EASP Medium Size Meeting

Promoting a Social Approach to Emotions

Social Cognition Center
Cologne, Germany
April 15-16, 2016

University of Cologne

C-SEB
CENTER FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BEHAVIOR
UNIVERSITY OF COLOGNE

SOCO
Social Cognition Center Cologne

EASP
European Association of Social Psychology

Conference Venue

- The meeting will take place at the UoC Seminar Building, Conference Room ("Tagungsraum", ground floor), Universitätsstraße 37, 50931 Cologne.
- If you arrive at the main train station (**Dom/Hbf**) take subway/tram lines 16 or 18 (platform 1) to **Neumarkt**. At Neumarkt, take line 9 (platform 4, direction Sülz) to **Universität**. From there it's a short walk to the building.
- If you arrive at the train station **Bf Köln Messe/Deutz** take tram line 9 (direction Sülz) to go to **Universität**.
- For information on public transport in Cologne, see KVB Köln (http://www.kvb-koeln.de/)

Dinner Friday, April 15

- Will be at HELLERS Brauhaus, Roonstraße 33, 50674 Köln, which is a short walk from the conference site

Dinner Saturday, April 16

- will be at the Bagatelle, Teutoburger Straße 17, 50678 Köln, Südstadt
- we have chartered a bus to take us from the conference site to the restaurant

Wi-Fi

- Eduroam Wi-Fi is available at the conference site
- Additionally, we have registered a number of Wi-Fi guest accounts. Please approach one of our research assistants to get one.

Cabs

- Call +49 221 2882 (Taxi Ruf)

FRIDAY, April 15	
9 am – 9.15 am	**Welcome**
9.15 am – 10.45 am	***Expression and Suppression of Emotions***
10.45 am – 11 am	Coffee Break
11 am – 12.30 pm	***Group-based Emotions***
12.30 pm – 2 pm	Lunch Break
2 pm – 3 pm	**Senior-Junior-Meetings**
3 pm – 3.30 pm	Coffee Break with Cake
3.30 pm – 5 pm	***Social Approaches to Envy and Schadenfreude***
5 pm – 5.15 pm	Coffee Break
5.15 pm – 7 pm	***Poster Session***
7.15 pm	Joint Walk to Brewery Hellers from Conference Venue
7.30 pm	Dinner at Brewery Hellers

SATURDAY, April 16	
9 am – 9.15 am	**Welcome**
9.15 am – 10.45 am	***Interpersonal Processes in Emotion Perception***
10.45 am – 11 am	Coffee Break
11 am – 12.30 pm	***Self-conscious emotions***
12.30 pm – 2 pm	Lunch
2 pm – 3.30 pm	***Blitz Talks***
3.30 pm – 4 pm	Coffee Break and Cake
4 pm – 5.30 pm	***Intrapersonal Processes in Social Effects of Emotions***
5.30 pm – 5.45 pm	Coffee Break
5.45 pm – 6.45 pm	***Kama Muta***
7 pm	Bus leaving to Restaurant Bagatelle at Conference Venue
7.30 pm	Dinner at Bagatelle

Friday, April 15	
9 am – 9.15 am	**Welcome**
9.15 am – 10.45 am	***Expression and Suppression of Emotions*** *Elise Kalokerinos* Context shapes social judgments of emotion suppression and expression *Katharine Greenaway* How to lose friends and influence people: Expressing positive emotion can increase perceived status in competitive contexts *Andrea Paulus* Threatening joy: The social meaning of emotional expressions
10.45 am – 11 am	Coffee Break
11 am – 12.30 pm	***Group-based Emotions*** *Vincent Yzerbyt* The emergence of group-based emotions: The key role of social interaction *Toon Kuppens* Mind the level: Distinguishing group-based and individual emotional appraisal *Ruthie Pliskin* Ideological Influences on the Outcomes of Emotion and its Regulation in Intractable Conflicts
12.30 pm – 2 pm	Lunch Break
2 pm – 3 pm	**Senior-Junior-Meetings**
3 pm – 3.30 pm	Coffee Break with Cake

3.30 pm – 5 pm	***Social Approaches to Envy and Schadenfreude*** *Niels Van de Ven* The social functions of envy at four levels of analysis *Jens Lange* Having a good laugh: Schadenfreude as social-functional status regulator *Jan Crusius* Facing the magic mirror: How envy is linked to narcissism and its social outcomes
5 pm – 5.15 pm	Coffee Break
5.15 pm – 7 pm	***Poster Session*** *Alexa Weiss* Suspicious morals: Distrust promotes diverging moral standards for the self versus others *Arik Cheshin* The social influence of the intensity of emotion displays *Janis Zickfeld* Heartwarming closeness: Being moved induces communal sharing and increases feelings of warmth *Julia Sasse* When lay beliefs about in-group and out-group reactions to emotions are at odds: Which one guides expression? *Katerina Petkanopoulou* Interpersonal effects of anger as a function of expresser's power and the type of expression

	Laura Sels Partner-expected affect: How you feel now is predicted by how your partner thought you felt before *Lea Boecker* A novel paradigm for measuring social comparison based emotions *Lisa Blatz* Gain with and without pain? Upward motivation in admiration and envy differs in abstractness and long-term focus. *Mark Carew* The consequences of embarrassment for contact quality between minority and majority group members *Paton Yam* Psychological and material gains as determinants of intergroup schadenfreude and victorious joy *Stine Torp Løkkeberg* To withhold or to disclose? How communicating unpleasant information can elicit either self-defensive or self-improvement motivations *Tom Kupfer* The function of disgust as a social signal *Victoria Schönefeld* Empathy vs. pseudo-empathy: A new model of empathic processes and first empirical contributions *Xia Fang* Unmasking smile: Amusement, satisfaction, or relief?
7.15 pm	**Joint Walk to Brewery Hellers from Conference Venue**
7.30 pm	**Dinner at Brewery Hellers**

Saturday, April 16	
9 am – 9.15 am	**Welcome**
9.15 am – 10.45 am	***Interpersonal Processes in Emotion Perception*** *Brian Parkinson* Interpersonal effects of emotion and emotional information *Ursula Hess* The limits of the malleability of the meaning of facial expressions *Gerben Van Kleef* The persuasive power of emotions: Effects of emotional expressions on attitude formation and change
10.45 am – 11 am	Coffee Break
11 am – 12.30 pm	***Self-conscious emotions*** *Agneta Fischer* The different social functions of shame and guilt *Nicolay Gausel* What does "I feel ashamed" mean? Avoiding the pitfall of definition by understanding subjective emotion language *Michael Boiger* Cultural context shapes emotional interactions: The different relational dynamics of anger and shame across cultures
12.30 pm 2 pm	Lunch
2 pm – 3.30 pm	***Blitz Talks*** *Eleanor Miles* A social approach to assessing the effectiveness of emotion suppression

	Frieder Paulus Social immersion as a scaffold for the neuroscience of emotions: the case of embarrassment *Friederike Funk* Perceiving remorse in others *Ines Schindler* How self-transcendent emotions tie individuals to communities: The case of being moved *Magdalena Rychlowska* The social influence of emotions in interpersonal and intergroup resource dilemmas *Lisanne Pauw* Interpersonal emotion regulation: The need for socio-affective vs. cognitive support *Lotte Van Dillen* Self-perceived moral integrity and attention to facial cues of emotion *Miriam Koschate-Reis* The use of emotions to re-claim social identity *Pum Kommattam* We are sorry, they don't care: Misinterpretation of facial embarrassment displays in intergroup contexts *Yossi Hasson* Motivated empathy and group membership: Do all people want to increase the intergroup bias?
3.30 pm – 4 pm	Coffee Break and Cake

4 pm – 5.30 pm	***Intrapersonal Processes in Social Effects of Emotions*** *Michael Häfner* Faraway so close! Interpersonal distance as focal dimension of socially situated emotion regulation. *Lisa Feldman Barrett* Growing a social brain *Shlomo Hareli* The role of emotional counter-reactions to anger for inferences of social power
5.30 pm – 5.45 pm	Coffee Break
5.45 pm – 6.45 pm	***Kama Muta*** *Alan Fiske* Inductively characterizing the cultural, social, and psychological processes that generate, shape, and orient an emotion: Kama Muta—'Moved by love' *Thomas Schubert* Kama Muta: A social relations model of being moved
7 pm	Bus leaving to Restaurant Bagatelle at Conference Venue
7.30 pm	Dinner at Bagatelle

Senior-Junior-Meetings

The pre-arranged Senior-Junior meetings will take place on Friday from 2 pm – 3 pm. Please meet in front of the conference room. For your conversations, we suggest to use the conference venue, head to the cafeteria, or take a walk and explore the campus area and the “green belt” behind the main university building.

