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The beholder beheld: a study of social emotionality

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Abstract

The study reported in this paper is concerned with social emotions. These are defined as states which are experienced either exclusively or more intensively before a real or imagined audience. It is argued that when social emotions arise as a consequence of disrupting social rules, this is because the actor in question is aware of a discrepancy between his or her self-image, which is assumed to be neutral, and the image which he or she assumes to have conveyed to those who witness the incident. In a role-playing experiment, subjects were presented with four situations depicting disruptions of routine activity, two of which involved rule disruption. These situations were described from one of two perspectives (actor or observer) and set in one of two social contexts (public or private). Results confirmed the main predictions, which were (1) that in the case of rule disruptions, the emotionality attributed to the actor would be greater in public than in private; (2) that dispositional ratings of the actor would reveal a discrepancy between self-image and public image, and that this discrepancy would covary with the actor's emotionality; and (3) that dispositional ratings of the actor would reveal a discrepancy between public image and subjective public image.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of the present paper is to examine the perception of situations in which unexpected disruptions of routine activity occur. In particular, the intention is to investigate what might be termed the *social* emotions which arise in such circumstances, in other words those affective states which are experienced either exclusively or more intensively in public, or with reference to a social context. The central question which this paper seeks to address is this: Why does an individual who unintentionally violates normative expectations in everyday life

Addressee for correspondence—see p. 265 for detail.

experience an emotional state? For example, why should someone who reaches for a can of food in a crowded supermarket, and in doing so accidentally upsets a whole tier of cans, feel self-conscious and embarrassed?

To answer this question, we have tried to examine, both theoretically and empirically, the framework of common-sense knowledge which underpins the interpretation of such situations by actors and observers. Following Schütz (1962), it is assumed that the actions of participants in these (and other) social situations depend on the intersubjective meaning these situations carry for their participants. Thus, the focus of attention in the present paper is not on the actual experience or behaviour of persons in situations where routine activity is disrupted, but rather the meaning structure which guides the interpretation of such situations and thereby shapes the actions and reactions of participants.

One social emotion which has been the subject of some inquiry is embarrassment. Modigliani (1968, 1971), drawing on Goffman's earlier (1955, 1956) analyses of facework and embarrassment, formulated a theory of embarrassment and subjected this model to empirical test. The basic features of Modigliani's model are (1) it is assumed that the incident which is the immediate cause of embarrassment involves a failure on the part of the individual concerned to fulfil certain social expectations; (2) this failure leads to a diminution of the individual's perceived public esteem; and (3) this diminution in turn leads to a diminution of the individual's self-esteem. Both correlational (Modigliani, 1968) and experimental (Modigliani, 1971) tests of this theory yielded only partial support; in neither case was it found that embarrassment is accompanied by a loss of self-esteem.

Since the public disruption of routine behaviours is thought to give rise to social emotions, i.e. those which are experienced exclusively or more intensively in public, the logical point of departure for an analysis of the properties of these incidents is to compare the points of view of the 'actor' whose behaviour is disrupted, and the 'uninvolved observer' who witnesses the incident (or who is thought to do so), particularly with respect to how the actor is perceived from these different perspectives.

Let us begin with the actor's perception of himself or herself—what we shall term *self-image*. The actor experiences an unexpected disruption of a daily routine which is normally performed flawlessly and is therefore taken for granted. The cause of the disruption (e.g. some fluctuation in attention to the task at hand) is irrelevant to the present argument. But the disruption itself is highly relevant, for it is the disruption of a daily routine which is shared and followed by 'everybody', both in terms of implicit knowledge and explicit practice. Disruption of such behaviour automatically leads the actor to become self-conscious through being individuated. Individuation is simply regarded as a process through which the actor becomes aware of being the focus of others' attention. If the disruption giving rise to individuation is accompanied by salient stimuli, for example the loud noise made by falling cans, then such individuation is presumably immediate, and the resulting state of public self-consciousness is unambiguous. Less blatant disruptions, such as realizing that one has been walking around in public with an unfastened trouser zip, would lead to retrospective individuation and public self-consciousness of a more ambiguous kind. In both cases the actor is aware of being a focal point for observers'

attention, but the greater ambiguity of retrospective individuation might serve to diminish the strength of any emotional reaction.

