

# From *Ressentiment* to Resentment as a Tertiary Emotion

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Received: May 14, 2018 Accepted: June 28, 2018 Online Published: September 5, 2018

doi:10.5539/res.v10n4p49

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/res.v10n4p49>

## Abstract

Resentment is a noxious emotion that can exist in sublimated form as a result of being subjected to inferiorization, stigmatization, or violence. In its active form, resentment can be a forceful response to acts that have created unjustified and meaningless suffering. We consider sociomoral conceptualizations of resentment by Adam Smith, Hume, and L'évinas. Nietzsche and Scheler developed the broader notion of *ressentiment*, a generalized form of resentment arising out of powerlessness and the experience of brutalization neither forgotten nor forgiven. Resentment is seen historically as a sentiment that is saturated with frustration, contempt, outrage, and malevolence. Marshall described oppositional class-consciousness as permeated with resentment and anger, but resentment also contains the basic emotions of surprise and disgust. Resentment is linked to the concept of relative deprivation. A partial classification of emotions is used to further analyze resentment as containing three secondary-level emotions: contempt (anger & disgust), shock (surprise & disgust), and outrage (surprise & anger). Thus, resentment is conceptualized as a tertiary-level emotion, containing three primary and three secondary emotions.

**Keywords:** class consciousness, contempt, emotion classification, outrage, resentment, *ressentiment*, Nietzsche, Hume, L'évinas, Scheler

## 1. Introduction: The Meaning of Resentment

The English word 'resentment' derives from the obsolete French word *recentir*, which meant the *re*-experience of a strong feeling (*sentir*). The Old French *recentement* (1300) and the Middle French *ressentiment* (1613), conveyed the meanings of a true recollection or recall of an earlier-experienced feeling or sentiment of any kind, including affective states such as joy, sorrow, and grateful appreciation (*Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) online: meaning 2a). These meanings are obsolete, for resentment no longer refers to the re-experiencing sentiments in general, but only of negative sentiments relating to grievances, injuries, patterns of unfair treatment, violation, unfulfilled or frustrated desires, and, most generally, unjustified suffering at the hands of another or others. The sentiments associated with resentment include ill-will, bitterness, and anger (OED: meanings 1a–1c).

Eighteenth Century sentimentalists and moral philosophers came to distinguish 'gratitude' and 'resentment', seeing resentment as a noxious emotion and an "unsocial passion" (Adam Smith, 2000 [1759]: 44–51). Smith linked resentment to hatred, indignation, and vengefulness directed to insolent or empowered persons who have wrongly inflicted injury upon the self or others with whom one sympathizes or identifies. Smith (2000 [1759]: 49) noted that resentment is a disagreeable, and undesirable passion that poisons one's happiness. Yet, Smith also conceptualized resentment as a moral sentiment capable of motivating a forceful behavioral response to wrongdoing, provided it is moderated by a sense of mercy and excludes savage revenge. If its consequences are what an impartial spectator would consider fair, resentment can be considered a guardian of justice and a component of self-defense against possible violence to the self by others in one's society.

David Hume (1748) analyzed resentment using concepts of scarcity and selfishness as conditions of justice. He argued that social inequality becomes a felt source of injustice especially for societal members who are of roughly equal status. When treated unequally, these individuals feel resentment, and possibly contemplate and take revenge against the perpetrators of their suffering. When individuals are powerless, their resentment can be sublimated, kept from consciousness, and fail to lead to action, instead generating a *helpless* feeling of resentment. Only if resentment is *forceful*, and the resentful have sufficient power and willfulness, can they successfully voice, and act upon, their interests and grievances. Hume (1986 [1748]: 180) argued that the helpless and forceful forms of resentment are distinguished by societal members' ability to make the powerful feel the effects of their resentment; moreover, "[a] sense of injustice is a sense, not of hopeless resentment, but of *forceful* resentment" (see Baier, 1980: 136).

Today, resentment is typically defined as a reactive feeling of bitterness, indignation, displeasure, or ill will toward some condition, behavior, individual, group, or other agent. It is an affective reaction to another's freely willed action that is wrong, insulting, offending, injurious, or unjustified (Strawson, 2008 [1974]: 6–11; Turner, 2011; OED: meaning 1a). It is the negative meaning of resentment that has prevailed; the distinction between its helpless and forceful manifestations remains topical in sociomoral philosophy and social theory.

We first consider the helpless kind of resentment, which is linked to both meaninglessness and powerlessness, and is a reaction to unjustified suffering. We then consider forceful resentment, wherein the resentful individual endeavors to seek an end to suffering and punishment for the agent held responsible for one's suffering.

## 2. Helpless Resentment

Relatively powerless individuals, disproportionately from society's lower strata, are prone to lacking a clear understanding of their objective social situation. But what is it about occupying lowly positions in social hierarchies that, for many, instills a sense of meaninglessness? Low status means, at least in reference-group comparison, the experience of exploitation, privation, health problems, food insecurity, and other forms of deprivation. Thus, disadvantaged groups and classes are subjected to suffering. L'évinas (1991; see also Minkkinen, 2007) argued that there can be no rational meaning in extreme suffering, and to hold that useless suffering can serve a higher good is morally repugnant. In his later phenomenology of suffering, L'évinas refuted its rationality by describing it as evil, passive, and meaningless.

Moral philosophers have argued that, considering the Holocaust and countless other atrocities, any theodicy providing a natural or supernatural justification for extreme suffering is, in itself, evil. Any justification of one's neighbor's pain is a source of immorality. As L'évinas argued, it is meaningless to be subjected to extreme suffering without resentment. The only meaningful suffering, L'évinas (1998 [1991]: 91–101) argued, is the pain associated with the recognition of ethical responsibilities toward others, a burdensome responsibility that can produce compassion (for L'évinas, the supreme ethical principle). Thus, resentment can be an adaptive reaction to suffering, an effort to restore meaning.

However, as White (2012: 119) points out, meaningless suffering can produce resentment in both directions; those who are exposed to the experience of extreme suffering will resent those who make them suffer; and those who witness such suffering can resent their ethical obligation to feel compassion and pity, and even to intervene. Nietzsche (1956 [1887]: 170–3, 185–6, 205–8, 262–5) noted the absurdity of suffering, and denounced the sentimentality of Christian ethics (and utilitarian morality), which attribute meaning to suffering. Nietzsche (1956 [1887]: 200) exclaimed: "What makes people rebel against suffering is not really suffering itself but the senselessness of suffering."

