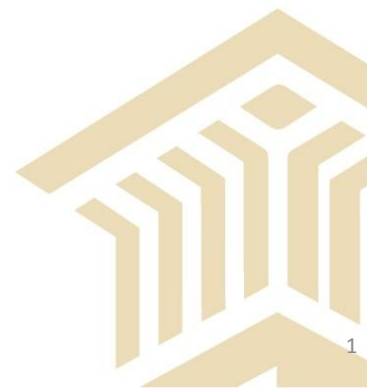


Different theoretical contributions



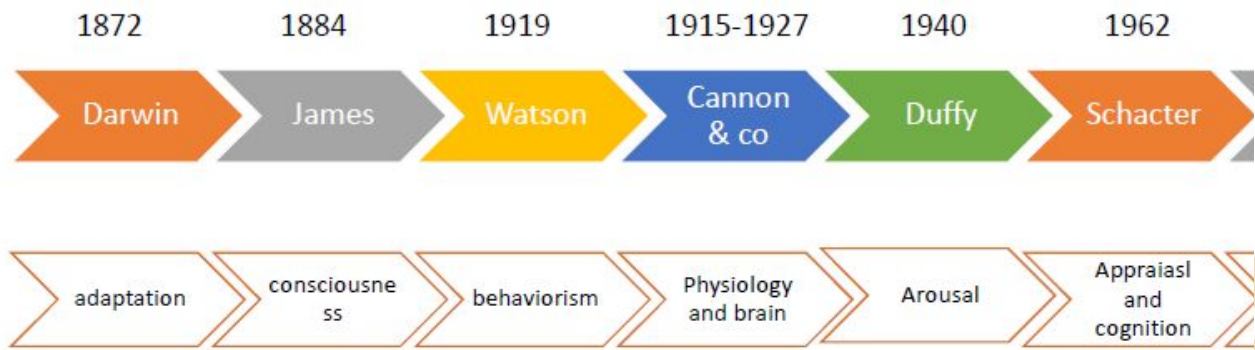
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History of psychology of emotions

- ◆ Contemporary study of emotions (from the end of 19th Century)
- ◆ Understanding the history of the study of emotions
- ◆ Main contributors and interests: how they changed over time
- ◆ Take home messages: what is still «valid» nowadays



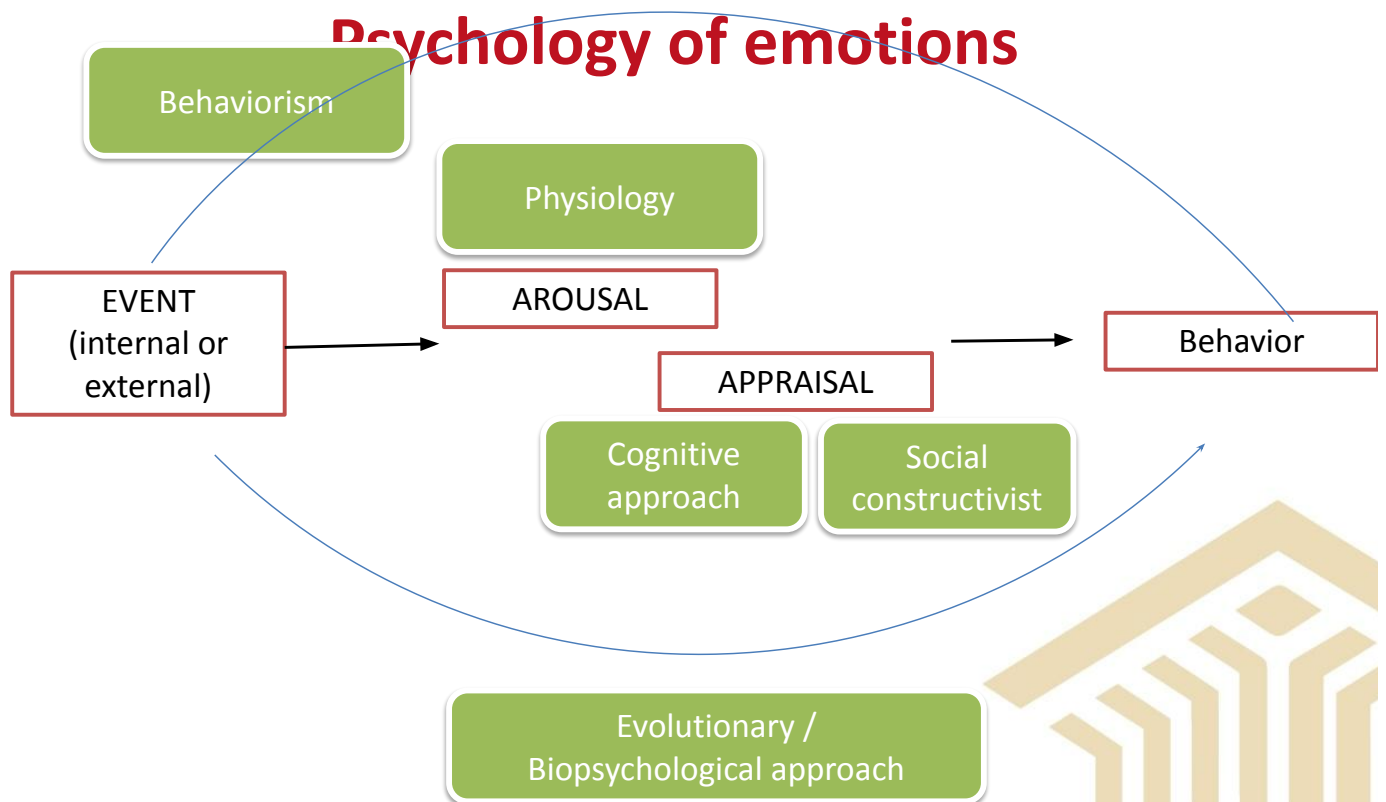
Historic timeline of research in Psychology of emotions



