



Sixteen Enjoyable Emotions

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When we use the term negative we don't know which emotion is being referred to. Is it fear, anger, disgust, or is the implication that it doesn't really matter? If we lump them together we cannot discover if it does matter, if each might have a different profile, a different signal, different social context, different physiology, etc. And each of these so-called negative emotions can have a very positive function, e.g., mobilizing us to get out of harms way. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for people to enjoy some of these negative emotions; there are some who read tearjerkers, others who go to scary movies, and even some who seek non-vicarious experiences of these misnamed negative emotions.

Here I suggest that we consider the possibility that there may be as many as sixteen different enjoyable emotions, each as different one from another as anger is from fear. There isn't much evidence to support these distinctions, but there won't be if we continue to lump them together with the gloss of happiness. Given the space limitations I can do little more than name them, but in my new book, *Emotions Revealed* (Times Books, 2003), I elaborate on them more.

6 The first five are the sensory pleasures derived from taste, smell, touch, sight and hearing. Fredrickson and Brannigan (2001) argued that they shouldn't be considered emotions because they don't require appraisal. But does the pleasure felt witnessing a sunset involve less appraisal than the fear felt when a chair collapses? Much of what

provides sensory pleasure does involve appraisal, often quite extended appraisal.

On to excitement, that is a response to novelty and challenge. Tomkins (1962) considered excitement the high end of interest, as did Izard (1971) after him, but I propose excitement has its own unique flavor, quite apart from interest, although it seems unlikely that one can be excited by something uninteresting.

Relief is the enjoyable emotion felt when something that had strongly aroused our emotions subsides. Unlike most other emotions, relief requires that there has been a preceding non-enjoyable emotion, typically fear.

Wonder is a rare emotion in which one feels overwhelmed by something incomprehensible. I think it is important to distinguish wonder from fear, although the two can merge when we find it hard to grasp what is threatening to us. I don't use the term awe, as the OED tells us that it combines wonder, fear and dread.

Ecstasy or bliss is a state of self-transcendent rapture, achieved by some through meditation, by others through experiences in nature and by still others through a sexual experience with a truly loved one.

The Italian word *fiero* denotes pride in achievement. There need not be any contest; triumph is the English word for such feelings when there is a contest with others. *Fiero* is a very important emotion motivating ambition and achievement.

Naches is the Yiddish word that refers to the pride a parent (or mentor)

feels about the accomplishment of offspring. *Naches* ensures parental investment in facilitating the growth and achievements of children.

Schadenfreude is the German word for the enjoyable feeling experienced when one learns that one's enemy has suffered. Unlike the other enjoyable emotions, this one is disapproved of in some cultures. We are not supposed to gloat over our successes nor enjoy the misfortunes of our rivals.

Haidt (2000) suggests the term elevation for the enjoyable emotion felt when one witnesses unexpected acts of human goodness, kindness or compassion. It may motivate us to engage in such acts ourselves.

In one of his last papers Richard Lazarus (and his wife Bernice) wrote about gratitude as "appreciation for an altruistic act that provides benefit" (2001). When someone does something nice for us, that doesn't benefit him or her, we feel gratitude. It is an emotion that has very strong physiological sensations.

I am fairly convinced that the face does not provide distinctive signals for each of these enjoyable emotions. Some version of what I have termed the Duchenne smile (1990) is seen in all of them although the temporal dynamics and intensity of the smiling may vary. Instead, I have proposed (1992) that it is the voice that provides the distinctive signal for each of them. Think for a moment of the sound of relief versus the sound of amusement. Scott and Calder (personal communication) have to date identified a different vocal signal for the four enjoyable emotions they studied. I believe more will be found.

