THE LANGUAGE OF EMOTION

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By

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In this dissertation, I defend a novel analysis of emotional expression, and then use it to explore the myriad ways in which emotional expressions function in communication. I argue that emotional expressions may be best analyzed as behaviors that enable the perception of emotion. A smile is an expression of joy because observers who see this smile can see joy, and a snarl is an expression of anger because observers who hear this snarl can hear anger. I then use this analysis to challenge two common assumptions concerning expression and communication. Against the assumption that we can express our emotions using language, I demonstrate that speech acts express emotions always in virtue of how they are said, and never in virtue of what they say. And against the assumption that emotional expressions communicate always by revealing emotions, I demonstrate that they communicate in many other interesting ways as well. Drawing on elements of speech act and signaling theory, I develop a novel framework for analyzing the many ways in which emotional expressions communicate.
Many people have aided in me in the process of writing this dissertation. I would like to thank Rebecca Kukla, Nancy Sherman, Mark Lance, and Bryce Huebner for reading through more drafts than I’d care to count; Andrea Scarantino for offering his invaluable expertise toward the end of the process, helping to make the final draft much stronger than the penultimate draft; Colin Hickey, Andy Blitzer, Ben Elzinga, Matt Duncan, Cassie Herbert, Matt Shields, Hailey Huget, Francisco Gallegos, Jake Earl, Anne Jeffrey, Keyvan Shafiei, and many others for leading me back on track when my ideas jumped the rails; and Kathy Glazer for always being willing to read and edit my work. I dedicate this work to Sarah, who has been my greatest supporter along the way.

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CHAPTER 1: THE IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

“[Emotional expressions] are as transient hieroglyphics. For as uttered words fly away, but written words stand, so hieroglyphics expressed in gestures pass, but expressed in pictures remain.” (Bacon 1962: VI)

Philosophical interest in emotion is at an all-time high. Although philosophers have always been interested in the passions, especially in their connections with rationality and morality, never before has so much attention been paid to the nature and function of feeling. Debates rage as to whether emotions are cognitive or non-cognitive (Deigh 1994; Griffiths 2013), whether they are rational or irrational (Solomon 1976; de Sousa 1990), and whether they are states for which we must take responsibility or states for which we may be excused (Solomon 1976; Smith 2008). In short, the philosophy of emotion is flourishing.

Despite a growing interest in the experience of emotion, however, relatively little interest has been accorded to the expression of emotion. Granted, a number of significant works on expression have recently been published in epistemology (e.g. Finkelstein 2003; Bar-On 2004), the philosophy of language (e.g. Davis 2003; Green 2007a), and aesthetics (e.g. Kivy 1980; Davies 1980), but philosophers of emotion have had precious little to say on the topic of expression.¹ This paucity of attention is both surprising, given the importance of emotional expression to interpersonal communication, and unsettling, given the importance of emotional expressions to philosophical theorizing.

¹ Notable exceptions include Goldie (2000) and Scarantino (2014).
On the first point, emotional expressions play a significant role in face-to-face communication. We constantly deploy facial expressions, gestures, tones of voice, and the like, both intentionally and unintentionally, to convey information about what we feel, what we want, and what we expect from others. In the absence of nonverbal cues, communication can become frustratingly difficult, and at times downright impossible. Given that philosophers are especially interested in the social dimensions of emotion, it is surprising that less attention has been paid to the importance of emotional communication.

On the second point, emotional expressions play a significant role in philosophical theorizing. In many subfields, “Expressivism” names the view that some target phenomenon can be usefully understood by analogy with the nonverbal expression of emotion (Bar-On & Sias 2013). For example, in Meta-ethics, expressivists hold that moral judgments express a speaker’s attitude toward an act—much like a smile or scowl does—rather than asserting a fact about that act (e.g. Ayer 1936; Bar-On & Chrisman 2009). In Epistemology, expressivists hold that avowals (e.g. “I am happy”) are nearly incorrigible to the extent that they express, rather than report, a speaker’s occurrent mental state (e.g. Finkelstein 2003; Bar-On 2004). And in the Philosophy of Language, expressivists hold that communication involves in every case the expression of a speaker’s communicative intentions (e.g. Davis 2003). Such views make a number of seemingly innocuous assumptions about the nature of expression, and then use these assumptions to demystify puzzling phenomena. Given the explanatory weight that philosophers expect emotional expressions to bear, it is unsettling that fewer efforts have been made to determine whether the assumptions made by these views are true.
My aim in this dissertation is to give emotional expressions the philosophical attention that they deserve. I shall argue that many of the common assumptions that philosophers make about expressions turn out to be false, and I shall propose a novel framework for analyzing emotional expressions and the myriad roles that they play in human communication.

Allow me to emphasize up front that I will not be defending a particular theory of emotion in this dissertation. Theories of emotion have proliferated in the past half century (see Prinz 2004 for a helpful review), but I take it to be a virtue of my theory of expression that it is consistent with a wide range of theories of emotion. Regardless of what you think emotions are, you presumably agree that emotions are the sorts of things that can be expressed, and my aim is to explain what it means for behaviors to express emotions, whatever they are. For the purposes of analyzing the concept of emotional expression, it does not matter whether emotions are cognitive or non-cognitive, basic or constructed, biological or social. All that matters is that emotions are the sorts of things that can be expressed in outward behavior.

1.1. Three Common Assumptions about Emotional Expression

Although philosophers rarely inquire deeply into the nature of expression, they often mention it in passing (Bar-On 2010: 212). Surveying the literature on emotion, one finds three common assumptions made by philosophers about the expression of emotion. First, philosophers often

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2 See Scarantino (2010) and Scarantino & Griffiths (2011) for helpful clarifications of these slippery terms.
assume that behaviors express emotions by “venting” them—or, less metaphorically, by being the direct causal effects of emotions. Second, they often assume that language can be used to express our emotions in much the same way that nonverbal behaviors can. Third, they often assume that emotional expressions communicate in every case by revealing or evincing our emotions to others. In the course of this dissertation, I shall demonstrate that all three assumptions are mistaken, and I shall develop viable alternatives to each. Let’s consider each in turn.

1.1.1. Expressions “Vent” Emotions

It is natural to think of expressions as behaviors that “vent,” “channel,” or otherwise “release” pent-up emotional feelings (Roberts 2004: 173; Solomon 1976; Bar-On 2004). Etymologically, the verb “express” means “to press out,” and indeed we often employ hydraulic metaphors when describing the process of expression. We say that he “exploded” with anger and that she “burst” with joy. These metaphors have led many philosophers to analyze emotional expressions as behaviors that are directly caused by felt emotional states. Thus, J.L. Austin writes that, “When we are angry, we have an impulse, felt and/or acted on, to do actions of particular kinds, and unless we suppress the anger, we do actually proceed to do them” (1946: 152). And Dorit Bar-On suggests that a person expresses a mental state whenever her behavior “comes directly from” that state (2004: 254), which is to say that the mental state is either a brute or rational cause of that behavior (2004: 249).
Intuitive though this view may be, I demonstrate in chapter 4 that it is mistaken. On the view that I defend, behaviors express emotions by enabling the perception of them. A smile is an expression of joy because an observer who sees a smile can see joy; a pout is an expression of sadness because an observer who sees a pout can see sadness; and a scowl is an expression of anger because an observer who hears a scowl can hear anger. Non-sincere expressions create the illusion of an emotion.

