

The Psychology of Emotion

Fifth edition

From Everyday Life to Theory

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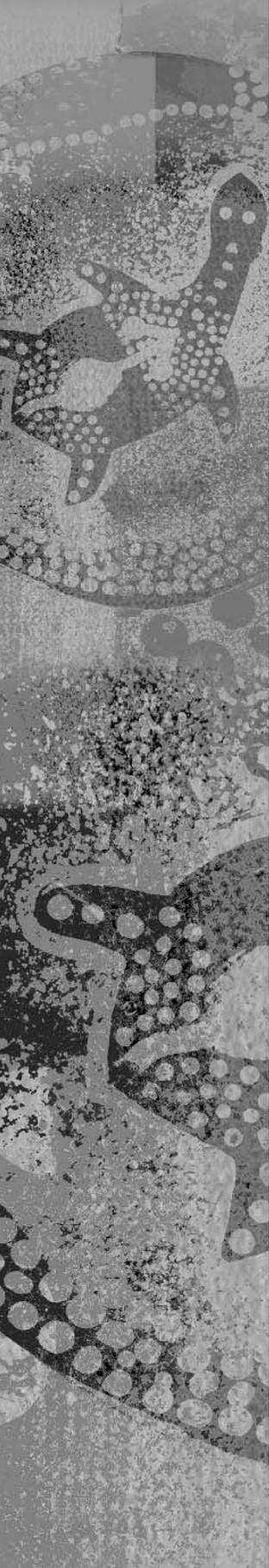
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Chapter 8

Specific emotions theory

Emotions have always had to compete against each other.

T. ZELDIN, 1995

Emotions affect the whole person, and each emotion affects the person differently.

C. E. IZARD, 1991

<i>Introduction</i>	132
<i>Anger</i>	133
<i>Anxiety and fear</i>	135
<i>Happiness</i>	135
<i>Sadness</i>	137
<i>Disgust</i>	138
<i>Jealousy and envy</i>	139
<i>Grief</i>	141
<i>Love</i>	142
<i>Shame and other self-conscious, self-reflexive emotions</i>	144
<i>Conclusions</i>	148
<i>Summary</i>	150
<i>A question of application</i>	150
<i>Further reading</i>	151

Introduction

Most chapters in this book start with examples of the everyday experience of emotion. In this chapter these examples are saved to introduce each of the specific emotions discussed.

The purpose of this chapter is not to present an exhaustive summary of everything theoretical that has been written about each of the specific emotions. Rather, it is to take some of the more obvious of these emotions and to describe some of the major theoretical contributions to which they have given rise. The point of so doing is to attempt to abstract any common themes or principles that emerge that might in their turn add to an understanding of emotion more generally.

Whether or not it is useful and/or reasonable to conceive of specific emotions at all is considered elsewhere in this text (see Chapter 7, for example). For the purposes of the present chapter, it is assumed, much as it is in everyday life, that specific emotions exist and that it is perfectly reasonable to distinguish between them. For example, in day-to-day interactions there is no difficulty in distinguishing between anger and happiness, or between shame and anxiety. Indeed, it makes communication and therefore life in general easier to do so.

One emotion theorist in particular has been concerned for many years with the development of a theory that relies very much on distinguishing between specific emotions. Consequently, Izard's differential emotions theory (e.g., 1972, 1977, 1991) will be referred to frequently in this chapter as well as having been considered in Chapter 7.

In a recent summary of his theoretical position, Izard (1993) points out that it rests on five assumptions:

- (1) emotion systems are motivational;
- (2) each discrete emotion organizes perception, cognition and behaviour for adaptation, coping and creativity;
- (3) relations between emotion and behaviour develop early and remain stable, even though repertoires of specific responses develop;
- (4) emotional development contributes to personality development;
- (5) particular personality traits and dimensions stem from individual differences in thresholds of emotion activation and in the experience of particular emotions.

Generally, Izard's standpoint is that there are discrete emotions and that there are basic dimensions of emotion that are complementary to these discrete emotions. There is considerable overlap in the approaches taken by those who espouse these apparently opposed viewpoints, and Izard argues that two issues need to be dealt with concerning specific emotions. Can discrete emotions be shown to have functions that are adaptationally useful? And do specific emotions facilitate development, coping and adaptation? Above all, though, from Izard's perspective, if discrete emotions exist they must be shown to serve motivational functions.

Not all the specific emotions will be considered in this chapter. This is because not all of them can be reasonably said to have attracted their own theory or theories. However, the majority will be covered, although not from every theoretical perspective.

For example, there are a number of theories of specific emotions, such as jealousy and envy, that come from the everyday world, or from a fictional background. Even for a fairly eclectic book such as this, it was thought that this would be stretching things too far. It should also be noted that some specific emotions, such as anxiety and depression, are discussed in more detail in Chapter 11, which is concerned with emotion theory from a clinical perspective.

Finally, the discussion of self-conscious or self-reflexive emotions is accorded more space than the others. This is particularly because of the social significance of shame, in this writer's view. Shame seems to be of increasing importance in the modern world, a matter with which, to some extent, psychologists have not caught up.

Anger

You are shopping in the supermarket, quietly making your way through the aisles and through your list. Suddenly, you hear screams and shouts and see a red-faced woman yelling at her four-year-old and slapping him time and time again. He is hunched up and crying with pain and fear.

Imagine a young woman who works in a team of health professionals who have daily meetings about the procedures they are following with the patients. She knows that she is doing her job well and she speaks up whenever there is something pertinent to say about a patient for whom she has some responsibility. Whenever she does, one of her colleagues immediately speaks over her, loudly interrupting what she is saying. This happens day after day, meeting after meeting.

Anger is always included in lists of discrete emotions and it is usually categorized as negative. The likely reason for this is that it is an integral part of aggression, hostility and violence, which are so negative for society. However, the experience of anger is not always negative. Izard (1991) places it alongside disgust and contempt, describing the three emotions as often interacting in human experience.