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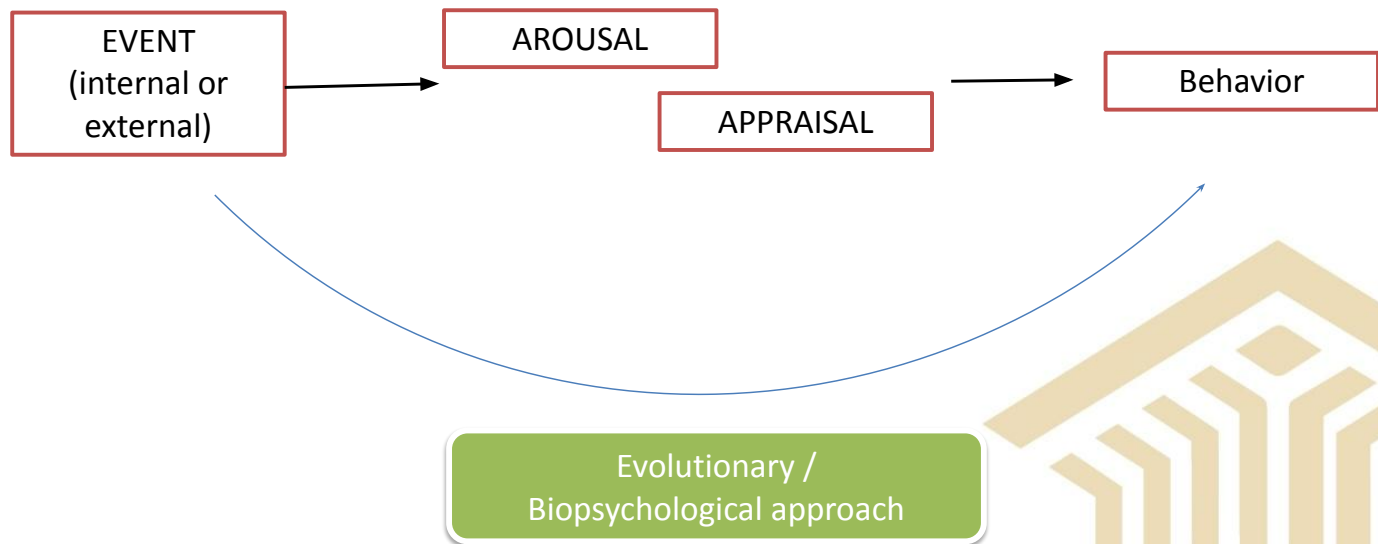
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«Emotional timeline» of research in Psychology of emotions



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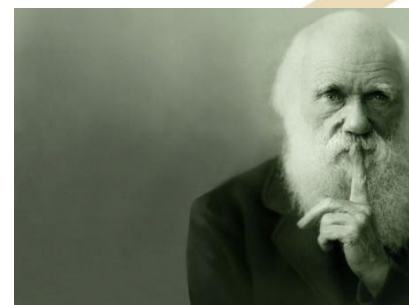
«Emotional timeline» of research in Psychology of emotions



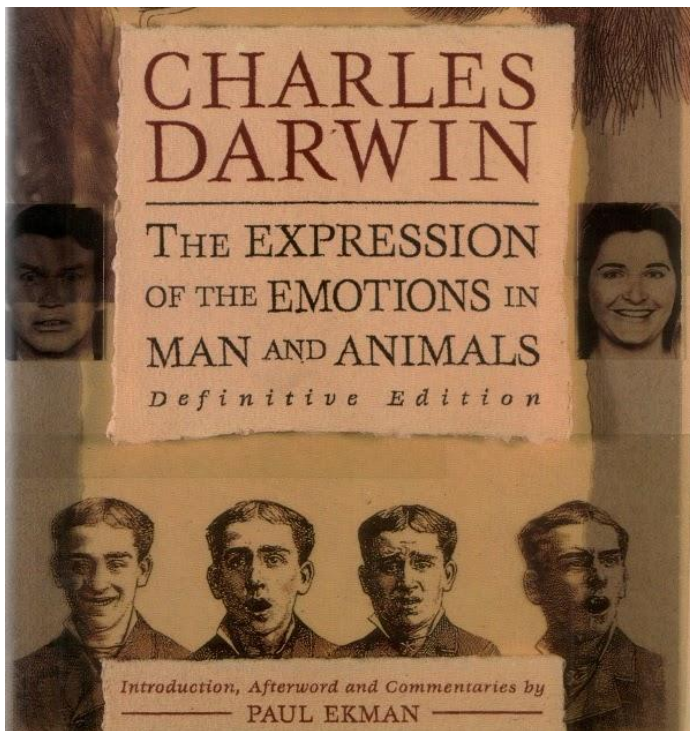
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Charles Darwin – Evolutionary theory of emotions

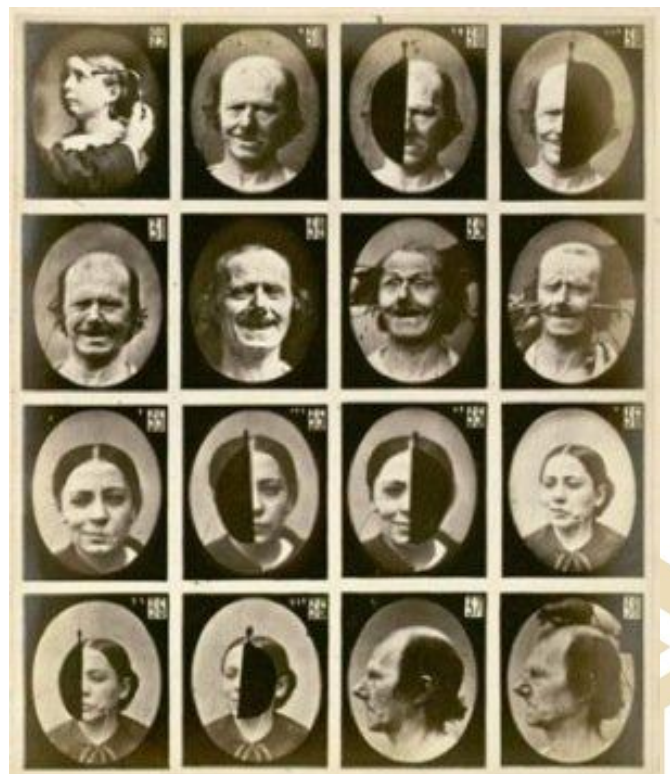
- ◆ Drive to his study: muscles for emotions expression (must derive from adaptation)
- ◆ Starts first observations (with animals, children, psychiatric patients) in 1838!
- ◆ Darwin anticipated the birth of Psychology
- ◆ Has been almost forgotten for around 100 years