Ines Schindler – Lisa Blatz

Brian Parkinson – Laura Sels

Shlomo Hareli – Friederike Funk

Niels van de Ven – Paton Yam

Alan Fiske – Ruthie Pliskin

Toon Kuppens – Katerina Petkanopoulou

Vincent Yzerbyt – Yossi Hasson

Agneta Fischer – Lea Boecker

Thomas Schubert – Alexa Weiss

Abstracts

Growing a social brain

Lisa Feldman Barrett and Shir Atzil

Northeastern University

It has long been assumed humans are born with a specialized brain system -- the "social brain" – evolved to support social perception, social reward and social cognition. The assumption is that from the first moment of life, a newborn infant can recognize kin and seek their closeness to ensure optimal mother-infant attachment, which ultimately improves survival. In this talk, we will combine developmental neuroscience, human brain imaging, and behavioral findings to a theoretical framework where early social competencies are learned early in life, guided by allostasis (i.e., autonomic, metabolic, temperature and immune regulation). Specifically, we will hypothesize that an infant brain learns to associate consistent human agents with allostasis, and this coupling is sufficient to create robust social competencies via the development of intrinsic networks that constitute the "social brain.: It also ensures smooth cross-generation-transmission of social concepts and behaviors without relying on genetic inheritance of a pre-set social brain module.

Gain with and without pain? Upward motivation in admiration and envy differs in abstractness and long-term focus

Lisa Blatz, Jens Lange, and Jan Crusius

University of Cologne

Studies of motivational consequences of envy and admiration, both elicited when confronted with excellent others, showed conflicting results. Whereas envy motivates to level the differences between oneself and the superior other either by moving oneself up (benign envy) or by levelling the envied person down (malicious envy), it remains unclear whether admiration motivates to improve oneself or not. We disentangled the motivational consequences of envy and admiration in two experimental studies. We reasoned that envy and admiration elicit qualitatively different goals. Given that admiration is directed at others who excel in domains that are less relevant for the self than in envy, we predicted that admiration elicits vague and long-term goals. In contrast, envy should elicit specific and short-term goals. In Study 1 (N = 194) we differentiated benign envy and admiration in a lab experiment with German undergraduates. In Study 2 (N = 416) we replicated these differences in an American sample via MTurk and extended them to malicious envy. The results were consistent with the preregistered predictions: Envy elicits more specific, short-term goals and the motivation to obtain exactly the same as the envied person. In contrast, admiration elicits vaguer, long-term goals and the motivation to obtain something similarly special (but not the same) as the admired person. Thus, envy and admiration are both motivating but in different ways. Whereas envy aims at levelling status differences by obtaining exactly the same as the other, admiration aims at emulating role models motivating people to strive for their abstract ideals.

A novel paradigm for measuring social comparison based emotions

Lea Boecker and Sascha Topolinski

University of Cologne

We constantly compare our own abilities, achievements and possessions to those of other people which typically involves strong emotional reactions. Other persons' fortunes can either make us feel happy for the other person or envious and other perons' mifortunes can either trigger sympathy or schadenfreude. We developed a new paradigm to elicit these four social comparison-based emotions on a trial-by-trial basis. First, participants took part in a (fake) lottery and then saw the outcomes of other people and reported how much envy (in the other conditions: joy, schadenfreude or sympathy) they experience. All participants received a start money of 500 cents and then lost a small amount of money (5 cents) in a following one-trial lottery. We then presented 60 students to the participants that had take part in the same lottery and either received a start money of 700 cents (superior), 500 cents (equal) or 300 cents (inferior) and then won (fortune) or lost money (misfortune) in the one-trial lottery. Furthermore, we varied the amount of wins and losses (50 – 199 cents) allowing us to analyze the course of each emotion as a function of status and (mis)fortune. As predicted, emotions were strongest in the following conditions: envy to superiors' wins, joy to inferiors' wins, schadenfreude to superiors' misfortunes and sympathy to inferiors' misfortunes. Furthermore, emotional reactions increased with the amount of monetary wins and losses. Additionally, results showed that participants also experienced envy and schadenfreude to persons that were inferior to them illustrating the competetive nature of social comparisons.

Cultural context shapes emotional interactions: The different relational dynamics of anger and shame across cultures

Michael Boiger[1], Yukiko Uchida[2], and Batja Mesquita[1]

[1]*Unversity of Leuven,* [2]*Kyoto University, Japan*

Most emotions unfold in interaction with others. Consequently, the goals people have for their relationships may affect which emotions they experience as well as how they respond to each other (Boiger & Mesquita, 2012). In Study 1, we tested this assumption by exploring German and Japanese scripts for anger and shame interactions between romantic partners. Because anger is beneficial for the German goal of relational autonomy and commonly experienced in close relationships, we expected that Germans have more elaborate interpersonal scripts for dealing with anger than Japanese. For shame, which is more helpful for maintaining the Japanese goal of relational harmony, we expected the opposite pattern. *N*=344 German and Japanese adults indicated for 8 anger (or shame) situations how intensely they would respond with anger/shame, how their partners would react, and how angry/ashamed they would feel after the interaction. Consistent with our predictions, Germans anger scripts were more interpersonal in nature: Compared to Japanese, the outcomes of German anger scripts depended more on the expected partner reactions than on the participants' initial feelings. Equally supporting our predictions, the outcome of Japanese shame scripts was almost entirely determined by the expected responses of the partner, while German scripts were largely unaffected by partners' responses. Study 2 is currently ongoing and extends these observations to actual interactions between romantic partners during a conflict discussion. First observations support the idea that anger and shame instill a different relational dynamic among couples from Belgium, Japan, and the United States.

The consequences of embarrassment for contact quality between minority and majority group members

Mark Carew

Canterbury Christ Church University

Embarrassment is an unpleasant, negative emotion that occurs when an individual makes a mistake or faux pas whilst, crucially, within the presence of an audience (Miller, 1996). However, despite its inherently social qualities, research has only recently shown that embarrassment can be meaningfully studied at the intergroup level (Eller et al. 2011). As such, there has not yet been systematic investigation into the consequences of embarrassment for intergroup relations. Specifically, given its aversive nature, it is plausible that experiencing embarrassment during interactions with out-group members may negatively impact the quality of contact between minority and majority group members. This presentation will report the findings of two studies that tested this hypothesis. In Study 1, a two-wave longitudinal survey was conducted with physically disabled (matched N = 101) and non-disabled (matched N = 65) participants pre- and post- 2012 Paralympic Games. Results showed that embarrassment negatively predicted contact quality among both groups over time, independently of other correlates (e.g., contact frequency, stereotypes). Additionally, exposure to Paralympic media coverage was found to successfully reduce embarrassment levels among both groups. Study 2 (currently in progress) assesses the causal impact of embarrassment on contact quality. Non-disabled participants are asked to recall embarrassing or non-embarrassing contact with a physically disabled person and, subsequently, interact with a physically disabled confederate. Contact quality is assessed through analysis of video data of this interaction and survey measures. Preliminary findings emphasise the importance of embarrassment in determining quality of contact during intergroup encounters.

The social influence of the intensity of emotion displays

Arik Cheshin

University of Haifa

It is well established that displays of emotions carry influence over those who encounter them. Another well-established fact is that emotions vary in the intensity in which they are felt and displayed. To date only scant research has touched upon the social influence of the intensity with which emotions are displayed. In this presentation I will provide evidence that encountering others' emotions at varying degrees of intensity begets impact beyond the discreteness of the emotion. Focusing on customer service settings I will demonstrate using lab and field studies, how encountering emotions of happiness, sadness and anger led to different outcomes when the display was at varying degrees of intensity. Service providers displays of high-intensity (compared to low-intensity) sadness and happiness caused participants to evaluate service provider's emotion as less authentic and appropriate, and to deem the service provider as less trustworthy. The reduced trust resulting from intense emotional expressions undermined customer evaluations of service, product quality, and resulted in lowered use of product. In another set of studies focusing on emotional displays of customers we demonstrate that various intensities of anger display led to opposite responses such that when anger was displayed at low intensity it led to greater compensation of the customer while high intensity anger led to higher likelihood of punishing the customer. These studies highlight the importance of the intensity of emotional expressions. Thus, I propose that emotional intensity be incorporated in theorizing and researching the social influence of emotions.