From an evolutionary perspective, Izard sees anger as having the rather obvious function of energizing the person for defence. Such defence and feelings of physical empowerment, which often attend it, might lead to aggression, either physical or verbal, but not necessarily. In passing, it is also worth mentioning that there are causes of aggression other than anger, some of them emotional. Interestingly, Izard also points out that both the experience and the expression of anger can be positive. He mentions, for example, the possibility that the controlled expression of anger that is seen as justified might strengthen the relationship between the two people involved.

A number of psychologists have written about anger, but none so cogently as Averill (1982) with his usual social constructionist view. In his treatise on anger, Averill not only shows that it is possible to undertake a penetrating analysis of a single emotion but also that in so doing it is possible to gain a much improved understanding of emotion in general.

Averill characterizes anger as a conflictive emotion that is biologically related to aggressive systems and to social living, symbolization and self-awareness.

Psychologically, it is aimed at the correction of a perceived wrong and, socioculturally, at upholding accepted standards of conduct.

Averill regards emotions as social syndromes or transitory rules, as well as short-term dispositions to respond in particular ways and to interpret such responses as emotional. He distinguishes between conflictive emotions (of which anger is one), impulsive emotions (inclinations and aversions) and transcendental emotions, which involve a breakdown in the boundaries of the ego.

The theory suggests that, although some emotions have all three of these characteristics, complex behaviour usually involves conflicts. These result in emotions that are compromises, which help to resolve the conflict. Biologically, aggression is linked to anger, but is not equated with it. Furthermore, Averill has it that there is a biological tendency in humans to follow rules as well as to formulate them. There is also a biologically based tendency to become upset if the rules are broken. Against this theoretical background, anger (and other emotions), although biologically based, become highly symbolic and reliant on appraisals in humans. Psychologically, anger then is seen as concerned with the correction of a perceived wrong. So, like other emotions, it will have its object, which is partly its instigation, and its target and an aim.

Socioculturally, Averill suggests that anger is about upholding accepted standards of conduct, perhaps unwittingly. Any emotion is concerned with such standards (rules that guide behaviour). Other rules relevant to emotion concern its expression, its course and outcome and the way in which it is causally attributed. As Averill suggests, a self-evident rule of anger is, for example, that it should be spontaneous rather than deliberate.

From this analysis of anger (to which the present brief discussion does not do justice – the original rewards close study) Averill argues that any theory of emotion should not be restrictive and should relate to all pertinent phenomena, if they are seen as part of emotion in everyday language. The important implication here is that everyday emotion, or folk concepts of emotion, can be scientifically useful. The aim would be to uncover what Averill terms the prototypic attributes of various emotions and to determine the rules that guide them. As mentioned elsewhere, Averill's view of emotion is that although biologically based it is largely socially constructed in humans.

In their analysis of anger and hostility from a developmental viewpoint, Lemerise and Dodge (1993) emphasize the functional significance of anger. More broadly than Izard, they see anger as serving a number of functions, including the organization and regulation of physiological and psychological processes related to self-defence and mastery, plus the regulation of social and interpersonal behaviours. They regard anger as functioning as an energizer, an organizer and as a social signal.

Lemerise and Dodge are particularly concerned with how anger develops and is caused. They make the point that the cognitive ability of young children is important in their developing anger, although the basic, original causes of anger seem to be to do with physical restraints and interference with activity. The development of anger becomes closely entwined with the processes of socialization, one general rule of which appears to be the encouragement of positive emotion and the control of negative emotion (which includes anger).

Of importance in this context is the manner in which parents respond to angry expressions in their children. There are large-scale individual differences here, which are dependent on the child, the parents and the circumstances. However, for present

purposes these details do not matter. Of importance is that, although anger appears very early in life, as Averill suggests and Lerner and Dodge endorse, its development is best understood in interpersonal terms.

Anxiety and fear

Picture an elderly man, slowly crossing the road, apparently absorbed in his own thoughts. There is a sudden screech of brakes and the blast of a horn. He jumps out of the way, shaken.

You have had something slightly wrong with your health for months, dizzy spells, occasional loss of balance and confusion. It has puzzled the medics and you have finally had an extensive series of tests carried out. This morning you received a phone call from the specialist, calling you in to discuss the results. You are waiting in his rooms and he is late.

For an extended discussion of theories of anxiety and fear see Chapter 11 and Strongman (1995). For the present these two closely related emotions should receive brief mention because they always appear in lists of the basic emotions. There has been a proliferation of theories of anxiety and fear, their starting points being very similar to those for general theories of emotion. There have been psychoanalytic, behavioural, physiological, experiential/phenomenological and cognitive perspectives.

What is clear from these theories is that anxiety can only be understood by taking into account some of its cognitive aspects, particularly because a basic aspect of anxiety appears to be uncertainty. Also, it is reasonable to conclude that anxiety can be distinguished from fear in that the object of fear is 'real' or 'external' or 'known' or 'objective'. The origins of anxiety are unclear or uncertain to the person. However, anxiety can be motivating and appears to be an inevitable part of the human condition. Anxiety and fear are definitely negative emotions and can be very distressing. Inasmuch as specific emotions can be said to exist, the constellation of anxiety and fear has a definite place among them.

Happiness

It is Christmas day and a middle-aged woman is surrounded by all her children and grandchildren. The meal she has cooked for them all is a great success and everyone is sitting round the table laughing and smiling. She looks across at her husband at the other end of the table and there he is as usual smiling at her with the same genuine affection she has known through all these years.

Imagine that you have just spent several hours writing a report. You tap the final sentence into the word processor and look up. You have no idea of the time and have been completely absorbed in your work, which has been quite difficult but to

which you are more than equal. You stretch, yawn, remember to save your work on the screen and then think of the evening to come.