Members of subdominant groups and classes are apt to rue their comparatively lowly social positions, and, affectively (often unconsciously), feel hostility and resentment toward those in higher positions. The result, historically, has occasionally been that subordinate groups and classes seek meaning in extremist ideologies, belief systems, and social movements, including slave revolts (Ferro, 2010: 1–20), fascism (Adorno, 1950), proto-fascism (Berlet, 2006), McCarthyism (Trow, 1958), racial prejudice (Lowenthal & Guterman, 1949), apocalyptic prophesies (Berlet, 2011; Strozier & Boyd, 2010), conspiracy theories (Katyal, 2003), revolutionary socialism (Ferro, 2010: 21–72; Sloterdijk, 2010: 111–81), and right-wing populist anti-elitism (Berlet, 2011; Berlet & Lyons, 2000; Salmela & von Scheve, 2017).

Nietzsche's (1887) *Genealogy of Morals* links both meaningless and powerlessness to resentment, using the French term *ressentiment* (perhaps to demonstrate his European social identity in contrast to Hegel's nationalism, or out of the Enlightenment vogue for all that is French). *Ressentiment*, for Nietzsche, involved the repeated experience and reliving of a negative emotional state felt by some individual, group, or category of persons seen as having inflicted an injury, or otherwise made one suffer, together with hostility, frustration, and a thirst for revenge which cannot be directly expressed. For Nietzsche, the attainment of efficacy and power engenders meaning; the lack of, or loss of, power, a collapse of meaning: The suffering of defeat or loss of status generates an explosive, dangerous affect, which deadens the tormenting, secret pain. Nietzsche (1956 [1887]: III.15) called this state of mind *ressentiment*.

*Ressentiment* is a deep and long-lasing sentiment. As used by Nietzsche, it suggests a sense of weakness or inferiority, together with feelings of hostility and malice directed at whomever or whatever is seen, accurately or not, as causing suffering and associated frustration. *Ressentiment* can become a savage affect resulting in involvement in extremist ideologies and practices, while simultaneously acting to satisfy the craving for a narcotic that can mask the pain of having one's system of meaning imposed upon, appear to have suddenly vanished, or has been gradually eroded. Essentially, Nietzsche saw *ressentiment* as an adaptive reaction motivated by "a desire to stun pain" (Morgan, 1965 [1941]: 150). *Ressentiment* is a potential source of energy, but this raw energy is typically not directed at the real source of one's incapacity; it rather finds expression on other levels, including changes of ideas and values, a "transvaluation of all values" (*Umwertung aller Werte*) (Nietzsche 1895), and by choosing targets for ridicule, spite, malice, condemnation, or scapegoating, thereby coming to experience overcoming and meeting a desperate need for a sense of efficacy.

Nietzsche's analysis of *ressentiment* began with a distinction between the nobility and the common people. The hereditary nobility (the 'masters') was divided between those who fought (the 'knights') and those who prayed (the 'priests'), with the common people being those who worked (the 'slaves' or the 'herd'). Nietzsche's (1956 [1887]: I.5) concepts of 'nobility' — along with 'knight', 'priest', and 'slave', were historically situated, both in the ancient world and in medieval times, but his 'genealogy of morals' was far from a rigorous historical account;<sup>1</sup> these concepts can more accurately be seen as a social-psychological diagnosis of character types. All three of these ideal-typical actors are subject to a variety of alienation. The highly competitive individual, the 'knight', is subject to violating whatever norms of behavior exist that might constrain his behavior, and, acting normlessly, is prone to a kind of *anomie* accompanied by ruthless grasp for power (Durkheim, 1960 [1897]: 257; TenHouten, 2016).<sup>2</sup> The subordinate, the 'slave', has no values of his own, rather internalizing those of his master, and is subject to a variety of alienation not considered here, which Schutte (1983) refers to as "heteronomic conscience" and links to envy. Heteronomy, the rule of another, or the state of being ruled or dominated by another, is the antithesis of 'autonomy', which Kant (1997 [1781]: 30, 33, 36–7; 1964 [1785]: 37–40, 108–13), drawing on Rousseau (1762b), defined as the true self, an autonomous moral will determine itself by its own moral laws.

It is the 'priest' that Nietzsche (1887, 1895) linked to *ressentiment*. Nietzsche essentially carried out a social-psychology of priests, described as "weak" and "unhealthy," and who had been defeated by the "physicality" and "overflowing health" of the knights, and who consequently develop a perverse sense of "impotence" (Nietzsche, 1956 [1887]: I.6–I.7). The priest desires to lead a kind of life he believes is valuable, which includes political supremacy, but cannot fulfill this aspiration of a "lust to rule" or "will to power." The result is a "man of *ressentiment*," who must adapt to the tensions between his aspirations, to which he feels entitled, and his inability to attain these aspirations.<sup>3</sup> He can resign himself to impotence, renouncing the kind of life he values most, and accept global failure. Opting for resignation to one's lot in life, however, requires a stable scale of values, but in a modern society oriented to the ideal of progress, all scales of value become transitory, so that resignation becomes difficult. Or, he can seek revenge as a means of restoring his lost superiority; but in *ressentiment* this urge to vengefulness comes to be 'repressed', 'submerged', or 'sublimated'.

Any theology or philosophy that springs from weakness, Nietzsche maintained, is sure to be decadent, lacking in vitality, and expressive of disgust with life in this world (de Huszar, 1945: 260). The priest's desire for superiority itself becomes repressed. The result can be a 'revaluation of values' that goes unrecognized, being masked by a self-deceptive imagining that 'real' power lies not in political superiority but in spiritual achievement; the value of political supremacy comes to be replaced with the values of pity, forgiveness, gratitude, love, and equality (Reginster, 1997: 291–2). The individual in an inferior position and experiencing *ressentiment* comes to see himself as superior "by virtue of the very properties that formerly constituted his inferiority" (Elster, 1999: 175). The display of emotions such as forgiveness and love, Nietzsche contended, masks a nearly opposite and often unacknowledged sentiment of *ressentiment*, which is saturated with contempt, outrage, malevolence, and hatred for those who have compromised one's dignity or challenged one's self-respect, so that these inflicted wounds will neither be forgotten or forgiven.

