REFERENCES

Blum, Lawrence. "Gilligan and Kohlberg: Implications for Moral Theory." *Ethics* 98 (April 1988): 472–491.
Flanagan, Owen, and Jonathan Adler. "Impartiality and Particularity." *Social Research* 50 (Autumn 1983): 576–596.
Flanagan, Owen, and Kathryn Jackson. "Justice, Care, and Gender: The Kohlberg-Gilligan Debate Revisted." *Ethics* 97 (April 1987): 622–639.
Gilligan, Carol. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982.
———. "Moral Orientation and Moral Development." In *Women and Moral Theory,* edited by Eva Feder Kittay and Diana T. Meyers, 19–33. Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1987.
Gilligan, Carol, Janie Victoria Ward, and Jill McLean Taylor, with Betty Bardige. *Mapping the Moral Domain.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Graduate School of Education, 1988.
Gilligan, Carol, and Grant Wiggins. "The Origins of Morality in Early Childhood Relationships." In *The Emergence of Morality in Young Children,* edited by Jerome Kagan and Sharon Lamb, 277–305. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
Kant, Immanuel. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals,* translated by H. J. Paton. New York: Harper and Row, 1964; first edition, 1785.
King, Martin Luther, Jr. "Letter from Birmingham Jail." In King, *Why We Can't Wait,* 76–95. New York: New American Library, 1964.
Kohlberg, Lawrence. "Indoctrination versus Relativity in Moral Education." In Kohlberg, *The Philosophy of Moral Development,* vol. 1, 6–28. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981.
Kohlberg, Lawrence, and Carol Gilligan. "The Adolescent as a Philosopher." *Daedalus* 100 (1971): 1051–1086.
Lloyd, Genevieve. *The Man of Reason.* London: Methuen, 1984.
———. "Reason, Gender, and Morality in the History of Philosophy." *Social Research* 50 (Autumn 1983): 490–513.
MacIntyre, Alasdair. *After Virtue.* Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981.
Nails, Debra. "Social Scientific Sexism: Gilligan's Mismeasure of Man." *Social Research* 50 (Autumn 1983): 643–666.
Noddings, Nel. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.
Taylor, Charles. "The Diversity of Goods." In *Utilitarianism and Beyond,* edited by Amartya Sen and Bernard Williams, 129–144. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
Williams, Joan C. "Deconstructing Gender." *Michigan Law Review* 87 (February 1989): 797–844.

13 / *The Virtue of Feeling and the Feeling of Virtue*

ELIZABETH V. SPELMAN

> The mother who taught me what I know of tenderness and love and compassion taught me also the bleak rituals of keeping Negroes in their place.
> —*Lillian Smith*[1]

We cannot be said to have taken women seriously until we explore how women have treated each other. But that means, too, how we have mistreated each other. The history of women, including the history of feminism and feminists, is hardly free of some women doing violence to others, of some women miserably failing other women in need.

Most feminists would insist that the history of women cannot be well told unless its tellers are not embarrassed to investigate and describe women's emotional lives: our joys, our griefs, our hopes, our fears, our loves, our hates. But such insistence on the importance of feeling amounts simply to a ringing, one-sided celebration of women's virtues—in having emotions and recounting them—unless we are willing, as Lillian Smith was, to look at the expression of emotions among women that reveal the less glorious side of our lives together.

As is well documented, nineteenth-century white, middle-class suffragists were ready and willing to use racist arguments in the name of advancing what they called "women's interests."[2] Some white women routinely beat black women who were their slaves.[3] Nazi women gave their all in the effort to eliminate the Jewish population of Europe—which included, of course, Jewish women.[4] At an international conference on women's history not long ago in Amsterdam, the organizers were asked why what in the conference brochure was

other behavior, then what it finds troubling is not the behavior itself but the exposure of the behavior. If there is anything wrong with the institution, it is that it does not know how to prevent adverse publicity or deal well with it once public notice is taken. When an institution is embarrassed, and only embarrassed, it puts its public relations department to work; it works not on changing the institution but on changing the perception of the institution. Admitting to embarrassment is usually not a good way of dealing with embarrassment, for it simply brings attention to the situation that the embarrassed party does not want others to see.