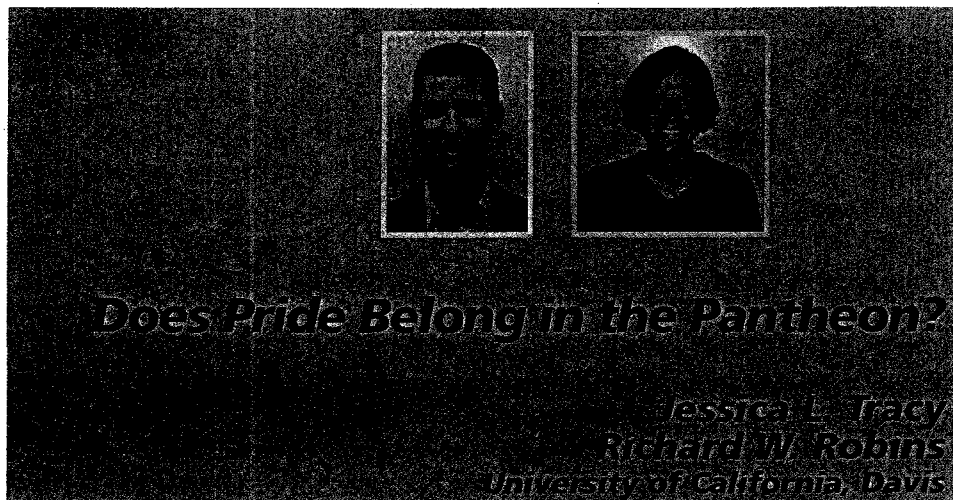
These enjoyable emotions motivate our lives; they cause us to do things that by and large are good for us. They encourage us to engage in activity that is necessary for the survival of our species – sexual relations and facilitating the growth of children. Along with Tomkins (1962), I believe the pursuit of enjoyment is a primary motivation in our lives. But which enjoyable emotion do we most pursue? Each of us can experience all of these emotions, but most of us are specialists, craving some more than

others. People organize their lives to maximize the experience of some of these enjoyments.

Are there really sixteen enjoyable emotions? Only research that examines when they occur, how they are signaled, and what occurs internally, can answer that question. For now I believe that we should investigate every one of them. If we are using a memory task we should not ask someone to remember a happy experience, but should specify which of these happy experiences we want them to retrieve. If we are trying to identify the signal, vocal, facial or postural, we should no longer ask people to pose happiness, but instead ask the person to pose amusement, or relief, etc. It is only by making such distinctions that we will discover how many need to be made.

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In 1872, Darwin speculated that every emotion has a distinct, universally recognized expression, and added,

"Of all the...complex emotions, pride, perhaps, is the most plainly expressed" (p. 263). Despite this claim, pride has yet to be accepted into the pantheon of "basic" emotions believed to have distinct, universally recognized, nonverbal expressions (Ekman, 1992).

In fact, researchers have speculated that all positive emotions (including pride) might share a single expression (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2001). Our recent research challenges this

assumption and suggests that Darwin might have been right—pride does have a distinct, recognizable expression (Tracy & Robins, in press-a).

Evidence for a Nonverbal Expression of Pride

Over the past several years, we have conducted a series of studies exploring whether there might be a pride expression. As a starting point, we reviewed the development literature on children's nonverbal reactions to success, and identified several possible features of the pride expression. We then asked individuals to pose this expression and set out to determine whether others would recognize it as pride. Using the standard procedures developed by Ekman, Sorenson, and Friesen (1969), we found that observers could reliably recognize the pride expression and distinguish it from other emotions including anger, contempt, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise (Tracy & Robins, in press-a).

These initial studies provided a general picture of the pride expression. To refine our knowledge of the signal's components, we next manipulated several specific facial and bodily features. We found that the best-recognized pride expression includes a small smile, head tilted slightly back, expanded posture, and arms either raised above the head or with the hands placed on the hips. Thus, our findings suggest that, like the current set of basic emotion expressions, the pride expression is an efficient signal that can be conveyed from a single snapshot image. However, in contrast to the other basic emotions, pride cannot be recognized from the face alone—without the appropriate posture and arm position, recognition rates were below chance. Importantly, though, pride also cannot not be recognized from bodily components alone (i.e., when the face shows a neutral expression).

Having established the existence of a recognizable expression, we next sought to address whether this expression is universal, or simply a socialized gesture that conveys a culturally specific message (much like the thumbs-up sign). In a preliminary study (Tracy & Robins, in press-b), we found that individuals born, raised, and living in Italy could recognize the pride expression at rates comparable to those from the U.S. (see Figure 1). However, most Italians have been exposed to American media, so the conclusions one can draw from this finding are limited. Thus, we are currently testing whether non-literate individuals in a remote village in Burkina Faso, Africa, can recognize pride.