Because the disruptive incident is episodic and quite accidental, it should carry no implications for the actor's self-image. So while the actor recognizes the fact of social transgression and is aware of being the focus of observers' attention, he/she has little cause to lose any self-esteem. This is consistent with Modigliani's (1968, 1971) failure to find evidence that the experience of embarrassment is accompanied by a loss of 'situational self-esteem'. Given that a social transgression does provoke emotional experience on the part of the transgressor, it is suggested that such an emotional reaction does not emanate from a change in self-image.

Let us now consider how the actor is seen from the observer's point of view—what we shall term the actor's *public image*. The noise made by falling cans attracts the observer's attention; or the fact that somebody's trouser zip is unfastened is noticed quite incidentally. One way or another, the observer notices the transgression; but since the object of his passing attention is anonymous, it is assumed that there is no basis for making dispositional inferences about the actor. It seems likely that this is one situation in which observers do not make dispositional attributions on the basis of an actor's behaviour—a possibility acknowledged in passing by Jones and Nisbett (1972, p. 80). Such an inconsistency with the 'usual' bias would presumably reflect the observer's recognition that the transgression in question is unintentional and may befall anyone, however infrequently. However, this would not prevent the observer from empathizing with the actor's emotional reaction to the incident. It seems quite likely that the observer is able to identify with the actor's feelings of conspicuousness, nervousness, tension and embarrassment.

The third and final aspect of the situation concerns the actor's perception of how he/she is seen by the observer—what we shall term the actor's *subjective public image*. It is assumed that one inevitable consequence of individuation is the actor's consideration of how he/she is evaluated by others, not simply as an anonymous performer, who slips up during the execution of routine activity, but as an identifiable individual whose competence is called into question by the witnessed transgression.

Given that individuation in this context arises from unintended social transgressions, it seems likely that the actor will assume that others who witness the incident evaluate him/her negatively. It is argued that the actor's emotional state results from a discrepancy between *self-image* which remains unaltered by the situation, and a *subjective public image* which is affected by the incident. This formulation bears some resemblance to objective self-awareness theory as proposed by Duval and Wicklund (1972). However, while their model holds that negative affect results from a discrepancy between self and ideal-self, which in turn results from simple awareness of oneself as an object, the present formulation holds that negative affect results from the discrepancy between the actor's self-image and subjective public image, which in turn is assumed to be elicited by committing a social transgression.

Of course there are many instances of disruption of routine activity which give rise to emotional responses of a non-social origin. In these cases it is suggested that the emotional state arises predominantly from physiological processes which

exacerbate arousal, for example the startle response to a loud noise, or the momentary panic experienced when missing a step on a staircase. Such disruptions are assumed to be characterized by stimulus configurations which are classified by Mandler (1975) as 'innate releasers of autonomic nervous system activity' (p. 137). Thus a distinction is drawn between *rule disruptions* which are held to give rise to emotional reactions purely or primarily because of the ensuing discrepancy between the actor's self-image and subjective public image, and *disruptions involving physical threat*, which are held to give rise to emotional reactions exclusively because of the physiological responses which naturally accompany such disruptions. This is not to deny the fact that disruptions involving physical threat that occur in public flout social convention, and in doing so also become instances of rule disruption; however, because disruptions involving physical threat are regarded as *inherently* emotional, it is assumed that when they do occur in public the added 'social' dimension of rule disruption contributes insignificantly to the intensity of the overall resulting emotional state. In other words the strength of the overall emotional reaction to rule disruptions should be strongly affected by the social context of the incident in question, i.e., whether it occurs in public or in private; whereas the strength of the overall emotional reaction to disruptions involving physical threat should be minimally affected by social context.