You can feel *embarrassed* without thinking that you have done anything wrong or anything you shouldn't do, but in general[19] you can't feel *guilty* without believing that you have failed to live up to some kind of standard or that you have done something that is forbidden according to an accepted authority (including your conscience). (Of course you can be guilty without feeling guilty, but here we are talking only about feeling guilty). There is something I have done or failed to do. According to Gabriele Taylor, in feeling guilt I certainly am judging myself adversely, but my situation is not hopeless—I am not less of a person than I thought I was. I simply did something I think I shouldn't have done or failed to do something I think I ought to have done. There is a blot on my record—but then blots only are blots against the background of an otherwise still morally intact person. That is connected to the fact that there are things I can do to repair the damage I've done. Indeed, the action I take is geared to restoring the blot-free picture of myself—so, Gabriele Taylor insists, if I feel guilty about harming someone else, the thought is not so much that "I have harmed *her*" but rather "*I* have harmed her"[20] and hence disfigured myself to some extent. In response, I may want to do something about the harm I did to her but—to the extent that my concern is more about myself than about her—as a means of restoring my status in my own eyes.

Gabriele Taylor's analysis, then, implies that the man who beats his wife and feels guilty about it, unlike the man who merely feels embarrassed, does believe that he has done something he ought not to do, and feeling this way he is inclined to take action to alleviate the feeling of guilt. But his concern is not directly for his wife but for himself. If her pain is the occasion for his thinking he has violated something he stands for, his ceasing to beat her or his otherwise atoning for what he has done is the means to his self-rehabilitation.

Could Ivylawn College feel *guilty* about the racism on its campus? Of course this sounds odd—in a way that ascribing regret to the institution does not. This seems related to the fact that feeling guilty involves a sense of direct responsibility for the deed, so that to ascribe feelings of guilt to an institution really amounts to ascribing it to particular individuals within the institution. Institutions can have regret precisely because regrets don't entail responsibility and where there is responsibility we look for particular agents. The president of Ivylawn, for example, could talk about the college's having regrets without implying that she herself has them, but it would take a lot of work for her to say that the college feels guilty about something without giving the impression that she was talking about herself or other highly placed officials. It certainly is possible that there might be reports of various officials feeling "very bad" about what went on—not simply embarrassed, much more than regretful. Insofar as this means something like "feeling guilty," then if Gabriele Taylor is right such officials believe that while nothing is basically wrong with the institution or with them, they or the institution bear responsibility for the racist events. The emphasis in any action will be on redeeming the good name of the institution and attending to the hurt done the injured parties as the means to redeeming the good name of the institution.

Let us go on to *shame*. Suppose the man who beats his wife feels shame for doing so. How is that different from his feeling embarrassed or guilty? According to Gabriele Taylor,[21] the identificatory belief in shame is that I am not the person I thought I was or hoped I might be. It is not simply, as in embarrassment, that I wish I hadn't been seen doing something (even though I don't think I've done anything wrong) or, as in guilt, simply that I have failed to live up to a standard I adhere to. If I thought the latter, I could still entertain the possibility that I can set the record straight, for in such a case what troubles me about what I've done is quite local: I've *done* something I don't approve of, but I'm not *someone* I don't approve of. As Gabriele Taylor puts it: "When feeling guilty . . . the view I take of myself is entirely different from the view I take of myself when feeling shame: in the latter case I see myself as being all of a piece, what I have just done, I now see, fits only too well what I really am. But when feeling guilty I think of myself as having brought about a forbidden state of affairs and thereby in this respect disfigured a self which otherwise remains the same."[22] So if Mr. Husband feels shame about beating his wife, he must think that his

action is revelatory of the person he in fact is even though he had thought or hoped that he was someone else, someone better than he turns out to be.

And thus if Ivylawn College should feel shame about the racism existing on its campus,[23] it would indicate that the college or the people identified as its representatives thought it wasn't the institution it hoped it was. The racism on the campus is revelatory of what the institution really is and not simply a sign that the college can't always live up to what it says it stands for.

Perhaps that is why an institution is unlikely to feel or admit to shame: It may be unable to countenance the possibility that at root it is not what it purports, even to itself, to be.

So, then, our emotions, or at least some of them, can be highly revelatory of who and what we care or don't care about. They provide powerful clues to the ways in which we take ourselves to be implicated in the lives of others and they in ours. And their *absence* provides such clues as much as their presence does. For example, the conference organizers referred to at the beginning of this chapter who were asked why no women of color were included in a gathering on "women's history" seemed to have no regrets about their decision, let alone embarrassment, guilt, or shame. From their vantage point, there was nothing undesirable about the focus of the conference, and though not in any way disclaiming responsibility for that focus, they made no room for the implication that they had done anything wrong or that the conference or they weren't what they understood it or themselves to be. Indeed, from the remarks quoted earlier, it appears that they began to argue that the complaints and demands of the women of color were groundless: The conference was about "women," not about race. And if anything, there is a strong note of annoyance in the remarks of the woman who insisted that talking about race was an "extra burden" for feminism and that the women of color were both missing the point and adding to the load already carried by the conveners.