I am by no means the first to suggest such a view. Ludwig Wittgenstein suggested something very similar, writing that

“We see emotion.” – As opposed to what? – We do not see facial contortions and make the inference that he is feeling joy, grief, boredom. We describe a face immediately as sad, radiant, bored, even when we are unable to give any other description of the features. – Grief, one would like to say, is personified in the face. (Wittgenstein 2006: §570)

That being said, I develop a novel formulation of this view, which is uniquely suited to account for the key features of expression. Once I have defended this view, I put it to work in illuminating the complex relationships between language, expression, and communication.

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3 Unlike Wittgenstein’s, my view is consistent with the view that we sometimes infer an emotion from its expression. I argue in chapter 4 that we are not always aware of what we perceive, and thus, despite perceiving an emotion in its outward expression, we may need to infer the emotion in order to gain knowledge about it.
1.1.2. Language is a “Vehicle” of Expression

It is widely believed that language is a means (or a “vehicle”) of emotional expression. If I am happy, then I can express my joy by smiling or by saying “Yippee!” or even “I am so happy right now!” Wittgenstein once mused that human beings learn over time to replace natural, nonverbal expressions of emotions with conventional, verbal expressions, thereby expanding their expressive repertoires (2006: §244; see also Bar-On 2004: 241-242). Thus, an unruly child expresses anger by throwing a temper tantrum, while a sophisticated adult expresses anger by verbalizing it. In his taxonomy of speech acts, John Searle (1969) lists “expressives” as a fundamental category of illocutionary act. Many other speech act theorists follow Searle in thinking of emotional expression as a basic function of language (e.g. Bach & Harnish 1979; Green 2007a; Kukla & Lance 2009).

I argue that this widespread view is mistaken. Although we can certainly express our emotions in speech, speech acts express emotions always in virtue of how they are said, and never in virtue of what they say. Thus, “Yippee!” expresses joy insofar as it is spoken in a cheerful tone of voice or with a cheerful facial expression, and not insofar as it uses a word whose conventional meaning is associated with joy. Indeed, were a person to say “Yippee!” in a disappointed tone of voice, this speech act would express disappointment, not joy.

Against the idea that language is a vehicle of emotional expression, I suggest that language and expression are two independent yet complementary modes of communication: language conveys information by encoding it in symbols; expressions convey information by making it
perceptually manifest. In chapter 5, I shall offer a novel account of the relationship between language and expression, which does not depend on the view that language is a means of emotional expression. Language, on my view, interfaces with and augments the nonverbal expression of emotion in a variety of ways.

1.1.3. Expressions Communicate by Evincing Emotion

It is often assumed that if emotional expressions communicate, then they do so by *evincing* or *revealing* a person’s occurrent feelings. Thus, a smile communicates by evincing one’s joy, tears communicate by revealing one’s sadness, and a snarl communicates by betraying one’s anger. The ethical emotivists held that utterances featuring moral terms ought to be interpreted as expressions, which evince a speaker’s attitudes, rather than as assertions, which describe the world (e.g. Ayer 1936). An utterance of “murder is wrong,” then, doesn’t state a fact but reveals a speaker’s disapproval of murder. Similarly, John Searle (1969) argues that expressive uses of language evince an attitude toward a presupposed state of affairs. An utterance of “I’m sorry for hurting your feelings,” for instance, presupposes that the speaker has hurt someone’s feelings, and reveals the speaker’s regret about this state of affairs. Finally, Mitchell Green (2007a) argues that emotional expressions communicate in every case by *showing* a person’s

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4 Symbols can also make information perceptually manifest, but I shall argue in chapter 5 that language cannot make emotions perceptually manifest in the way that nonlinguistic expressions do.

5 Even Bar-On (2004), who thinks that judgments can be both expressions and assertions simultaneously, holds that expressions function in every case to evince occurrent feelings.
occurrent emotional state, where “showing” is roughly synonymous with “evincing” and “revealing.” All of these thinkers agree, then, that emotional expressions communicate in every case by evincing, revealing, or showing a person’s present feelings.

Against this view, I argue that while emotional expressions sometimes communicate by evincing emotions, they also communicate in myriad other ways as well.⁶ Consider, briefly, the following examples:

1. A child falls down on the playground, and, unsure of how to react, looks up to his mother. The mother grins, and the child bursts into laughter. Here, the mother’s grin doesn’t tell the child what she feels; rather, it tells the child what he ought to feel. The grin exemplifies the appropriate emotional response. Had the mother gasped in horror, then the child might have burst into tears.⁷

2. A student begins to misbehave in class, but stops when she sees the teacher frowning at her. The teacher might be angry at the student, but even if he is not, the frown still succeeds in reproaching the student for misbehaving.

3. A flight attendant smiles at passengers as they board the aircraft. The purpose of this smile is not to communicate that she is happy to serve them, but rather that she is willing to serve them. Social smiles often signal a person’s commitment to playing out certain social roles, rather than revealing a felt emotion.

⁶ Scarantino (2014) offers a similar argument.
⁷ It’s tempting to deny that these behaviors ought to count as “expressions,” since they don’t “vent” someone’s emotion, but this objection falls back on the first mistaken assumption about expression.
Given that emotional expressions communicate in more ways than one, I propose a novel framework for analyzing and categorizing the many different ways in which emotional expressions communicate.

I have so far suggested that three common assumptions about the nature of emotional expression are mistaken. (The arguments will come later.) Furthermore, I have sketched three positive claims about expression: (1) that behaviors express emotion by enabling the perception of emotion, (2) that language interfaces with the nonlinguistic expression of emotion without serving as a means of expression, and (3) that emotional expressions communicate in many ways above and beyond evincing feelings. The aim of this dissertation is to weave these claims into clear, coherent, and fruitful account of the expression of emotion.

1.2. Road Map

The dissertation proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 explores the science of emotional expression, which I take to be the proper starting place for a philosophical investigation into the expression of emotion. I will review the methods that scientists use to investigate expressions, as well as the behaviors that they classify as such.

Chapter 3 delves into the evolutionary history of emotional expression. I shall argue that one of the most important insights to come out of evolutionary work on expression is the realization that expressions serve many different functions. Some serve as communicative signals, while others do not (Shariff & Tracy 2011). And even those expressions that do serve as signals
function in a variety of ways (Fridlund 1994). Against a widespread philosophical tendency to analyze emotional expressions as a unified functional class (Bell 1806; Alston 1965; Searle 1969; Green 2007a), I argue that a proper philosophical analysis of emotional expression ought to accommodate the many different functions that expressions happen to serve.

Chapter 4 develops and defends a novel analysis of emotional expression, which I call the Perceptual Analysis. On this view, behaviors express emotions by enabling the perception of those emotions. A smile expresses joy by enabling observers to see joy; a pout expresses sadness by enabling observers to see sadness; and a growl expresses anger by enabling observers to hear anger. After defending my analysis against a series of objections, I survey four alternative analyses of emotional expression, and argue that none is satisfactory.

Chapter 5 focuses on the relationship between language and expression. Although many philosophers believe that we can—and often do—express our emotions using language, I argue that language is not a means of emotional expression per se. Only nonlinguistic behaviors, such as tones of voice, facial expressions, and gestures, can be used to express our emotions. We can express our emotions in speech, but speech acts express emotions always in virtue of how they are said, and never in virtue of what they say. I develop a positive account of the relationship between language and expression, based on the idea that language interfaces with and augments the nonverbal expression of emotion.

Finally, Chapter 6 explores the pragmatics of emotional expression. Against the common assumption that expressions communicate always by making an expresser’s emotions known to others, I argue that expressions communicate in a rich variety of ways above and beyond merely “publicizing” a “private” feeling: we use expressions to beseech, solicit, call, reprove, threaten,
repent, instruct, accuse, and condemn, among many other things. Borrowing tools from signaling theory and speech act theory, I develop a novel account of the ways in which emotional expression function in communication.