The above argument can be summarized by enumerating its basic propositions:

- (1) Public disruptions of routine actions lead the actor to experience emotional reactions. This is because:
- (2) Disruption of routine activities gives rise to individuation, either immediately or retrospectively.
- (3) Individuation involves (a) becoming aware of being the object of the observer's attention; and (b) a consideration of how one is being evaluated by the observer on the basis of one's actions.
- (4) In the case of disruptions of social rules, the actor's awareness of a discrepancy between his/her self-image, which is assumed to be neutral, and his/her subjective public image, which is assumed to be negative, gives rise to an emotional reaction. This reaction should therefore be much stronger in public, when public image considerations come into play, than in private.
- (5) In the case of disruptions involving physical threat, the primary source of emotional reaction is non-social. The discrepancy between self-image and subjective public image will correspondingly exert little influence on emotional reaction, and this fact should be reflected in minimal differences in strength of emotional reaction between public and private contexts.
- (6) Observers do not evaluate an actor more negatively following his/her disruption of routine activity. This should be reflected in a systematic disparity between the actor's subjective public image, which is assumed to be negative, and the actor's public image, which is assumed to be neutral.
- (7) The observer, as witness to the disruption of routine activity, has

empathic access to the actor's emotional state immediately after the individuation process. This access is thought to derive from the observer's ability to identify with steps 2 through 5, above.

METHOD

Overview

Four descriptions of situations in which routine activities were unintentionally disrupted were constructed. One of these situations ('cans') involved immediate individuation and rule disruption; another ('zip') involved retrospective individuation and rule disruption; while the remaining two situations ('tripping' and 'choking') involved immediate individuation and disruptions involving physical threat. Each situation was depicted as occurring in a public or a private social context, and was described from one of two social perspectives, actor or observer. Although a role-playing strategy was employed with its attendant limitations (*cf.* Aronson and Carlsmith, 1968, *inter alia*) no obvious alternative means of testing the present model is apparent.

Subjects were presented with a written description of one of these situations and were asked for what they thought their reactions would be. Questions posed in relation to these vignettes enabled the assessment of how subjects perceived (a) the actor's self-image; (b) the actor's emotional response to the situation; (c) the actor's subjective public image; (d) the observer's evaluation of the actor, i.e. the actor's public image; and (e) the observer's inferences about the actor's emotional state.

Comparison of results across situations, social contexts and social perspectives enabled various predictions to be tested. The three central predictions were (1) that the social context manipulation would have a significant impact on perceived emotional responses in those situations involving rule disruption, but not in the situations where disruptions involved physical threat; (2) that the perspective manipulation would result in perceptions of the actor's subjective public image being more negative than perceptions of the actor's self-image, and that the size of this discrepancy would covary with the actor's perceived emotionality; and (3) that the perspective manipulation would result in perceptions of the actor's subjective public image being more negative than perception of the actor's public image.

Subjects

Three hundred and thirty-six subjects participated in this study, of whom 160 were males and 176 females. All subjects were unpaid volunteers.

Material

Sixteen vignettes were employed, based on four situations. Each situation was described from one of two perspectives, i.e., actor's or observer's, and was presented in one of two social contexts, i.e., public and private. The four basic

disruptions were (a) picking up a can of food and thereby disturbing other cans, which fall with a loud crash; (b) walking around with an unfastened fly; (c) choking on one's food while eating a meal; and (d) tripping while running down stairs, and spilling the contents of a shopping bag. The social context manipulation was achieved by describing these disruptions as occurring in public (i.e. in a 'crowded supermarket', a 'crowded museum', a 'crowded restaurant' and a 'crowded department store', respectively), or in private (i.e., 'at home, alone', in all cases). The perspective manipulation was achieved by describing these disruptions as befalling the reader of the vignette, or as befalling someone else whom the reader of the vignette either observes (in the public contexts) or is asked to imagine (in the private contexts). The vignettes were written in such a way that the sex of the actor was not specified.

Questions

Vignettes described from the actor's perspective were followed by three questions: (1) 'How would you describe yourself in terms of what type of person you are, given only the above information?'; (2) 'How would you describe your feelings in this situation?'; (3) 'How do you think a bystander would describe you in terms of what type of person you are, having witnessed the above incident?'¹. Vignettes described from the observer's perspective were followed by two questions: (1) 'How would you describe the person in this situation, in terms of what type of person this individual is having witnessed the above incident?'; and (2) 'How would you describe this person's feelings in this situation?'.