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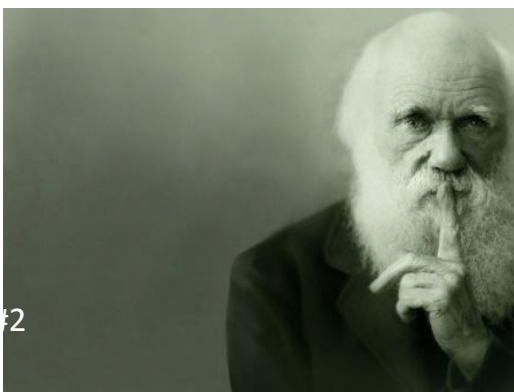
1872



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Charles Darwin – Evolutionary theory of emotions

- ◆ He develops the **evolutionary theory of emotions**:
 - ◆ Adaptive scopes
 - ◆ Composed of 7 fundamental theses of emotions



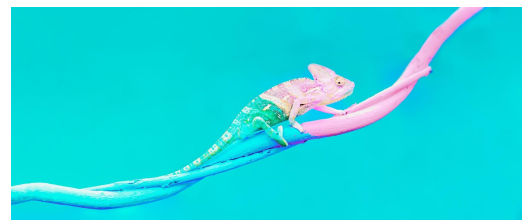
1. Innate (result of the evolution, can be found in children)
2. phylogenetic continuity (link with other similar species)
3. 8 categories of emotions, each responding to a specific situation and showing a specific facial expression which is adaptive (e.g. showing our teeth)
4. Expressions are analyzable (muscular units)
5. Social communication of emotions (communicative value of emotions)
6. Universality in expressions

7. Impact of Expression on



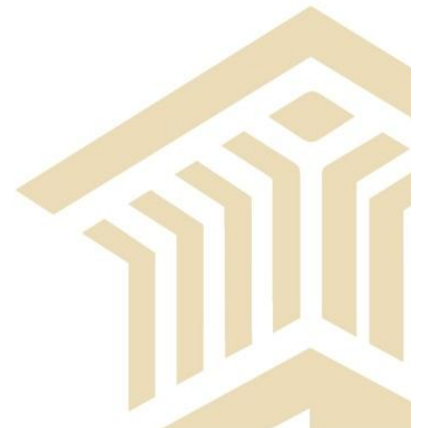
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The purpose of emotions



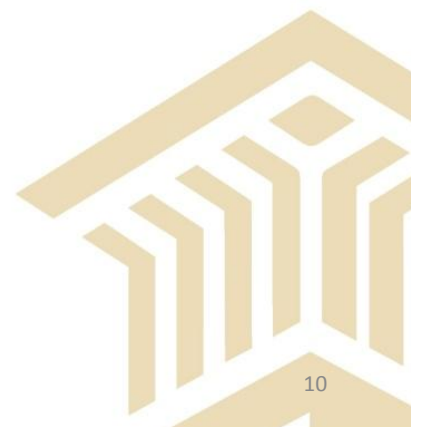
- ◆ Emotions are (at least partly) universal and they have an **adaptive scope**, they help us surviving

- ◆ But in general it's a matter of regulation!
 - ◆ Regulated
 - ◆ Dysregulated emotions

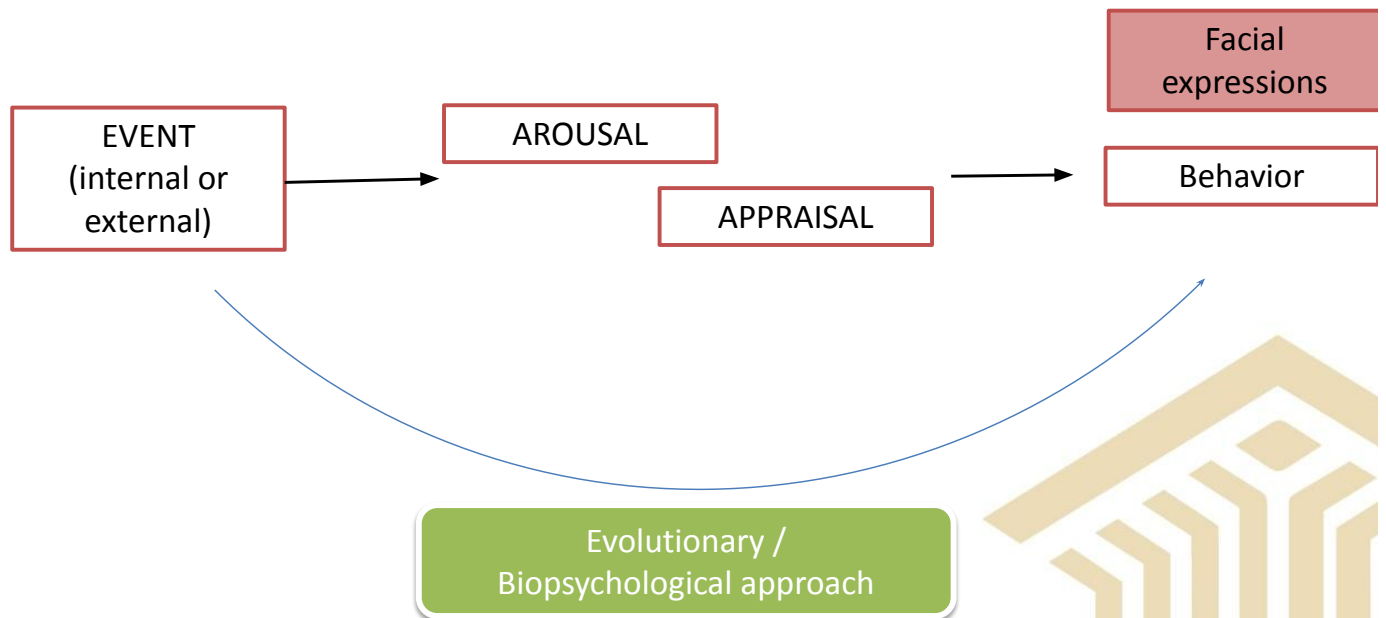


Facial expressions (and body reactions in general) are not just a display system (output)!