Facing the magic mirror: How envy is linked to narcissism and its social outcomes

Jan Crusius[1], Jens Lange[1], and Birk Hagemeyer[2]

[1]University of Cologne, [2]University of Jena

Are narcissists envious? According to a widely held assumption, they are. In fact, this notion was treated as a truism in psychoanalytical approaches to narcissism, in the diagnosis of the narcissistic personality disorder, and in mainstream personality research on narcissism. Nevertheless, the empirical link between narcissism and envy has remained elusive. Indeed, should not narcissists' grandiosity protect them from invidious thoughts? We argue that narcissists' hunger for status should predispose them to react with envy when confronted with superior others. However, the link between envy and grandiose narcissism may be more complex. Five studies (N = 1,225) are in line with the idea that to unravel their relationship, it is necessary to take different narcissism facets and the forms of envy into account. Hopeful for success, narcissists characterized by narcissistic admiration were more prone to experience benign envy, entailing the motivation to improve performance. Fearful of failure, narcissists characterized by narcissistic rivalry were more prone to experience malicious envy, entailing hostility. Furthermore, the data suggest that envy is connected to the contradictory social outcomes of narcissism. Benign envy predicted the ascription of social potency by peers, whereas malicious envy predicted the ascription of a proclivity for social conflict. These results converged in self-report and dyadic studies measuring envy as a trait or as a state in recall tasks and in comparison situations. They offer important insights into narcissists' emotional complexities, integrate prior isolated and conflicting evidence, and open up new avenues for research on narcissism and envy.

Unmasking smile: Amusement, satisfaction, or relief?

Xia Fang, Gerben Van Kleef, and Disa Sauter

University of Amsterdam

Observers may interpret a smiling face differently when it is preceded by different negative emotional expressions. In the present research, participants judged the smile changed from anger, disgust, fear or sadness on valence and authenticity (Experiment 1), and described the expresser's feeling when the expresser smiled after different negative emotional expressions (Experiment 2). The results of Experiment 1 showed that fear-to-happiness was judged as most positive and authentic while disgust-to-happiness was judged as most negative and inauthentic. This pattern was consistently found in all six expressers. The results of Experiment 2 showed that the mental state inference of a smiling face varied across preceding emotional expression, as anger-to-happiness was more commonly associated with satisfaction, disgust-to-happiness with amusement, and fear-to-happiness with relief. These results suggest that different positive emotions may share the same signal (i.e., a smiling face), but differs in valence, authenticity and mental state inference of the smile (e.g., amusement, satisfaction and relief).

The different social functions of shame and guilt

Agneta Fischer and Michael Vliek

University of Amsterdam

Previous theorizing and research has suggested that although guilt and shame may occur together, they have fundamentally different features (Tangney, Steuwig, & Mashek, 2007). Whereas shame implies withdrawal, guilt implies approach and repair behavior. Still, the social function of both shame and guilt is assumed to be affiliative (Fischer & Manstead, 2015), so the question arises to what extent shame and guilt have different functions. We may distinguish different functional levels (Giner-Sorolla, 2013), depending on the perspective one has: subject or target of the expression. We examined functions of guilt and shame in two studies. In Study 1, we asked participants (*N*=48) to think about autobiographical shame and guilt events, and then to share the shame or guilt event with the imagined target of their emotion. We also recorded participants' facial expressions while they told their stories. We then asked them about their feelings after the thinking (Time 1) and after the sharing (Time 2) of their emotions. The results showed that participants felt more guilt after thinking about their guilt than after their sharing, whereas the opposite pattern was found for shame. This suggests that ruminating about the event, but keeping the emotion to oneself, is more functional when one feels shame, whereas expressing one's feelings to the target is more functional when one feels guilt. In Study 2, we took the perspective of the observer by examining whether social signals of shame and guilt are different and whether observers can distinguish between the expression of shame and guilt on the basis of nonverbal (facial) information. We are currently collecting these data and will be able to provide the results at the time of the small group meeting.

Inductively characterizing the cultural, social, and psychological processes that generate, shape, and orient an emotion: Kama Muta—'Moved by love'

Alan Page Fiske[1], Beate Seibt2, Thomas Schubert[2], and Janis Zickfield[2]

[1]University of California, Los Angeles, [2]University of Oslo

The psychological study of emotions, we argue, can profit from including inductive methods, such as exploration of a wide range of lexicons, ethnographies, histories, religious texts, fiction, personal accounts, and mini ethnographies. We have applied these methods to study an emotion we call kama muta, and from these six patterns emerged: First, many languages in several distinct language families have emotion terms whose literal meaning is moved, touched, or stirred. Second, while people use these terms imprecisely and with important linguistic specificity, people generally use a 'moved/touched/stirred' term primarily for a very positive emotion which, when intense, is accompanied by tears, being choked up, goosebumps or chills, and a feeling in the center of the chest, often followed by buoyancy and exhilaration. Third, people actively create this emotion with many cultural practices. Fourth, people are eager to recruit others to experience this emotion, and to experience it together with others. Fifth, the emotion occurs when a communal sharing (CS) relationship suddenly intensifies, such as when receiving an extraordinary unexpected kindness, feeling the love of a divinity, or observing others reunited with a loved one. Sixth, this emotion motivates people to recommit to or enhance their own CS relationships. All this illustrates how we can learn about an emotion by studying its natural occurrence in the real world across cultures, history, and settings. I argue that such work needs to accompany systematic survey sampling and controlled experimental manipulations that allow us to verify the causes, sensations, and consequences of emotions. Inductive and deductive methods combine synergistically.

Perceiving remorse in others

Friedrike Funk

University of Cologne

Oscar Pistorius and Dschochar Zarnajew are recent cases that exemplify something people deeply care about: Over weeks, people who watched the news or read newspapers have looked at their faces and wondered "Do they really regret what they did? Are they remorseful?" Displaying remorse in the aftermath of transgressions has an important social function: if perceived as authentic, it signals the perceiver that transgressors have truly changed their attitudes and will change their future behavior for the better. In collaboration with Alexander Todorov and Mirella Walker, I have created and validated face models in FaceGen and the Basel face model that can systematically manipulate a face's remorseful or remorseless appearance. I will first present how these facial expressions were obtained and validated. Second, I will discuss findings from an experimental study in which faces with various levels of remorseful appearance were used as add-on to verbal feedback about the presence or absence of transgressor change following transgressions. Results replicated earlier findings on transformative justice motives (Funk et al., 2014, in prep.), supporting the idea that punishment leaves punishers only satisfied if it effects a genuine change in the transgressor's attitude. Lastly, I will briefly introduce how face models of remorse can be used as methodological tool in other research paradigms, for instance in order to study how the facial perception of remorse affects guilt and punishment recommendations in scenario studies, as well as to examine core social-cognitive reactions that are generally activated when people perceive remorse in transgressors.

What does “I feel ashamed” mean? Avoiding the pitfall of definition by understanding subjective emotion language

Nicolay Gausel

Centre for Emotion Research, Østfold University College, Norway

To “feel ashamed” is perhaps one of the most studied human emotional experiences. Ironically, there is no agreement yet on what people mean when they say that they “feel ashamed”. This can be reflected not only in the numerous definitions of the feeling but also in the numerous subjective understandings of it. Therefore, instead of endorsing one specific definition of “ashamed”, I will argue that we should not predefine what it means when someone report that they “feel ashamed”. Rather, by reviewing the literature on subjectivity, semantic theory and appraisal theories of emotion, I will conclude that the expression to” feel ashamed” can only be understood through acceptance of subjective language and the importance of appraisals as meaning-carrying components.