By the end of the dissertation, I will have developed a rich account of the nature, structure, and functions of emotional expression.
CHAPTER 2: THE SCIENCE OF EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

“Everyone knows that grief involves a gloomy and joy a cheerful countenance... There are characteristic facial expressions which are observed to accompany anger, fear, erotic excitement, and all the other passions.”

(Aristotle 1913: 805, 808)

Where should the philosophical study of emotional expression begin? I suggest that it should begin with the scientific study of emotional expression. For nearly a century, the purported universality of emotional expression has been a major research project in the sciences, and scientists have accrued a wealth of knowledge about the structure, functions, and evolutionary history of the facial expressions, gestures, and tones of voice that express our emotions to others. Taking this wealth of knowledge as a foundation, I will build a philosophical analysis of emotional expression atop it.

In this chapter I shall review the methods that scientists employ in studying the expression of emotion. In the course of doing so, we will get a better sense for the kinds of behaviors that a philosophical account of emotional expression ought to illuminate.

2.1. The Modes of Emotional Expression

Emotional expressions are, first and foremost, patterns of physical behavior, consisting of facial expressions, hand gestures, body language, tones of voice, and/or other physiological
changes. A typical expression of joy, for instance, might include smiles, laughs, and an increase in the speed and pitch of one’s voice. An expression of anger might include frowns, grunts, clenched fists, and an aggressive stance. And an expression of embarrassment might include blushing, shrinking away, and the covering of one’s face. Often, a person’s entire body will be mobilized in the expression of an emotion; at other times, only parts of it. Even when someone attempts to suppress the expression of her emotion completely, subtle leakages, or “micro-expressions,” may occur somewhere on her face or body, which can reveal what she is trying to hide (Ekman & Friesen 2003: 14-15, 151-152).

When studying the expression of emotion, scientists begin by specifying a particular mode of expression—such as the face, the body proper, or the voice. Next, they catalog the expressive resources of that mode—that is, the various discrete states into which that mode can be configured (Ekman et al. 1983; Ebner, et al. 2010; Jack, et al. 2012). The human face contains some forty-three muscles, which can be contracted in thousands of combinations. The human voice varies incrementally along the independent dimensions of pitch, volume, speed, and timbre, which combine to form countless “tones of voice.” Both of these modes may be called “expressive” in a related sense of the term: they can be configured into a great number of discrete states, and hence they have the potential to express a wide variety of emotions uniquely (Green 2007a: 40-41). Other modes of expression are comparatively less “expressive.” The capillaries of the cheek, for instance, admit of fewer distinct states—corresponding to the degree of blood flow through them—and hence they have the potential to express fewer emotions uniquely.
We may think of these catalogs as spaces of possible expressions. Every discrete state of a particular mode could, but need not, express one or more emotion (either alone or in conjunction with states of other modes). In the case of the face and the voice, it turns out that only a small number of their respective states typically express emotions, as many express other, non-emotional states, such as pain or confusion, and most typically express nothing at all. Think of a child making “funny faces”: a clever child can make dozens of them before approximating a standard expression of emotion. An analogous point holds for language. The letters of the Roman alphabet can be combined in countless ways, yet only some of these combinations will constitute words in a natural language. “Bird” is an English word, while “bdir” is not.

In order to determine which states of a mode do in fact constitute expressions, scientists typically perform two types of experiments (Ekman, et al. 1983). In a “component study,” they elicit an emotion in a participant (e.g. by showing a disgusting or an amusing film), and then observe which behaviors reliably follow. If a subject watches an amusing film and then laughs, for instance, then laughing is recorded as an expression of amusement. In a “judgment study,” by contrast, they present a particular behavior to a participant (e.g. a photograph of a face or a recording of a voice), who then judges which emotion, if any, has been expressed. If subjects judge that a smiling face expresses joy, for instance, then smiling is recorded as an expression of joy.

The behaviors judged to be expressions within a judgment study do not always match the behaviors elicited within a component study. Sometimes, people act out their emotions in ways that observers do not recognize as emotional expressions. At other times, people regard

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8 In chapter 4, I will offer necessary and sufficient conditions for emotional expression.
behaviors as emotional expressions even when they are not acted out by people in the grips of an emotion. Still, in many circumstances, these behaviors do match: people act out their emotions in ways that observers recognize as emotional expressions. Figure I illustrates the relationship between those behaviors counted as expressions by component studies and those behaviors counted as expressions by judgment studies.

Figure I. Two Measures of Emotional Expression

Some scientists limit their attention to those behaviors that are judged to be expressions within both types of studies (i.e. those behaviors that occupy the union of the two circles above) (e.g. Ekman, et al. 1983). I adopt a more liberal stance: behaviors counted as expressions by only one type of study are still emotional expressions, and in chapter 3 I shall argue that the evolutionary history of emotional expression explains why some expressions are counted as such only by component studies and others only by judgment studies. Emotional expressions are, we shall see, complex biological phenomena, which resist simple functional or operational classifications.

Once scientists specify a mode of expression, once they enumerate the resources of that mode, and once they do experiments to determine which states of that mode constitute expressions, they are able to compile a dictionary of emotional expression. This dictionary
includes all the behaviors that are found to express emotion within a specific mode, matching them with the emotions they express. (Note that this is my own rational reconstruction of what scientists are up to; some scientists may conceive their own work in similar terms, while others surely would not.) In what follows, I will briefly review some common dictionary entries for five modes of expression: the face, the hands, the body proper, the voice, and a miscellany of other physiological changes. The purpose of doing so is to give a sense for how scientists grapple with the difficulties of classifying behaviors as expressions, and to specify the phenomena that a philosophical account of emotional expression ought to illuminate.

2.2. Facial Expressions

In 1862, the French neurologist Guillaume-Benjamin-Amand Duchenne de Boulogne published *The Mechanism of Human Facial Expression* (1990), which presented, among other things, a detailed description of the various facial muscles involved in the expression of emotion. His method of discovery was as innovative as it was ghastly. Using electrodes, he would galvanize particular muscles in the face of a patient—who suffered from a rare neurological disorder that fortunately spared him any pain (Darwin 2009: 202)—so as to recreate recognizable expressions of joy, fear, anger etc. He then photographed the resulting contortions. Regardless of our feelings toward these grotesquely beautiful photographs (the photograph of “fear” is reproduced below), Duchenne deserves credit for making the study of the structure of emotional expression a rigorous anatomical discipline. To categorize a facial expression as the expression
of a particular emotion, e.g. fear, we must determine which muscles are involved in its production.

Figure II. Duchenne’s Fear Expression

More than a hundred years later, Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen would bring Duchenne’s project to completion. With the publication of the *Facial Action Coding System* in 1978, or *FACS*, Ekman and Friesen systematically categorized *every* muscular change that could possibly be involved in the facial expression of emotion (Ekman et al. 1983). Initially consisting of forty-six entries, *FACS* has been updated several times to now catalog more than one hundred, including movements of the eyes and orientations of the head. Every facial expression of emotion will consist of some combination of these muscular changes. For example, the following six muscular changes occur in a standard facial expression of fear (Matsumoto & Ekman 2008):
Figure III. FACS Analysis of Fear

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AU #</th>
<th>FACS Description</th>
<th>Muscular Basis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AU1</td>
<td>Inner Brow Raiser</td>
<td>frontalis (pars medialis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU2</td>
<td>Outer Brow Raiser</td>
<td>frontalis (pars lateralis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU4</td>
<td>Brow Lowerer</td>
<td>depressor glabellae, depressor supercili, corrugator supercili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU5</td>
<td>Upper Lid Raiser</td>
<td>levator palpebrae superioris, superior tarsal muscle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU20</td>
<td>Lip Stretcher</td>
<td>risorius with platysma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU26</td>
<td>Jaw Drop</td>
<td>masseter; relaxed temporalis and internal pterygoid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FACS was a significant achievement because it established an objective metric for cataloging facial expressions of emotion, which would not differ from observer to observer or from lab to lab. Since 1978, FACS has been employed in hundreds of experiments to determine how reliably observers are able to decode emotional information from emotional expressions.