This devaluation of power and self-efficacy, however, continues to be motivated by a repressed desire to generate power. If power cannot be generated in one-way, other ways will be tried in an effort to avoid the collapse of meaning (Nietzsche, 1956 [1887]: III). For Nietzsche, "loss of meaning is precisely the situation where life is unable to engender power" (Bowles, 2003: 13). For the priest who has been overcome, who has lost his high position, and is fueled by *ressentiment*, power can find manifestation in two ways: (i) by enjoying the bit of power than comes from doing good deeds; and (ii) in order to deaden the pain, by brutalizing, torturing, and killing those they *can* control, justified by accusations of evil thoughts or deeds: The Catholic Inquisition, from mid-12th–early-19th Centuries, stands out as one historical example (Bethencourt, 2009); witchcraft persecutions, from the mid-15th–late-17th Centuries (Demos, 2008), another (see also Ferro, 2010 [2007]: 15–20). Those who suffer a loss of power can find a narcotic in inflicting suffering on others.<sup>4</sup>

Max Scheler (1961 [1912]: 46–7) saw the concept of *ressentiment* as encompassing several affective states, including hostility, aggressive impulses, indignation or anger, rancor, envy, malice, and a desire for revenge. While Scheler emphasized the emergence of *ressentiment* among those holding lowly positions in status hierarchies, this affect-laden phenomenon extends to those who have been subjected to suffering and brutalization, such as victims of political crimes. Auschwitz survivor Jean Améry (1980 [1966]: 77) held that, while *ressentiment* is a negative state of mind, the victim can use it as a sociomoral justification for remaining alive, "in order that the crime become a moral reality for the criminal, in order that he be swept into the truth of his atrocity." Améry offered this view as a counterweight to contemporary advocacy of reconciliation, pardon, and forgiveness following mass atrocities. Some societies that have experienced atrocities against subdominant groups make efforts to ensure that history does not repeat itself, but they can also be prone to seek obliteration of the past. Fassin (2013: 253) recalls an inscription tagged on a wall in Johannesburg, South Africa: "As if nothing ever happened." It is only *ressentiment*, Améry contended, that stands in the way of forgiving and forgetting the past. Whereas Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu were men of reconciliation, South African politician

Thabo Mbeki is a man of *ressentiment*, for whom the history of apartheid and the suffering it wrought should never be forgiven or forgotten. Forgiveness, if it comes, would not be unilateral, and criminals would exhibit signs of repentance. A white South African might feel anger and resentment toward the criminals who exploited apartheid to torture, rape, and kill black South Africans. But he or she could not feel *ressentiment*, for this requires having been subjected to inferiorization, stigmatization, or violence. Thus, “*Ressentiment* is more than an affect: it is an anthropological condition related to a historical situation of victim — a description that does not suit the ordinary experience of resentment...” (Fassin, 2013: 256).

*Ressentiment* is based on a feeling that one is undeservingly losing, or has lost, the superior, or even equal, social position to which one is entitled, and where: (i) an aspiration which is repressed has been denied; (ii) an inability to acquire these desires is not accepted; and (iii), one becomes vulnerable to mistreatment. As *ressentiment*, this involves not only resentment but also envy, vengefulness, shame, and self-contempt (Reginster, 1997: 296). As Nietzsche’s (1978 [1883–91]: II.7) Zarathustra exclaimed: “You preachers of equality, the tyrannomania of impotence clamors thus out of you for quality: your most secret ambitions to be tyrants thus shrouds themselves in words of virtue. Aggrieved conceit, repressed envy...erupts from you...as the frenzy of revenge.”

Resentful individuals, whose character structures have come to profess acting according to altruistic values, are subconsciously motivated by wishes and desires that are incompatible with such values. Nietzsche (2005 [1895]: 5, 12, 36, 40, 58, 61) expanded the meaning of *ressentiment* by applying it to the entire Judeo-Christian tradition. He saw in this theology a rejection of the acceptance of life, of temporality, and of well-being, beauty, pride, social power, enjoyment, passion, and self-approval. The strong individual, Nietzsche argued, does not seek meaning in changelessness, certainty, and uniformity, but rather finds value in change, uncertainty, variety, and the experience of power and efficacy (de Huszar, 1945: 264). Nietzsche came to see *ressentiment* as a psychological condition of self-poisoning, triggered by discontent with society’s stratificational hierarchy; it especially afflicts those who consider their situations oppressive, and their prospects, worsening. *Ressentiment* can take the form of an interiorized hatred that finds no expressive outlet. It can be blocked or repressed and projected backward onto oppressed individuals’ world views. But resentment, as emphasized by Smith and Hume, can also exist as a moral emotion, and be associated with forceful behavior.

### 3. Forceful Resentment

Resentment has been topical in contemporary social psychology and sociology. Research on social inequality has shown that cognitive apprehension of relative deprivation, an unfair discrepancy between one’s own situation and those of more privileged others (Corning, 2000), is apt to result in discontent and resentment (Bernstein & Crosby, 1980; Folger, 1987; H. Smith & Kessler, 2004; H. Smith, Pettigrew, Pippin, & Bialosiewicz, 2012). In sociology, Bryan Turner (2011) views the high level of visibility between social groups in modern societies, especially within mega-cities, as a source of resentment. Compared to traditional societies, modern societies are open, fluid, and contiguous. Wealth and celebrity are often on full display, with the homes, life styles, and social behavior of the rich and famous displayed (primarily via mass media) to the underprivileged and disprivileged in large doses, which reinforces the perception of the vast social distance between the common people and the inaccessible wealthy elite. This exposure to inequality in the crowded social spaces of modernity can breed resentment. Rousseau (1762a) argued that modern individuals are rendered inauthentic by the need to assume a social mask, and that they display a false, amoral self. Because status and prestige are considered scarce, and their attainment often appears random and arbitrary, the resulting sense of frustration and disappointment of those who fail to attain high status or prestige creates the conditions for “an inflationary growth of resentment,” in the form of “an individualized emotion or disposition” (Turner, 2011: 88, 90). The basis of modern resentment, Turner concludes, is the development of a disjunction between material or status attainment and personal worth. Traditional virtues such a loyalty, saving, and asceticism have lost their place, and character has been devalued and corroded (Sennett, 1998). Success appears, to many who have not attained it, to be either random, or manipulated in favor of those with social advantages. This makes a mockery of the idea of equality of opportunity and generates an “exquisite resentment” (Turner, 2011: 90).

A few researchers have examined the relationship between resentment and macrosociological processes of social class competition. Marshall (1973 [1938]: 167–9) recognized that class antagonisms have an affective source in “resentment against inequality.” Such resentment, he argued, derives from three sources: (i) invidious *comparison* of one’s own class with higher classes; (ii) *frustration* at other classes’ privileges, which create inequality of opportunity, and which imputes to the higher classes “responsibility for the injustice under which the inferior suffers;” and (iii), *oppression*, where class conflict is expressed in unequal cooperation, in which one’s group is relatively powerless and subjected to exploitation. Marshall’s model of the three sources of resentment corresponds closely to the three-step process of developing, and acting upon, a state of relative deprivation. First, there must be a comparison made by the individual of his personal situation or that of a group to which he belongs. Second, there must be a cognitive appraisal that an individual, or his group, is at a comparative disadvantage; this can induce frustration, but Marshall used the concept of “frustration” in a

way that departed from earlier frustration-aggression theory, which was not a comparative model. And third, this perceived disadvantage is not only frustrating, but is seen as unfair, exploitative, and oppressive, such that “the perceiver or his/her ingroup deserves better, and this results in angry resentment” (H. Smith et al., 2012: 204).