How to lose friends and influence people: Expressing positive emotion can increase perceived status in competitive contexts

Katharine Greenaway[1] and Elise Kalokerinos[2]

[1]The University of Queensland, [2]KU Leuven

Expressing positive emotion is typically thought of as an affiliative signal that wins friends. Yet, research shows that individuals who express positive emotion after a win are liked less and considered less desirable friends than people who are inexpressive in victory (Kalokerinos, Greenaway, Pedder, & Margetts, 2014). Why, then, might winners express positive emotion following victory? We tested the possibility that positive emotion expressions in competitive contexts can serve to increase perceived status, thus creating an impression of formidability. In two experiments, we found that winners who expressed positive emotion following a victory were perceived as higher status, more formidable, and more successful than people who suppressed positive emotion. In three additional experiments, we varied the context to understand why this effect occurs, manipulating who was on the receiving end of the emotion expression, how competent the winner was, and whether the winner was authentic in their emotion expression. The only variable that moderated the positive emotion status effect was perceived authenticity: Winners who were inauthentic in their emotion expressions were not seen as higher status than winners who suppressed their emotion. These findings support an emotion-as-social-information approach, whereby people make inferences about others based on their emotional expressions (Van Kleef, 2009). They also extend understanding of positive emotion expressions, showing they are not only affiliative signals designed to promote social closeness, but in certain contexts can signal dominance. Hence, despite the relationship costs, winners may express positive emotion in victory to reap reputational benefits.

Faraway so close! Interpersonal distance as focal dimension of socially situated emotion regulation.

Michael Häfner

Berlin University of the Arts

In the present paper, I advocate the position that the social nature of emotions is also inherent in their regulation. Specifically, I claim that spontaneous emotion regulation is more than about the management of immediate pleasure and pain, as emotions usually have interpersonal consequences. This leads me to consider to which degree regulating social displays of emotion differs from what we know about individuals' internal emotion regulation. Based on brief reviews of research on facial mimicry, approach-avoidance motivation and social comparison, I develop the argument that the management of interpersonal distance comprises the central dimension of social emotion regulation. In other words, I posit that spontaneous efforts to initiate, inhibit, or modify emotional displays in their social context mirror the regulation of interpersonal distance, i.e., management of interpersonal approach and avoidance. Ultimately, these processes serve to reduce stress by helping interaction partners to determine the state of their relationship and the potential consequences of continued interactions. This theoretical argument will be backed-up by first empirical evidence. Specifically, I will present data from a couple of experiments investigating the interplay of perceived (spatial) distance, social comparison and spontaneous facial displays. Findings show that perceived (spatial) distance triggers contrastive social comparisons and disinhibit facial expressions enhancing the distance to the social standard. Conversely, having people take a distancing facial expression (e.g., an anger expression), lets them perceive themselves in a greater distance to a given standard.

The role of emotional counter-reactions to anger for inferences of social power

Shlomo Hareli

The Interdisciplinary Center for Research on Emotions, University of Haifa, Department of Business Administration, University of Haifa

Expressions of anger, especially in men, are perceived as signals of high social power. Targets of such expressions may respond by expressing emotions of their own. Depending on the type of response, it can serve as a signal of confirmation or disconfirmation of the claims to high power suggested by these expressions of anger and determine the perceived social power of the responders. The talk reports the results of three studies that examined this idea, by presenting participants with a sequence of two photos of same-sex and mixed-sex dyads. The first photo presented an angry person and the second one presented another person responding by expressing, anger, neutrality, sadness or fear. Focusing on the way in which the first person was perceived, Study 1 shows that counter-reactions of neutrality decreased perceived social power, whereas counter-reactions of fear increased it. For same-sex dyads only, counter-reactions of anger had the same effect as neutrality, while sadness had the same effect as fear. Furthermore, counter-emotions had a stronger effect on perceived social power when the emotions were incongruent with gender-stereotypes. Whereas women's stereotype-incongruent reactions made them appear more powerful, the stereotype-incongruent reactions of men made them seem less powerful. The two other studies mostly replicated the results of the first study in the context of the effect of counter-reactions to anger on perceived social power. Study 2 precluded the possibility that the impact of counter-reactions on perceptions of social power is caused by these emotions serving as a benchmark for comparison rather than because of them being counter-reactions. Study 3 showed that counter-reactions are indeed perceived as confirmation and disconfirmation of claims of power on the part of the angry person and affect how powerful this person seems to be. This research underscores the importance of social interaction as a context for the social perception of emotions.

Motivated empathy and group membership: Do all people want to increase the intergroup bias?

Yossi Hasson

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem & The Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya

The current study examined whether and how group membership and group attachment influence motivation to empathize with others and as a consequence directs empathy regulation. Using the minimal group paradigm, 88 Israeli students belonged to one of two groups that were ostensibly competing against each other. After training all the participants in cognitive reappraisal, we showed them a series of 24 empathy-inducing stories whose target was either a member of the ingroup or the outgroup. On each trial, participants were asked to choose whether to increase or decrease their emotional reactions to the event, using reappraisal. Finally, participants rated their level of attachment to the group. As predicted, highly attached participants showed greater intergroup bias as being more motivated to increase their empathy toward their ingroup (vs. outgroup) members. This study provides support for the hypothesis that group membership influences empathy regulation. Additionally, such findings also demonstrate that people do not regulate their emotions in a uniform manner. Instead, whether they want to increase or decrease empathy depends on the level of attachment to their ingroup.

The limits of the malleability of the meaning of facial expressions

Ursula Hess

Humboldt Universität, Berlin

This presentation considers the impact of context information on the perception of emotions. Different types of context are discussed and the limits of the influence of context information are delineated. A model of the meaning of emotion expressions in context (MEEC) is introduced, which proposes a pertinent but not exclusive role for context information by proposing core appraisals as the limiting frame of reinterpretation. The model, just as do social constructivist accounts, considers perceivers as active participants in the emotion decoding process - but as ones who are limited with regard to their constructive freedom. Two studies will be presented to show when and how context influences the meaning of facial perceptions and when facial expressions influence the meaning of context. For study 1, a total of 380 participants either (a) rated facial expressions with regard to the likely appraisal of the eliciting situation by the emoter, (b) appraised the scenes alone or (c) appraised scenes shown together with the expressions they supposedly elicited. For study 2, a total of 191 participants first saw for two seconds a picture showing either a disgust, anger, happy or fear context. This was followed by a picture showing a facial expression. Participants then saw both images together and where asked in an open question to explain why the person showed the expression they did show. The findings strongly supported the MEEC.

Context shapes social judgments of emotion suppression and expression

Elise K. Kalokerinos[1] and Katharine H. Greenaway[2]

[1]KU Leuven, [2]The University of Queensland

Is it better to express or suppress positive emotion? Most people would agree that the answer to this question is obvious: by and large, positive emotion should be expressed and not suppressed. Yet there are many contexts in which it is socially inappropriate to express positive emotion. To avoid social condemnation in such situations, it may be better to suppress the expression of positive emotion. However, this suggestion is at odds with the emotion regulation literature, which almost universally finds suppression is a maladaptive emotion regulation strategy with social costs. In this work, we argue that this generally negative characterization of suppression exists mainly because previous research has not considered the role that social context plays in governing appropriate emotion regulation. We hypothesized that positive emotion expressions would be considered inappropriate when the valence of the expressed emotion (e.g., positive) did not match the valence of the context (e.g., negative). Five experiments demonstrated that in the case of an emotion-context mismatch, targets who suppressed positive emotion were rated more positively than targets who expressed positive emotion. This provides the first empirical evidence that social costs to suppression are not inevitable, but instead are dependent on context. Expressive suppression can be a socially useful emotion regulation strategy in situations that call for it.

We are sorry, they don't care: Misinterpretation of facial embarrassment displays in intergroup contexts

Pum Kommattam

University of Amsterdam

Embarrassment is a negative emotional experience that arises if individuals have concerns about past behavior, or how the self is presented to others. It has the function of restoring relationships and saving one's social standing by signaling acknowledgement about one's norm transgression. Since disrupted interactions with in-group members are more important to individuals than disrupted interactions with out-group members due to shared social identities, we examined whether the interpretation of embarrassment displays varies as a function of group membership. Aggregated Study 1 (*N*=1158) suggests that embarrassment displays of in-group members are perceived as such, whereas embarrassment displays of out-group members are more likely to be perceived as disinterest. These findings point to a potential confusion of facial embarrassment displays in intergroup settings. Studies 2 (*N*=193) and 3 (*N*=260) include methodological improvements and either largely or fully replicated our findings. Based on this evidence we conclude that the social function of embarrassment varies as a function of group membership. Restoration of relationships after embarrassment displays are more likely to occur in intragroup contexts but not necessarily in intergroup contexts due to misinterpretations of out-group expressions.