Let us suppose that as a convener I come to feel regret as a result of listening to the comments of the women of color. What would that show about what I care about and how I take myself to be implicated in the lives of others and others in mine? Well, that depends of course

on *what* I regret. Do I regret having hurt the women of color? Having been made uncomfortable myself? That my theory turns out not to be adequate? In this connection María Lugones recently noted that in her experience many feminists, when asked to explain how their accounts of "women's experiences" apply to women of color, express considerable concern about the inadequacy of their theories—but the focus of concern, María Lugones reluctantly concludes, is not how they have hurt women of color but rather that they need to tidy up their theories.[24]

It is not news that white feminist conferences and conversations have been peppered, sometimes even smothered, with expressions of guilt—sometimes in reaction to the very lack of regret (or perhaps some other emotion) for the exclusionary practices and policies I have described.[25] Indeed, a great deal has been made of white women's feelings of *guilt* in the face of charges by black women, Latinas, Japanese-American women, and others that our theories have been heavily tilted in the direction and to the exclusive benefit of white, middle-class women. Reflection on Gabriele Taylor's work leads me to make three comments about the discussions about this guilt. First, if Gabriele Taylor is right about the point of action taken to get rid of the feeling of guilt, then guilt is not an emotion that makes us attend well to the situation of those whose treatment at our hands we feel guilty about. We're too anxious trying to keep our moral slate clean. Second, I think it worth asking whether in any given case people are feeling guilt or simply embarrassment. If the latter, then there is no sense that one has failed in any way to act in accordance with what one stands for. There are no amends to make, only appearances to create.

Third, I think that there is a very neat fit between feeling guilty and a particular way of conceiving the relation between one's gender and one's racial identity. This friendly cohabitation throws some very interesting light on the concept of "white guilt." According to Gabriele Taylor, in feeling guilt rather than shame, it is possible for me to think of a part of myself as not living up to what the rest of me stands for. Insofar as I see myself as a "doer of a wicked deed," I see the hint of an alien self; in order to make sure such a self does not emerge, I need to do whatever it takes to "purge" myself of this alien self.[26] If I have a metaphysical position according to which my gender identity is thoroughly distinct from my racial identity (what I elsewhere call a form

of "Tootsie Roll metaphysics")[27] I very handily can rely on a neat distinction between myself as woman and myself as white person. The woman part of me is perfectly okay; it's being white that is the source of my wrongdoing. I assert my privilege over women of color not insofar as I am a woman but insofar as I am white. Note then that unless I am prepared to think of my womanness and my whiteness as folded inextricably into the person I am, I can think of myself and my responsibility for my acts in the following way: What really counts about me is that I am a woman, and my deeds do not show that I am not any less of a woman than I thought I was; it's only insofar as I am white, which isn't nearly as important a part of me, that I have failed other women. It's not the woman in me that failed the woman in you; it's the white in me that failed (for example) the black in you. I, woman, feel nothing in particular; but I, white person, do feel guilt. If feminism focuses on the "woman" part of me and the "woman" part of you, conceived of as thoroughly distinct from my white part and your black part, feminism doesn't have to pay attention to our relations as white and black. We never have to confront each other woman to woman, then, only white to black or Anglo to Latina.

Feminist ethics, I have been insisting, must at least address the history of woman's inhumanity to woman. This part of the history of women is shameful. However, I am not proposing a daily regimen of shame-inducing exercises. Nor do I think that the deep self-doubt that is part of shame can serve as the immediate ground of a vibrant feminist politics, a politics that expresses and promotes real care and concern for all women's lives. But I do not see how women who enjoy privileged status over other women (whether it be based on race, class, religion, age, sexual orientation, or physical mobility) can come to think it desirable to lose that privilege (by force or consent) unless they see it not only as producing harm to other women but also as being deeply disfiguring to themselves. It is not simply, as it would be in the case of guilt, that the point of ceasing to harm others is to remove a disquieting blot from one's picture of oneself. The deeper privilege goes, the less self-conscious people are of the extent to which their being who they are, in their own eyes as well as in the eyes of others, is dependent upon the exploitation or degradation or disadvantage of others. Seeing myself as deeply disfigured by privilege and desiring to do something about it may be impossible without my feeling shame. The degree to which I am moved to undermine systems of privilege is closely tied to the degree to which I feel shame at the sort of person such privilege makes me or allows me to be.