While a relative-deprivation model can apply to individuals or to any social group, Marshall’s focus was on social classes, and particularly on the resentment of inferior classes,<sup>5</sup> Barbalet (1992: 155) points out that resentment can also be experienced by superordinate classes insofar as the actions of inferior classes result in losses of resources and opportunities. Class resentment, Barbalet shows, is also sensitive to changes in fortune based on the business cycle and other disruptions and discontinuities, with ascending classes not experiencing resentment but rather a future-oriented optimism and an aggressive self-assurance, and descending classes experiencing a past orientation, status defensiveness, and the potential for “resenting and rejecting the total framework of society” (Bensman & Vidich, 1962: 40). If not brought to consciousness, the resulting sublimated resentment can lead to: enhanced religiosity; a fascination with crime, cruelty, and perverse sexuality; and venom directed not against the class forces responsible for downward socioeconomic mobility, but rather “against those who are perceived as gaining rewards without having made sacrifices, such as welfare recipients and those who disdain economic opportunities, such as liberal and radical students” (Sennett & Cobb 1983 [1972]: 137–9).

The Marxian theory of class consciousness was never fully developed, and Marx’s life ended amidst his failed effort to define the concept of social classes (Marx, 1971 [1894]: 886). While Marx (1935 [1847]: 40) can be credited with an intuitive understanding of relative deprivation, he did not infer the emotions that invidious social comparisons of subordinate social classes would trigger. Efforts to describe class consciousness in cognitive terms have foundered on the fact that members of social classes frequently do not act in their objective interests, due in part to the free-rider problem (Elster, 1985). Those who have focused on the affective aspect of class consciousness have identified resentment as a key emotion, but resentment itself has not been explicitly defined. To this end, it is helpful to sketch the arguments for proletarian revolutionary action adumbrated in Marxism and identify the functions of the components of this conceptualization. On the level of emotion, and especially longer-lasting sentiment, oppositional consciousness requires resentment, which can be broken down into primary emotional components (subjective-states/functions) of disgust/rejection, anger/destruction, and surprise/orientation-and-boundary-defense.<sup>6, 7</sup> The oppressed must recognize what they wish to reject, what they wish to destroy, and what they wish to resist, by orienting themselves to economic exploitation (the negative experience of economic interactions (Plutchik’s 1962, 1980 “territoriality”). According to Marx, and Marxists who advocate a revolutionary class consciousness, the proletariat and associated groups and classes *reject* their subdominant position and the associated conditions of their exploitation. They wish to *destroy* the capitalist mode of economic production, private property, and the class structure of society. They wish to gain control of the territorial or socioeconomic resources of the capitalist classes, their ill-gotten gains and private property that have been acquired by extracting surplus value from the laboring classes: to this end, they must *orient* themselves to resisting, and overcoming, economic exploitation and degrading conditions of labor. Because the functions of rejection, destruction, and orientation belong to the primary emotions disgust, anger, and surprise, respectively, there is at least a rough correspondence between Marshall’s (i) comparison, (ii) frustration, and (iii) oppression, and the present model of resentment, which identifies (i) a perception of inequality and therefore disgust, (ii) an effort to express unfair treatment, through expressions of anger,<sup>8</sup> and (iii) the negative experience of economic or territorial relations, and therefore surprise.<sup>9</sup>

Because the helpless form of resentment often is sublimated or repressed, and fails to reach consciousness, it does not lend itself to analysis. Forceful resentment, in contrast, can be seen as an affective basis of an oppositional class-consciousness, which has enabled resentment to be understood as possibly based on less complex, or basic, emotions. We first elaborate the meanings of these three emotions, and then examine the concept of basic, or primary, emotions, which requires presentation of a partial classification of the secondary emotions. It should be emphasized that while relative deprivation can be conceptualized at the individual or group level, it is only individuals that can experience emotions. Resentment can derive from invidious comparison of other ingroup individuals, with outgroup individuals, in comparing one’s ingroup with an outgroup, or the ingroup at present to its past or future (Runciman, 1966). All of these comparisons, according to relative-deprivation theory, result in feelings of unfairness that stimulates an “angry resentment” (H. Smith et al., 2012: 205; see also Runciman, 1966; Crosby, 1976; Folger, 1987). This, generalization, however, must be qualified by adding that some individuals will recognize, and then accept, their position of relative deprivation (Jost, Kay, & Thorisdottir, 2009) and not experience anger or resentment.

#### **4. Resentment as a Tertiary Emotion**

We propose that resentment is a tertiary-level emotion, whose primary emotional components are anger, surprise, and disgust, and whose secondary emotional components are contempt, shock, and outrage.

##### *4.1 Anger*

Anger is widely considered a negative emotion because it can be unpleasant for all concerned. However, while trait anger

can indeed be pathological (DiGiuseppe & Tafrate, 2007), normal anger is an approach-oriented, goal-directed emotion that prioritizes the attainment of favorable outcomes (Tomarken and Zald, 2009). Anger of mild intensity can enhance analytic processing (Moons and Mackie, 2007), and its approach-motivated features are visible even in infancy (He et al., 2010). Plutchik was not in error when he defined anger as a positively-valenced primary emotion. Anger becomes positive through a 'dialectical' process, a 'negation of the negation' that makes normal anger a positive: One is insulted, a negative experience, and then endeavors to negate this negative experience by a derisive rejoinder, a counter-insult, or an expression of displeasure. By their insult, the other has asserted their own status in a hierarchy by means of lowering one's own status, and a display of anger is an adaptive response, an effort to restore one's status, either by defending one's own status, or by endeavoring to reduce the status of one's opponent. Anger is a re-assertive response to goal-blockage or denigration (Carver & Harmon-Jones, 2009). If, in comparison to other people, groups, or even to themselves at different points in time, individuals who believe they do not have what they, or their group, deserves, and feel at least relatively deprived, will feel anger and resentment. There is thus a close relationship between anger and resentment, and it can be said that anger is the central ingredient of resentment. While in their meta-analytic review of relative deprivation theory, H. Smith et al. (2012: 217–18) repeatedly referred to "angry resentment," but at the same time pointed out the difference between the two emotions. Resentment is a less ephemeral and more clearly moral emotion (that is, a sentiment) than is simple anger (Grant, 2008).

The resentful person will feel anger at having been violated, mistreated, or brutalized by others. The anger within resentment "strives to get even, inflicts one hurt for another, ...[and] asserts one's personal power over anything that challenges it" (Diamond, 1996: 271). Such anger will take the form of a desire for the misery of the violator, together with an aversion to his happiness (Hume, 1978 [1739]: 382). Hume saw anger as a response to suffering, pain, frustration, injury, and wrong inflicted by others which instills a desire to act in the moral role of punisher. Resentment, Hume (1986 [1748]: 218–27) argued, strives to make itself known and is desired not for any hedonic pleasure but for itself. As summarized by Baier (1980: 138), Hume argued that, "Resentment is not simply anger, it is the form anger takes when it is provoked by what is seen as a wrong, and when the striking back which is desired is seen as punishment." Anger is interior to the very definition of resentment, which is "a feeling of...ill will, bitterness, or anger against a person or thing" (OED: meaning 1a).