Early component and judgment studies suggested that six basic emotions—fear, anger, sadness, joy, surprise, and disgust—have standard facial expressions (Ekman, et al. 1983). These expressions are depicted in Figure IV, below.
Later studies found that varying intensities of these emotions likewise show up in behavior, depending primarily on the degree of contraction of the muscles involved (Ekman & Friesen 2003). Here is how Ekman and Friesen describe some of the differences in behavior relevant to the intensity of expression:

The intensity of the anger expression can be manifest in how much tension there is in the eyelids or how much bulge in the eye. It can also be shown in how tightly the lips are pressed together. (2003: 92)

Fear varies in its intensity from apprehension to terror, and the face reflects these differences. Intensity is shown in the eyes, with the raising of the upper lid and the
tensing of the lower lid increasing as the intensity of the fear increases. Even more evident are the changes in the fear mouth. (2003: 55)

Although it is not yet clear how many magnitudes of each intensity can be distinguished, some experiments have reported recognizable differences in five intensities of each of the basic emotions, measured at 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%, and 100% intensity (Hess et al. 1997).9

It is worth noting that folk taxonomies of emotion often assign distinct names to distinct intensities of the basic emotions. Extreme fear is often called “terror,” for instance, while mild fear is often called “apprehension.” Frijda, et al. (1992) surveyed native English speakers and produced the following folk taxonomies of anger and fear:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fear Family</th>
<th>Mean intensity (1-10)</th>
<th>Anger Family</th>
<th>Mean intensity (1-10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timidity</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Annoyance</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprehension</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Irritation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nervousness</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Aggravation</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dread</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Exasperation</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terror</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Irateness</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrification</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Outrage</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 Jack, et al. (2012) also report differences in five intensities of emotion (very weak, weak, medium, strong, very strong). Hoffman, et al. (2010) found that women are better at recognizing subtle expressions (measured at 40% intensity) than men, but that both are equally skilled at recognizing intense expressions (measured at 100%).
Accordingly, we may refer to an expression of extreme fear as an expression of “terror” and an expression of mild fear as an expression of “apprehension.”

A study published 2014 found that a variety of *emotional blends* are likewise measurable in the face (Du, et al. 2014). Just as an expression of fear may be distinguished from an expression of anger, so too can both be distinguished from an expression of “fearful anger”. Each of the six basic emotions mentioned above, with the exception of joy, can be blended with any other to yield a unique expression. Figure VI depicts these blends.

Figure VI. Emotion Blends with Unique Expressions
It is likely, though not yet confirmed, that blends of different intensities of the basic emotions can also have distinct expressions. It is less likely that all of these varieties will be recognizable, since this would require observers to discriminate between hundreds of subtly distinct facial configurations.

My aim in this section has been to show how scientists catalog the expressive resources of the human face, and to enumerate many of the expressions that have been entered into a “dictionary” of the facial expression of emotion. How exhaustive this list is continues to be a source of debate.

2.3. Hand Gestures

The 17th century English physician John Bulwer dedicated no fewer than four philosophical treatises to the nature and importance of hand gestures. In his Chirologia, which contains a catalog of expressive gestures, he writes that “We clap our hands in joy, wring them in sorrow, advance them in prayer and admiration; shake our head in disdain; wrinkle our forehead in dislike, crinkle our nose in anger, blush in shame, and so for the most part of the more subtle motions” (1644). Figure VII presents Bulwer’s own dictionary of expressive hand gestures.
Three types of hand gestures may be distinguished. (1) **Emblems** are paradigmatically deliberate gestures that encode a conventional meaning, such as the signs of American Sign Language, the thumbs-up, the middle finger, and the A-OK sign (Ekman & Friesen 2003: 12-14). (2) **Gesticulations** are paradigmatically spontaneous gestures that depict a speaker’s thoughts, such as when a speaker “grasps” into the air when trying to find the right word or points to the floor when saying “here” (McNeill 1992). (3) Finally, **expressions** are paradigmatically
spontaneous gestures that manifest a person’s emotions, such as clenched fists, outstretched hands, and covering the mouth. (Ekman & Friesen 2003: 12-14). Here, I shall be interested solely in expressions.

Next, we must recognize that gestures are much more difficult to measure than facial expressions. Although the hand contains fewer muscles than the face (around thirty-five), most of them can produce much broader ranges of perceptible motion, and in more complex combinations. Let’s do a quick demonstration. Extend you hand in front of you. Twist your wrist so that your palm faces up and then down. Bend your wrist so that your fingers point toward your body and then away from it. Make a fist (while still twisting and bending your wrist in a figure-eight motion). Extend some fingers, but not all. Use your thumb to touch the tips of each of those extended fingers. Insofar as exhaustive anatomical classifications of these gestures would be difficult to produce, scientists typically rely on less rigorous taxonomical categories. Often, they rely on what I shall call coarse physiological descriptions of position or movement. Figure VIII presents an especially coarse description of various expressive gestures (Kipp & Martin 2009).
At other times, scientists rely on *pictorial representations* of gestures, and make no attempt to articulate verbally what constitutes them. Bulwer’s dictionary of emotional hand gestures (Figure VII, above) exemplifies this latter technique, as do most presentations of the American Manual Alphabet (the signs for particular letters that supplement the vocabulary of American Sign Language). Besides avoiding the difficulties inherent in measuring gestures anatomically, pictorial representations enjoy the added benefit of being useful in judgment studies.

Sadly, little research has been done to test Bulwer’s hypothesis that the hands alone are capable of expressing a variety of different emotions.\(^{10}\) Most research to date focuses on body

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\(^{10}\) Recent work on so-called “hand-over-face gestures,” however, suggests that states of interest, boredom, uncertainty, and thoughtfulness are expressed by the hand touching or covering the face in various ways (Mahmoud & Robinson 2011).
language more generally, treating hand gestures as components of full body postures. Future research must determine whether the shaking of the fist is itself an expression of anger, for instance, or whether it is an expression of anger only when it is a component of an expressive posture.

2.4. Body Language

Early research suggested that full body postures do not express particular emotions. Ekman & Friesen (1977) concluded, for instance, that body language can express only a person’s “gross affective state” (i.e. whether she is feeling a positive or a negative emotion), and the intensity of this state. At the same time, they hypothesized that body language may be a more reliable guide to the extreme intensities of emotion than facial expressions, since social norms demand a more careful managing of the expressions of the face than those of the body (Ekman & Friesen 1977). However, subsequent experiments suggest that body postures can indeed express many of the basic emotions. Figure IX presents coarse physiological descriptions of expressive postures, based on a recent component study (Lhommet & Marsella 2015):
### Table: Coarse Physiological Descriptions of Expressive Postures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Frequent posture features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Head forward, no chest backward, no abdominal twist, arms raised forwards and upwards, shoulders lifted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>Head backward, no chest forward, arms raised above shoulder and straight at the elbow, shoulders listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadness</td>
<td>Head forward, chest forward, no abdominal twist, arms at the side of the trunk, collapsed posture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surprise</td>
<td>Head backward, chest backward, abdominal twist, arms raise with straight forearms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Head backward or lightly tilt, expanded posture, hands on the hips or raised above the head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Head backward, no abdominal twist, arms are raised forwards, shoulders forwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgust</td>
<td>Shoulders forwards, head downwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boredom</td>
<td>Collapsed posture, head backwards not facing the interlocutor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And Figure X depicts the pictorial representations used in a recent judgment study, which found that observers can reliably identify emotions in full body postures (Schindler, et al. 2008):
Although it has been demonstrated that certain emotional blends (especially of fear and anger) are expressed in the body language of non-human animals (e.g. Lorenz 2002), no experiments have been performed, to my knowledge, to determine whether body language in humans can uniquely express particular emotional blends. A great deal of research remains to be done.