Responses

Subjects were instructed to respond to these questions by means of 7-point rating scales. Ten rating scales were used for responding to questions about what type of person the actor is: Tolerant-intolerant, reckless-cautious, unemotional-emotional, intelligent-unintelligent, weak-strong, competent-incompetent, unsociable-sociable, mature-immature, clumsy-skilful and wise-foolish. Eight rating scales were employed for responding to questions about the actor's emotional reactions: Happy-unhappy, anxious-calm, clear-confused, tense-relaxed, unembarrassed-embarrassed, vulnerable-invulnerable, confident-nervous, selfconscious-unselfconscious.

RESULTS

Emotionality index

Responses on the eight rating scales pertaining to emotion were factor analysed using principal components analysis without iteration. Only one factor with an Eigenvalue greater than 1 emerged. This factor accounted for 57.5 per cent of the variance and had an Eigenvalue of 4.6. On the basis of this analysis the

¹This question was used only in the public conditions.

eight emotion rating scales were combined by summation into an overall emotionality index (EI). The item-whole correlations for this index varied between 0.71 and 0.83 and were all highly significant ($p < 0.001$).

EI scores were entered into a three-way analysis of variance, using social context (public versus private), perspective (actor versus observer) and situation type (cans, zip, tripping, and choking) as independent variables. This analysis revealed a significant main effect due to social context ($F_{1,320} = 50.36$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that perceived emotionality under public conditions ($M = 41.39$) was reliably greater than under private conditions ($M = 35.34$). There was in addition a significant main effect due to situation type ($F_{3,320} = 21.03$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that perceived emotionality differed reliably across the four situations. In particular, the zip situation ($M = 32.86$) elicited a markedly lower average rating than did the cans, tripping and choking situations ($M_s = 38.46$, 40.62 , and 41.52 , respectively). Furthermore, an *a posteriori* comparison between the means (Scheffé; $p < 0.10$) with situation type as the independent variable revealed that only the zip situation EI-mean differed significantly from the other means.

The analysis of variance also revealed a significant two-way interaction between social context and situation type ($F_{3,320} = 4.75$, $p < 0.003$). The mean scores associated with this interaction are shown in Table 1. It can be seen that the form of this interaction effect supports the prediction that whereas rule disruptions would be seen as giving rise to greater emotionality in public than in private, disruptions involving physical threat would not. Analysis of the simple main effect due to the social context manipulation revealed that while it was significant in the zip situation ($F_{1,320} = 25.61$, $p < 0.001$), the cans situation ($F_{1,320} = 32.71$, $p < 0.001$) and the choking situation ($F_{1,320} = 4.90$, $p < 0.05$), it was not significant in the tripping situation ($F_{1,320} = 1.56$, n.s.).

Discrepancy index

A discrepancy index (DI) was derived from the ten dispositional rating scales. Scale values were first adjusted so that all poles were consistent with regard to evaluative connotation. The differences between the ratings for actor's self-image and the actor's subjective public image were then computed. The resulting differences between these two sets of scales were averaged across the ten personality scales to form an overall DI.

Table 1. Mean emotionality index scores,* broken down by social context and situation type

Social context	Situation type			
	Zip	Cans	Tripping	Choking
Public	37.16	43.32	41.68	43.40
Private	28.56	33.60	39.56	39.64

*Higher scores indicate higher emotionality.

The mean DI scores for the four situations each differed significantly from zero. They ranged from 0.36 ($t[20] = 2.10, p < 0.025$) to 0.48 ($t[20] = 3.59, p < 0.005$). Furthermore, there was a significant correlation between DI scores and EI scores, within the actor's perspective condition ($r = 0.32, p < 0.001$), thereby supporting the hypothesis that the size of the discrepancy between self-image and subjective public image covaries with perceived emotionality.