The use of emotions to re-claim social identity

Miriam Koschate-Reis

University of Exeter

Membership in social groups can be contested or even denied by others. Hence group members need a means to publicly claim their desired social identity. Expressing group-normative emotions may be a particularly effective way for such identity performance as emotions are generally seen as more authentic than verbal or behavioural affirmations. In three experimental studies we provide first evidence that emotions are indeed used to re-claim a social identity in public. In Study 1 (N = 61), women whose femininity was threatened were more likely to show 'feminine' emotional expressions (e.g. giggling, hair tossing) when faced with a difficult math test. In Study 2 (N = 60), we found that men whose masculinity was subtly threatened were more likely to laugh about a sexist joke than non-threatened men, but only when told that most men found the joke funny. In Study 3 (N = 80), we found that Southern English citizens who were mistaken for Northerners were more likely to visibly express anger than non-threatened Southerners, but only when being told that anger expression rather than a stiff upper lip was typical of Southerners. In sum, results show the truly social nature of emotional expression as a means to communicate social belongingness. Implications for potentially unintended social consequences such as the judgement of own attitudes and those of others will be discussed.

The function of disgust as a social signal

Tom Kupfer

The University of Kent

The principle function of disgust is to motivate disease avoidance but sometimes people also report feeling disgust in response to moral violations. Much research has focused on identifying the types of moral violation that elicit disgust, as opposed to anger, and a popular conclusion has been that people experience disgust when they appraise literal contamination (e.g. by incest or cannibalism) or figurative, social contamination (e.g. by thieves or cheaters). The current research takes a different approach and suggests that people report and express disgust, not because of the particular characteristics of a moral violation, but because the signalling properties of disgust allow the expresser to convey socially useful information. Studies reported here show that observers are more likely to infer moral and disinterested motives when they see someone express disgust, compared to more self-interested motives when they see someone express anger. The decision to express disgust depends on the information that the expresser wants to convey: participants chose to express disgust if their aim was to communicate moral concern but anger if their aim was to show that their own interests have been harmed. By shifting the focus from the intrapersonal effects of disgust to its interpersonal effects, these findings offer a new perspective for understanding the social and moral functions of disgust.

Mind the level: Distinguishing group-based and individual emotional appraisal

Toon Kuppens[1], Vincent Yzerbyt[2], Antony S. R. Manstead[3], and Russell Spears[1]

[1]University of Groningen, [2]University of Louvain, [3]Cardiff University

The key distinction between individual emotions and group-based emotions is that they are emotional reactions to individual versus group concerns, respectively. Group-based appraisals are evaluations of group concerns, and combinations of group-based appraisals lead to different group-based emotions. However, direct empirical evidence for the role of group-based appraisals is scarce. This is partly because in most circumstances where group-based appraisals are relevant, individual appraisals are relevant too. That is, in many situations people are concerned both as individuals and as group members. Few studies have manipulated the level at which events concern people in order to illuminate the process of group-based appraisal. We aim to fill this gap and hypothesize that the importance of the group should increase the relevance of group-based relative to individual appraisal. In four studies we investigated the relation between the importance of the group and the intensity of group-based emotions. Two studies showed that people who are generally inclined to value groups they belong to (a construct similar to horizontal collectivism), report more intense group-based emotions, but not individual emotions. Two other studies manipulated both the importance of groups and the level of the appraisal process. When belonging to a group was made more important to participants through a social exclusion manipulation, they responded with stronger emotional reactions to group concerns, but not individual concerns. Together, these studies provide new insights into the difference between individual and group-based emotions, and suggest that a process of group-based appraisal is indeed at the heart of group-based emotions.

Having a good laugh: Schadenfreude as social-functional status regulator

Jens Lange

University of Cologne

Schadenfreude reestablishes self-worth after threatening social comparisons. Complementarily, we argue that schadenfreude regulates status hierarchies. Specifically, in dominance hierarchies, subordinates perceive low control to change status. As humans fundamentally desire status, undermining successful persons' dominance by publicly expressing schadenfreude might regulate the hierarchy. Dominance is attained by displaying hubristic pride (talent attribution) as opposed to authentic pride (effort attribution). Therefore, schadenfreude should be enhanced when misfortunes happen to initially hubristically proud persons. Four studies (N = 1,193) support these predictions. In Study 1, participants imagined receiving a worse grade than a competitor. In videos, the competitor either displayed hubristic pride, authentic pride, or a low-status emotion—embarrassment. Afterwards, the competitor suffered a misfortune and participants rated their schadenfreude. Schadenfreude was higher in the hubristic pride condition compared to both other conditions. In Study 2, participants read an ostensibly real article about a successful student who attributed success either to talent or effort. Again, participants indicated more schadenfreude when the student in the hubristic pride condition later suffered a misfortune. In Study 3, we showed that the effect is partly mediated via heightened malicious but not benign envy. Finally, in Study 4, participants judged a person who displayed hubristic pride from an outsider perspective. After this person suffered a misfortune, others either publicly or privately expressed schadenfreude, or were fidgeting. Only public schadenfreude expression undermined dominance perception. Collectively, these results suggest that schadenfreude regulates status and they show how emotions contribute to establishing and maintaining social hierarchies.

A social approach to assessing the effectiveness of emotion suppression

Eleanor Miles[1], Paschal Sheeran[2], and Thomas L. Webb[3]

[1]University of Sussex, [2]University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, [3]University of Sheffield

Suppressing emotions is generally considered to be a maladaptive emotion regulation strategy, which has been associated not only with decreased wellbeing but also with poorer social outcomes (Gross & John, 2003; English et al., 2012). However, some research suggests that suppressing the expression of emotions may actually be adaptive for personal wellbeing, whereas suppressing the experience of emotions is maladaptive (Bonanno et al., 2004; Webb, Miles, & Sheeran, 2012). We hypothesized that these strategies might also have differential effects on social outcomes. Across two studies, we investigated the effects of two types of suppression (expressive, experiential) on two types of outcome (personal, social). In a 7-day daily diary study (*N*=173), individuals who tended to suppress their emotions had less desire for social contact, spent less time socializing, and perceived that they had been less successful in maintaining good relationships with others; use of expressive suppression was primarily responsible for these negative effects. However, in a prospective study across 1 year (*N*=81), individuals who tended to suppress their emotions were rated as better emotion regulators by their friends, and use of experiential suppression was primarily responsible for this positive effect. Contrary to previous research, we found little evidence that the use of either type of emotional suppression was associated with lower wellbeing. These findings suggest that the social consequences of particular emotion regulation strategies may differ from their personal consequences, and that to fully understand successful emotion regulation we need to consider social as well as individual outcomes.

Interpersonal effects of emotion and emotional information

Brian Parkinson

University of Oxford, UK

There is increasing research interest in the question of how our emotions affect other people. However, for theoretical and practical reasons, most studies have focused on informational effects, treating verbal or nonverbal representations of emotion as the independent variable in controlled experiments. This paper suggests ways in which we might extend our focus by considering a wider variety of ways in which one person's emotions might impact on another person's emotions and behaviour. In particular, I suggest that some interpersonal effects are not mediated by representations of the emotion's categorical meaning as an instance of anger, fear, anxiety and so on. Instead, emotions may converge or diverge in interpersonal interaction by a process of mutual bottom-up adjustment. I illustrate these arguments using evidence from research into interpersonal effects of emotion-related gaze on attention and behaviour, before applying the conclusions to studies of emotion contagion and social appraisal. Finally, I consider how people regulate their emotions in order to exert informational and non-informational influence on other people, using examples of my recent research into interpersonal worry regulation.

Threatening joy: The social meaning of emotional expressions

Andrea Paulus

Universität des Saarlandes

Emotional expressions are powerful social signals—they convey information about the affective state of the expresser but also communicate a social message. This social message informs the interaction partner about the expressers' intentions and is therefore of great relevance for her/him. Accordingly, it should trigger fast and involuntary reactions. However, since emotional expressions are social signals, we hypothesize that the evaluation of the social message should be influenced by the social situation: Depending on social, contextual, and interpersonal factors, the same emotional expression can be evaluated as expressing different social messages. Accordingly, different reactions to the same expression should occur. A smile, for example, will be interpreted as signaling a wish for affiliation if the situation is friendly and accordingly trigger a positive response. However, if the situation is hostile the same expression might be seen as a sign of dominance and Schadenfreude and trigger a negative response. Our assumptions were supported by a number of studies examining approach and avoidance reactions and the emotional modulation of the startle response. They show that automatic reactions to emotional expressions can indeed be triggered by the social message of the expression. They furthermore provide evidence that a social feature such as group membership can moderate approach and avoidance reactions as well as the startle response to emotional expressions. These results show that automatic reactions to emotional expressions are adaptive and point to the importance of examining social factors when studying emotions.