2.5. Vocal Expressions

Reflecting on a century of research, the Swiss psychologist Klaus Scherer writes that “There is considerable evidence that emotion produces changes in respiration, phonation and
articulation, which in turn partly determine the parameters of the acoustic signal, and much points to the existence of phylogenetic continuity in the acoustic patterns of vocal affect expression” (Banse & Scherer 1996). In other words, there are acoustic patterns of the voice corresponding to a variety of distinct emotions, not only in humans, but also in other mammals. Furthermore, evidence suggests that observers can recognize these patterns as the expressions of particular emotions.

To begin, it will be helpful to draw a distinction between vocal expressions of emotion and verbal expressions of emotion. The former depend on how something is said; the latter on what is said. In this section I will focus exclusively on vocal expressions (verbal expressions will be the subject of chapter 5). Similarly, it will be helpful to distinguish between vocal bursts and emotional prosody. The former include yelps, whimpers, whines, and other vocalizations that do not involve articulate speech (I am also tempted to include here interjections such as “Fuck!”, “Shit!”, “Damn!”). The latter include the acoustic characteristics involved in the production of articulate speech. A sentence can be said in many ways, some of which are expressive of sadness (e.g. “Why did you do this to me?”), of anger (e.g. “Why did you do this to me?”), of surprise (e.g. “Why did you do this to me?”), and so on.

Most research to date on human vocal expressions has focused on emotional prosody. In a standard judgment study, an actor will be prompted to read a nonsensical pseudo-sentence with a variety of emotions, and the recording will be played back to participants, who must identify which emotion, if any, has been expressed. In a standard component study, an actor will be prompted to read a sentence with feeling, and the acoustic properties of the resulting utterance
will be measured and analyzed. Emotional prosody can be measured across several dimensions, such as pitch, spectrum, and amplitude (Sauter, et al. 2010).

Although early research focused on the basic emotions, subsequent research has investigated other emotions and differing intensities of the basic emotions. Banse and Scherer (1996) confirmed that observers can detect differences in the vocal expression of fourteen emotions—hot anger, cold anger, panic fear, anxiety, despair, sadness, elation, happiness, interest, boredom, shame, pride, disgust, and contempt. Sauter, Eisner, Calder, and Scott (2010) did the same for ten—achievement, amusement, anger, contentment, disgust, pleasure, relief, sadness, and surprise. Finally, Juslin and Laukka (2001) found measurable differences in the intensities of the expressions of five basic emotions (all but disgust) (see also Green, et al. 2011; Bachorowski & Owren 1995).

In sum, scientists have found that a wide variety of emotions can cause changes in a person’s tone of voice, which, in turn, can be identified by observers as expressions of those emotions.

2.6. The Autonomic Nervous System

Every mode of expression considered thus far involves changes in the musculoskeletal system. That is, all involve the contraction of particular muscles causing certain dynamic movements of the body or face or certain changes in the pitch, spectrum, and amplitude of the human voice. Furthermore, every mode considered thus far was remarkably “expressive,” in the
sense (specified in §2.1) that it could be configured into hundreds or even thousands of distinct states, thus exhibiting the potential to express a great number of emotions uniquely.

However, there are other modes of expression that involve other types of physiological changes. These tend to be comparatively less expressive and as a matter of fact express fewer emotions. Take, for instance, the capillaries of the cheek. When blood flow increases through these capillaries, a blush is produced, expressing embarrassment (Crozier 2010). (Blushing is not to be confused with flushing, which occurs on the face and upper body, and which is a standard expression of emotional excitement more generally.) When blood flow decreases, by contrast, the face becomes pale, often expressing fright.

A number of glands and ducts can also express emotion. Secretions from the sweat and anal glands are common expressions of fear (Levenson 2003), while secretions from the tear ducts are common expressions of sadness. Many animals, and some unfortunate humans, also defecate when frightened.

Arasing (also called “piloerection” or, more colloquially, “goose bumps”) is the standing of hairs or feathers on end. It is a common response to the cold, but in some animals (e.g. cats) it is an expression of fear, while in other animals (e.g. dogs) it is an expression of anger (Darwin 2009).

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11 Some philosophers have argued that changes in the autonomic nervous system ought not to be regarded as emotional “expressions” at all (e.g. Green 2007). Although there are indeed important differences between such changes and the other types of expressions enumerated, it would be a mistake to think that these differences are enough to disqualify the former from counting as “expressions.” After all, most people think of blushes and tears as emotional expressions, and Darwin went so far as to call blushing “the most peculiar and most human of all expressions” (2009: 310). In what follows I will classify changes in the autonomic nervous system, alongside facial expressions, gestures, and tones of voice, as “emotional expressions.”
As before, we may distinguish those behaviors counted as expressions by component studies from those counted as expressions by judgment studies. Sometimes, people act out their emotions in ways that observers do not recognize as emotional expressions. At other times, people regard behaviors as emotional expressions even when they are not acted out by people in the grips of an emotion. Still, in many circumstances, these behaviors do match: people act out their emotions in ways that observers recognize as emotional expressions.

2.7. Conclusion

We have just reviewed the methods that scientists employ when compiling “dictionaries” of emotional expression. Although these dictionaries are interesting in their own rights, and would certainly make for a nice coffee table book, scientists compile them for the purpose of testing empirical hypotheses about the expression of emotion. Most research to date has focused on confirming or disconfirming what has been called the universality thesis, or the claim that some emotional expressions can be recognized across all cultures. Some have argued that each of the basic emotions has a universal facial expression (Ekman 2003; Matsumoto 1990; Oatley & Jenkins 1992; Izard 1992; Turner & Ortony 1992; Keltner 2009). Others have denied that any emotion has a universal expression (Russell 1994; Russell 1995; Barrett 2011). And still others have attempted to broker a compromise between these two extremes (Elfenbein & Ambady 2002; Elfenbein 2013). The jury is very much still out, so I won’t come down on one side of the
debate or another. Thankfully, my account of emotional expression is consistent with both the acceptance and the rejection of the universality thesis, so construed.

I am interested in these dictionaries of expression for another reason. Rather than asking whether these dictionaries apply to all humans or only to some, I will be asking a more abstract conceptual question: what is it that makes these behaviors “expressions” of emotion in the first place? Before attempting to answer this question, I will first take a detour through the evolution of emotional expression, since doing so will reveal that expressions evolved to serve a multitude of functions, and thus that ‘expression’ cannot be defined in terms of a single function.
CHAPTER 3: THE EVOLUTION OF EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

“With mankind some expressions, such as bristling of the hair under the influence of extreme terror, or the uncovering of the teeth under that of furious rage, can hardly be understood, except on the belief that man once existed in a much lower and animal-like condition.” (Darwin 2009: 19)

Emotional expressions, as we have seen, consist of facial expressions, gestures, tones of voice, and the like, which convey information about types and intensities of emotions. These expressions are not conventional symbols, like the words of natural language, but were established by the forces of natural selection, in many cases long before the speciation of *Homo sapiens*. Indeed, some of our expressions are homologous to the expressions of non-human animals. The muscles that cause our body hairs to stand on end when we are afraid are the same muscles that cause mammals’ fur and birds’ feathers to stand on end when they are afraid. The muscles that cause our lips to curl when are angry are the same muscles that cause a baboon’s lips to curl when it is angry.

