



# Shame and Sexuality: Psychoanalysis and Visual Culture

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Why do human beings feel shame? What is the cultural dimension of shame and sexuality? Can theory understand the power of affect? How is psychoanalysis integral to cultural theory?

The experience of shame is a profound, painful and universal emotion with lasting effects on many aspects of public life and human culture. Rooted in childhood experience, linked to sexuality and the cultural norms which regulate the body and its pleasures, shame is uniquely human. *Shame and Sexuality* explores elements of shame in human psychology and the cultures of art, film, photography and textiles.

This volume is divided into two distinct sections allowing the reader to compare and contrast the psychoanalytic and the cultural writings. Part I, *Psychoanalysis*, provides a psychoanalytic approach to shame, using clinical examples to explore the function of unconscious fantasies, the shame shield in child sexual abuse, and the puzzling manner in which shame attaches itself to sexuality. Part II, *Visual Culture*, is illustrated throughout with textual analysis; contributors explore shame and sexuality in art history, politics and contemporary visual culture, including the gendering of shame, shame and abjection, and the relationship between shame and shamelessness as a strategy of resistance.

Claire Pajaczkowska and Ivan Ward bring together debates within and between the discourses of psychoanalysis and visual culture, generating new avenues of enquiry for scholars of culture, theory and psychoanalysis.

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