Anger is a crucial component of resentment (Spielberger, 1988).<sup>10</sup> The perception that one has received undeserved harmful treatment by others, and deserves better, can be a source of a deep and persisting anger. Those who have experienced abuse in childhood are apt to develop a bitter resentment about having been mistreated and unloved, which creates a thirst for retribution. Pincus (2002) sees an anger-infused, even seething, intense, and enduring resentment, fueled by a sense of worthlessness, as increasing individuals' propensity for murder and rape, which become — although often misdirected and precipitated by a mild slight — crimes of retribution. Such deep resentment, Pincus argues, leads to (i) seeing the slightest indifference as a global disrespect, (ii) reduces capacity for self-control, and (iii) leads to misinterpretation or distortion of social signals as shameful rejection.

#### 4.2 Disgust

When the angering behavior of predatory others is seen as unjust, and is rejected on moral grounds, the victim's sociomoral response includes disgust. It is meaningless, or useless, suffering that is the source of resentment. Lévinas (1998 [1991]: 91–5), in arguing that it is meaningless to suffer without resentment, described the resentful person as engaging in a "refusal of meaning" for any claimed justification of his or her suffering. The alternative to such rejection, or revulsion, is a passive submission, a reduction of the self to a mere thing whose humanity has been overwhelmed by the evil that rends suffering. Resentment at being subjected to useless, even absurd, pain is an emotion, and is also an adaptive reaction that, if forceful, can command the ethical duties of others to help relieve one's helplessness, abandonment, and solitude. Thus, it is rejection, the central function of disgust, that can elevated an interiorized form of "pure pain" that is intrinsically meaningless, a helpless form of resentment, to a forceful resentment that, however confused and misdirected it might be, comprises a demand for ethical treatment and palliative intervention, the price that civilization must pay to lighten the pain of those who suffer — and especially if the source of suffering is diabolical and malignant, even if this effort itself causes suffering. This, Lévinas (1998 [1991]: 93–5) argued, is the supreme ethical principle, for meeting this obligation to the other who suffers is the only kind of suffering that is meaningful. Resentment is indeed a sociomoral emotion, for it can be ignored, but only at the cost of rejecting what is morally incumbent, thereby being a party to a meaningless evil.

Plutchik (1980) saw disgust as the adaptive reaction to the negative experience of social identity. This identity dimension can be generalized into Fiske's (1991) notion of equality-matched social relationships (TenHouten, 2013: 27–33). If this generalization is valid, then the negative experience of equality-matching will trigger disgust. Based on Hume's analysis, we might expect that the primary emotion disgust is also interior to resentment. For Hume (1978 [1739]: 581), moral qualities are "certainly...not deriv'd from reason...but proceeds entirely from a moral taste and from certain sentiments of

pleasure or disgust.” Hume (1986 [1748]: 213) further observed that, “those who produce utility earn praise; while those who produce disutility, and moral evil, instill in those they injure “the strongest sentiment of disgust and hatred.”<sup>11</sup> Those who are tyrannical, barbarous, or insolent trigger disgust in those they dominate and abuse (Hume, 1986 [1748]: 273). The expression of disgust can itself be punitive toward an oppressive other. As Hume ([1748] 1986: 280–1) put it, no experience of sociality “can be agreeable, or even tolerable, where a man feels his presence unwelcome, and discovers all around him symptoms of disgust and aversion.”

Marshall’s linkage between “comparison” and disgust requires elaboration. Disgust is the prototypical adaptive reaction to what Plutchik calls “identity,” Fiske calls “equality matching,” and de Waal (2009: 187) calls “fairness.” Sensitivity to a partner, another individual, or a collectivity, getting a comparatively larger share or reward, is disturbing and agitating to capuchin monkeys and chimpanzees (de Waal, 2009: 187, 190–1). Human individuals typically resent unequal treatment, which in behavioral economics has led to the development of “inequality aversion theory” (Chambers, 2012). While the inequality-aversion literature does not mention disgust, it does focus on the basic *function* of disgust, rejection, especially in studies of bargaining games, where unfairly unequal offers tend to be rejected, so that rational self-interest is outweighed by the force of resentment. While concern that others get more than we do might seem petty and irrational, and often is, it nonetheless serves the adaptive function of resistance to being taken advantage of, thereby discouraging exploitation and contributing to control of the free-rider problem. In evolutionary terms, de Waal (2006) argues, it was the anticipation of the resentment of others, motivated by conflict avoidance, that led to a larger sense of fairness emerging, first in primates and then in humans. “From humble beginnings noble principles arise. It starts with resentment if you get less, then moves to concern about how others will react if you get more, and ends with declaring [unfairness a]...bad thing in general” (de Waal, 2006: 220). The consequences of perceived unfairness extend far beyond a twinge of resentment if a sibling gets a bigger slice of pizza; this was recognized by Marshall and is reiterated by de Waal (2009: 190), who observes, “Human history is filled with ‘let them eat cake’ moments that create resentment, sometimes boiling over into bloody revolt.”

#### 4.3 Surprise

The behavior that stimulates resentment effectively penetrates one’s boundaries, possibly involves abuse of body and property, and therefore contains an element of *surprise* (the prototypical adaptive reaction to the negative experience of territoriality or resources).<sup>12</sup> Violations of manners, of norms of interpersonal behavior, and of respect for what is valued, believed in, and held to be proper and moral, can be seen as breaches of interpersonal or moral territory. Individuals who perceive they are undeservedly disadvantaged will experience a number of emotions, which in addition to anger and resentment include surprise, disappointment, outrage, and envy (Corning, 2000).<sup>13</sup>

Feather, McKee, and Bekker (2011) found that both anger and surprise clustered with resentment as undeserved negative emotions.<sup>14</sup> Surprise is triggered when one’s territory is violated. We have seen that resentment arises when one is placed in an inferior position, and where harmful treatment is undeserved, unfair, insulting, or injurious. Smith (2000 [1759]: 44) asserted that resentment arises when an empowered other wrongly inflicts injury. The most direct kind of injurious territorial violation is injury to one’s ultimate territory, the body.

In the rest of this section, the hypothesized primary and secondary emotional components of resentment will be specified, and resentment will be defined as a tertiary emotion. Resentment we hypothesize to be a tertiary-level combination of three emotions (TenHouten, 2013: 20–2; 2017a: 105–21) that Plutchik (1962, 1980) and Ekman (1992; see also Ekman, Sorenson, & Friesen, 1969) agree are primary. It can be formally defined as follows:

$$\text{Resentment}_1 = \text{Anger} \ \& \ \text{Disgust} \ \& \ \text{Surprise}.$$

In order to further interpret resentment, we formulate this proposed tertiary emotion as combinations of one primary emotion and the secondary emotion formed from the other two primaries.