The evolutionary origins of emotional expressions have a significant implication for our investigation here. Whereas the lexemes of natural language were established for the sake of communication—indeed, words do not typically have any other uses besides communication—emotional expressions evolved for a variety of reasons. As we shall see, some emotional expressions evolved specifically to serve as signals in communication, whereas others evolved to serve physiological functions that have nothing to do with communication. It can be tempting to
assume that emotional expressions exist for the sake of communication, but that’s a mistake. Emotional expressions serve many other functions as well.

Although natural selection is responsible for the emergence and perpetuation of many emotional expressions, we can do much more with these expressions today than what they evolved to do. Humans are social animals, and we have constructed complex systems of norms to govern the intricacies of social living (cf. Zawidzki 2013). Today, we use emotional expressions to navigate our way through this system—by staking claims to entitlements, by forecasting our commitments, by imputing obligations to others, and so on. These are some of the most interesting uses of emotional expressions, yet they do not admit of an evolutionary explanation. That being said, we rely on the same basic repertoire of natural expressions, even in these more complex cases. In this chapter I shall focus on the evolutionary origins of many of our expressions, emphasizing the continuities between emotional expressions in humans and non-human animals. In chapter 6, I shall go on to explore the more complicated ways in which humans use emotional expressions to communicate.

I begin this chapter with a summary of Darwin’s original theory, followed by a sketch of what I think a proper “Neo-Darwinian” theory of the evolution of emotional expression ought to look like. Both emphasize what I shall call Darwin’s Diversity Thesis, or the claim that emotional expressions evolved at different times, by distinct mechanisms, to serve diverse functions. I shall then spend some time surveying the myriad functions that emotional expressions evolved to serve. Many of these functions are non-communicative, and hence will not be of interest to us later. Others are communicative, however, and will be incorporated into my account of the pragmatics of emotional expression, developed in chapter 6. Before we can
understand what emotional expressions are, we must consider where they came from and what they evolved to do.

3.1. Darwin’s Diversity Thesis

Charles Darwin’s *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872/2009) is, by all accounts, a groundbreaking work in evolutionary biology. In addition to providing a fully naturalistic explanation of the origins of expression, Darwin must also be credited with first advancing what I call “Darwin’s Diversity Thesis,” or the claim that emotional expressions evolved at different times, by distinct evolutionary mechanisms, to serve diverse functions. Some evolved to serve a role in communication, others evolved for purposes unrelated to communication, and still others evolved for no purposes whatsoever. Philosophers tend to assume that expressions form a unified functional class (e.g. Searle 1969; Koch 1983; Green 2007a), yet Darwin suggests otherwise.

Darwin’s book opens with a discussion of three basic principles, which, he claims, can account for the origins and functions of a wide variety of emotional expressions. The important point for our purposes is that each principle yields expressions with distinct biological functions. Expressions that evolved via the first principle function as components of the fight-or-flight response. Expressions that evolved via the second principle function as signals in communication. And expressions that evolved via the third principle have no function at all.
3.1.1. The Principle of Associated Habits

The first principle, which Darwin calls “the principle of serviceable associated habits,” holds that some expressions evolved as fitness-enhancing behavioral routines (2009: 34). A dog draws its ears back when angry to protect them in a fight (2009: 112), perks them up when surprised to increase its power of hearing (2009: 115), and lowers them when affectionate to prevent itself from being distracted (2009: 119). It tenses the muscles throughout its body when it is angry or afraid to prepare itself for fight or flight (2009: 116), and it tucks its tail between its legs when afraid to keep it from being bitten (2009: 122). In each case, the particular physiological changes that constitute an emotional expression serve a specific purpose in helping the animal to survive. These expressions are, in short, adaptations: functional traits that evolved via natural selection to increase the fitness of the organism.

Darwin argues that many elements of the standard human expression of sadness can likewise be given adaptationist explanations. We shut our eyes (2009: 159-160) and furrow our brows (2009: 189) when screaming or crying in order to protect the vessels in and around our eyes from rupturing. We produce tears when crying to lubricate the surfaces of the eyes, which have been irritated by the increase blood flow through the blood vessels (2009: 170-175). And we turn down the corners of our mouths or extend our lips into a pout when saddened as a prelude to crying out (2009: 191-193). Darwin concludes that these expressions of sadness, far from having evolved to signal sadness to observers, as Bell claims, are but “vestiges of screaming fits” (2009: 194). These expressions evolved to protect the vulnerable parts of the face during intense bouts of screaming, but since adults for the most part inhibit these bouts (Darwin claims), the
expressions no longer serve this function. Darwin goes on to give adaptive explanations for a wide variety of emotional expressions: we wrinkle our noses and retch when disgusted to prevent contaminants from entering our bodies (2009: 257-258), and we clench our fists when angry to prepare to strike (2009: 236). These are expressions that help us to survive.

3.1.2. The Principle of Actions Due to the Constitution of the Nervous System

According to Darwin’s third principle (I will return to the second principle shortly), which he inelegantly names “the principle of actions due to the constitution of the nervous system, independently from the first of the will, and independently to a certain extent of habit,” a second class of emotional expressions emerged not as adaptations, but as functionless by-products of other primary adaptations (2009: 34-35). Take, for instance, the rattlesnake’s rattle. We might

\footnote{12} Unfortunately influenced by Lamarck, Darwin insists that many of these routines began as voluntary movements, were eventually committed to habit, and then were passed down as instincts to future generations (something like this can occur via the Baldwin effect, however). To his credit, Darwin also offers an explanation for how natural selection could be responsible for the evolution of these expressions, but he tends to favor the Lamarckian explanation (2009: 39). Today, scientists reject the Lamarckian explanation and offer purely Darwinian explanations of the evolution of these expressions. In short: if an aberrant gene were to cause an animal to retch in the presence of a disease-ridden corpse, then this animal would be less likely than conspecifics to contract a disease, and hence more likely to survive and reproduce. Many generations later, this animal’s progeny would make up a significant portion of the population. In this way, natural selection would ensure that fitness-enhancing expressions would promulgate. Thus, whereas Darwin emphasizes the habitual character of these expressions (he claims that they must be begin as voluntarily performed behaviors), contemporary scientists instead emphasize their serviceable character: expressions that evolved in accordance with the first principle are adaptations (and need not ever have been performed voluntarily).

\footnote{13} Given the Lamarckian influence, Darwin sometimes contrasts the first and third principles by stating that expressions that evolved via the first began as habits while expressions that evolved via the third began as instincts. However, a more defensible contrast is that expressions that evolved via the first are directly serviceable, while expressions that evolved via the third are not. On my interpretation, then, an increased heartbeat, which prepares an animal for fight or flight, evolved via the first, rather than the third, principle.
speculate that the rattle evolved as a warning sign to keep other animals at bay, but Darwin suggests that it in fact evolved as a side-effect of molting. Because the skin at the tip of the snake’s tail does not detach, a series of molts will leave a build-up of skin at the tip, thereby forming the rattle (2009: 109-111). (The rattle later took on the function of signaling, but Darwin’s second principle, rather than the third, will help us to explain this transition.)