Social immersion as a scaffold for the neuroscience of emotions: The case of embarrassment

Frieder M. Paulus, Laura Müller-Pinzler, and Sören Krach

Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, Social Neuroscience Lab | SNL, University of Lübeck, Germany

The burgeoning field of social neuroscience has seen rapid growth and noteworthy success in illuminating the neurobiological foundations of human social behavior over the past years. The investigation of the neural bases of 'interacting minds', however, has proved to be more difficult and could be seen to constitute the ‘dark matter’ or 'two-brain challenge' of the field. In fact, most studies have examined subjects in social isolation. While this debate is relevant for all kind of emotional experiences, it is essential for the neuroscience of emotions that develop in mere presence of other people. Despite the constraints of the laboratory setting, social neuroscience studies have investigated the neural foundations of emotions such as embarrassment or guilt. These studies used written or pictorial vignettes and asked participants to judge, simulate or re-enact a briefly described situation. It is rather unlikely that these paradigms have been able to fully capture the emotional experience and processes related to reciprocal interaction and the representation of oneself in relation to others. I will start this talk with a very brief overview of these challenges in the social neuroscience of emotions and then discuss the concept and results of a recent ‘socially immersive’ paradigm that we have developed to induce embarrassment in the fMRI. We thereby present a scaffold to induce strong engagement of subjects with their social environment and show that new paradigms are crucially needed in order to understand the neural foundations of emotions and social behavior.

Interpersonal emotion regulation: The need for socio-affective vs. cognitive support

Lisanne Pauw

University of Amsterdam

Most research on emotion regulation has focused on the processes taking place within the individual, thereby overlooking the social dynamics of emotional processes. In two studies, we focused on a common interpersonal method of emotion regulation: sharing one's emotions with others. Specifically, we examined what type of support (socio-affective or cognitive support) sharers want from their sharing partner. Furthermore, we investigated whether the desired support differs depending on the emotion that is shared. We asked participants in Study 1 to imagine themselves in a scenario depicting a situation that evoked different negative emotions (sadness, worry, regret, anger, or general negative affect). Next, they were asked to imagine sharing this situation with a friend, and were then presented with different hypothetical support reactions: socio-affective support, cognitive support, or a combination thereof. Results showed that across emotions, only receiving cognitive support was rated as least desirable compared to all other reactions. However, this effect seemed to be mainly driven by the anger and sadness scenarios. For regret and worry on the other hand, cognitive support was equally desirable as socio-affective support. In Study 2, we replicated these findings in a different sample (American rather than Dutch), and using different scenarios. These findings show that, when sharing emotions, people mainly want socio-affective support. Importantly, relative preferences depend on the specific emotion. Future research is warranted to investigate whether these conscious motives coincide with more unconscious motives, as both might affect the way in which emotions are communicated and the responses they elicit.

Interpersonal effects of anger as a function of expresser's power and the type of expression

Katerina Petkanopoulou, Rosa Rodríguez-Bailón, and Guillermo B. Willis

Universidad de Granada

Expressing anger has different interpersonal effects as it elicits emotional and behavioral responses not only in the target of it but also in observers. This study aimed to explore how observers react to powerful and powerless individuals' anger expression. The type of the anger expression (direct vs. indirect) was also manipulated. We asked participants to read a vignette and identify with the main character who was an observer of an anger eliciting event. Specifically, they were asked to imagine that they work in a company and that a colleague of them who is either a manager or an employee is angry at an employee/manager depending on the condition (power manipulation). In the direct anger condition, they were informed that they witnessed their colleague expressing his/her anger directly toward the employee/manager. In the indirect anger condition they read that their colleague shared his/her anger about what happened with them. Then we measured participants' experience of reciprocal anger, feelings of closeness as well as their willingness to show empathy and solidarity with the expresser. Results revealed that when anger was expressed by a powerless toward a powerful individual had a greater impact to observers. More interestingly, participants in the powerless condition experienced more reciprocal anger and reported greater empathy and closeness when the expresser confronted the powerful target (direct anger) than when he/she expressed the anger indirectly. Finally, participants' greater empathy in this condition made them more willing to show solidarity with the powerless expresser. We discuss the implications of these findings.

Ideological influences on the outcomes of emotion and its regulation in intractable conflicts

Ruthie Pliskin[1,2], Daniel Bar-Tal[1], Gal-Sheppes[1], and Eran Halperin[2]

[1]School of Psychological Science, Tel Aviv University, [2]School of Psychology, IDC Herzliya

Ideology is an important element of the socio-political context that may shape the emotional process at various points, influencing not only the emotions that people experience, but also the outcomes of these emotions and the manner in which they are regulated. Drawing on insights from the literature on ideology, we posited that emotions should differentially influence the support given by ideological leftists and rightists to different political policies, as well their action intentions. In a series of six studies (Pliskin et al., 2014), we demonstrated that in ideologically-relevant contexts, the clearer and more rigid guidelines afforded by rightist ideology make rightists (compared to leftists) less susceptible to the outcomes of emotions, with emotional change associated with changes in policy support mostly or only among leftists. In ideologically-irrelevant contexts, however, differences in susceptibility to certain emotions may actually lead these emotions to have a greater impact on rightists' (compared to leftists') behavior intentions, a hypothesis supported in a large experimental study comparing across fear-inducing collective contexts (Pliskin et al., 2015). Could these differences in the tendency to be influenced by emotion also indicate differences in emotion regulation tendencies? Initial experimental evidence indicates that ideology moderates the relationship between the type of stimuli and emotion regulation choice, as well as the relationship between a stimulus' subjective intensity and emotion regulation choice (Pliskin et al., in preparation). We discuss the significance of these findings and the importance of taking ideology into account in the study of emotions in intergroup conflicts.

The social influence of emotions in interpersonal and intergroup resource dilemmas

Magdalena Rychlowska, Job van der Schalk, and Antony S.R. Manstead

Cardiff University

This research investigates whether and how emotions promote fairness and trust in interpersonal and intergroup social dilemmas. In a first set of studies participants were exposed to an exemplar who made a fair or an unfair division in a resource dilemma and expressed pride or regret about this decision. Participants then made their own resource allocation decisions. These allocations were significantly affected by the exemplars' emotional expressions, such that competitive emotions (regret about fair decisions, pride about unfair decisions) decreased the likelihood of participants making fair decisions. Conversely, exemplars' cooperative emotions (regret about unfair decisions, pride after fair decisions) increased fairness. The second set of studies extends these findings by investigating the effects of cooperative and competitive emotions in an intergroup setting. Groups of participants were led to believe that they were playing a two-round trust game with another group. In the first round, each group was exposed to an outgroup member who was fair (reciprocating trust) or unfair (not reciprocating trust) and expressed cooperative or competitive emotions about this decision. In the second round, each participant played with another outgroup member. In line with the interpersonal studies, participants' trust was affected by exemplars' emotional expressions, such that regret following unfair decisions increased the amount of resources shared with the outgroup. Together, the studies reveal that others' emotions shape individual as well as intergroup trust and fairness.

When lay beliefs about in-group and out-group reactions to emotions are at odds: Which one guides expression?