#### 4.4 A Contemptible Breach of Normative Boundaries

We first consider the compound emotion consisting of anger and disgust, following Plutchik’s (1991 [1962]: 118) definition, “contempt = anger + disgust.” In contempt, anger and disgust are present at a high level of intensity. Given that anger and disgust can be extrojected moral emotions, the same can be said of contempt. Contempt is apt to be particularly strong if it is directed to an individual or group believed to be inferior yet hold a position of power or advantage, as in the case of contempt for a tyrant, or for a political party propelled to power but regarded as inferior by members of a traditional elite (Elster, 1999: 74; 2010). Yet, in resentment contempt can also be introjected, for the first reaction of the man of *ressentiment* to his defeat is not resentment or indignation, but shame and *self*-contempt (Reginster, 1997: 296). The objects of contempt are (i) one who is perceived as failing to uphold interpersonal or sociomoral standards, and whose behavior violates others’ values, norms, mores, or bodies. For Nietzsche, *ressentiment* (or helpless resentment) involves a covert endorsement of the values of the agent inflicting injury. The word ‘contempt’ originated in 1393 from the Latin

*contemptus*, which essentially means regarding with scorn. Behavioral expressions of contempt involve the behavior of anger, moving toward the object of contempt, yet avoiding direct contact with what is despised, disdained, and disrespected. Given that ‘contempt = anger & disgust’, it follows by substitution into the formula for resentment<sub>1</sub> that,

$$\text{Resentment}_2 = \text{Contempt} \ \& \ \text{Surprise}.$$

The emotion, surprise, motivates us to resolve representational discrepancies. “Surprise,” Izard (1980: 209) observes, “resets consciousness, and the resulting affect gives direction to subsequent perceptual activity.” Surprise, as boundary defense, can be invoked by a degradation of one’s meaning system, combined with contempt for the putative causes of this sociocultural deterioration and shrinking opportunities to maintain a valued way of life and associated systems of belief. This form of resentment, resentment<sub>2</sub>, is entirely consistent with Hume’s (1978 [1739]: 389–93) position that contempt involves invidiously comparing oneself, regarded positively, with another perceived as undeserving of sympathy.

Emotions such as contempt and resentment have consequences for the nature and quality of intergroup relations in society. Intergroup behavior that leads unequal groups or classes to experience prejudice and racism possesses an emotional complexity that social-psychological researchers have only recently appreciated. Relations of domination and subordination of course involve negative emotions, such as contempt, envy, and resentment; but they also involve positive affective states such as affection and admiration (Jackman, 1994). No doubt negative emotions experienced at the group level can lead to action tendencies and behaviors favoring one’s own group (Mackie, Smith, & Ray 2008). This especially holds for extreme emotions such as humiliation, hatred, disgust, and contempt, which can become implicated in violent behavior. Contempt, in particular, is considered an extremely negative emotion. When experienced by members of dominant and oppressive groups, it is associated with short-term derogation, long-term social exclusion, lack of group reconciliation, and an absence of relational improvement (Fischer & Roseman, 2007). Tausch et al. (2011) report that, while anger by itself does not contribute to such intergroup difficulties, contempt (which includes anger) does contribute to non-normative action, such as lynching in the United States during the reconstruction period following the Civil War (and beyond), and systematic rape in South Africa, rampant during the apartheid era. The holding of a subordinate group in contempt has historically played a key role in humiliation, dehumanization, and brutalization. Groups subjected to such inhumane treatment surely experience resentment, in response, and this will involve contempt for the oppressors’ predatory behavior. Resentment can be directed downward, as indicated by the contemptuous treatment of the property, rights, bodies, and dignity of the oppressed on the part of their oppressors, and in some instances by derisive characterization of the working classes and the underclass by members of dominant classes, who do not hesitate to describe their social inferiors as lazy freeloaders sponging off a putatively bloated social-safety net.

#### 4.5 An Angering Culture Shock

Resentment is apt to arise in sociohistorical situations where individuals suffer from abrupt social and cultural change, where there can develop, for example, a “malaise resulting from the shock of an excessively abrupt economic change” that creates hardship and dissatisfaction (Ferro, 2010: 55). An intense and disturbed emotional state of shock occurs when an unfortunate event or situation develops suddenly and unexpectedly. It is the unforeseen nature of bad events that triggers shock, which can bring with it a destabilization of one’s worldview, for if one facet of life is disrupted (e.g., losing a job, or being persecuted on the basis of one’s ethnicity (Ball, 2008: 42, 67–8, 98, 176–7)), then all other aspects of everyday life will also be disrupted, and resentment will be directed to what are perceived of as the cause of this misfortune. As a deep emotional aspect of resentment, “shock...is a reaction not simply to an inadequate conceptual analysis but to the suggestion of a change in our world” (Strawson, 2008 [1974]: 22).

While Plutchik (1991 [1962]: 118) offered no definition of the mixture of disgust and surprise, it has been proposed that ‘disgust & surprise = shock’ (TenHouten, 2007: 88–90). *Shock*, in *Webster’s New World Dictionary* (1988; hereafter, *Webster*), means “to disturb the mind or emotion; affect with great surprise, distress, disgust, etc.” and “to be shocked, distressed, disgusted;” *shocking* includes in its meaning “extremely revolting” (OED), which clearly corresponds to the emotion of disgust. From these definitions, it follows that, ‘shock = surprise & disgust’.<sup>15</sup> Given this definition, it follows that

$$\text{Resentment}_3 = \text{Anger} \ \& \ \text{Shock}.$$

Resentment of those conducting what is regarded as morally unacceptable or sociomorally shocking can trigger angry indignation, that is, an annoyance provoked by whatever is perceived as unworthy, mean, or cruel. Resentment can thus result from perceived shockingly wrong, angering behavior of another person, group, or category of persons.

Resentment occurs through protracted, intractable intergroup conflicts, and anger is surely an important aspect of resentful feelings (Bar-Tal, 2004). Because anger is a sociomoral emotion, it is more likely experienced by those who are offended, than by those who are offending. Consistent with this, Tausch et al. (2011) found anger was more closely related to normative collective actions (e.g., demonstrations) than to non-normative collective actions (e.g., support for violence).



Anger, whether embedded in resentment, or not, and whether joined with a shocking realization, or not, can enhance self-esteem and play a role in redressing putatively wrong and unfair situations.

