



## The Structure of Emotions.

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But this should not be allowed to distract attention from Post's great and erudite achievement, which is to bring to the centre of contemporary metaphysics a most important question: How little does physicalism actually involve?

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**The Structure of Emotions.** ROBERT M. GORDON. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987. Pp. xiv, 161.

Some years ago I tried to make sense of the emotions as a class. Robert Solomon had forcefully argued in *The Passions* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1976) that emotions are not feelings, but I was not thrilled with his sweeping statement that emotions are judgments. I was keen on finding something systematic to say, however complex. Seeking an illuminating classificatory scheme, I assembled over one hundred index cards, one emotion per card. Unfortunately, every hand was a misdeal. Shuffling and reshuffling didn't help. Eventually I gave up, concluding, as I had suspected initially, that emotions really are a messy subject.

A motley crew they are indeed. Robert Gordon's book doesn't prove otherwise, but it does put a semblance of order into the subject. A brief review cannot convey its attentiveness to detail, for which I heartily commend it. My worries about several controversial theses should not discourage one from discovering the many sensible, often subtle points it contains.

Gordon rejects the familiar distinction between backward- and forward-looking emotions in favor of one between *factive* and *epistemic* emotions. The pivotal difference concerns not time but certainty. We are certain mostly about things past — but not always. You can be glad (factive), being certain, that you will go to the tropics next week, and next week, as you land in Kauai, you can fear (epistemic), being uncertain, that your baggage has not arrived with you. Notice that the factive/epistemic distinction applies only to emotions the terms for which take sentential complements. Thus it excludes such emotions as love, envy, and pity. Factive emotions are so-called because, claims Gordon, F-ing that *p* implies that it is a fact that *p* and, indeed, that one knows that *p*. Gordon observes that "positive" factive emotions, such as excitement or pride, involve "wish-satisfaction," whereas negative ones, like resentment and embarrassment, exhibit "wish-frustration." Epistemic emotions, such as hopefulness and worry, feature "*nondeliberative* uncertainty," i.e., are not based solely on indecision. They have both epistemic and attitudinal reasons. For example, in worrying that Sally's old car has broken down, your epistemic reason might be that she is late and hasn't called, your attitudinal reason that if her car has broken down, she could be in danger.

Gordon's labels for his dichotomy are misleading. Noting how epistemic reasons for (epistemic) emotions are like reasons for beliefs, he calls these emotions "epistemic" because of their "functional resemblance to belief" (p. xi). Yet this warrants calling them not "epistemic," which suggests knowledge (what Gordon attributes to factive emotions), but at most "doxastic," suggesting belief. However, even that won't do, since these emotions involve

uncertainty but not necessarily belief. As for so-called “factive” emotions, it is doubtful, for reasons given below, that they involve not only certainty but truth, much less knowledge. Because of my qualms about Gordon’s labels, I will use simply “F” and “E,” at least when questioning what is suggested by “factive” or “epistemic” (I suggest the terms “reactive” and “proactive,” if taken to mark a distinction not in temporal but in cognitive perspective).

Why does Gordon insist that F-emotions, such as regret, pride, and gratitude, involve not only certainty but knowledge? After all, if E-emotions all involve uncertainty, there should be in-between cases of emotions with certainty but without truth, much less knowledge. Gordon acknowledges such cases but detects “a contradictory ring” (p. 40) to attributions like “He was glad there were Martian spaceships circling the Earth, though he didn’t know they were.” Gordon admits that “it is counterintuitive that the proper description of [an F-] emotion should depend on what is happening totally out of [one’s] ken” (p. 60) and allows one can attribute F-emotions without committing oneself to the truth of *p* by “adopting the subject’s point of view, as in novels and psychiatric case studies” (p. 59). We can say, “He is upset because he believes that there are Martian spaceships circling the Earth,” but here “we revert to specifying the ‘content’ of the emotion in terms of the content of a belief on which the emotion is based. . . . There is apparently no satisfactory way to fill in the blank in ‘regrets that —’ or ‘is upset that —’ that does not presuppose the truth of the sentence (clause) used to fill it in” (p. 37). Gordon observes that “there appears to be no form of words that entails everything that is entailed by sentences of the form ‘S [Fs] that *p*’ minus only the entailment (or presupposition) of ‘*p*’” (p. 59). I might note an analogous phenomenon that seems to prevail regarding reports of “informative” speech acts, such as reminding, disclosing, and pointing out. Here too there seems to be an entailment of ‘*p*’. So the linguistic lacuna, if it were real, would be even wider than Gordon suggests.

