session 10 – School shootings and acts of Domestic Terrorism
Is there a structural similarity between the 15-year-old who shoots up their school and the 50-year-old who shoots up a church or exercise class?

Required Reading
Fast, J. Beyond Bullying Chapter 7 - Failures in Shame Management: School Shootings and Acts of Domestic Terrorism 163


Recommended:
Session 11 - Genetic, Social, & psychological risk factors for violence
A brief explanation of public health. The public health perspective on violence. Incidence, prevalence, and risk factors. The biological perspective.

Individual risk factors: Perspectives on Narcissism and anti-social personality disorder. Healthy narcissism and malignant narcissism. Divorce, unemployment, and mental illness as shaming factors.

Required Reading:


Recommended:
Volavka, J. (2002). Neurobiology of violence. American Psychiatric Pub. (Full text available for free on Google books.)


Week 12 – Crime and Punishment
The Western tradition of retributive justice. Rehabilitation versus scapegoating. Why women are more violent than men. The crack/cocaine disparity and mandatory sentencing. The biggest prison population in the world!

Required Reading:
http://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.21.1.505


**Review:**

**Week 13 – Restorative Justice & Restorative Processes**
What is restorative justice (RJ)? How does it differ from retributive justice? RJ with adolescent crime, bullying in schools, and domestic violence.

**Required Reading**
Beyond Bullying Chapter 8 – p. 196 – 208.


**Recommended:**


**Week 14 – Catch up and Review**
Bibliography


Goethe, J. W. von. (1854). *Novels and tales: by Goëthe. Elective affinities; The sorrows of Werther; German emigrants; The good women; and A nouvellette*. H. G. Bohn.


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Suitable works of fiction for the Shame Autopsy

Shakespeare: *Macbeth*

Thomas Hardy: *Jude the Obscure, Tess of the D'Urbervilles, The Mayor of Casterbridge*

Frank Norris: *McTeague*