#### 4.6. A Disgusting Outrage

Meaningless suffering finds one source of its affective basis in the mixture of disgust and the secondary emotions resulting from the combination of anger and surprise. This is hypothesized to form outrage. One syllable of the word 'outrage' is rage, and 'outrage' clearly has an anger component, as it meant an "extremely vicious or violent act, ... a deep insult or offense" (offense meaning moving toward, the behavior of anger) and especially, "great anger, indignation, etc." Surprise is more indirectly included, but is nonetheless present, as *outrage* also means "exceeding all bounds of decency or reasonableness" (*Webster*). Outrage includes a penetration of a normative social boundary. We need only recall that surprise is the adaptive reaction to the penetration of a boundary of one's territory or rightful place. Moral outrage is a response to the behavior of others, not to the self (Goodenough, 1997). Given that 'outrage = anger & surprise', it follows that

$$\text{Resentment}_4 = \text{Disgust} \& \text{Outrage}.$$

In resentment, outrage occurs as an adaptive reaction to an event or action by another or others that is grossly offensive, or morally wrong, and is seen as repulsive or disgusting. Such behavior that is both outrageous and disgusting can arouse feelings of resentment, or of "bitter indignation" (OED), which will be experienced most intensely if the harmful behavior is experienced personally, or by close community members.

A definitional summary of the tertiary emotion, resentment, is shown in figure 1.

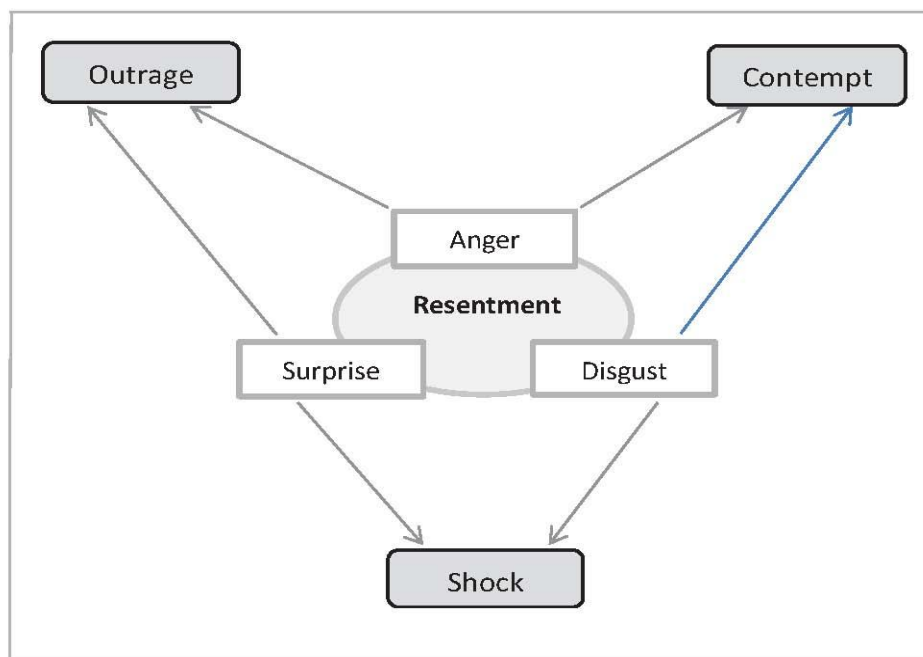


Figure 1. Primary and Secondary Emotions of Resentment

## 5. Discussion

It is in a world in which meaning seems to be slipping away, and individuals lose the sense of understanding the events in which they are engaged, resentment finds its fullest expression. In the contemporary world there are endless possibilities that the individual can experiment with, in a process of self-creation and openness to all kinds of experiences and beliefs. This, for some, will mean that life need not be taken seriously, as if it means something, as if it were morally constrained only by outmoded views of the sacred. If no important distinction can be made between true meaning and false meaning, then all meaning becomes false, an illusion, and a deception. But to accept that there is no truth means there is no such thing as a lie, and it is at this point that meaninglessness can become monstrous and unleash the demons of resentment upon those who are held up as scapegoats and subjected to abuse and even brutalization. It is when meaning becomes entirely relative that resentments are set free, so that meaninglessness can become “a cause of corruption and decay in society” (Casey, 2004: 74).

There is a continuity between emotions, which are acute and intense short-term, and sentiments, which are less activating and become longer-term dispositions of attitude, personality, and character. One might feel the emotion of resentment at not being invited to a social event but develop a global sentiment of resentfulness if one is systematically excluded from one’s community. In terms of theory construction, it is useful to focus on emotions, proceeding under the likelihood that the most complex sentiments develop out of the most complex emotions. Resentment, consistent with its first meaning, re-sentiment, means it is not just an emotion but is a sentiment, meaning it has substantial cognitive content. Re-sentiment is also past-oriented, as it is a reaction to an insult or injustice that *has been* suffered, and involves recall, recollection, reconsideration, and rumination. This temporal emphasis was evident in 1632: “An elephant, in whom...is...a wonderful memorie and a recenting of things past. And in 1716, “Despair...supposes...the resenting past, and the date of grace spent” (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 1971: 810).

The concepts *ressentiment* and resentment have a colorful history. ‘*Ressentiment*’ came to be elaborated by Nietzsche and Scheler to describe the affective reaction to downward social mobility or unjustified suffering and oppression. The phenomena that *ressentiment* refers to are real and are of sociological and sociohistorical importance. Both resentment and *ressentiment* have taken on a negative meaning. Even negative emotions are adaptive, however, and Lévinas recognized this in insightfully observing that it is meaningless to suffer without resentment; further insight was provided by Hume, who noted that resentment is meaningless if it does not make itself known and considered by those it accurately targets. Thus, resentment has the potential to be not only adaptive but forcefully so.

There is a difference between *ressentiment* and resentment. Resentment is a complex emotion, here hypothesized to be a tertiary-level emotion, it is nonetheless a garden-variety emotion, one of 56 possible tertiaries.<sup>16</sup> While resentment involves anger, it also involves surprise (the prototypical adaptive reaction to violation, and especially to violation of the territories of the self) and disgust (the prototypical adaptive reaction to denigration of one’s social identity). *Ressentiment* is a form of resentment, and therefore is comprised of the same three primary emotions and the same three secondary emotions (contempt, shock, and outrage). The difference is that resentment ordinarily has as its scope a feeling of mistreatment in the everyday social world, whereas *ressentiment* is a *generalized* resentment against larger social categories, the ruling class, the freeloading minorities, certain ethnic groups, or the whole cruel world. *Ressentiment*, more than a more narrowly focused resentment, is typically accompanied by other complex emotions and affective states of mind, which can vary greatly by situation and circumstance, but which can include vengefulness, hatred, bitterness, and malevolence. *Ressentiment*, more than resentment, is apt to become entangled with ideological worldviews that are infused with a desire to gain revenge against those held responsible for one’s suffering, but history is replete with instances in which the wrong categories of persons are identified as culprits, so that injurious, aggressive behavior comes to be directed toward groups and categories of people that are wrongly held responsible for wrongs and crimes they did not commit. Resentment, and its broader form of *ressentiment*, is indeed a powerful emotion. It can be sublimated to the extent that an individual is not consciously aware of being resentful, and in its forceful form can lead to participation in the most unsavory and destructive ideologies, belief systems, and social movements. In spite of the hazards, and the tragedies that have resulted therefrom, resentment–*ressentiment*, like all emotions, is potentially adaptive and can serve sociomoral purposes.