- Darwin's 7th thesis
- William James's peripheral theory of emotions
- Ekman's discoveries
- Meditation



«Emotional timeline» of research in Psychology of emotions



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Neo-Darwinism – bio-psychological approach (2)



- ◆ Paul Ekman (1973)
 - ◆ Interest in non-verbal communication
 - ◆ Cross-cultural studies (Ekman & Friesen) showing universality of emotions, but also display rules (depending on gender, role, etc.) □ nature + nurture!
 - ◆ NEURO-CULTURAL THEORY
 - ◆ Neuroprogram for each basic emotion
 - ◆ Emotions produce an answer also in the observer
 - ◆ They developed the Facial Action Coding System (FACS), an “atlas of emotions” with more than ten thousand facial expressions
 - ◆ Famous in detecting deception (people lying) (riconoscimento delle menzogne)

Paul Ekman’s work on tv: Inside out, Lie to me



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Detail: Paul Ekman

- ◆ **An amazing unexpected discovery:** «*If you put on your face one of the universal expressions, you will turn on the physiology of emotions, you will begin to experience that emotion*»
- ◆ Our face is not just as a display system!

◆ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVp5pGSwZkg>



> Psychol Sci. 2010 Oct;21(10):1363-8. doi: 10.1177/0956797610383437. Epub 2010 Sep 20.

Power posing: brief nonverbal displays affect neuroendocrine levels and risk tolerance

Dana R Carney¹, Amy J C Cuddy, Andy J Yap

Affiliations + expand

PMID: 20855902 DOI: 10.1177/0956797610383437

Abstract

Humans and other animals express power through open, expansive postures, and they express powerlessness through closed, contractive postures. But can these postures actually cause power? The results of this study confirmed our prediction that posing in high-power nonverbal displays (as opposed to low-power nonverbal displays) would cause neuroendocrine and behavioral changes for both male and female participants: High-power posers experienced elevations in testosterone, decreases in cortisol, and increased feelings of power and tolerance for risk; low-power posers exhibited the opposite pattern. In short, posing in displays of power caused advantaged and adaptive psychological, physiological, and behavioral changes, and these findings suggest that embodiment extends beyond mere thinking and feeling, to physiology and subsequent behavioral choices. That a person can, by assuming two simple 1-min poses, embody power and instantly become more powerful has real-world, actionable implications.



William James - peripheral theory of emotions (conscious experience of emotions)

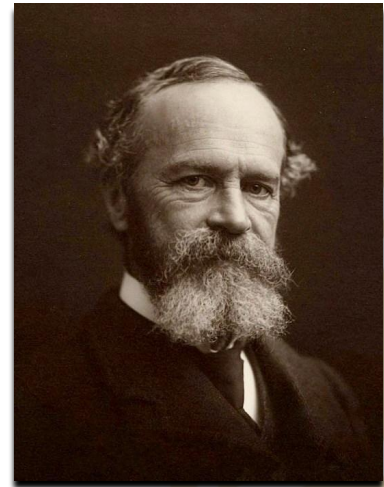
- ◆ 1884 “What is an emotion?”
- ◆ He is the father of American Psychology
 - **urge to define psychology as an empirical discipline:** every psychological phenomena should be found in the brain (nothing is in the mind if not in the senses or in the body)
- ◆ For the knowledge of brain at that time, emotions could not find a place as part of this empirical discipline □ Need for a physical location for them □ but.. **hard to find a part of the brain where to locate emotion!**
- ◆ Based on Darwin’s 7th thesis (Impact of Expression on subjective experience), James had the idea to turn the common sense upside down!

II.—WHAT IS AN EMOTION?

By Professor WILLIAM JAMES.

THE physiologists who, during the past few years, have been so industriously exploring the functions of the brain, have limited their attempts at explanation to its cognitive and volitional performances. Dividing the brain into sensorial and motor centres, they have found their division to be exactly paralleled by the analysis made by empirical psychology, of the perceptive and volitional parts of the mind into their simplest elements. But the *aesthetic* sphere

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William James - peripheral theory of emotions (conscious experience of emotions)

- ◆ **We start from common sense:** usually we think that we feel the mental states and this in turn leads to the body reaction
- ◆ We see a bear, we feel fearful, we run away (so our muscles become active, and our heartbeat increases)



(In this view, the emotion (mental state) comes before the body and the senses, so it has no empirical «power»)



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William James - peripheral theory of emotions (conscious experience of emotions)

- ◆ For James, **mental state does not come first!**
- ◆ Emotional state (fear) does not come directly from the perception (of an aggressive animal), but it is the opposite
- ◆ **Between perception and fear, we find the body modifications** (muscles, bones, viscera) that comes as a reflex and are crucial
- ◆ **Different emotions = different patterns of body modifications**



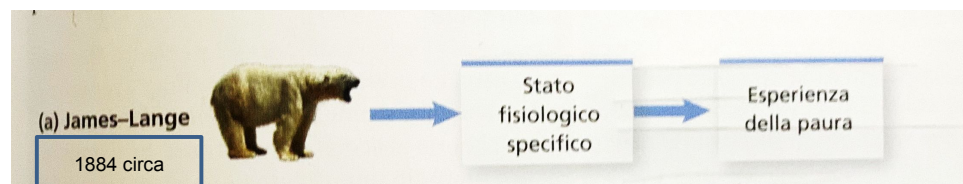
(In this view, the emotion (mental state) comes after the body and the senses, so it does have empirical «power»)

- ◆ Consequences? **We can control emotions, by controlling our body**
 - research has proven that it is true, so the theory is largely confirmed



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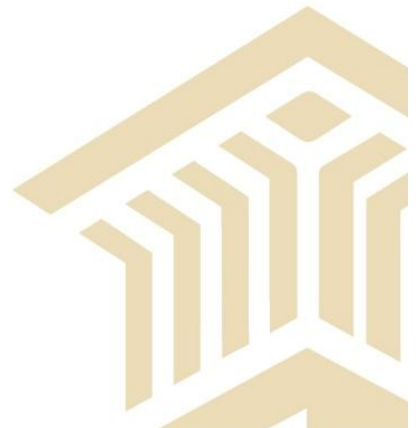
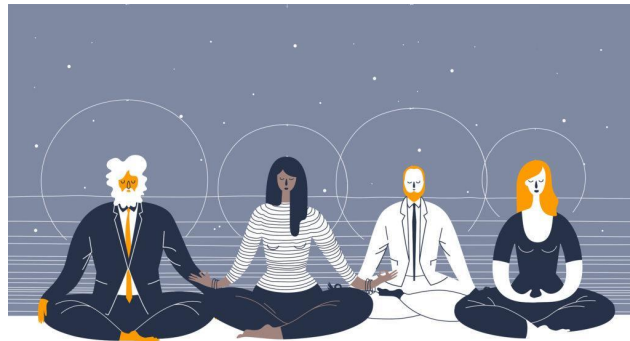
The process of emotions