In sum, then, I have been urging these considerations to keep those of us who are feminists from hastening to quickly to feel virtuous about attending to the virtues of feeling, the marvel of care. Whatever we mean by "feminist ethics," it ought not to make it difficult for us to examine and evaluate how women treat or mistreat each other. However, there are elements in feminism that make such examination difficult. For example, there is a tendency to focus on the contrast between an "ethics of care" and ethical systems that seem not to take care seriously. So far the contrast tells us nothing about who cares or does not care for whom. Moreover, since it has been claimed that an ethics of care is associated strongly though not exclusively with the way "women" think and act in the moral domain, it makes it very hard even to suggest that some women have failed to care for others, let alone that they have done violence to others. There is also a reliance on an understanding of care that obscures the fact that some forms of care are not only compatible with but crucial to the maintenance of systematic inequalities among women. In this connection, Judith Rollins's book about relations between white female employers and their black domestic employees is very insightful.[28] Among other things, Judith Rollins describes ways in which the employers insist on the privilege of "caring" for their employees in ways that reflect and sustain their power over them. Finally, there is a rampant terminology of contrasts between "women" on the one hand and "slaves" or "minorities" or "the poor" or "Jews" or whatever on the other. Such contrasts (and for that matter similarities) obscure differences between free women and slave women, gentile women and Jewish women, and so on, making it hard to talk about how one group of women treated others. This is reinforced by theories within feminism according to which women are the same *as women* and are oppressed the same *as women* and so if white women mistreat, say, black women, it is seen as how whites treat blacks, not how some women treat other women.

I have proposed one way of looking at some of the moral dimen-

sions of women's treatment of one another. Some emotions are called "moral emotions" because having them involves or can involve moral assessment of oneself and others. In Gabriele Taylor's words, a moral emotion "requires a sense of value on the part of the agent, an awareness, more or less developed, of moral distinctions, of what is right or wrong, honorable or disgraceful."[29] Our having such emotions toward others can reveal whether, how, and to what extent we have treated them or think we have treated them well or poorly—so does our not having them. Moreover, our political and metaphysical theories give shape and structure to our emotional lives. For example, our assumptions about what *feminism* is about will influence our beliefs about what is appropriate and inappropriate to bring up at feminist conferences, which will in turn influence the possibility of our feeling anger, regret, remorse, embarrassment, guilt, or shame. (As Arnold Isenberg says: "When you lack what you do not want, there is no shame."[30]) And as I stated earlier, assumptions about the relation between our gender identity and other aspects of our identity such as our race, class, and religion can influence how we describe our responsibility for the way we treat other women.

NOTES

1. Lillian Smith, *Killers of the Dream* (New York: Norton, 1949, 1961), 27.

2. See, for example, Eleanor Flexner, *Century of Struggle* (New York: Atheneum, 1972), especially chap. 13; Ellen Carol DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978); Angela Davis, *Women, Race, and Class* (New York: Random, 1981); Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* (New York: Morrow, 1984).

3. See, for example, Linda Brent, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, ed. L. Maria Child (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973); Solomon Northrup, *Narrative of Solomon Northrup, Twelve Years a Slave* (Auburn, N.Y.: Derby and Miller, 1853), quoted in Gerda Lerner, ed., *Black Women in White America* (New York: Vintage, 1972), 51.

4. See, for example, Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland: Women, the Family, and Nazi Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987).

5. *off our backs* (feminist newspaper), July 1986, 3.

6. See notes 1–5 above; also, for example, bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (Boston: South End Press, 1984); Audre Lorde, *Sister/Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Trumansburg, N.Y.: Crossing Press, 1984); Helen Longino and Valerie Miner, eds., *Competition: A Feminist Taboo?* (New York: Feminist Press, 1987); Elly Bulkin, Minnie Bruce Pratt, and Barbara Smith, *Yours in Struggle: Three Feminist Perspectives on Anti-Semitism and Racism*, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Firebrand Books, 1984). Simone de Beauvoir, by the way, had quite a lot to say about women with race and class privilege undermining or failing to support other women in order to maintain their race and class privilege, but that part of her work is rarely highlighted—even by herself (see Spelman, *Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought* [Boston: Beacon Press, 1988], chap. 3).