In the case of humans, Darwin argues that most affect vocalizations—the sighs, moans, and groans that occur during intense emotional episodes—likewise emerged as functionless by-products, rather than as communicative signals. He writes: “When the sensorium is strongly excited, the muscles of the body are generally thrown into violent action; and as a consequence, loud sounds are uttered” (2009: 88). In the last section we saw that the expressions of sadness evolved as adaptations that help an animal to cope with screaming fits. The screaming fits themselves, however, are in Darwin’s view by-products of adaptive changes to the nervous system, as are the acts of trembling (2009: 71), blushing (2009: 72), sweating (2009: 73), and arasing (2009: 99-100). Crucially, these expressions evolved to serve no function whatsoever, on Darwin’s view; they simply co-occur with some other adaptive trait, due to the constitution of the organism.

3.1.3. The Principle of Antithesis

Although many emotional expression can be accounted for by the above two principles, others conspicuously cannot. Smiling, for instance, which is one of the most prominent
examples of an emotional expression, appears neither to prepare the organism to cope with an environmental challenge nor to be the side-effect of another fitness-enhancing routine. Why, then, do we express joy by smiling? Darwin offers his second principle, which he calls “the principle of antithesis,” toward this end (2009: 34). He speculates that if one emotion has an expression that evolved via the first or third principle, then contrasting emotions will subsequently evolve to have contrasting expressions. Because the face lowers with negative emotion, it rises with positive emotion (2009: 211). Darwin applies this principle in explaining a number of other curious expressions. Because the dog assumes a crouching, tensed stance when angry, it assumes a flighty, relaxed stance when happy (2009: 56-57; see Figure XI, below). And because the shoulders become taught with concentration, they shrug with indifference (2009: 270).

Figure XI. The Principle of Antithesis

By what mechanism does the second principle operate? Darwin offers several explanations, but the best appeals to interpersonal communication. If an animal benefits from signaling its
emotional state to others, then it would benefit by having unambiguous, clearly distinguishable expressions for separate emotions (2009: 63-66). As a result, selective pressures would facilitate the emergence of a distinctive display of joy, such as the smile, which is difficult to mistake for a frown or pout.14

Darwin is reluctant to claim that emotional expressions first evolved to serve as communicative signals, in part because he wants to distance his view from that of creationists, who argued that God created emotional expressions to enable humans communicate their emotions. That being said, Darwin suggests that emotional expressions that first evolved for purposes unrelated to communication may later take on the function of communicating. In the conclusion to *Expression*, he muses that:

The movements of expression in the face and body, whatever their origin may have been, are in themselves of much importance for our welfare. They serve as the first means of communication between the mother and her infant; she smiles approval,

14 In his critical commentary on *Expression*, Paul Ekman laments the fact that Darwin did not place greater weight on the signaling value of expressions, but develops Darwin’s suggestive line of thought:

Darwin here [2009: 63] grants the importance of intercommunication. If he had followed that line of reasoning, it would have been logical to suppose that opposite movements would be selected for their signal value. He would then have explained the smile, for example, as being selected for communication over the course of evolution, because it is a movement different from all the negative facial expressions of emotion—anger, fear, disgust or sadness. As the antithetical emotion, one would expect the smile to stand out in marked contrast to the other expressions and this is indeed what we have found…. One can recognize that someone is smiling from a further distance (100 meters) than any of the negative facial expressions. And when expressions are presented for only a fraction of a second, the smile is recognized more accurately than the negative emotional expressions. (2009: 63-64)

Compared to Darwin, contemporary scientists place far greater weight on the signaling value of expressions, and, indeed, much of the recent empirical work on emotional expressions has focused on their effectiveness as signals within communication. For his part, Darwin seems willing to appeal to the signaling value of an expression only when no other explanation is forthcoming.
and thus encourages her child on the right path, or frowns disapproval. We readily perceive sympathy in others by their expressions; our sufferings are thus mitigated and our pleasures increased; and mutual good feeling is thus strengthened. The movements of expression give vividness and energy to our spoken words. They reveal the thoughts and intentions of others more truly than do words, which may be falsified. (2009: 359)

In contemporary parlance, expressions may be “exaptations” or traits that initially evolved to serve one function (or no function) but were later co-opted by the organism to serve another (Gould & Vrba 1982). Expressions may not have first evolved to provide observers with information, but if it turned out that they were well-suited for this role, then they may have evolved further, appearing more distinctive and prototypical, to serve this function more effectively. Here is where Darwin’s second principle again comes into play. Because it is useful for animals to be able to signal their emotions, natural selection would favor increasingly antithetical expressions for distinct emotions.

3.1.4. Summary

To review, Darwin claims that expressions evolved via three distinct evolutionary principles to serve three different sets of functions. Some expressions evolved for their immediate survival
value (principle 1). Others evolved as functionless by-products of other adaptive traits (principle 3). And still others first evolved for their signaling value (principle 2).15

The upshot of Darwin’s account is, for our purposes, two-fold. First, since only some emotional expressions evolved to play a role in communication, only some emotional expressions are appropriately conceived as communicative signals. Other expressions, which evolved to serve either non-communicative functions or no functions at all, are not appropriately conceived as such. Second, we learn that even those expressions that did evolve to serve a role in communication may have first evolved for purposes unrelated to communication.

Darwin’s account of the evolution of emotional expression was forgotten for nearly a century, when myths about the cultural relativity of emotional expression reigned, but it was rediscovered and embraced in the second half of the twentieth century (Ekman 2006). I turn now to contemporary accounts of the evolution of emotional expression, and situate them within a broadly Neo-Darwinian theory of the evolution of emotional expression.

15 My reading of Darwin resolves an ongoing interpretive debate within the literature. “Adaptationist” readers of Expression take Darwin to be pursuing an adaptationist explanation of emotional expression, according to which such expressions evolved as functional adaptations, designed to increase the fitness of the organism (Shariff & Tracy 2011: 395; Hess & Thibault 2009: 120; Chevalier-Skolnikoff 1973: 27; Ekman 1992). “Anti-Adaptationist” readers, by contrast, take Darwin to be pursuing a non-adaptationist explanation of expression, according to which such expressions evolved as functionless by-products of other primary adaptations (Fridlund 1994: chapter 2; Barrett 2011: 400). Based on the reading that I’ve developed in this chapter, both readings have gotten something right: expressions that evolved via the 1st and perhaps the 2nd principles are indeed adaptive while expressions that evolved via the 3rd and perhaps the 2nd principles are indeed functionless. These two readings stand in conflict only if one commits Bell’s mistake, presupposing that expressions must form a unified functional class. Yet we have seen that Darwin’s strategy in Expression is explicitly to demonstrate that expressions evolved via distinct principles in order to serve distinct functions or no functions at all. This ongoing debate between traditional and revisionist interpretations is simply ill-formed.
3.2. Neo-Darwinian Theories of Emotional Expression

A theory of emotional expression is “Neo-Darwinian” to the extent that it affirms Darwin’s Diversity Thesis. One particularly promising Neo-Darwinian theory has been advanced by Azim Shariff and Jessica Tracy (2011) under the name of the “Two-Stage Model” of the evolution of emotional expression. In their view, emotional expressions evolved in two distinct stages, in order to serve two distinct sets of functions. (Their view ignores emotional expressions that evolved to serve no function whatsoever, or those that evolved via Darwin’s third principle.)

In the first stage, emotional expressions evolved for adaptive purposes unrelated to communication, namely to “promote automatic, adaptive responses to recurrent environmental events that pose fitness challenges” (Shariff & Tracy 2011: 396-397). An animal that retches when disgusted by putrid flesh, for instance, is less likely to ingest deadly pathogens, and is therefore more likely to survive, reproduce, and pass on the genes responsible for retching (recall Darwin’s 1st principle). Similarly, an animal may tremble when afraid, not because trembling serves any particular function, but because of how the animal’s nervous system is constituted (recall Darwin’s 3rd principle). Shariff and Tracy call first stage functions “physiological functions” (Shariff & Tracy 2011: 396, 398).