- ◆ What Darwin and James postulated has been confirmed by Ekman:

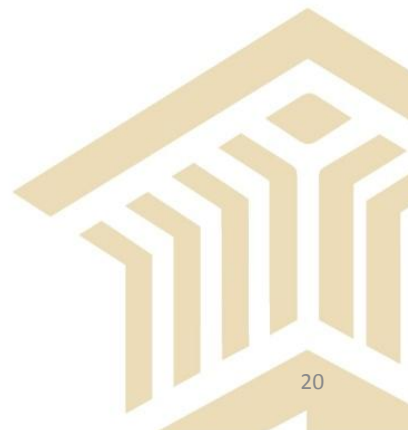
Body is not just a display system!

*If body can be controlled,
emotions can be controlled in turn!*



Facial expressions (and body reactions in general) are not just a display system (output)!

- Darwin's 7th thesis
- William James's peripheral theory of emotions
- Ekman's discoveries
- Meditation



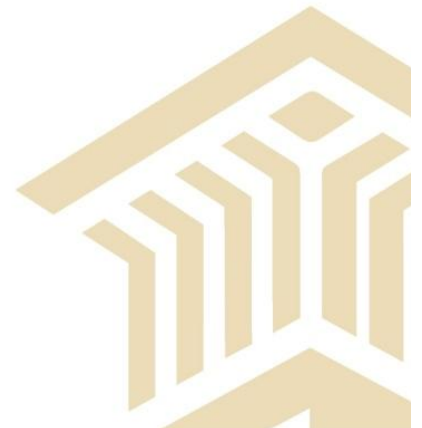
William James - peripheral theory of emotions (conscious experience of emotions)

◆ Key-points of William James' theory

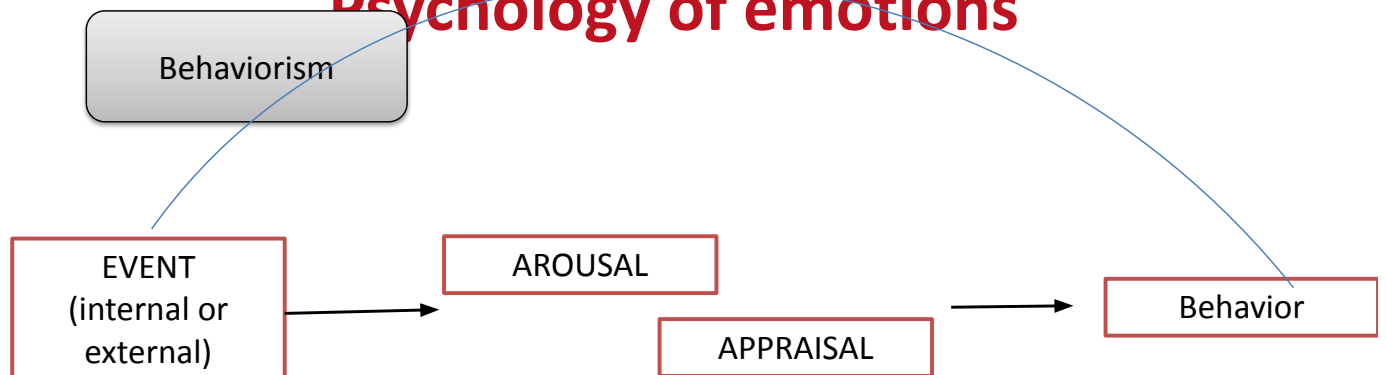
- ◆ Mental state (emotional state) comes after the body reaction
- ◆ Emotions are the subjective experience of this body reaction



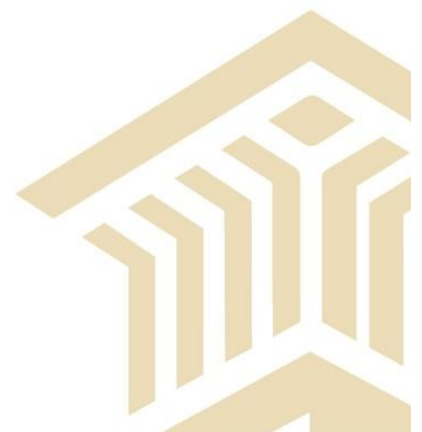
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«Emotional timeline» of research in Psychology of emotions

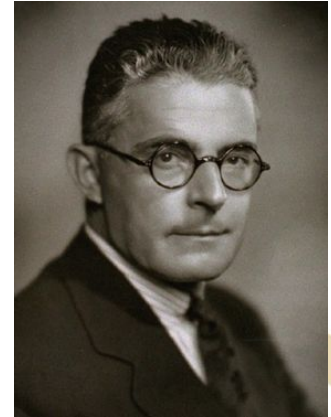


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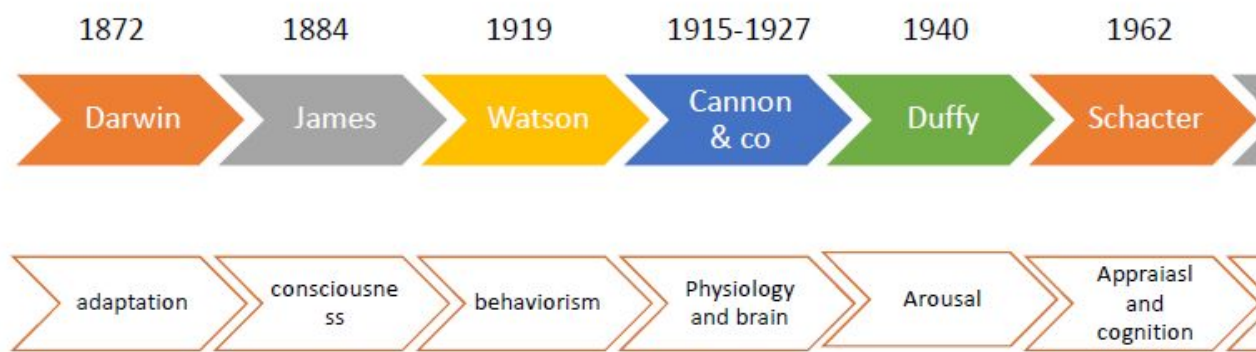
Behaviorism: the obstacle to the study of emotions