7. Berenice Fisher, "Guilt and Shame in the Women's Movement: The Radical Ideal of Action and Its Meaning for Feminist Intellectuals," *Feminist Studies* 10, no. 2 (Summer 1984): 186.

8. See Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982); Eva Feder Kittay and Diana T. Meyers, eds., *Women and Moral Theory* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1987).

9. Jane Austen, *Emma* (New York: Bantam, 1981; first edition, 1816), 133–139.

10. These are not incompatible conceptions, according to Gilligan and others. See Eva Kittay and Diana Meyers, eds., *Women and Moral Theory.*

11. See, for example, ibid.; Lawrence A. Blum, "Gilligan and Kohlberg: Implications for Moral Theory," *Ethics* 98 (April 1988): 472–491.

12. Jane Austen, *Emma*, 139–140.

13. Judith Rollins, *Between Women: Domestics and Their Employers* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1985), 186.

14. Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, tr. Sir David Ross (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), 97.

15. Two problems emerge here, even in the presentation of 1–4: One is what it means for institutions, as opposed to individuals, to have such reactions; and the other is that as long as we focus on institutions, we don't have to think about what our own reactions are. But we'll get to these below.

16. Gabriele Taylor, *Pride, Shame, and Guilt: Emotions of Self-Assessment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

17. See Elizabeth V. Spelman, "Anger and Insubordination," in *Women, Knowledge, and Reality*, ed. Ann Garry and Marilyn Pearsall (Winchester, Mass.: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 263–273.

18. Although regretting that something happened differs in some important ways from regretting having done something—since the latter, not the former, entails responsibility for having done the thing in question—I can fully regret that something happened without in any way implicating myself in having brought it about.

19. In "Cognitive Emotions?" Chesire Calhoun discusses the repair work necessary for certain versions of the cognitive theory in light of the fact that sometimes "one's doxic life and one's emotional life part company" (in *What is an Emotion? Classic Readings in Philosophical Psychology*, ed. Chesire Calhoun and Robert C. Solomon [New York: Oxford University Press, 1984], 333).

20. Gabriele Taylor, *Pride, Shame, and Guilt*, 92.
21. Ibid., 68.
22. Ibid., 92.
23. Note how odd it would be to refer to that about which one feels shame as merely an "incident."
24. See chapter 2 of this volume.
25. It may seem as if this is at odds with my claim at the beginning of the chapter that the history of hostile or uncaring relationships among women has not gotten the sustained attention it deserves. But passing, even frequent, expressions of regret, embarrassment, guilt, or shame are hardly the same as a thorough examination of the meanings of those emotions in the history of the social and political relationships among women.
26. Gabriele Taylor, *Pride, Shame, and Guilt*, 134, 135.
27. See Elizabeth Spelman, *Inessential Woman*, passim.
28. Judith Rollins, *Between Women*, passim.
29. Gabriele Taylor, *Pride, Shame, and Guilt*, 107.
30. Arnold Isenberg, "Natural Shame and Natural Pride," in *Explaining Emotions*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 370.

14 / *Whom Can Women Trust?*

ANNETTE C. BAIER

"But though the males, when united, have in all countries bodily force sufficient to maintain this severe tyranny, yet such are the insinuation, address and charms of their fair companions that women are commonly able to break the confederacy, and share with the other sex in all the rights and privileges of society."[1] For years, decades even, I referred to this claim of Hume's as a claim about women's power to break male confederacies. It took a male reader of the passage, Chris Williams, to point out to me that Hume does not say that the confederacy to be broken is one of males only. Males are those accused of tyranny over women in many societies, but the confederacy that supports the tyranny that needs to be broken may not be an exclusively male one, indeed has not been an exclusively male one. Women must distrust not only the men who have the bodily force to maintain severe tyrannies but also the women whose insinuation, address, and charms are used to keep in favor with the tyrants, to help maintain rather than to break the confederacy that, in the extreme case, reduces women to slavery "incapable of all property, in opposition to their lordly masters."

Not only is this a pretty obvious truth once it is pointed out, but it is indeed one that Hume explicitly draws attention to in the essays that he addressed particularly to the women of his time and culture. In "Of Love and Marriage," for example, he gently chides them for taking satires on the institution of matrimony to be satires on themselves. "Do they mean that they are the parties principally concerned, and that if a backwardness to enter into that state should prevail in the world, they would be the greatest sufferers?"[2] Then there is his "pretty remarkable instance of a philosophic spirit," the young woman who, "observing the many unhappy marriages among her