Comparison between public image and subjective public image

It was predicted that ratings of the actor's subjective public image (SPI) would be more negative than ratings of the actor's public image (PI), indicating that actors are perceived to assume that their public image following disruption of routine activity is more negative than is actually the case. This predication was tested by entering scores on the 10 dispositional rating scales into a multivariate analysis of variance, using perspective (PI versus SPI) and situation type (zip, cans, tripping, and choking) as independent variables. This analysis revealed a significant main effect due to the perspective manipulation ($F_{10,151} = 2.11, p < 0.03$), reflecting the fact that ratings of subjective public image were consistently more negative than ratings of public image. The relevant mean dispositional ratings, averaged across the four situations, one shown in Table 2.

On each of the 10 dispositional rating scales shown in Table 2 the mean subjective public image rating is both more extreme, in the sense of deviating further from the scale's mid-point, and more negative in evaluative terms than the comparable mean public image rating. The only other significant effect revealed by the multivariate analysis of variance was a main effect due to situation type ($F_{30,444} = 4.08, p < 0.001$), indicating that the mean dispositional rating, averaged over the two perspectives, varied significantly across the four situations.

Table 2. Mean dispositional ratings for subjective public image (SPI) and public image (PI)

Dispositional rating*	Perspective		Univariate F†	p
	SPI	PI		
Reckless-cautious	2.70	3.10	8.48	<0.005
Clumsy-skilful	2.58	3.03	5.26	<0.03
Unsociable-sociable	3.67	3.80	<1	n.s.
Weak-strong	3.70	3.72	<1	n.s.
Tolerant-intolerant	4.20	3.93	3.27	<0.08
Mature-immature	4.66	4.35	5.52	<0.02
Unemotional-emotional	4.70	4.42	2.93	<0.09
Intelligent-unintelligent	4.72	4.33	6.67	<0.02
Wise-foolish	4.88	4.61	3.08	<0.09
Competent-incompetent	5.23	4.84	7.49	<0.01

*Lower scores fall nearer first-named adjective in each pair.

†Degrees of freedom are 1 and 160.

DISCUSSION

The findings provide a satisfactory measure of support for the model of social emotionality that was advanced in the introduction to this paper. The aspects of that model which were addressed in this study were (1) differences between types of disruption of routine activity, and the implications of such differences for the emotionality ascribed to actors who commit these disruptions; (2) the perceived evaluative discrepancy between an actor's self-image and subjective public image, following disruption of routine activity, and the relationship between this discrepancy and the amount of emotionality attributed to the actor; and (3) the tendency for an actor to be perceived as assuming that his or her public image is more negative than it really is, following disruption of routine activity.

Consider first the findings pertaining to differences between types of disruption of routine activity. The 'cans' and 'zip' situations were employed because they were assumed to entail rule disruption. However, the former situation was expected to give rise to immediate individuation because of the noise which accompanies the incident, while the latter situation was expected to give rise to retrospective individuation because it is not clear who has witnessed the rule violation. Nevertheless, both situations are thought to give rise to social emotions, because rule violation *per se* is not emotionally arousing. Private disruptions of this type should not lead to emotional experience. Public disruptions of this type, on the other hand, are thought to result in individuation or public self-consciousness leading the actor to assume that observers evaluate him negatively as a result of the incident. The discrepancy between this subjective public image and the actor's self-image is regarded as the origin of social emotions.

The 'choking' and 'tripping' situations are regarded as instances of skilled performance breakdown which are threatening to the actor and therefore inherently arousing. These two incidents are instances of rule disruption only in a secondary sense, since the threatening aspect of performance breakdown is not significantly enhanced or diminished by virtue of the social context. Because the threat applies equally whether the incidents occur in public or in private, the degree of emotional upset attributed to the actor in these situations was not expected to vary with social context.

These several expectations were substantially borne out by the findings of the present study. The 'zip' situation produced the lowest overall emotional reaction, consistent with expectations regarding retrospective individuation. However, this situation was found to share a common property with the 'cans' situation: the social context manipulation produced large and significant differences in emotional reactions in both situations, consistent with expectations regarding rule disruptions. The 'choking' and 'tripping' situations both led subjects to see the actor as experiencing strong emotional reactions, but the manipulation of social context had no impact on these ratings in the 'tripping' situation, and only a marginal effect in the 'choking' situation—a pattern of results that is broadly consistent with expectations regarding disruptions involving physical threat.

