

Book Reviews

K.T. Strongman (Ed.) (1991).
International review of studies on emotion: Vol. 1
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Pp 364. ISBN 0-471-92831-3

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During the past fifteen or so years, the so-called cognitive revolution in psychology has given way to something of an affective revolution. Indeed, the topic of emotion is currently so "hot", it is extremely difficult for the interested (but busy) reader to keep up with theoretical and empirical developments in the field. However, a basic understanding of such developments is becoming increasingly important within an expanding number of areas within psychology (e.g., neuroscience, animal behaviour, developmental, social and cognitive psychology). Clearly, there is an urgent need for a stimulating, state-of-the-art series of volumes, with contributions drawn from amongst the most distinguished emotion scholars in the world, to encapsulate current thinking and research about emotion, in a provocative, yet easily digestible form.

The first volume of the International Review of Studies on Emotion (to appear biannually) clearly fills that need, and more. It comprises eleven chapters, covering a broad range of topical areas, all of which have an innovative twist, either to their subject matter and/or their presentation. For example, the vexed question of the status of infant emotion (do babies have feelings?) is presented as a spirited debate between two opposing points of view, with Malatesta-Magai and Izard arguing for the affirmative, and Camras arguing, equally forcibly, for the negative. The most refreshing aspect to this debate is that both sides have a right of reply after first stating their cases; a rarity in the standard literature.

Other innovative and intriguing topics include a fascinating look at emotional creativity (Averill & Thomas-Knowles), a timely discussion of gender in the psychology

of emotion (Shields), and an occasionally chilling description of the links between negative emotion (do you "let it out" or "hold it in"?) and health (Robinson & Pennebaker).

A number of chapters cover more familiar territory (to students, at least), e.g., Plutchik's well-known evolutionary theory of emotion (remember the colour wheel analogy?), and Buck's developmental-interactionist view of the relationship between motivation, emotion and cognition. Familiarity notwithstanding, Buck's chapter in particular is by far the most lucid, concise and integrative account of his theoretical position that I have yet encountered. And speaking of lucidity, Panksepp's extremely provocative chapter on affective neuroscience should be required reading for all social constructionist theorists of emotion, just as Kemper's superb historical introduction to the sociology of emotions should be required reading for all who hold that emotions are a function of identifiable brain circuitry. Perhaps a topic for lively debate in some future volume?

Cognitive theorists of emotion are also well-served with Ellsworth's elegant defence of appraisal analysis, while methodological issues are treated imaginatively, first in Malatesta-Magai and Culver's chapter on the use of diaries in investigating emotions and moods, and second, in Frijda et al's typically thorough-going analysis of the differences between emotions, emotion episodes, sentiments, passions and moods (with duration being one of the major criterial features).

Perhaps the only quibble I have about this volume is that the subject index is rather broad, making it occasionally difficult to locate specific themes and topics. Overall, however, this volume has two qualities that make it a unique and vitally important contribution to the rapidly growing stockpile of emotion literature. The first quality is sheer readability. Every chapter, no matter how complex the material, is coherently and, in many cases, beautifully written. The end result is that this volume is immediately accessible to interested students and scholars from any discipline.

The second outstanding quality derives from the editor's, creative approach, in particular, with regard to the breadth of material selected for the volume, but also with respect to his

invitation to the authors to extend their theories, to speculate, to idly wonder, to let themselves go a little. As a consequence, each chapter is rich with possibilities: with points to argue, ideas to share, hypotheses to investigate. And, whether or not it was the editor's overall intention, I believe the end result of amalgamating such a diverse and exciting range of theories and opinions about emotion has been to draw the field together. Having finished this book, one begins to make conceptual connections, to weave together previously unrelated theoretical strands, and to catch glimpses of new, integrative analyses and models of emotion.

In conclusion, this book represents a fine co-operative effort between a group of creative and scholarly theorists and researchers, and an editor obviously completely "at home" in the field of emotion. One can only look forward to the next volume in the series with anticipatory delight!

Neil Burdess (1991).

Handbook of student skills for the social sciences and the humanities.

New York: Prentice Hall, pp. 183.

ISBN 0-7248-1086-2 (paperback)

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This handbook is designed for social science and humanities students, particularly those in their first year at university. The content is not very different from the many other similar volumes stocked by university book shops and includes sections on study skills, library skills and writing skills. There is also an appendix of commonly misspelled words.

The study skills chapter uses a before-during-after chronological sequence when discussing lectures, tutorials, seminars and examinations. This is a logical sequence which I have not seen used before and it works well in this section. A rather similar format has been used in the writing skills chapter which covers essay writing and planning. Chapter 2 provides

detailed coverage of how to locate books, journal articles and reports in a university library.

At first sight the book appears to contain little coverage of students' motivational problems, stress and coping skills. However, a number of these issues are addressed in appropriate sections through the book. For example, anxiety about speaking in public is included in the study skills section on tutorials and the stress reducing techniques given here are reintroduced in the section on examinations.