Gordon is not suggesting that we need new terms for F-emotions based on misinformation. A person who is convinced that there are Martians afoot can still be glad, angry, or whatever. What Gordon is suggesting is that this is not a case of being glad (angry) that *p*. Evidently, an emotion based on a false belief is not a propositional attitude. Gordon infers this from our preference for nonsentential specifications like “He is upset because he believes that *p*,” as if the person is, somehow, upset *simpliciter* (besides, he might be upset not that *p* but that *q*, where his belief that *p* is his reason for being certain that *q*). Of course we cannot say, “He is upset (angry) about the fact that *p*” (as the Knowledge Condition on p. 60 tentatively has it), but we can omit “about the fact” and say, “He is upset (angry) that *p*.” Indeed, using suitable prefatory language we can forestall the implication that *p*, which shows that the seeming “contradictory ring” in attributions of F-emotions is merely a pragmatic contradiction. If we say, for example, “Ollie is upset that he got demoted,” we pragmatically imply that Ollie got demoted, but we can avoid the implication while still imputing the same content by prefacing the attribution with, say, “Having just heard what he mistakenly takes to be an accurate news report.” Similarly, in reporting an informative speech act we can say, for example, “Having been misinformed by his superiors, Ollie disclosed that the secret bank account belonged to the Red Cross.” That these disclaimers

must be made (except in cases, like the Martian example, where it is obviously false that  $p$ ) reflects a presumption of factivity in our use of terms for F-emotions (and for informative speech acts), but it does not demonstrate any factivity in the emotions themselves.

Gordon observes that believing and wishing (or wishing-not) are essential to factive emotions. Indeed, he persuasively argues that they play a special causal/functional role. The "Belief-Wish Condition" (p. 53), which is construed counterfactually, is designed to capture this role and to help us to determine the content of a given factive emotion precisely. It aims to reckon with cases where, for example, a person who believes that  $p$  and wishes that not- $p$  is angry but not angry that  $p$ , as well as to take into account the possibility of overdetermination, as when one is angry about several things at once. In this way Gordon seeks to show exactly how a factive emotion with a certain content depends on a combination of a belief and a wish with a certain content. Unfortunately, his account appears to be subject to a well-known difficulty common to many analyses employing subjunctive conditionals, namely, that there can be circumstances where the satisfaction of the antecedent renders the consequent false. For it is required that the relevant conditions be such that if  $S$  were to believe that  $p$  and wish that not- $p$ ,  $S$  would be angry. However, the fulfillment of those conditions might so change the situation that, for example, the state of affairs that  $p$  would have been brought about by  $S$ , in which case he would be not angry but sorry.

Epistemic emotions are so-called because they are based on epistemic as well as on attitudinal reasons. Fear is Gordon's prime example. He insists that its motivational effect is not prevention of what is feared but "vulnerability avoidance" (p. 74), which is based on the attitudinal reason. For example, fearing that it will rain, I carry an umbrella. My attitudinal reason is a conditional, that if it rains I will get wet, and my action is intended to make this conditional false. In general, if one fears that  $p$  and one's attitudinal reason is that if  $p$  then  $q$ , then one is motivated to bring about conditions in which it is false that if  $p$  then  $q$ , i.e., "to sever the[ir] connection" (p. 74). Hence the phrase "vulnerability avoidance."

Gordon rejects the natural view that fear motivates prevention of what is feared. He is surely right about the case of rain, where what is feared is beyond one's control, but what if prevention is feasible? Suppose an engineer fears that a bridge will collapse and thereby takes measures to prevent its collapsing. This is a case of prevention all right but, claims Gordon, "what motivates the engineer to reinforce the bridge is her fear that it will collapse if she doesn't reinforce it" (p. 75). This fear is not her original, categorical one but a further, conditional fear. I find Gordon's account implausible. First, what motivates the engineer to (try to) prevent the bridge from collapsing is her original fear that it will collapse, which might persist even after she reinforces it, together with the *belief* (not the conditional fear) that it will collapse if she doesn't. Thus, she is motivated to bring about conditions in which the *epistemic* reason for her fear is false (or at least weakened). Second, she doesn't really have a conditional fear but only a reason for her categorical fear. She *could* fear the conditional that the bridge will collapse if she didn't reinforce it, say if she didn't care if the bridge collapsed unless it collapsed out of disrepair, for which she would be held responsible. In fact, that it is not repaired

is part of her epistemic reason for fearing that it will collapse, and because of this she is motivated to repair it. So in my view the fear that  $p$  (because if  $p$  then  $q$ ) can, depending on which is feasible, motivate either severing the connection between  $p$  and  $q$  (vulnerability-avoidance) or preventing  $p$  outright.