Julia Sasse, Russell Spears, and Ernestine H. Gordijn

University of Groningen

Intergroup conflicts evoke a multitude of – often negative – emotions that may play a decisive part in conflicts. The expression of some emotions provokes retaliation while expressing others paves the way for a ceasefire (de Vos, Gordijn, van Zomeren, & Postmes, 2014, Halperin, Russell, Dweck, & Gross, 2011). We investigate whether lay beliefs about reactions to emotion expression, from both antagonistic out-group and in-group, exist and –if yes - whether they influence emotion expression. Study 1 found evidence for lay beliefs about reactions: Anger is seen as approved by the in-group but at the same time seen as most likely to provoke counteraction from the out-group. Hope on the other hand showed lowest perceived likelihood for counteraction but also lowest perceived in-group approval. In Study 2, we investigated how this dissonance between lay beliefs of in-group and out-group reactions to emotion expression affects actual expression. To make expected reactions from either in-group or out-group more relevant we manipulated personal accountability to both groups and predicted that accountability to the out-group would lead to more expression of hope and less of anger, while we expected the reverse for accountability to the in-group as a form of norm compliance. To our surprise the expression of both, anger and hope, were unaffected by accountability, suggesting that lay beliefs about consequences of emotion expression do not influence how emotions are expressed. Overall however, anger expression was high and hope expression low, which may mean that expected in-group reactions are overall more important.

How self-transcendent emotions tie individuals to communities: The case of being moved

Ines Schindler

Universität Koblenz-Landau

Research interest in how people come to transcend their own interests to benefit others has increased in recent years (e.g., research on self-transcendence values or the "quiet ego"). Clearly, emotions, and most notably sympathy and compassion, play an important role in creating a concern for the welfare of others. However, the range of emotions relevant to fostering prosocialty and altruism has not been fully explored. Within the emerging area of self-transcendent emotions, researchers have identified emotions in addition to compassion that can help push one's self-concerns to the background, including moral elevation, adoration, awe, gratitude, or inspiration. This presentation will provide a theoretical overview of the nature and functions of self-transcendent emotions. Subsequently, I will discuss the emotion of being moved as one understudied but prototypical self-transcendent emotion and present data of a qualitative study on moving experiences. I will argue that being moved (or being touched) is linked to awareness of the existential limitations of human agency (including death, helplessness, and suffering). This emotion is elicited when we are reminded that living a life that matters means to contribute to the communal good. The empirical data show that being moved typically is experienced as a mixed emotion and is linked to feelings of meaning and insight rather than immediate and concrete action tendencies. I will conclude that being moved is an emotion that both signals commitment to and affective valuation of prosocial values and serves to maintain and increase commitment to such values and to one's group or community.

Empathy vs. pseudo-empathy: A new model of empathic processes and first empirical contributions

Victoria Schönefeld and Marcus Roth

University of Duisburg-Essen

The ability of empathy is responsible for eliciting a wide range of emotions in a social context. Empathy enables us to share joy as well as pain, but also can cause feelings of sadness or helplessness if one is overwhelmed by empathic feelings that arise in interpersonal interactions. With the Empathy Process Model (EPM), Altmann & Roth (2012) provide an integration of both essential and diverse facets of empathy. However, the EPM does not cover the process we refer to as pseudo-empathy – leading to a verbal reaction that superficially "looks" like empathy and is meant to help your counterpart, but actually serves as emotional relief for yourself, like "Cheer up!". It is assumed that feelings of helplessness, emotional overload or the lack of action alternatives are responsible for pseudo-empathic reactions. To provide a theoretical framework for this phenomenon, we would like to introduce the Empathy/Pseudo-Empathy Process Model (EPPM; Schönefeld, in preparation) as an extension of the model developed by Altmann & Roth. To test the assumptions of the EPPM, empirical results of both experimental and explorative studies will be presented. All samples were recruited in the health-care sector and consist of nursing students and employees of mobile nursing service providers in Germany. This occupation group was chosen for the high density of empathy-demanding situations in the everyday working life of nursing staff. Integrating both theoretical and empirical findings, the EPPM will be introduced as a social approach to emotions and its contribution for theory and practical application will be discussed.

Kama Muta: A social relations model of being moved

Thomas W. Schubert[1], Beate Seibt[1], Janis H. Zickfeld[1], and Alan Page Fiske[2]

[1]University of Oslo, [2]University of California, Los Angeles

The feeling of being moved to tears is widely known but only tacitly defined, and has received little systematic theoretical or empirical attention. To integrate this literature and explain this phenomenon, we postulate a new theoretical construct, the emotion kama muta, which we conceptualize as a culturally implemented social-relational emotion responding to and regulating behavior in communal sharing relations. Based on social-psychological and anthropological work, we hypothesize that kama muta is elicited by experiencing or observing sudden intensification of communal sharing relationships. When sufficiently intense, kama muta is accompanied by weeping, piloerection and feelings of warmth in the center of the chest. We postulate that across cultures, similar emotion concepts developed to describe kama muta and related experiences – in U.S. culture and English the emotion concepts of being touched and being moved. In Study 1 we investigated the relation of being touched or moved to communal sharing by sampling everyday relationships. In Studies 2 and 3, participants watched video clips that elicited being moved, and reported feelings, judgments, and symptoms after each clip. Across U.S. and Norwegian samples we found that indicators of increased communal sharing predicted being touched or moved (Study 1-3). Weeping, goose bumps and warmth in the chest were confirmed as physiological symptoms of strong feelings of being moved. Our theory and evidence provide a new framework to understand feelings typically labeled as being moved or touched. This framework helps understand the many manifestations and functions of kama muta in various cultures and contexts.

Partner-epected affect: How you feel now is predicted by how your partner thought you felt before

Laura Sels, Eva Ceulemans, and Peter Kuppens

KU Leuven

Romantic partners can modulate each other's emotions in numerous ways. Here, building on findings from basic psychological research, we propose that how someone thinks their partner feels over time may influence that partner's actual feelings, called partner-expected affect. We evaluated this hypothesis on the basis of an experience sampling study in which 100 romantic partners (50 couples) reported on the level of valence and arousal of their own feelings and of the perceived feelings of their partners ten times a day throughout a week. In line with expectations, we found that how individuals were feeling at a particular moment was predicted by how their partner thought they felt at the previous moment (on top of how they felt at the previous moment and how their partner felt at the previous moment), at least when they had interacted with each other in between. These findings identify a novel subtle way in which people shape each other's feelings and pave the way to further examine the nature and boundary conditions of such partner-expected affect.

To withhold or to disclose? How communicating unpleasant information can elicit either self-defensive or self-improvement motivations

Torp Løkkeberg[1], Nicolay Gausel[2], Roger Giner-Sorolla[1], and Colin Wayne Leach[3]

[1]University of Kent, [2]Østfold University College, [3]University of Connecticut

Every now and then, people have to communicate unpleasant information to others. People can deal with this either by toning down or withholding their information, or by fully disclosing the information they have. If this decision is judged to put the social relationship at risk, the discloser can engage in 'other-defense' (i.e., avoiding others and acting as if they don't know about it, or even try to cover it up) in order to avoid other's condemnation, or they can engage in 'pro-social repair' (i.e., relationship-repair and acknowledgment of having hurt the other) in order to mend the damage to their social bond. In two experimental studies (Experiment 1, *N*= 217; Experiment 2, *N*= 174) we found support that the motivation to engage in 'other-defense' was mostly explained by their concern for their social-image and their feeling of rejection. In contrast, the motivation to engage in 'pro-social repair' was mostly a concern for their self-image and it was explained by their felt shame. We discuss theoretical implications for the literature on shame and the literature on communication.

The social functions of envy at four levels of analysis

Niels Van de Ven

Tilburg University

Based on the work of Keltner & Haidt (1999) I analyze the social functions of envy at four levels of analysis. For this, I will discuss empirical findings (my own and those of others) on envy. First, I discuss the social function of envy at an individual level: what good is envy to the individual? Empirical work is presented that shows that (benign) envy motivates people to improve and that it serves as a signal to the individual. Second, the effects of envy at the dyadic level are discussed, focusing on how people respond to being envied. I discuss work showing that people prefer to avoid being envied, with positive consequences for the individual as well. The third level of analysis is the group level, where I discuss how envy is perceived between groups (linking it to the stereotype content model) and whether something like group-based envy is likely to exist. I also discuss work that shows that envy increases gossiping, which could foster the envious person's bond with other people. Finally, the fourth level of analysis links envy to the cultural level, and how the experience of envy affects society or how society affects the experience of envy, where I make the link with research on inequality. The main advantage of looking at envy at all these levels of analysis is to first get a clear answer on what envy is, and why it likely exists. A second reason is that analyzing envy across these four levels helps to identify where there are still gaps in our empirical knowledge, that we can hopefully work on in the future.