- ◆ John Watson and the behaviorism approach
- ◆ What is subjective cannot be studied
- ◆ Emotions are just body answers throwing the person into a **disorganized state** (in his opinion, we would live better without them) □ Not only they are not adaptive, but they are even unadaptive!
- ◆ For behaviorists, studying emotions pertains (riguarda) more to **physiology** than to psychology.
- ◆ Thus (così)
 - ◆ We assisted to a block of research in psychology of emotions (between 1940 and 1960)
 - ◆ This is why next authors in our timeline are mainly focusing on physiology of emotions (and not on psychological aspects)



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Historic timeline of research in Psychology of emotions



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Physiology of emotions –Walter Cannon (1915) (the leader in the study of physiology of emotions)



1) Homeostatic theory of emotions

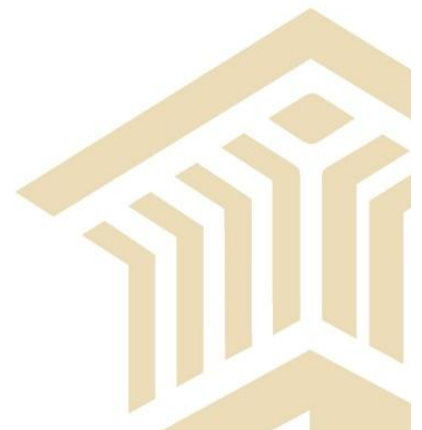
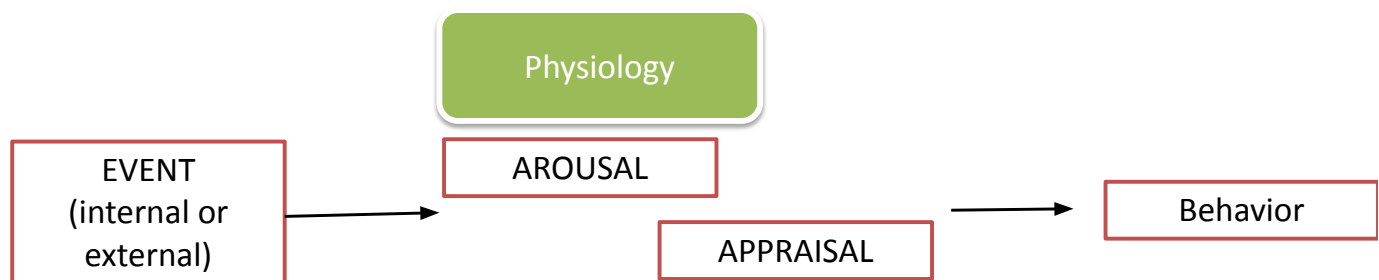
By studying viscera (stomach and intestine movements after emotions) – and not yet the brain- he discovered that emotion alert the organism □
These changes are needed to prepare body for an intense activity (attack or escape) □
emotions have again an adaptive purpose

2) Central theory of emotions

He became interested in the role of the brain
Lots of experiments on animals found that the cortex does not play a central role
and later discovered that the headquarter of emotions is situated under the cortex, where parallel nerves are going both to viscera and to areas deputed for subjective experiences



«Emotional timeline» of research in Psychology of emotions



Activity variations and energy used (Brain+Viscera)

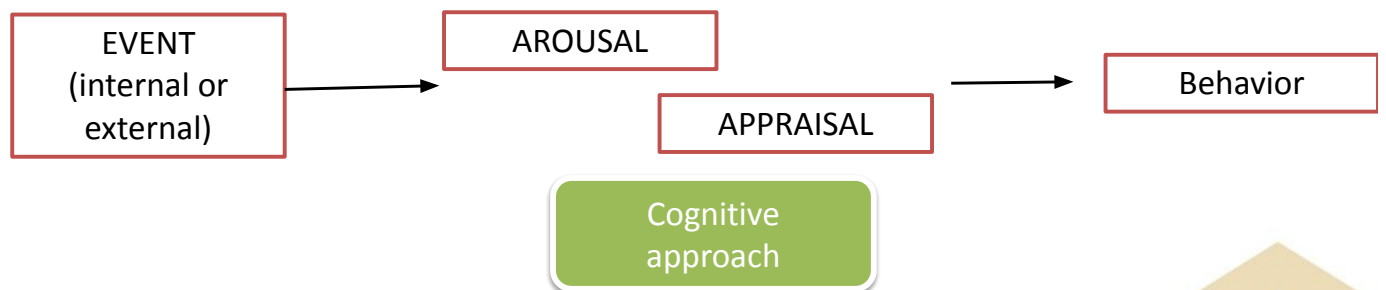
The concept of “arousal»

- ◆ From this vision of emotions as something that mobilizes energies, it emerges the concept of **arousal** (*attivazione*)
- ◆ **Arousal is an activation of both**
 - ◆ activities
 - ◆ motivations and emotions
- ◆ Since **arousal would be almost identical for any emotions**, Elisabeth Duffy was the first one implying that **emotions require an interpretation of the situation**
→ and here comes the cognitive approach!