Before considering happiness, it should be said that specific positive emotions have not, in general, been dealt with as well as specific negative emotions. This is not the place to offer possible explanations for this other than to say that negative emotions have to be coped with; the aim is to regulate them, to get rid of them or at least to reduce their impact. Positive emotions are simply to be enjoyed rather than endured. It is therefore not surprising that psychologists and others have spent more time in an attempt to understand the negative than the positive emotions. However, with increasing attention being paid to emotion regulation (see Chapters 9 and 11), the matter of the maintenance of positive emotions becomes of greater moment.

One result of this bias is that, although there are some empirical investigations of the positive emotions and considerable attempts made to theorize about love (see later), other positive emotions have not received much theoretical attention. For example, it is hard to find clear distinctions between happiness, joy and elation.

From the viewpoint of differential emotions theory, Izard (1991) concentrates on what he calls enjoyment and joy and distinguishes between the experience of joy and the experience of satisfaction or sensory pleasure. He characterizes joy as involving a sense of confidence and contentment, and often as including a feeling of either being lovable or, more specifically, loved.

Izard sees joy as a state that follows various experiences rather than as a direct result of action. So, we are likely to experience joy after stress or negative emotion has finished, or following creativity, for example. From an evolutionary perspective its effect is to help in maintaining us as social beings. Izard believes that joy and other emotions interact and can affect perception and cognition. It can not only slow down behaviour but can also induce a sort of open creativity.

In one of his typically cogent analyses, Averill (Averill & More, 1993) considers happiness in general and argues that ideas about it have remained obdurately fuzzy because its scope is so broad. He believes that it does not help to deal with more circumscribed concepts such as joy, this merely substituting the part for the whole. Furthermore, Averill and More argue that happiness defies understanding because of its depths of meaning. For example, if happiness in its own right is considered the greatest good then it may well involve pain and suffering, which might seem anomalous. Anyway, in short, happiness is more difficult to conceptualize than many specific emotions because of both its breadth and its depth.

Averill and More distinguish between three approaches to understanding happiness, emphasizing, respectively, systems of behaviour, enabling mechanisms and personality characteristics. They argue that an understanding of happiness must take into account social/psychological as well as biological systems of behaviour. The psychological systems are those that help the development (or actualization) of self.

From this perspective there are five matters that Averill and More believe must be considered:

- (1) Happiness is associated with the optimal functioning of behavioural systems. So, although people might seek happiness it is not simply for its own sake.

- (2) Systems are hierarchically ordered, and happiness at one level is informed by higher levels and given substance by lower levels. So, the levels interact.
- (3) Happiness is closely linked to systems that are concerned with social order, systems that clearly involve values. So, in this sense happiness is related to values.
- (4) Happiness often involves compromise in the sense that one system (say, the biological) may have to be sacrificed at the expense of another (the social or psychological). When this occurs, happiness cannot be associated with tranquility, as is sometimes thought.
- (5) Happiness is an individual matter, each person having a distinct propensity or capacity for it. It might be capable of relatively objective measurement, but it remains a subjective or individual construct.

From Averill's perspective, enabling mechanisms are concerned with the inner workings of happiness, or whatever the emotion might be, rather than its origins and functions. Again, any analysis can be made from a biological, psychological or social viewpoint.

There has been recent emphasis on 'gap' theories that derive from extrinsic mechanisms of happiness. Michalos (1985, 1986) describes the gaps as between what one wants and what one has, actual and ideal; actual and expected conditions; actual and best previous conditions; what one has and what others have; and personal and environmental attributes. Although they have an appeal to common sense, such gap theories are in fact rather weak on explanatory power.

The final account of happiness is via personality mechanisms or, more properly, traits. Here, according to Averill and More the important theoretical questions concern the conditions under which happiness is related to specific personality traits. Their final position is that happiness is dynamic, it is never complete and is perhaps best seen as the optimal functioning of behavioural systems.

Sadness

A family sit watching a television documentary on Afghanistan. It shows sequence after sequence of the terrible deprivations suffered by the children as a consequence of the war.

Your father is a good man, who has worked hard all his life in a position of middling responsibility for the one company. He is in his mid-fifties and perfectly happy, looking forward to a further 10 years or so until his retirement. He has two or three years remaining to clear the mortgage and is beginning to develop several new interests in midlife. One evening, your mother phones you and says that with no prior warning your father has been targeted for redundancy and has to leave work at the end of the month. The prospects of finding another job in his line of work at his age are remote.

Although at face value sadness would be thought of as a negative emotion and it does have obvious negative aspects, it also has its positive side. A life without sadness would have less colour to it than one in which it is not possible to experience, say, mourning,

even though it is painful to do so. Surely, sadness can only occur after the experience of positive emotion.

From Izard's (1991) differential emotions theory view, sadness is less tense than many of the other negative emotions. It is also somehow purer as an experience. Experientially, it is made up of downheartedness, discouragement, loneliness and isolation. Typical causes are the commonplace circumstances of everyday life, but especially those that usually involve loss. It seems to have the effect of slowing down the system and prompts reflection. Izard argues that sadness is so commonplace that it frequently interacts with other emotions, such as anger, fear and shame.

Stearns (1993a) makes an interesting analysis of the psychological approaches to sadness. One of the most promising of these is that of seeing emotions, including sadness, as *enabling* and motivating adaptive responses. Sadness is an emotion that concentrates attention on the self and is an indication that the person (the self) needs help. It can be distinguished from fear and guilt in that they have something anticipatory about them, whereas in sadness the self is usually not responsible for what has happened. Also, it has been argued that sadness occurs when a situation that is bad for the person is nevertheless reversible or can be changed in some way.

Stearns also discusses anthropological and historical approaches to sadness. Some anthropological work, for example (Lutz, 1988), points to sadness not being regarded as negative in some societies. Also, although psychologists have suggested that a distinction between sadness and anger, say, comes from agency or cause, anthropologists suggest that it is a matter of knowing when, to what audience and in what language it is apposite to feel sadness or anger. Also, sadness does not always involve turning inward, Stearns viewing its expression in modern America as turning outward, for help.