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## Notes

1 Nietzsche's three classes — those who fought, those who prayed, and those who worked, was a vast oversimplification of the complex class structure of medieval times, and in no way can be seen as a historical study. Murray (1978) describes the complexity and development of medieval class structure and the gradual breakdown, mainly in the 12th century, of the overall tripartite structure of those who fought, prayed, and worked.

2 Power, for Nietzsche, was also expressed in calm restraint, tolerance, and reposed confidence.

3 The claim that it is the priest, not the slave, who is the “man of *ressentiment*” is controversial, because many readers of Nietzsche have associated *ressentiment* revaluation with the “slave revolt.” However, in Nietzsche's (1886) *Beyond Good and Evil*, the moralities of the master and slave are described without reference to *ressentiment*; the notions of the priest and *ressentiment* are introduced together in the *Genealogy of Morals* (Nietzsche 1887). *Ressentiment* revaluation is a “slave revolt” not because it is instigated by the slave, but because it negates “noble values” (see Reginster, 1997: 289).

4 Nietzsche (2005 [1895]: 55, 74) was no admirer of the ‘priest’, who he described as “the most dangerous form of parasite, as the venomous spider of creation,” which filled him with “disgust,” such that the very sight of him “excites loathing.” He points out the historical truth that Christian priests, while professing pity and love of others, found a way to

exert power over others. Nietzsche's (1978 [1883–91]: 83–5) Zarathustra likened resentment to the tarantula, a solitary, defensive creature, terrifying and disgusting in appearance. It is poisonous, and can launch a surprise attack, but hides in its hole and walks backward. Nietzsche's tarantula is filled with rage and seeks revenge, willing equality as a response to all who have power.

5 As an early example, ancient Greeks established various procedures for freeing slaves, but these freed slaves did not gain full citizenship rights in their city-states and could be re-enslaved if they showed an "aggressive ingratitude" which "testifies to their resentment" (Ferro, 2010: 1).

6 Some emotions researchers (e.g., H. Smith and Kessler, 2004: 293) see what are here considered complex secondary emotions, suggesting that they "represent different natural word clusters within the basic emotion of anger [and other emotions]." According to this view, as examples, resentment and frustration represent anger, and disappointment and hopelessness represent sadness.

7 A complete classification of the 7 secondary and 21 tertiary emotions that contain anger as a primary constituent is presented elsewhere (TenHouten 2018). A classification of all 28 secondary emotions is shown in TenHouten (2017b).

8 Frustration is a common affective reaction to opposition and blockage of goal-attainment. This lack of control can induce either rational problem-solving methods and/or anger. The relationship between frustration and anger is so close that they are apt to form a common factor in measurement models (e.g., Deater-Deckard, Pettrill, & Thompson 2006). Frustration contributes to aggressiveness (Miller 1941), and aggressiveness can be defined as a mixture of anger and anticipation (TenHouten, 2013: 73–90, 86–90, 138–139, 144–146).

9 Plutchik saw anticipation and surprise as the positive and negative adaptive reactions to the existential problem of territoriality. Territoriality, because it involves resources and the function of exploration, can in turn be sociologically generalized to what Fiske (1991) called "market-pricing" social relations (TenHouten, 2013: 23–46).

10 Spielberger (1988) rather sees resentment as an aspect of anger-in; but if, as claimed here, resentment is a complex emotion and anger is a primary emotion, then anger-in (and anger-out) is rather a component of resentment.

11 Hatred is hypothesized to be a tertiary emotion which, like resentment, contains the primary elements anger and disgust, and therefore contempt, but differs from resentment in containing fear rather than surprise. This means that hatred can be further characterized by the secondary emotions frozenness or tonic immobility (anger & fear) and repugnance or revulsion (fear and disgust) (TenHouten, 2013: 234–40).

12 Surprise is a reaction to the misexpected or to the unexpected. A misexpected event causes an individual's "coherence representation," or model of the world, to break down, and initiates an urgent "representational adaptive process" (Maguire, Maguire, & Keane, 2011: 177). Maguire and colleagues' "integration hypothesis" (in opposition to Teigen's and Keren's (2003) "contrast hypothesis") holds that events difficult to integrate into one's coherence representation are most apt to be surprising. If individuals were able to understand the precise causes behind events, then low-probability outcomes would in all cases be more difficult to integrate than higher probability events. However, given limits on knowledge and mental resources available in the everyday world, individuals tend to depend not on causal models but on generalized, often simple, heuristics (Gigerenzer et al. 1999). Accordingly, rare events, potential deadly to beneficial, such as severe weather and lottery winning, are seen as improbable but are generalized in terms of frequencies in ways that do not require representation updating.

13 Outrage will be defined here as a mixture of surprise and sadness. Elsewhere, disappointment has been described as a secondary emotion comprised of surprise and sadness; envy, as a tertiary emotion comprised of surprise, anger, and sadness (TenHouten, 2007: 78–81, 205–214). These definitions, if valid, point to an indirect place for surprise in emotional components and correlates of resentment.

14 In this study, disgust was not considered, but being treated as an object of disgust would appear to qualify as an undeserved negative emotion.

15 Goddard (2014: 74–5) defines disgust at (i) "extremely unpleasant," and "unacceptable. and shocking." According to the present emotions classification, however, shock is rather a combination of disgust and surprise.

16 If we assume, with Plutchik (1962, 1980), that there are 8 primary emotions, then there are 56 subsets of 3 elements and 28 subsets of 2 elements. Thus, there would be  $8 + 28 + 56 = 92$  emotions in all. An inventory of the 21 primary emotions that contain anger as an element is presented elsewhere (TenHouten 2018).

**Author Biography**

Warren TenHouten is a Research Professor of Sociology at the University of California Los Angeles. His current principal research involvements include: affect-spectrum theory and emotion classification; social dominance and social power; cognitive and affective neurosociology; and octonion-algebra-based theory of sociocognitive relational models. Recent publications include *Emotion and Reason: Mind, Brain, and the Social Domains of Work and Love* (Routledge 2013), *Alienation and Affect* (Routledge 2017), “The emotions of powerlessness” (*Journal of Political Power* 2016, 9(1), 83–121), and “Social dominance hierarchy and the pride–shame system” (*Journal of Political Power* 2017, 10(1), 94–114).

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