Apart from these expectations concerning differences in responses to the four situations, it was also postulated that the public disruption of routine behaviour

results in the individuation of the actor concerned, and that this individuation leads the actor to perceive a discrepancy between his/her self-image and his/her subjective public image. The results were consistent with this proposal and it was found that the size of this perceived evaluative discrepancy tended to covary with the amount of emotionality attributed to the actor.

Finally, it was anticipated that actors would be seen as assuming that, following their disruption of routine activity, their public image is more negative than is actually the case. This prediction was also borne out by the results.

However, several issues still need to be resolved. First, it is not clear whether the perceived evaluative discrepancy causes the emotional response, or simply accompanies it. Since the aim of the study was to identify the appraisal processes involved in the experience of emotion precipitated by disruptions of routine activities, this question of causality was not directly investigated; further experimentation could settle this matter. However, if it is assumed that the evaluative discrepancy is the source of the emotional response, then further questions naturally rise. First, why should this discrepancy give rise to an emotional response? Secondly, is the perception of the evaluative discrepancy a sufficient condition for the experience of a social emotion?

The answer to this second question is clearly negative. It would seem that four prior conditions need to be satisfied, and these can be incorporated into the propositional framework in the following way. Public violation of social rules leads to individuation if: (a) the rule in question is part of the actor's repertoire of rules; (b) the actor has unintentionally broken the rule in question; (c) the actor is aware of having broken the rule in question; and finally (d) the actor has some awareness that the disruption of the rule in question has been witnessed by others.

Another discrepancy is therefore logically prior to the perceived evaluative discrepancy. This prior discrepancy is the actor's awareness of having unintentionally disrupted a rule which is socially endorsed. It might therefore be argued that the perceived evaluative discrepancy is a 'social translation' of the prior discrepancy, whereby the actor's awareness of the transgression and the consequent individuation are manifested in the form of hypotheses concerning the evaluative inferences which could potentially be made by an observer on the basis of the witnessed incident.

This line of reasoning leads to a tentative explanation for the proposed causal link between perceived evaluative discrepancy and emotional experience. The actor is aware of the socially endorsed rule, and knows that he/she can execute it competently in the normal course of events. In this particular instance, however, the execution fails and the observer witnesses the failure. The actor is also aware that regular failure on the part of an individual to perform 'routine activities' would lead this individual to be evaluated negatively. The actor's personal involvement in the encounter following the critical incident means that his/her post-disruption perspective in the situation is peculiarly egocentric. This egocentricity leads the actor to think that those who witness the disruption construe him/her not simply as a 'figure' against the background of routine activity, but as a figure with *personal identity* who fails to perform appropriately on this occasion and may do so again. From such a perspective it is perhaps reasonable to entertain the notion that an observer would evaluate the actor negatively.

If we now consider how the actor would appear in the eye of an interested observer, should no show of emotion follow the disruptive incident, it seems clear that such a stance would encourage the observer to conclude that the disruption is a regular occurrence for this actor, who either has no respect for the rule in question, or lacks the basic competence required in order to fulfil it. Either way, dispositional inferences would probably be made. It seems likely that observers would expect the actor to experience an enhanced emotional state following the public disruption of routine activity, so the actor is in a position to capitalize on this assumption. An emotional reaction is likely to be visible, and would serve as a signal to observers that the witnessed disruption is something exceptional from the actor's perspective. In this way the actor can perhaps stem the flow of negative attributions which are assumed to arise from the inadequate performance. These speculations are open to empirical investigation.