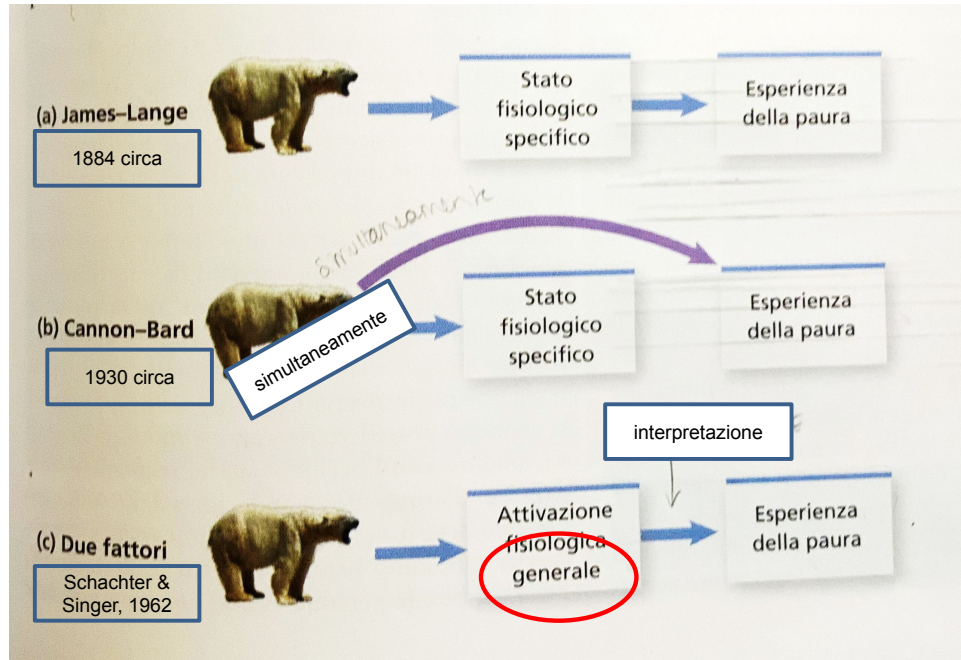
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«Emotional timeline» of research in Psychology of emotions



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The process of emotions



The appearance of cognitive theories

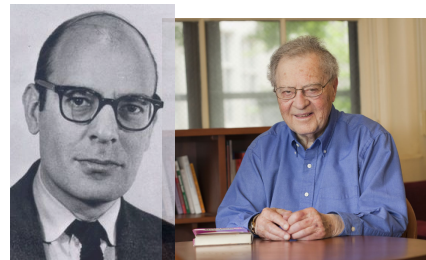
- ◆ The changes in the body described by Cannon are necessary to emotions, but they are not enough (abbastanza)! They are ambiguous, if taken alone
- ◆ All previous theories did not consider something very “human” in emotions: the cognitive part
 - ◆ **Cognitive** means something related to the mental processes of perception, of memory, of judgment, of reasoning, remember?
- ◆ *Humans are constantly focused on cognitive evaluation operations* (they compare their actual situation with the perspective that comes from their vision, their knowledge, their objectives, the social norms)
- ◆ □ the difference between emotions stays in our evaluation! (Elizabeth Duffy)



Cognitive theories: a)

A famous experiment (Shachter & Singer, 1962)

1. Injection of adrenaline (arousal)
2. Information about the side-effect
Correct ← no information → incorrect
3. External stimulus (person in the room)
Angry ← happy →



Conclusions:

- ◆ we always try to find a meaning to what we feel! □ participants who had no explanation for their feelings were more likely to be susceptible to the emotional influences of the confederate
- ◆ Emotions are labelled (etichettate) through (attraverso) reasoning and inferences
- ◆ Ca you find any examples?
- ◆ The cognitivist approach allows (permette) to overcome (superare) the mind/emotions dichotomy



You can find a more complete explanation here: <https://www.verywellmind.com/the-two-factor-theory-of-emotion-2795718>
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Cognitive theories: b)

evaluation of the situation Magda Arnold

- ◆ Focus on **perception**
- ◆ The appraisal is not applicable only to emotions (general)
- ◆ It leads to a **tendency towards or away from the object/event** (depending on its value for us, also due to previous experiences)



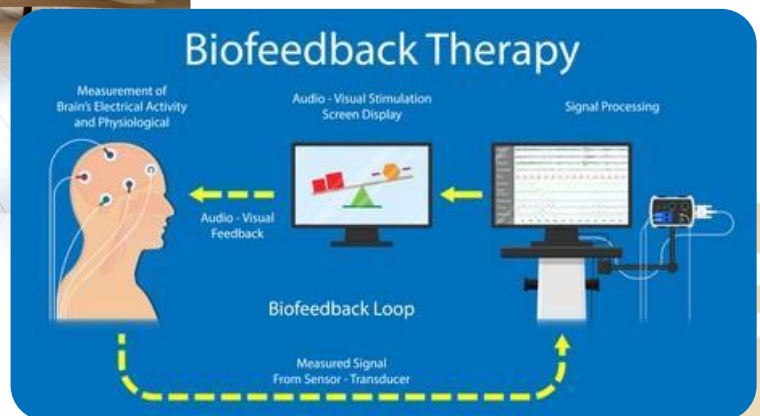
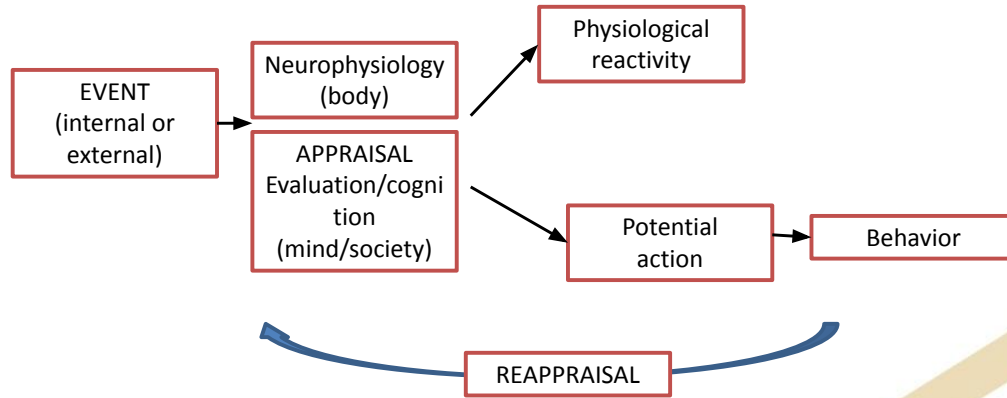
- ◆ **Different emotions: different relationships between subject and object**