From a theoretical viewpoint, perhaps the most important point to emerge from considerations of sadness is that it is not always a negative emotion. As ever with human emotions, judgements about this are mixed up with the surrounding moral order, or values, or individual versus collective responsibility and so on.

Disgust

You are running along the street, late for an important appointment, a bit worried about being dressed up and getting too sweaty. You round a corner, slip and fall. You put out your hands to save yourself and they slide straight through a mound of dog poo, pushing it up your sleeve.

It is lunchtime and while you are talking you fork some lettuce into your mouth. You bite into something soft and succulent that you realize shouldn't be there. You spit out a half-eaten slug.

Disgust is about rejection: rejection of what might be contaminated or might be distasteful, either physically or psychologically. At its basic level it seems to occur without cognition, although of course we also learn to be disgusted at many things. From a differential emotions perspective, Izard (1991) discusses disgust as fundamentally

related to the expulsion of contaminated food, the experience of which only develops when the cognitions necessary to appreciate/understand it have developed.

Usually associated with disgust is contempt (characterized by Tomkins, 1963, as *dismell* – compare the facial expressions of the two emotions), which, as Izard puts it, is ‘... associated with feelings of superiority’ (1991, p. 279). He characterizes it as a truly negative emotion, predominating as it does in a range of endeavours from prejudice to murder.

In a cogent analysis, Rozin, Haidt and McCauley (1993) describe disgust as one of a few uniquely human emotions. They argue that, assuming that there are basic emotions, then it is clear that disgust should be included among their number, viewing it as similar to guilt, shame and embarrassment (see later). They see disgust as satisfying Ekman’s (1992) criteria for emotions – it has a universal signal, comparable expression in lower animals, a specific physiology, universal preceding events, a coherent response system, a rapid onset, a brief duration, an automatic appraisal mechanism and an unbidden occurrence.

After discussing various ways of looking at disgust, Rozin et al. conclude that its cultural evolution suggests that it is concerned with essential humanness. Clearly, disgust began (in evolutionary history) as a very useful rejection of bad or contaminated tastes. But it has developed in humans far beyond this to a much more abstract type of rejection of potential foods, with a particular concern with body products. They consider that a fear of animal products and mortality and their associated decay has replaced the original condition of the more simple avoidance of bad taste.

Jones (2000) takes the argument further, making the point that, although disgust appears to be universal, it does not seem to be innate, in that, for example, many young children will put almost anything into their mouths, to their parents’ consternation. Jones also argues that since disgust is clearly bound up with taste and that taste is considerably broader than a purely gustatory matter, then disgust is also associated with aesthetics and moral judgements. To some extent, a similar argument can be made about all the specific emotions; they are partly concerned with the moral order.

Jealousy and envy

Trifles light as air are to the jealous confirmations strong as proof of holy writ.

SHAKESPEARE, *Othello*

For it reminds me that envy is the prime emotion in life.

O. PARNUK, 2001

Envy presents a paradox: unique among the emotions in its smouldering, subterranean character, it is a strong feeling that often induces no action.

J. ELSTER, 1991

Imagine a young lad, 11 years old. For the six years that he has been at school he has done consistently well at his work and at sport. In a quiet way, he has been the star

of the class, but has remained popular with the other children. This term, a new boy has joined the class, his family having moved into the district. It has quickly become clear that he is just slightly better than the previous best at everything. He is even bigger and taller. The previous leader has been toppled from his social position.

Your wife asks you to drop some clothes in for dry cleaning on your way to work. You get to the shop and quickly search through to make sure the pockets are empty. You find a few scraps of paper and put them in your pocket, leave the cleaning and drive to work. Later, sitting at your desk you feel the paper in your pocket and start to throw it away. You notice some writing and idly look at it. It is a love letter from someone your wife works with.

Although jealousy and envy form a reasonably important part of everyday life, they have not often drawn the attention of psychologists. They tend to receive passing attention in discussion of the negative side of loving and liking and there are attempts made to distinguish between them. However, a useful discussion is made by Smith, Kim and Parrott (1988).

Jealousy is the reaction to the threat that we might lose the affections of someone important to us and that these affections be directed toward someone else. Envy is more simply a desire to have what someone else has, whether this be a possession or a personal attribute or characteristic. So jealousy is based on the possibility of losing an existing relationship and envy is based on the possibility of possessing some *thing* that another person has. Generally, jealousy is more powerful and more intense than envy.

Smith et al. draw attention to the fact that although these distinctions are reasonable, in everyday life there is considerable overlap between these two emotions. Their research and theory show that the overlap is due to the ambiguity of the word jealousy, which is used to mean both envy and jealousy, envy meanwhile being more restricted. Moreover, the feelings associated with the two are different. Jealousy is linked to feelings of suspiciousness, rejection, hostility, anger, fear of loss, hurt and so on. Envy is linked to feelings of inferiority, dissatisfaction, wishfulness, longing and self-criticism. They argue that envy should be used as a useful label for discontented feelings that stem from social comparisons, whereas jealousy remains ambiguous in its use, sometimes referring to what more properly should be termed envy.

Elster (1991) makes a penetrating analysis of envy from a part psychological, part economic perspective. He distinguishes between envy about transferable and non-transferable goods; for example, envying people either for what they have or for what they are. He also points out that we tend to envy those who are close to us rather than those who are more remote, perhaps because any sense of unfairness or injustice is more obvious close up. Generally, envy seems to increase with equality, which is perhaps also to do with closeness.

From Elster's perspective, envy can be controlled by either destroying or setting aside the object of envy, or by choosing one's associates carefully, by expressing sour grapes, or, most interestingly, by devaluing *other* things. For example, to end on a light note, it may be that it is those who envy blondes who characterize them as dumb.

Grief

You have had your cat for 12 years, since you were eight years old. She is ill and the vet says that it is an inoperable tumour. You sit with her while the vet gives her the final injection. You go home and look around, seeing her familiar feeding bowl and bed.

You are on the way home from your mother's funeral. She lived a good life, but at age 50 died too young. The eulogies were profound and did her justice. You don't know whether you feel angry or sad or frustrated at the unfairness of life, or anxious about how you can manage life without her.