Self-perceived moral integrity and attention to facial cues of emotion

Lotte Van Dillen

Leiden University

Research suggests that people constantly scan their environment for social cues of rejection and acceptance. In addition, people derive their sense of belongingness from perceptions of moral integrity. The present research therefore examined whether social monitoring varies as a function of one's self-perceived moral integrity, how this contextual variation might be affected by individual differences in social anxiety, and how this relates to actual behavior. With an autobiographical writing task, participants were instructed to retrieve a memory of a moral or an immoral act from the past. Next, they were presented with angry, happy, and neutral faces during a passive viewing task, while participants' eye gaze and pupil dilation were recorded using eye tracking (Study 1) or their brain repsonses using EEG (study 2) as measures of attention to social emotional cues. After the emotion perception task, people were given the opportunity to donate some of their money to a charity cause. Results showed that participants who had retrieved a moral memory fixated less at emotional features of the target expressions, most notably on the eyes, relative to participants who had retrieved an immoral memory, which was further supported by the EEG signal, which signified reduced attention. Similarly, participants pupils were more contracted when viewing the target faces when they had just retrieved a moral memory compared to an immoral memory. Finally, we observed that people who engaged in more avoidant processing styles, were less likely to engage in reparatory behavior (donating money). The results confirm the importance of the social (moral) context when considering emotion perception.

The persuasive power of emotions: Effects of emotional expressions on attitude formation and change

Gerben A. Van Kleef

University of Amsterdam

Despite a long-standing interest in the intrapersonal role of affect in persuasion, the interpersonal effects of emotions on persuasion remain poorly understood – how do one person's emotional expressions shape others' attitudes? Drawing on emotions as social information (EASI) theory (Van Kleef, 2009), we hypothesized that people use the emotional expressions of others to inform their own attitudes, but only when they are sufficiently motivated and able to process those expressions. Five experiments support these ideas. Participants reported more positive attitudes about various topics after seeing a source's sad (rather than happy) expressions when topics were negatively framed (e.g., abandoning bobsleighing from the Olympics). Conversely, participants reported more positive attitudes after seeing happy (rather than sad) expressions when topics were positively framed (e.g., introducing kite surfing at the Olympics). This suggests that participants used the source's emotional expressions as information when forming their own attitudes. Supporting this interpretation, effects were mitigated when participants' information processing was undermined by cognitive load or was chronically low. Moreover, a source's anger expressions engendered negative attitude change when directed at the attitude object, and positive change when directed at the recipient's attitude. Effects occurred regardless of whether emotional expressions were manipulated through written words, pictures of facial expressions, film clips containing both facial and vocal emotional expressions, or emoticons. The findings support EASI theory and indicate that emotional expressions are a powerful source of social influence.

Suspicious morals: Distrust promotes diverging moral standards for the self versus others

Alexa Weiss

University of Cologne

The experiences of trust and distrust are inherently social. Distrust is elicited by cues to malevolent intentions, and can have highly detrimental consequences for interpersonal relationships. A potential mechanism is the effect of distrust on moral cognition. In three studies, we examined how distrust, compared to trust, affects the flexibility of moral judgments. Specifically, we expected that distrust would increase moral hypocrisy—the endorsement of different moral standards for the self compared to others. Study 1 established a positive relationship between the dispositional tendency to experience distrust and moral flexibility. In Studies 2 and 3, participants completed an imagination task and an episodic recall task, respectively, to induce experiences of social trust or distrust. Subsequently, they rated the acceptability of various mundane moral transgressions. While in Study 2, these transgressions were described within the same situational context and involved the same social target as the trust versus distrust manipulation, the transgressions were unrelated to this manipulation in Study 3. In both studies, distrusting participants judged moral transgressions less severely for themselves than for other persons, whereas trusting participants did not show this hypocrisy effect. These findings suggest that those who distrust others are themselves rather flexible in their moral judgments, applying double moral standards. This may harm social interactions and interpersonal relationships, potentially leading towards both enhanced selfish behavior and vengeful tendencies, promoting further mutual distrust.

Psychological and material gains as determinants of intergroup schadenfreude and victorious joy

Paton P. C. Yam and Brian Parkinson

University of Oxford, UK

Previous research has identified a number of antecedents for schadenfreude, which together indirectly support the notion that the gain from a misfortune is most likely psychological rather than material (van Dijk & Ouwerkerk, 2014; Leach et al., 2015). The current research aimed to test this assumption empirically, using a new paradigm wherein participants played a fabricated intercollege competition. We hypothesised that participants would experience more schadenfreude toward the college (i.e. second-party outgroup) which previously defeated the ingroup when it lost to another college (i.e. third-party outgroup) because this event could improve ingroup's status (i.e. psychological again). Furthermore, participants would experience more victorious joy (i.e. happiness about an outgroup's victory) when the third-party outgroup's victory resulted in extrinsic rewards (i.e. material gain). Study 1 provided initial support for these hypotheses. After controlling the feeling of victorious joy, participants experienced more schadenfreude when the motive to improve ingroup's status was high. Study 2 (which is currently underway) will replicate these findings with a similar paradigm that is more involving and emotionally engaging and use new measures to tease apart intergroup schadenfreude from joy about gaining extrinsic reward. In sum, these two studies show that the online-experience of intergroup schadenfreude can be manipulated experimentally in the laboratory and that it may be separable from other kinds of pleasure (e.g. victorious joy) in an intergroup competition. This finding is important to the development of a social-functional account of intergroup schadenfreude.

The emergence of group-based emotions: The key role of social interaction

Vincent Yzerbyt[1] and Toon Kuppens[2]

[1]University of Louvain, [2]University of Groningen

Group-based emotions are emotional reactions that emerge when people approach events while endorsing a specific social identity. Whereas researchers have traditionally triggered group-based emotions by directly manipulating either people's appraisals or their social identity, we suggest that social interactions constitute the more natural settings shaping people's emotional reactions as group members. In three experiments, we investigated whether indeed discussing a group-relevant event with other group members shapes people's appraisals, emotional reactions, and behavior. Specifically, we confronted participants with an unfair group-relevant event, while manipulating whether they discussed the event itself or an irrelevant topic. In Experiments 1 and 2 group members who discussed the unfair group-relevant event (versus an irrelevant topic) reported emotions that were more negative. Interestingly, these emotions were comparable to those observed when social identity had been made salient explicitly beforehand. The relevant discussion also generated group-based appraisals of injustice (Experiment 1) and group-based identity (Experiment 2). In Experiment 3, participants in the relevant group discussion expressed more intense indignation and, in turn, engaged more in collective action. Importantly, using a thought-listing procedure, Experiment 3 confirmed that the intergroup context was more psychologically salient in the relevant than in the irrelevant discussion. Also, participants' indignation in the relevant discussion was related to the proportion of thoughts that were unfavorable about the unfair event and referred to group concerns. This research sheds new light on the consequences of within-group sharing of emotions for the unfolding of intergroup relations but also on the nature of group-based emotions.

Heartwarming closeness: Being moved induces communal sharing and increases feelings of warmth

Janis H. Zickfeld[1], Thomas W. Schubert[1], Beate Seibt[1], and Alan Page Fiske[2]

[1]University of Oslo, [2]University of California, Los Angeles

The feeling of being moved has only received marginal attention by emotion research during the last decades. Recently, an emotion framework termed kama muta has been introduced giving a first overview and suggesting that being moved is a positive cultural-dependent feeling typically accompanied by tears, piloerection, and a warm feeling in the chest (Seibt, Schubert, Zickfeld & Fiske, 2015). The present article tries to give a first insight into the effects of kama muta. Based on relational models theory (Fiske, 2004) it is postulated that being moved induces closeness and feelings of warmth. Two different studies including 702 participants investigated the effects of being moved with regard to a known or unknown observed target. Over both studies communal feelings toward the target were predicted by being moved, and in Study 2 also by the type of story presented (moving vs. neutral vs. amusing). In both studies, subjective feelings of warmth in the chest were higher after feeling moved. The interplay among being moved, warmth in the chest and communal feelings was mediated by both warmth and communal feelings in Study 2. Implications of the present findings and possible future research directions are discussed.

Participants

Participants

Notes

Contact

University of Cologne
Social Cognition Center Cologne
Richard-Strauss-Str. 2
50931 KÖLN
GERMANY

Fon: +49 221 470 4720
Fax: +49 221 470 1216
E-mail: socc-co@uni-koeln.de
Web: http://soccco.uni-koeln.de/home.html