I have focussed on Gordon's distinctions and allied theses, to which four of his seven chapters are devoted. In the later chapters he puts some of his findings to work. He offers incisive critiques of William James's physiological theory, which reverses the commonsense view of the relation between emotion and arousal, and of Stanley Schachter's "refined, cognitivized version" (p. 87), and for good measure he includes a devastating spoof of the famous Schachter and Singer adrenaline experiment. Next, denying that the claim that emotions are passive implies that they act on us, much less that we have no control over them, Gordon explains in precisely what sense they are passive. Finally, he offers a novel conception of folk psychology. He views it as simulation, specifically what he calls "hypotheticopractical reasoning" (an unfortunate misprint has "hypotheticodeductive" in the section heading on p. 140). Gordon's underlying rationale is to connect "the prevalence of factivity in our emotion concepts" with its prevalence in ordinary rational explanations (p. 128). His discussion is stimulating indeed (I cannot here convey its subtlety) but not entirely convincing. I think he exaggerates the extent of our uses of simulated reasoning in predicting others' behavior. We also rely heavily on our knowledge of behavioral regularities, especially with people we know well or whose reasoning we find hard to fathom. Often we can simulate our responses to situations without simulating any reasoning (it is a mistake to simulate reasoning in cases where one acts on a "gut reaction").

*The Structure of Emotions* is not as systematic or as comprehensive as its title suggests. Gordon himself, with characteristic forthrightness, acknowledges its limited scope and admits a semblance of "false advertising" (p. 22n). In developing his distinctions, he tends to limit the discussion to a few emotions, notably anger and fear. A skeptical reader, worried that Gordon has stacked the deck, should ante up and play a few hands to see how well Gordon's claims hold up. He shouldn't be discouraged by Gordon's disclaimer that the "scope [of this investigation] may be defined as *those states of which my generalizations hold true*" (p. 22). Surely Gordon does not mean to trivialize his pursuit; he must intend its scope to include those states of which he believes his generalizations to hold true, and could not intend to have that scope whittled down by counterexamples. In any case, I wish he had examined a greater diversity of emotions, using plenty of concrete examples not only to add variety to the discussion but to yield further insights as well. Also, despite his concern with folk psychology, which philosophers commonly (and in my view mistakenly) seem to restrict to belief-desire psychology, he does not explicitly address the question whether the emotions can be reduced to beliefs and desires, each with its own distinctive analysis. His answer would surely be negative, but it would be instructive to see why (the hint at the bottom of p. 30 barely scratches the surface).

In no way do I wish to detract from the care and thoughtfulness that has gone into this book. I just wish Gordon has taken it further, testing his generalizations with more kinds of emotions and seeking out their differences (a beginning to this end may be found in the several "complications" appearing

on pp. 54-58). For example, they vary considerably in the extent to which they characteristically color one's outlook, direct one's attention, and move one to act. In my view some emotions (e.g., pride and respect) are primarily attitudinal, some (e.g., worry and grief) are primarily attentional, and some (e.g. gratitude and anger) are primarily motivational. It would be most interesting to consider how these categories interact with Gordon's. Now, where did I put those cards?

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**Cogitations.** JERROLD J. KATZ. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986. Pp. 206.

The aim of this book is restricted, yet ambitious: the explanation of Descartes' *Cogito*-argument in terms of linguistic theory.

Katz starts out from what he calls the "Cartesian Scholar's Dilemma." Is the *Cogito* a formally valid argument? It does not seem to be as it stands: *cogito* does not logically entail *sum*. Is it then an enthymeme, based on a suppressed general premise? Descartes denies it; in the Second Replies he says that it is "a primitive act of knowledge derived from no syllogistic inference" (Katz, 18). Hence the dilemma: the great philosopher, laying the cornerstone of his system, either presents an invalid argument, or does not know what he is doing . . .

According to Katz, Descartes did everything he could to explain the nature of the argument, but he simply lacked the theoretical tools to make it clear and convincing. An advanced theory of language provides the solution: the *Cogito* is formally, but not logically, valid; it is an "analytic entailment" not based on logic, but on grammar (which for Katz means syntax plus semantics). This is how, for instance, "John has a sister" entails "John has a sibling," and this is how, if our author is right, *cogito* entails *sum*.

The central part of the book is devoted to the development and defence of a linguistic theory which underlies the notion of analytic entailment. Inferences, to Katz, depend on the logical form of sentences. This form, however, is by no means the function of the logical vocabulary (i.e., connectives, quantifiers, etc.) alone. It also depends on grammar, that is to say, on the syntactic and semantic features of a sentence. Thus a layered structure emerges: where logic proper (the domain of logical vocabulary) leaves off syntax continues, and where this is exhausted, semantics takes over. Accordingly, valid entailments may depend upon a combination of all these factors.

The lack of a systematic account of the grammatical elements, Katz continues, has prompted past philosophers to extend the sway of logic beyond its proper domain. As Frege's "logicism" tried to absorb mathematics into logic, so did, for example, Carnap's "meaning postulates" attempt to provide a logical account of analytic entailments. Even Kant, the champion of analyticity, is found guilty of a similar move by attempting to reduce analytic propositions to the principle of non-contradiction, i.e., to a principle of logic.

Locke is Katz's real hero, the true father of analyticity. Following his footsteps, Katz restates his own well-known semantic theory. In this he continues