There are obvious links between sadness and grief, grief being what most people experience at some time over the loss of something highly valued, usually of course a loved person. Theoretically, the problem with grief is that, although it might be seen as a discrete emotion, it might also be seen as more than an emotion. The predominant emotion in the experience of grief is sadness, but other emotions are also generated by grief: anger, for example, and fear and shame.

In parallel with the predominant emotion in grief being sadness, the most common psychological problem associated with it is depression. From the differential emotions theory perspective, depression is a pattern of basic emotions, including sadness, anger, disgust, contempt, fear, guilt and shyness. Here though is not the place to consider theories of depression (see Chapter 11).

Interestingly, as with happiness and anger, Averill (Averill & Nunley, 1988) has made a cogent social constructionist analysis of grief. In brief, this rests on the assumptions that:

- (1) emotions are made up of cognitive appraisals, intervening processes and behavioural expression;
- (2) all three of these are partly determined by the beliefs and values of the culture; and
- (3) emotional syndromes reinforce these same beliefs.

Averill and Nunley describe grief as involving shock, protest, despair and reorganization, sometimes seen as stages, but with considerable overlap and the possibility of occurring in other orders. Within the terms of a systems approach to emotion, they regard grief as a biological system that is related to attachment. It is as though the purpose of grief is to help maintain social bonds. So, it seems to have to work through its course even though it is so full of anguish – in the case of bereavement, for example.

However, from this perspective grief is not simply biological, separation (bereavement) having societal implications as well. So, most societies have developed ritualized mourning practices. As well as having a place in biological and social systems, grief also is involved in the psychological system. Some symptoms of grief are related to the disruption to behavioural possibilities, cognitions and so on that result from the loss. Moreover, grief has its own rewards, people often assuming some of its more public aspects for the effects this might have. In other words, the outward expression of grief can be socially useful.

Typically, Averill breaks down emotional roles in the way in which he would also break down social roles. First, the *privileges* of grief act to allow some feelings to be displayed publicly and to permit the person not to undertake a wide range of social roles that would normally have to be assumed. Second, grief puts certain *restrictions* on a person: not to laugh too soon or not to grieve for too long, for example. Third, usually a bereaved person has *obligations*: to mourn in particular ways, for example. And, finally, the manner in which grief can be expressed varies according to age, sex, and the nature of the prior relationship with the deceased person. Formally, the emotional role of grief has certain *entry requirements*.

Averill and Nunley also offer an alternative account of grief: as a disease. In their turn, diseases can be conceptualized via biological, social and psychological systems, and grief fits all the criteria to be included as a disease. Why then, asks Averill, should it be viewed as an emotion? He sees the essential difference as the emotion of grief being part of the moral order of whatever systems (political, religious, etc.) that help to define a society, whereas disease concepts lie within the system of health care. He judges that, eventually, grief will come to be treated like other diseases.

In the end, Averill is concerned to ensure that emotions are treated in relation to social as well as biological and psychological systems of behaviour. Grief considered either as an emotion or as a disease illustrates this.

Love

... love is an important part of the emotional landscape.

P. R. SHAVER, H. J. MORGAN & S. WU, 1996

You and your husband have been playing with your daughter, who is just under a year old. She is your first child. She has been delightful. She looks up at you and very clearly says "mum", her first word. You look at her and at your grinning husband.

Imagine a young man of 17. He has just met a new girl. She is beautiful, charming and talented and he has placed her straight away on a pedestal. He cannot believe that she will glance down from up there and see him. He plucks up all of his callow courage and asks her out. She agrees enthusiastically. He is waiting for her on the first date and sees her coming toward him. She looks absolutely stunning.

The quotation at the start of this section is a considerable understatement. If love is an emotion it is probably the most complex of all. If it is some state of being that includes various emotions, some of them decidedly positive, then it is a very complex state of being.

Love has a distinct place in Izard's (1991) scheme of things, but he does not characterize it as a discrete emotion. He views love as basic to the human condition, as involving strong, affectionally based social attachments, to be full of interest and joy but also to '... run the full gamut of emotions' (1991, p. 407). Like many psychologists who have written about love, Izard distinguishes between various types: love for parents, love for siblings and love in a romantic sense, for example. He views all

types of love as having certain elements in common; he lists attachment, loyalty, devotion, protectiveness and nurturance. However, romantic love is special because it involves sexual expression, whereas the other types normally do not.

In recent years, psychologists have turned their attention to love rather than putting it aside as too hard or regarding it as better left to the poets. Among the most interesting of these expositions has been Sternberg's (1986, 1987), who reviews theories of love and then attempts to provide his own. He suggests a triangular model of liking and loving, the three aspects being intimacy, passion and decision-commitment. Various weightings in this triangle allow Sternberg to provide a place for the eight types of love or, more properly, love relationships that he has distinguished:

- non-love (casual);
- liking (intimacy only);
- infatuation (passion only);
- empty love (decision-commitment only, from only one person);
- romantic love (intimacy and passion);
- fatuous love (passion and decision-commitment);
- companionate love (intimacy and decision-commitment); and
- consummate love (intimacy, passion and decision-commitment).

Of this typology, Lazarus (1991a) makes the interesting point that it appears to be treating love as social relationships rather than as an emotion. He further points out that love can also be a momentary state.

Shaver, Morgan and Wu (1996) ask the basic question, 'is love a basic emotion?' They point out that, although it is clearly recognized as a basic emotion in everyday life, it rarely, if ever, appears in psychologists' lists. The reasons that psychologists give for this is that love has too much social context to be regarded as a basic emotion, it is too long-lasting (and thus more like an attitude or a sentiment than an emotion) or it is a mixture of basic emotions.

Shaver et al. argue that love is universal, both throughout history and across cultures, and agree with Lazarus (1991a) that it can take the form of a social relationship or of a momentary state. They view love as being attachment, caregiving or sexual attraction, again making the point also made by many others: that there is more than one form of love.