Secondary evaluations

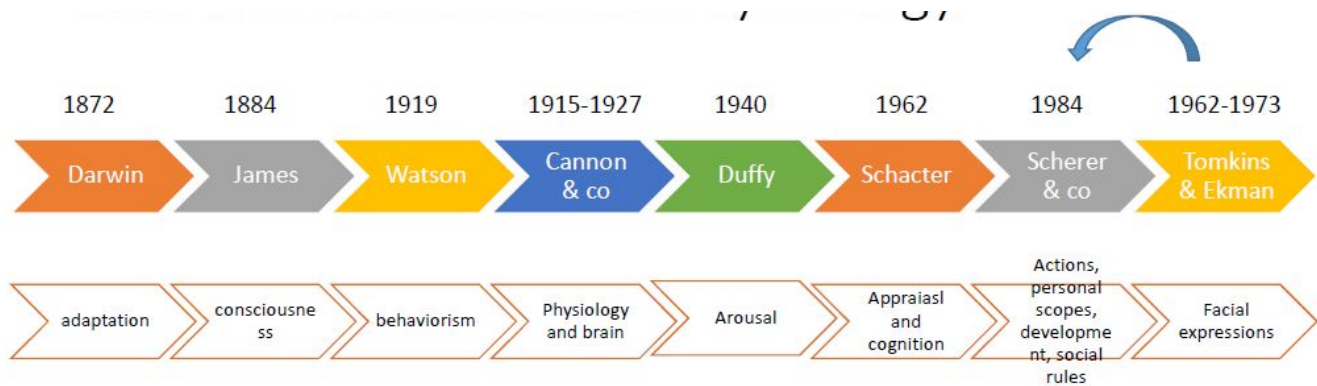
- ◆ There is also an evaluation of the emotion experienced called **reappraisal (we become aware of our arousal and of our actions)**, which implies if the emotions will continue or be inhibited/blocked
- ◆ We can go back to our evaluation process in a conscious way, through (attraverso) introspection



The process of emotions



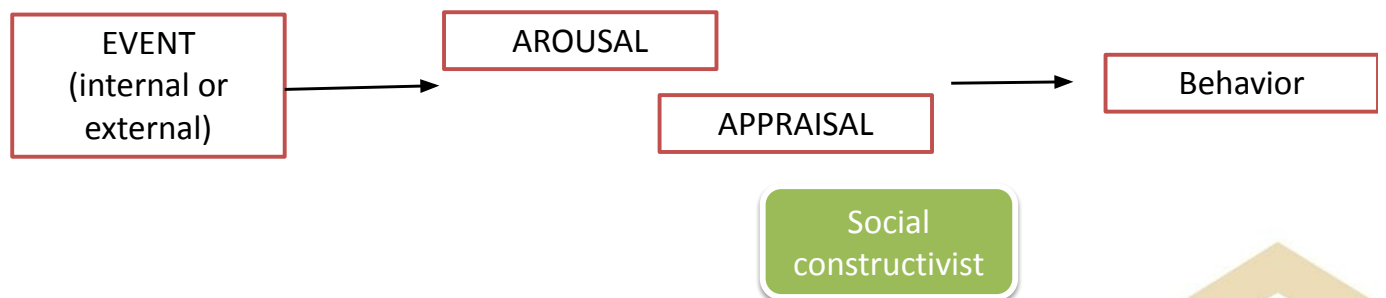
Timeline of research in Psychology of emotions



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«Emotional timeline» of research in Psychology of emotions



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Towards a social perspective...

Nature or nurture.. beyond (oltre) facial expressions

- ◆ We already mentioned the debate between nature and nurture with respect to Paul Ekman's work.
 - ◆ Their cross-cultural studies (together with Friesen) showed:
 - ◆ universality of emotions
 - ◆ but also display rules (depending on gender, role, etc.) □ nature + nurture!
 - ◆ They developed the **neuro-cultural theory based on the facial expressions of emotions**
- ◆ Ekman & Friesen work focused on facial expressions and on the display of emotions. But we know that emotions are much more than the expression...
 - ◆ Is there something universal in emotions in general?
 - ◆ Can we find universality also in the situations generating emotions, in physiological reactions, and in the appraisal process?



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Detail: Nature or nurture?

- ◆ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IISfh-lp-qA>



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Emotions as social facts

- ◆ Psychophysiology underlined (ha sottolineato) the **individual component** of emotions
- ◆ but we don't have to forget that **emotions are social facts**, even if we are less aware (siamo meno consapevoli) of this social component.
- ◆ In this perspective, emotions are not innate, they are learnt (apprese)
 - ◆ The role played by *other people* in the emotional process:
 - ◆ When we feel emotions, other people are often there (physically or mentally)
 - ◆ And the role played by the *cultural context*
 - ◆ Culture influence the way we express emotions (and not only!)



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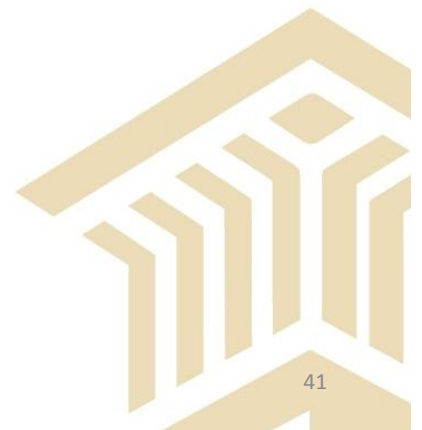
Social constructivist approach

- ◆ This approach try to find an answer about:
 - ◆ If and how the social component act on single emotions
 - ◆ The interdependence between emotion and social context
- ◆ The central point has to do with **the social meaning of experiencing that emotion**
- ◆ Two different approaches:
 - ◆ **Social construction of emotions**
 - ◆ **Language and values of a culture are the true determinants of subjective emotions.**
 - ◆ **Social role of emotions**
 - ◆ Temporary social role of emotions



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To sum up...



Nowadays: approaches “living in harmony”

- ◆ Bio-psychological approach
 - ◆ Evolutionary and adaptive functions of emotions (neo Darwinians)
 - ◆ Ekman
- ◆ Cognitive approach
 - ◆ Evaluation of situations and pertinence with personal scopes and aims
- ◆ Social-constructivists
 - ◆ Emotions as communicative acts
 - ◆ Social value (valore)
 - ◆ Role of language and environment

Open debate: in the emotional process, what is the real «emotional» part? The arousal, or the consequences of appraisal? Still no agreement

Is arousal unique, or do can we find different patterns for different emotions?

