Human Emotion

Psychology 3131
Professor June Gruber
Human Emotion

What is an Emotion?
QUESTIONS?
William James

“To the psychologist alone can such questions occur as: Why do we smile, when pleased, and not scowl? Why are we unable to talk to a crowd as we talk to a single friend? Why does a particular maiden turn our wits upside-down?”

"The common man can only say: "Of course we smile, of course our heart palpitates at the sight of the crowd, of course we love the maiden. And so, probably, does each animal feel about the particular things it tends to do in the presence of certain objects..."
Roadmap

Theories of emotion
Components
Classification
Expert Interview
Roadmap

Theories of emotion

Components

Classification

Expert Interview
Theories of Emotion Timeline

- Ancient Greek
- Enlightenment
- Darwin
- William James
- James-Lange
- Cannon-Bard
- Schachter-Singer
- Lazarus
Theories of Emotion Timeline

Ancient Greek

- Hippocrates: 4 Humors
- Aristotle: Moderation principle
“Getting angry or sad is easy and anyone can do it; but doing it... in the right amount, at the right time, and in the right way is not easy, nor can everyone do it.”

- ARISTOTLE, Nicomachean Ethics, 11.9, 1109a27
Theories of Emotion Timeline

Descartes
Spinoza
Hume
Evolutionary Approach

Expression of Emotions in Man & Animals

Emotions evolutionarily evolved, serve survival purpose

Theories of Emotion Timeline

Darwin
Immediately a bestseller of its time (over 5,000 copies)

1st Scientific Treatment of Emotion

Includes survey data

Observations of healthy and mentally ill individuals

Personal anecdotes (e.g., grief expressions in Darwin’s own family after death)
Darwin’s Three Principles
I. Principle of Serviceable ("Useful") Habit
Darwin’s Three Principles

II. Principle of Antithesis
Darwin’s Three Principles

III. Principle of Involuntariness ("Nervous discharge")
Physiological Approach

Emotions secondary to physiological phenomenon

William James

Theories of Emotion Timeline

Physiological Approach
"The perception of bodily states, as they occur, is the emotion."

James-Lange
Theories of Emotion Timeline

Cannon-Bard

Physiological responses alone cannot explain emotion experience.
2-factor theory of emotion

Theories of Emotion Timeline

Schachter-Singer

Stage 1

Stage 2

FEAR
Theories of Emotion Timeline

Cognitive Theory

Lazarus

Fear
Roadmap

Theories of emotion

Components

Classification

Expert Interview
Valence: Positive, Negative, or Neutral

Eliciting or intentional object

Multi-Component Response

Components of Emotion

Enables pursuit of important goals
Multi-Component Response

SUBJECTIVE

BEHAVIORAL

PHYSIOLOGICAL
What is an Emotion: A Broader View

**BEFORE EMOTION**

Cognitive appraisal:
provides an evaluation of events and objects

**EMOTION**

**AFTER EMOTION**

Action tendencies:
a motivational component for the preparation and direction of motor responses
6 features of an Emotion

1. Brief
2. Unbidden
3. Cross-Species
4. Coherent
5. Fast
6. Automatic appraisal/evaluation

Paul Ekman UCSF
6 features of an Emotion?

- Brief
- Unbidden
- Cross-species
- Coherent
- Fast
- Automatic appraisal/evaluation

Is this a sufficient explanation?
What an emotion is not

MOOD

FEELING

AFFECT
What an emotion is not

PERSONALITY TRAIT

COGNITION
Roadmap

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Expert Interview
**Basic / Discrete**

**THEORY**

Emotions as discrete categories, biologically fixed, universal to all humans (and many animals).

**EXAMPLE**

- **Basic Emotions**: Anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, surprise.
- **Complex Emotions**: Arise from combination of basic emotions or are culturally influenced and constructed.

**THEORISTS** (example)

Paul Ekman, Rene Descartes, Silvan Tomkins

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**Dimensional**

**THEORY**

Emotions are a combination of several psychological dimensions.

**EXAMPLE**

- **EMOTIONAL STATE**

**THEORISTS**

Wilhelm Wundt, James Russell, Lisa Feldman Barrett
Roadmap

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Expert Interview
Experts In Emotion

*EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY*
What is an emotion?
Have a Great Day!

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