From a philosophical perspective, in a most stimulating book, Solomon (1994) has produced a genuine theory rather than a model of love. His account is simultaneously hard-headed and sympathetic and begins with the view that a theory of love is essentially a theory of self; however, it emphasizes a shared self. With this theory he is harking back to the platonic view of love as a joining of two souls.

This notion began with Aristophanes, who suggested that love is an attempt to find the other half of the self. Bringing this to the present in Solomon's terms, love becomes a matter of defining oneself in terms of another person. He makes the point that romantic love is a very modern notion, indicating a set of relationships that have

only existed for a relatively short time. It is a notion that is based on the idea of two separate and autonomous persons who are free to make choices.

A further core aspect of this theory is that any of the concepts involved in love only work when they are in tension with their opposite. To make this clear, the seeking for union with someone else in these terms is exciting because it is in tension with the notion of the autonomous self. So, and most importantly, Solomon is here describing love as a process and not a state: it comes from movement.

As already mentioned, Solomon is a philosopher rather than a psychologist, but rests his theory of love not just on both these disciplines but also on history, literature and anthropology, and especially on personal experience. A theory of love has to make sense personally as well as within more rarefied academic discourse, a point that might be made about emotions in general. All these complexities suggest to Solomon that love is something that should be seen as taking time rather than being instant and it is something that develops and grows. In the end, he argues with this deceptively simple theory that it is time to 'reinvent' love along the lines that he describes, but within the framework of the contemporary world.

Although Solomon's theory of love has been given pride of place in this brief account, it remains to be seen whether or not it generates empirical research. It looks likely to, as well as having obvious heuristic value. It has particular importance in that it deals with the topic of love irrespective of disciplinary boundaries. It is becomingly increasingly evident that to understand emotion in general this should be the approach of first choice (see Chapter 14 for further discussion of this).

Shame and other self-conscious, self-reflexive emotions

You are attending the funeral service of a friend who died unexpectedly a few days ago. The church is full and the congregation is silent in contemplation of your friend's life. Your cell phone shatters the silence.

A 13-year-old boy is in a shop with friends. He gives way to a moment's temptation and slips a packet of cigarettes into his pocket. He stays in the shop for a few more minutes, feeling very self-conscious. As he leaves with his friends, he feels a hand come down on his shoulder.

A man in his late twenties has newly begun his academic career. He had completed what he regards as some interesting, even seminal research. He is at his first conference to present the work. All the researchers that he admires are there. He gives his talk and gives it well and is feeling a mixture of relief and beginnings of a quiet pride. The doyen in the field asks the first question. Very gently, he points out a fundamental flaw in the design of the research, the implications of which the young man sees instantly.

You are eight years old and your aunt, uncle and cousin have come to visit. You cannot stand your cousin – he is an aggressive, sneaky, toy-stealing pain. Finally, you can take no more and push him into the pond. The next thing you are aware of is

being surrounded by adults blasting you with: 'God knows what will become of you', 'You are a thoroughly bad child', 'There is no excuse for that behaviour – what on earth is wrong with you?'

A woman works in an open-plan office. A colleague of hers has recently produced a very creative solution to an enduring problem. One of the directors of the company visits unannounced and, clearly mistaken, starts talking to the young woman as though it had been she who had made the breakthrough. Believing no-one else to be in the office, she allowed him to continue in the mistake. After he leaves, two of her colleagues appear from behind their partition and look at her.

Some emotions are self-reflective or self-conscious; that is, they are to do with our own evaluations and judgements of ourselves. They include embarrassment, guilt, shame, empathy, pride, hubris and perhaps shyness. Of these self-conscious emotions, the first three – embarrassment, guilt and shame – are also emotions of social control. They give us and others information and feedback about the degree to which we conform to various standards and rules, and pursue various goals. It is these three emotions that will be dealt with in this section, with particular emphasis on shame. The reason for this is that much attention is being given to shame across a wide range of disciplines. It can be argued that it is by far the most important of the 'social' emotions, that its importance as a mechanism of social control is growing and yet people in everyday life are less and less consciously aware of it.

Harré and Parrott (1996) argue that embarrassment 'provides disincentive for violating the social consensus and a means of repairing that consensus once it is violated.' There are three major ways of looking at it:

- dramaturgical, where it helps in performing a role and maintaining social identity;
- self-esteem (or rather its loss) in some situation; and
- negative social evaluation, which allows others to form an unfavourable social impression of one.

These three can interact, so providing some of the most embarrassing moments of all. For example, by chance, accompanied by your partner you run into some people whom it is important that you impress and, then, in making the introductions you forget one of their names or, even worse, get it wrong. You have played your role poorly, disrupted the interaction, created unfavourable impressions and lost self-esteem.

Guilt, according to Harré and Parrott is the result of transgressing some rule from authority. To *feel* guilty, however, one has to accept the authority. If, as a teenager, you believed that your parents had no right to say that you have to be home by 11 o'clock, you would not feel guilty if you came home at midnight. Guilt is to do with harm being done to someone through one's omission of commission. It involves responsibility and reparation is possible. One can do something about feelings of guilt by attempting to put things right.

From the Harré and Parrott analysis, shame concerns the sort of person one believes oneself to be, rather than to do with something that one has done or not done. With shame it is not possible to make reparation – one can only hide or slink

away. Shame can occur over things that are entirely outside one's control. One might be ashamed of a disfigurement, for example, or of some physical characteristic such as being too short, or ashamed of one's Alf Garnett sort of father or one's apparently deranged mother.

In some very interesting historical research, Demos (1996) looked at the change from social control based on shame to social control based on guilt in New England. Before the American revolution, social control was through shame. A puritan morality led to exposure to public criticism, with religion based on self-abasement and the general culture based on reputation, derision and the opinions of others. Lawsuits were about slander and defamation, with massive concern about damage to reputation. There were stocks, pillories, badges of infamy – all to do with public exposure. Punishment was believed to be useful only if it led to self-abasement and shame.