The guidelines for presenting seminars are unlikely to be of use to first year psychology students, at least those at Canterbury University, but they provide useful pointers both for students in later years of study and for those who teach them. The library skills chapter presents some material — searching for journal articles and using abstracts — that is unlikely to be necessary for first year students of psychology. It also concerns me that the zealous first year student who reads this handbook might explore these sources at the expense of their study of any set readings.

In general, this slim volume would be a useful guide for any first year psychology student. It gives excellent information about important academic skills, such as how to get the most out of lectures, how to cope well with examinations and how to write good essays. In addition to being clearly presented it is well written and often entertaining. Neil Burdess' experience as a teacher is clear, as is his awareness of the difficulties faced by those who are new to tertiary education. At around \$20 this book is affordable, which is a particularly important consideration for students these days. My main reservation is that many students who really need the help that books like this offer will neither take the time to read it nor put into practice the advice that it offers.

N. Stein, B. Leventhal and T. Trabasso (Eds.) (1990).

Psychological and biological approaches to emotion

Hillsdale, New Jersey: Erlbaum,
pp 454 (paperback). ISBN 0-8058-0150-2.

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In September 1986, a conference devoted to the psychological and biological bases of behaviour was convened at the University of Chicago. The overall purpose of the Conference was somewhat analogous to the quest among physicists for a grand, unified theory: to attempt an integration of biological theories of emotion with psychological approaches, including a consideration of coping, appraisal, developmental and psychopathological perspectives. The fruits of the Conference are embodied in this collection of 17 papers, each concerned with some theoretical and/or empirical aspect of any one (or more) of the major themes.

The papers have been divided into five broad sections: cognition and emotion, biological perspectives, developmental perspectives, coping and psychopathology, and system approaches to emotion. However, there is a good deal of overlap between the sections, with most contributors making an effort to consider the merits of both the psychological and biological approaches. Even Averill, in his theoretical paper on emotional behaviour, concedes there is a place for the biological level of explanation (though he is quick to note that biological systems have become "progressively relaxed" during the course of human evolution). Coming from the other perspective, Tucker, Vannatta and Rothlind offer an intriguing "bottom-up" view of the neuropsychology of emotion-cognition interactions; their theory fits particularly well with Isen's observations about the differential effects of positive and negative affect on cognitive processes (also included in this volume).

To someone relatively unfamiliar with neuroscience, the material in the biological section may initially look a little intimidating, but on the whole, the contributors have done

a good job in making a complex and difficult area both interesting and accessible. For example, Heilman and Bowers provide an excellent review of the differential emotional changes that occur in patients with damage to the right or left hemispheres of the brain, while Heller (in a paper rich with clinical implications), discusses the neuropsychology of emotion, proposing that different patterns of brain activity may underlie syndromes such as unipolar and bipolar depression.

Other papers are more complex and less immediately accessible, for example, Brown's chapter on the biological significance of affectivity (very challenging!), and Huttenlocher and Smiley's paper on the emergence of emotion categories in childhood, with emotion categories representing one type of person category. This chapter in particular might have been improved with a little more explication of the relevant concepts (and perhaps an easier writing style). On the other hand, several chapters read like old favourites, with Lazarus and Mandler restating their respective positions on cognition and emotion, Folkman and Lazarus explicating their theory of coping and emotion, and Abramson, Alloy and Metalsky still slightly reformulating their reformulated hopelessness theory of depression. All worthy chapters, but perhaps not to the extent of being "required reading" for anyone reasonably familiar and up-to-date with the emotion literature.

Nevertheless, there is one group of readers for whom this volume may be particularly timely and relevant: developmental psychologists with an interest in emotion and/or cognition, and/or biology. Indeed, although the editors' stated aim was to bring together and integrate psychological and biological approaches to emotion, the book's greatest strength lies in its overarching developmental perspective. For example, in the cognition and emotion section, Stein and Levine extend and elaborate Mandler's perspective with respect to emotion in children, and Isen contributes an intriguing discussion about the potentially beneficial effects of positive affect for the development of children's cognitive flexibility. Similarly, the biological section makes developmental contributions, for example, Kolb and Taylor offer a fascinating account of the role of the neocortex in emotional behaviour, including a consideration of developmental

changes in children's emotional expressions; so too, the coping section, in which Cicchetti and White look at the role of emotions in the formation, course and consequences of developmental psychopathology. Their theoretical perspective is richly illustrated with data from infants and children with Down syndrome, maltreated children, and the children of manic depressive parents. In the developmental section proper, Bloom contributes an important chapter on affect and speech development, followed by an interesting perspective on the ontogenesis of anger expressions in infancy (Stenberg and Campos). Finally, Radke-Yarrow and Kochanska's paper on anger in young children (reactions to parental anger, parental reactions to children's anger, children growing up with highly angry

mothers) is extremely well-written and enlightening; this chapter is definitely one of the highlights of the book.

It is my impression that with some judicious editing, restructuring and chapter reorganization, the strong developmental theme which already weaves its way through so many of the chapters would have merged even more clearly as the focal (and integrating) point of the volume. However, it is probably unfair to seek this level of integration from a diverse collection of Conference papers. So, focus aside, if your interest in emotion is developmental and/or biological then you should find *Psychological and biological approaches to emotion* makes a solid contribution to the literature in this increasingly popular area of emotion research.