# ***European Journal of English Studies***

**Note that the Call for Papers for Special Issues in Volume 23 has closed.**

**SHAME AND SHAMELESSNESS**

*Guest editors: Kaye Mitchell (Manchester), Katrin Röder (Potsdam), Christine Vogt-William (Berlin)*

In the last few decades, shame has merited increasing critical investigation as an affect invested with negative connotations (guilt, humiliation, pain). In the fields of psychology, sociology, ethics, as well as cultural and literary studies, scholars have explored the impact of shame on processes of identity formation. Amongst the most prominent critical disciplines that have addressed the formative dimensions of shame are gender, queer, disability, critical race and postcolonial studies. Recent investigations in the field of affect theory have demonstrated that shame is an emotional reaction to ostracisation, various forms of transgression and defeat (Silvan S. Tomkins, Eve Sedgwick, Sara Ahmed). Shame is tied to discourses of normativity, honour, lawfulness and respectability.

This issue explores the connection between affect and literary and cultural studies. It investigates the ways in which shame inscribes itself on bodies and in individuals’ sense of self-esteem in culturally diverse societies. This inscription often takes place on the bodies and in the self-images of vulnerable subjects and those belonging to subordinate and subjugated groups, especially migrants, mixed-race, non-white, queer, transgender, disabled persons, women, children, criminals, the poor and the homeless. These groups are often located beyond the purview of normative citizenship ideals and hence have to negotiate forms of shame. Furthermore, the issue considers whether and how shame impacts on nations and communities, especially in postcolonial scenarios when calls for the recognition and reparation of indigenous peoples’ dispossession and oppression under British colonial rule are made.

The issue’s analytical focus will be on cultural artefacts that represent or discuss experiences of shame. It will ask if these artefacts express the ambivalent nature of shame, and whether they dismantle or reinforce stigmas by contesting, transforming, affirming or endorsing normative concepts of identity, images of nations and other collective bodies as well as shame-inducing power structures and practices of representation.

The editors invite papers addressing the formative effects of shame as they manifest themselves in

* literature, (auto)biographical writing / memoirs
* visual art, performance art, video, film, social media
* political, legal, religious and medical discourse
* popular culture and subcultural practices.

Detailed proposals (up to 1,000 words) for essays, as well as all inquiries regarding this issue, should be sent to all three editors: Katrin Röder: [kroeder@uni-potsdam.de](mailto:kroeder@uni-potsdam.de), Kaye Mitchell: [Kaye.Mitchell@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Kaye.Mitchell@manchester.ac.uk) and Christine Vogt-William: [cvogtwilliam@yahoo.com](mailto:cvogtwilliam@yahoo.com).