In the first half of the 19th century, religion shifted away from the idea of inherent sinfulness and toward the idea of the sacrifices and sufferings of Christ. Religious shortcomings would result in the suffering of others being in vain – the result was guilt. Upbringing no longer involved public exposure and censure, but the emphasis shifted to punishing children by isolating them so that they would be punished by their own consciences. So, control shifted from external sources to being dependent on inner morality.

Here then there are two types of social control. The shamed person has to demonstrate self-abasement and attempt to escape from public exposure. The guilty person must right a wrong by making reparation or by incarceration or some other form of punishment.

Lewis (1993), in his cognitive theory of the self-conscious emotions, emphasizes standards, rules and goals and points out that our beliefs and what is and is not acceptable vary across time and culture and subculture. He also stresses a second cognitive process, evaluation, in which we are concerned with whether behaviours or circumstances are to do with internal or external influences, whether the self or another can be blamed for success or failure and whether or not an act is unique, unusual or pathological. Also important is the matter of self-attribution. In the self-conscious emotions, the self is both subject and object, it is evaluating itself. So, one's actions can be seen as global or specific and as involving the whole self or part of the self.

From this perspective, shame involves an evaluation of one's actions in relation to a global self and transgressions of standards, rules and goals. It is negative, painful, and disruptive of thought and behaviour. There is a massive motivation to be rid of it, but this is hard to achieve; shame is to do with failure.

In guilt, the focus according to Lewis is on specific features of the self that might have led to failure. This is painful, but the pain is directed toward the cause of the failure or of the object harmed in order to put things right. There is always the impetus to put things right, so guilt is not as negative as shame. Shamed people hunch up with nowhere to go, whereas guilty people move about. In shame the self and the object (again the self, but from a different perspective) are melded. In guilt the self is differentiated from the object. One can be ashamed of one's guilt, but not guilty over one's shame.

Embarrassment from the Lewis angle is similar to shame, but less intense and more transitory. It is less disruptive to thought and behaviour. Embarrassment is an odd mixture of approach and avoidance, of looking and looking away. For further

detailed analyses of these emotions, again particularly shame, see Nathanson (1987, 1994), Tangney (Tangney & Fischer, 1995) and Helen Lewis (1971).

To return briefly to Lewis (1993), shame is 'The feeling we have when we evaluate our actions, feelings or behaviour and conclude that we have done something wrong.' It is about character, involves the whole person and prompts hiding, disappearing or even dying. Lewis regards it as species-specific and central to humans and believes that the final attempt to avoid shame is narcissism.

To experience shame there has to be a comparison with some standard. Shame is distinguished from the other self-conscious emotions at the level of conscious awareness and by what elicits it. The elicitors are internal rather than external: '... it is the focus of the self on the self's failure and an evaluation of that failure that leads to shame ...' (Lewis, 1993). This can be a failure to adhere to some standards (cleanliness, intelligence, etc.), physical appearance or even loss of a significant other.

Phenomenologically, shame seems to have distinctive features. These are a huge desire to hide or disappear, intense pain, discomfort and anger, a feeling that one is entirely no good, unworthy or inadequate, and the fusion of subject and object in which ongoing activity is disrupted – the focus is entirely on the self, leaving thinking, talking and acting in a confused state. In shame, the internal command is to stop whatever you are doing because you are no good, you are a bad person. The whole being is stopped rather than merely some behaviour. So, from a functional viewpoint shame is a signal to us that we should avoid any actions that lead to it – it is very unpleasant. This argument demonstrates the extent to which shame can be seen as a mechanism of social control.

Shame can be acknowledged or unacknowledged. If it is unacknowledged it means that we do not understand what is happening in our lives – we start to behave in ways for which we cannot account. So, in the extreme, the very concept of shame is not available to us as an explanation for our behaviour.

Crozier (1998) stresses the experience of the self by the self in shame. He regards it as dependent on three important factors: attribution to the other, a correspondence between one's own judgement of behaviour and one's perception of the judgement of others, and the aspect (the core) of the self being judged. From this perspective, shame is experienced when core aspects of the self are called into question, but for this to occur one has to take a perspective of 'the other' outside oneself.

Scheff (2000) analyses many sociological approaches to shame, sociological approaches being particularly important as shame is so significant to social control. From this he defines shame as a large family of emotions (embarrassment, humiliation, shyness, failure, inadequacy) that are united by a 'threat to the social bond'. This makes shame the most *social* emotion, pervasive in all aspects of social interaction. From this perspective, we are seen as constantly anticipating possible shame even if it does not eventuate. If shame goes unacknowledged, and there seems to be increasing evidence that this is the case in recent times in Western society, then the result can be hatred, resentment and envy.

Shame, then, whatever perspective one takes on it, is an extremely debilitating emotion and seems to be an integral part of the human condition, even though no obvious neurophysiological substrate has yet been found for it and the conditions that precipitate it do not have a prototypical form. Moreover, what is regarded as shameful

changes from place to place and from time to time. This is not surprising since shame is integral to social control.

Shame is a self-reflexive emotion and so relies on self-consciousness. Self-consciousness has its pros and cons. It leads to apparent freedom and choice, but brings with it the possibility of anxiety and shame. Freedom brings isolation from others, and lack of freedom brings belonging, so there is a cost to individuation and freedom – an increased likelihood of shame.

Conclusions

Mostly, the theories included in this chapter are not as ambitious or as far-reaching as the others in this book. Their aims are restricted to providing an account of a single emotion or at best a group of emotions, as with the so-called self-conscious ones. The exception, of course, comes with Averill's treatment of anger and to an extent his treatment of happiness, which he uses as a vehicle in his social constructionist theory of emotion in general. Also, some of the theoretical analyses of shame could provide a template to analyse other specific emotions.

