



All that Heaven Allows: *Emotion Manifest*

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A passion is an original existence, or, if you will, modification of existence, and contains not any representative quality, which renders it a copy of any other existence or modification. When I am angry, I am actually possest with the passion, and in that emotion have no more reference to any other object, than when I am thirsty, or sick, or more than five foot high. (Treatise 2.3.3 ¶5, p.266 in new Oxford.)



If we fancy some strong emotion, and then try to abstract from our consciousness of it all the feelings of its bodily symptoms, we find nothing left behind... What kind of emotion of fear would be left if the feeling neither of quickened heart-beats nor of shallow breathing, neither of trembling limps nor of weakened limbs, neither of goose-flesh nor of visceral stirrings, were present, it is quite impossible for me to think.
(William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, Ch. XXV, p.1067, Harvard University Press).

What is a *feeling* theory of the emotions?

Hume's theory treats the passions as *simple* feelings: this need not involve rejecting their intentionality, but for Hume secures their role as fundamental psychological *explanantes*.

James denies that anything psychological occupies such a role – there is no such simple feeling in the feeling of fear; emotions are to be understood through their physiological causes.



James is surely right that there is no such simple feeling as Hume supposes for any of the passions.

Consider a dramatic example that Niko Frijda would tell of his early life



But James's eliminativism about the psychological category of emotion or affect makes little sense of our inner lives.

How then should we understand the relation between emotion and the feeling of an emotion – for example, between fear and the feeling of fear?



How Do We Relate?

- a.) Emotion
- b.) Feeling an emotion
- c.) Conscious emotion
- d.) Awareness of an emotion as the emotion it is



I suggest:

- a.) the distinction between events and processes on the one hand, and states on the other does work for us in the ontology of mind;
- b.) most emotions are states; feelings of emotion are episodes;
- c.) the feeling of emotion is complex not marked by the presence of a simple quality;
- d.) experiences which are feelings of emotion are expressive of the emotional state.

The contrast between a *happening, occurrence, or event* on the one hand and a *state, property, or way of being* on the other is central to the ways we think about the mind in ordinary life.

thinking is an activity or happening;
perceiving – to see, to feel, to hear – are events

to know, to remember, to believe these are but states or properties of individuals

our *mental* categories reflect the importance of these *metaphysical* differences for example: we can think of memory as the preservation of our cognitive achievements, whether these are episodic, as in experience and sense perception, or stative, as in knowledge

this categorical difference is present in how we think of *consciousness*

- (1) A *mental* episode or process is thereby conscious – for such a phenomenon to occur is for it to occupy some element of the stream of consciousness;
- (2) States may be conscious or unconscious – the condition of being conscious is never to occupy the stream of consciousness.

Most of our emotion terms are stative

Sometimes we appeal to emotion states as explanations of,
and excuses of behaviour

Talk of feelings is talk of the episodic aspect of the mind

So our question is a subset of the question how the episodic
and stative aspects fit together

Hume avoids this question by treating all as if the former



If emotions are not simple feelings or experiences, then they cannot occupy the stream of consciousness.

They may be states which we could classify as conscious or unconscious.
But what connection would there then be between emotion and feeling?



What would force us to think of our passions or emotions as outside of the stream of consciousness?

We have an ambivalent attitude towards our passions – our emotions and desires. To some extent we identify with them as part of ourselves and our identity as agents; to some extent we treat them as outside of our identity, even when we hold them responsible for our actions or aspects of our action.

Expression of Emotion & Behaviour

Our actions are expressive of our emotions and some are expressions of emotion –

- (i) the manifestation of emotion is not an agent's direct goal in any action which is expressive of emotion;
- (ii) With actions which are expressions of emotion, a rational goal may be hard to find for the action
- (iii) But the expressive aspects of action are intentionally related to the emotional state

Frijda's case:

- a.) Fear was present but *F* was not aware of fear;
- b.) In coming to be aware of fear, *F* did not fixate on any quality;
- c.) We recognise *F*'s situation as one of fear through being told elements of a complex external and bodily situation – not through highlighting a distinctive feeling or quality.



An agent is aware of emotion through self-awareness
of phenomenal consciousness when:

1. The agent recognises the pattern of their experience as expressing or manifesting the presence of the emotion;
2. The agent applies a conception of how the emotion can relate an agent to the situation in the world experienced, as can be applied in relation to the actions of other agents;
3. The symptoms of an emotion need not be definitional of it, but relate to the emotion expressively.