The present study and the ensuing discussion have focused exclusively upon disruptions of routine activity which have negative consequences and therefore, it is argued, give rise to negative emotional reactions. It might be suggested by extrapolation that disruptions with positive consequences give rise to positive social emotions, but this should perhaps remain an open question, particularly with respect to any assumption that the process involved would be symmetrical, but simply reversed. There is clearly a sense in which unexpectedly positive performances can give rise to some negative emotional states, e.g. embarrassment. This line of enquiry would also need to be pursued empirically.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the systematic differences that were obtained between ratings of the actor's subjective public image and ratings of the actor's public image are not readily explicable within the theoretical framework advanced by Jones and Nisbett (1972). The present findings suggest that actors are seen as holding an 'implicit theory' that corresponds to what observers might infer about the actor, and that at this point there is concordance between Jones and Nisbett's formulation and the naive theory. However, this naive theory did not correspond to subjects' perceptions of the inferences actually made by observers, in that the latter were less extreme and less negative. Observers were perceived as being less inclined to make dispositional inferences about the actor, by comparison with what actors were seen to assume.

The study reported in this paper was intended to test some of the propositions outlined in a model of the appraisal of specific emotional states, namely those which ensue from the unintentional disruption of routine activity. It is clear that further research of a systematic nature is required in order to clarify and resolve the issues and processes involved in the experience of such 'social emotions', and to discover how these emotions relate to the wider context of emotional experience.

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RÉSUMÉ

Le sujet de cette étude est les émotions sociales. Celles-ci sont définies comme des états ressentis soit exclusivement soit plus intensément en public, celui-ci pouvant être aussi bien réel qu'imaginaire. On a argumenté de telle manière : la cause de la naissance d'émotions sociales comme conséquence de la rupture de règles sociales est la prise de conscience de l'acteur en question d'une discrédance entre sa propre image qu'il présuppose neutre, et celle qu'il pense avoir donnée aux autres témoins de l'incident. Dans une expérience sous forme de rôles, on a présenté à des sujets 4 situations montrant des cessations d'activités routinières, deux de celles-ci concernant des ruptures de règles sociales. Les situations étaient décrites d'après l'une de ces deux perspectives : l'acteur ou l'observateur, et mis dans l'un de ces deux contextes sociaux : public ou privé. Les résultats ont confirmé les hypothèses principales qui étaient premièrement que dans le cas d'une rupture de règles, l'émotion attribuée à l'acteur était plus grande en public qu'en privé, deuxièmement que des estimations (faites par autrui) de l'acteur vis à vis de ses dispositions révélaient une discrédance entre sa propre image et son image publique et que cette discrédance covariait avec l'émotion de l'acteur, et troisièmement que les mêmes estimations révélaient une discrédance entre son image publique et l'image subjective publique, c'est à dire celle qu'il pense que le public s'est faite de lui.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Untersuchte soziale Emotionen, die wir als Zustände begreifen, die ausschließlich oder besonders nachhaltig in tatsächlicher oder nur vermeintlicher Gegenwart von Anderen erlebt werden. Wir behaupten, daß, wenn gesellschaftliche Regeln verletzt werden, soziale Emotionen auftreten, und zwar aus folgendem Grund: Der/die Handelnde bemerkt, daß sein/ihr Selbstbild—das er/sie als neutral betrachtet—von dem Bild abweicht, daß er/sie meint, bei denjenigen erzeugt zu haben, die den Vorfall miterlebt haben. In einem Rollenspielexperiment beschrieben *E* vier Situationen, bei denen Routinetätigkeiten unterbrochen werden, wobei in zwei Fällen gesellschaftliche Regeln übertreten werden. Diese Situationen wurden aus einem von zwei möglichen Blickwinkeln (des/der Handelnden oder des/der Beobachters(in)) beschrieben und in einen von zwei sozialen Kontexten (öffentlich oder privat) eingebettet. Die Ergebnisse bestätigen die Kernhypothesen: (1) Übertritt jemand Regeln in der Öffentlichkeit, so wird ihm/ihr mehr Emotionalität zugeschrieben, als wenn er es im Privaten tut. (2) Das Selbstbild des/der

Handelnden weicht von seinem/ihren Bild ab, das sich die Öffentlichkeit von ihm/ihr macht (Beide Bilder werden durch Ratings seiner/ihrer Eigenschaften erfaßt). Diese Abweichung kovariert mit der Emotionalität des/der Handelnden. Und (3) das Bild, das sich die Öffentlichkeit von dem/der Handelnden macht, weicht von dem ab, was er/sie zu erwecken vermeint.

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