So, the theories should be judged within this relatively restricted framework. However, even with this limitation, they do not stand up very well to scrutiny. Mostly, they provide definitions of the particular emotion with which they are concerned. Although this is useful enough it does not go very far. They do provide summaries of the existing knowledge, knowledge that is relatively sparse. However, with the possible exception of Sternberg and Solomon on love, they do not provide good explanations, nor lead to much in the way of readily testable predictions. They do of course have a clear focus, but somehow they lack in heuristic value.

Apart from Averill and from some of the recent work on shame, the general exception to these critical points comes from Izard and his differential emotions theory. More than anyone, Izard has attempted to do what the layperson might expect to be done in writings on emotion, and that is to provide an account of the specific emotions. It follows naturally from his theory that he should do this. Even Izard's accounts go little further than being definitional and descriptive.

Thinking of Lazarus's (1991a, b) criteria that should be met by theories of emotion, the 'specific' theories score well on definition and obviously on the matter of the discrete nature of emotions. They also do rather well on consideration of the biological or sociocultural background to emotion. However, they are somewhat wanting with respect to the remaining criteria. They tend either not to be formally expressed or to be in the form of models. Either way, this means that it is hard to find what they might imply about the causes of emotion and of emotion considered as an independent or a dependent variable.

From Oatley's (1992) perspective, the specific theories have useful things to say about the functions of emotion and of the emotions as discrete entities. Relatedly, they are also clearly grounded in the folk psychology of emotion. In some cases, they are also clearly concerned with the interpersonal communication aspects of emotion and by definition with the basic emotions. It is almost entirely the so-called basic emotions that the specific emotion theorists are concerned with. However, they do not fare well with respect to the unconscious causes of emotion, nor with the question of evaluations, nor

with the extent to which a specific emotion might be concerned with simulating the plans of other people.

Some of the theories can deal with more evidence in Oatley's characterization of the Lakatos approach. And in some cases, but not many, specific predictions can be derived from them in the sense of Oatley's view of the Popperian tradition.

It is perhaps not surprising that there have been relatively few attempts to theorize about specific emotions and that what there are do not add greatly to our knowledge. However, various themes do emerge from a consideration of them, an important one of which is that it seems reasonably straightforward to differentiate the specific emotions from one another, conceptually, even though it might not be so easy physiologically. In this sense, they both derive from and have something to feed back into the folk psychology of emotion.

Interestingly, and consistently with every conclusion drawn in this book so far, the specific emotion theorists frequently draw attention to the importance of cognition in their accounts. However, they go further than this and often forge a link between emotion (or the specific emotion under consideration) and personality. Moreover, in their concern with the evolutionary functions of the specific emotions plus their possible social construction, the theorists draw on much that is outside psychology. In other words, they imply that an interdisciplinary approach to emotion might serve us well. This position is endorsed strongly here and is explored in some detail in Chapters 13, 14 and 15.

The significance of an interdisciplinary approach to emotion is made clear by a number of the specific emotion theorists who draw attention to the importance of the moral order in their accounts. Much of what they describe is concerned with the nature of rules in human, particularly emotion, conduct. As soon as the idea of social rules comes into play, then other disciplines become of obvious relevance – history, philosophy, sociology and anthropology, for example.

Clearly, some of the theories about specific emotions are somewhat disappointing. The reason for this is not obvious. Clearly, many, if not most emotion theorists believe that specific, discrete, and even basic emotions exist. Why then have they not produced cogent theories of them?

That they have not is particularly surprising given the everyday interest that there would be in such an endeavour. Perhaps this is the reason, everyday interest being a little suspect to good scientists. Or, more charitably, perhaps it is because those who have produced general theories of emotion believe that their theories can simply be used to account for the specific emotions. Or it may be that the individual emotions have proved a little difficult to engage in any depth.

It should be noted that a definite exception to this theoretical desert surrounding the specific emotions comes with anxiety. Vast amounts have been written on anxiety, embracing both empirical and theoretical work. Also, some of the ideas about anxiety have considerable ramifications for the understanding of emotion more broadly. Indeed, the theories of anxiety to some extent reflect the theories of general emotion. As mentioned previously, discussion of anxiety is reserved for Chapter 11 since it is importantly in the domain of abnormal and clinical psychology.

Moreover, shame is beginning to take its place as an emotion that seems to be central to human social interaction as a mechanism of social control and as a fundamental factor in the development of many psychological disorders.

Finally, one of the positive features of theoretical accounts of the specific emotions is that they seem to tie in well with everyday experience. Perhaps this is a further reason why they are also pursued by members of disciplines less concerned with the 'scientific' status of their discipline than psychologists typically tend to be.

Summary

- In an everyday sense, it is obvious that we experience specific emotions and that fear and joy, for example, are quite distinct from each other and from, say, jealousy and guilt, which in turn are quite distinct.
- Theories of the specific emotions are, almost by definition, less far-reaching than theories of emotion more generally, but in some respects can be applied to emotion in general.
- Such theories are well grounded in everyday life and it is probably in this area that there is the most obvious interplay between science-based academic psychology and the more popular sort of fiction and self-help texts.
- Theories pertinent to specific emotions emphasize both an evolutionary perspective and the significance of social constructionism. They also draw attention to the role of emotions in the moral or social order.
- The emotion of shame has received much recent attention across a number of disciplines. It seems to be both integral to the social order and a basic determinant of what can go wrong in people's emotional lives.

A question of application

- What are the most significant emotions encountered in family life or at work? Which emotions are missing from these lists? In what ways are the lists different?
- Are the specific emotions that *you* experience at home and at work different and are they different from those experienced by other people?
- Which emotions are more difficult to deal with in other people? Why are they more difficult?
- Which emotions help in matters of social or moral control?
- Do people have any choice in whether or not they experience particular emotions?
- Which emotions are the most debilitating?
- Which emotions interfere most with (or most enhance) family life or interpersonal relations or in your work environment?
- Shame seems to be a fundamental emotion in both social control and personal

experience. Can you think of instances of this in your life or the lives of others? Do you agree with its importance?

- Is it easier to bring about some emotions than others in your family, friends or workmates? Why might this be?

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