In the second stage of evolution, many of these expressions became ritualized—that is, more exaggerated and pronounced—so that they could take on the function of communicating information to observers (Shariff & Tracy 2011: 396). If retching not only protects oneself from deadly pathogens, but teaches kin that they too should avoid materials that contain them, then retching has signaling value above and beyond its immediate survival value (recall Darwin’s 2nd
principle). Similarly, suppose a random gene mutation causes an animal to bear its teeth before striking (this behavior is termed a “pre-intention movement”). Although this behavior does not serve a physiological function, it may become ritualized to function as a signal in communication. Shariff and Tracy call second stage functions “communicative functions” (Shariff & Tracy 2011: 396, 398).

Not every first stage expression has acquired a communicative function. Galvanic skin responses and blushing, for instance, did not evolve into signals. Not every second stage expression has retained its physiological function (if it had one) either. Piloerection (“goose bumps”) has become vestigial in human beings, for instance, and now serves only a communicative function. Nevertheless, many expressions have endured both stages of evolution, and now serve both physiological and communicative functions.

The Two-Stage Model offers a simple and elegant Neo-Darwinian framework for analyzing the evolution of emotional expressions, which I adopt here. In what follows, I will situate recent empirical work on particular emotional expressions within the Two-Stage Model. I will wade deep into the details, at times, but I want to emphasize the importance of Darwin’s Diversity Thesis, and of what it means for our investigation here. One upshot is the recognition that emotional expressions evolved at different times, via different mechanisms, to serve distinct functions. Thus, I hold that it is a mistake to assume that emotional expressions are all cut from the same cloth. Another upshot is the recognition that a philosophical theory of the pragmatics of emotional expression will need to account for the communicative functions of expressions that are studied within the natural sciences. In §3.4, below, we will get a sense for many of the ways
in which emotional expressions communicate, which will be explained using the pragmatic framework that I develop later in chapter 6.

### 3.3. Stage One: The Physiological Functions of Expressions

Long before expressions took on communicative functions, they served more immediate physiological functions. By altering the physical state of the organism in a specific way, these expressions prepared the organism to cope with common environmental challenges. We may understand these expressions by considering them in light of the particular challenges that they evolved to address (Keltner & Haidt 1999; Keltner & Haidt 2001; Keltner, et al. 2006).

#### 3.3.1. Problems of Predation

Most animals risk predation on a daily basis. Unless you’re an apex predator, there’s something else in your habitat that’s bigger and nastier than you are, and, chances are, it’s very hungry. To increase their chances of escaping predation, animals have evolved a hair-trigger “fight-or-flight response.” The coiner of this phrase, W. B. Cannon (1915), observed that emotional expressions play a central role in this response.

When surprised by a loud noise or a quick movement in the visual field, for instance, an organism will snap to attention. Its eyes will widen, enabling it to take in more of its immediate surroundings. Its head will raise, giving it a better vantage point. And its ears will prick up,
allowing it to focus its hearing. Each of these expressions may have helped the organism to locate and assess the cause of surprise (Ekman 1989). The cause of surprise will not always be a predator, but since the cost of a false negative is so much greater than that of a false positive, the surprise response may be operating on the principle of “better safe than sorry.”

If the cause of surprise does turn out to be a predator, then fear might set in. The organism’s heart will begin to beat faster, which will increase blood flow to the legs, should the organism need to flee. The organism may gasp, sucking in a breath of air, again prepping it for flight. And it may defecate so as to shed excess weight. When camouflage is the best defense, the organism may freeze in place, so as not to draw attention to itself. When hiding is not an option, its hairs or feathers may stand on end, making it appear more formidable. Each of these expressions could have evolved in response to the problems of predation (Ohman & Mineka 2001; Marsh, et al. 2005; Susskind, et al. 2008): they alter the physiology of the organism so that it will be best prepared to observe, identify, and escape predators.

3.3.2. Problems of Disease

Some animals have picky diets, which do not include toxic or other otherwise harmful substances. Other animals have hearty digestive systems, for which very few substances are harmful. Humans fall into neither category. We eat an incredibly wide range of foods, yet many substances are harmful to us. What, then, keeps us from ingesting these harmful substances?
Disgust might play a crucial role. Certain stimuli disgust us, and when are disgusted, we often respond with adaptive ambivalence. Our first response is to turn away from, to spit out, or to distance ourselves from whatever caused the disgust. Our next response, however, is to turn back, to investigate the source of our emotion. In Plato’s Republic, Leontius feels this ambivalence toward the pile of corpses on the roadside. He wants to look, but, at the same time, he is disgusted and wants to turn away. In the end, the former desire wins out and he runs to the corpses to examine them. Paul Rozin has argued that this ambivalence has a straightforward evolutionary explanation: we need to avoid disgusting things, but, at the same time, we need to learn as much about these things as possible so that we can better avoid them in the future (Rozin, et al. 2013).

On Rozin’s view, we are “hard-wired” to find some things disgusting, including feces, insects, and other small disease-ridden creatures (Rozin & Fallon 1987; but See Griffiths 1997 for an alternative view). However, we learn quickly through experience to find other things disgusting, too. In the wake of food poisoning, for instance, we often find that we are disgusted by whatever we last ate, regardless of whether it really was the cause of the poisoning. (As in the case of surprise, it’s better to be safe than sorry.) Rozin claims to have identified a series of “laws” that our disgust response appears to obey (Rozin, et al. 1986; Rozin & Fallon 1987). One is the law of contiguity: we will be disgusted by anything that comes into contact with something else that we find disgusting. Research subjects report being disgusted by their favorite juice after it has been stirred with a (sterilized) flyswatter. Another is the law of similarity: we will be disgusted by anything that sufficiently resembles something else that we find disgusting. Research subjects report being disgusted by chocolate that’s been molded to look like dog feces.
Whatever the cause, disgust is expressed in the following ways. We wrinkle our noses in response to offensive smells, which may serve the function of narrowing the nostrils so as to allow less air in. Our mouths gape and we stick our tongues in response to offensive tastes, which may serve the function of ejecting food from our mouths. Retching and vomiting might regurgitate foods that have already been ingested. On this proposal, disgust evolved to track (by crude approximation) the carriers of toxins, pathogens, and other harmful substances, and the expressions of disgust evolved to keep us from ingesting these substances (Rozin, et al. 1994). As with the expressions discussed in the previous section, these expressions are not (yet) communicative signals.

3.3.3. Problems of Competition

Humans, like bees and naked mole rats, are ultra-social organisms. As such, we are far more often concerned with navigating a vindictive social environment than we are navigating a threatening natural environment. The ability to outdo predators and diseases pales in comparison to the ability to outdo conspecifics. Because of this, many emotional expressions have evolved specifically to make us better negotiators of social space. (I will return later to the communicative functions of these expressions; here, I am concerned solely with their physiological functions.)

An expression of pride is so the so-called “power stance.” When we assume the power stance, research suggests that our bodies produce higher quantities of testosterone, which, in
turn, makes us more aggressive and commanding (Carney, et al. 2010; however, I should note that this research has failed to replicate and is hotly contested at the moment). Assuming that these findings are correct, our bodies reward social accomplishment by increasing our competitiveness and motivating us to pursue further accomplishments. We commonly express shame, in turn, by slumping our shoulders and by covering our necks or faces. The same research also suggests that this expression has the opposite effect: it lowers the amount of testosterone in the body. In the face of a social failing, the expression of shame discourages us from pursuing social accomplishments, since, given our initial failing, we may not be cut out for success (Carney, et al. 2015; again, this research is controversial).

Expressions of pride and shame, then, might function as feedback mechanisms that help us to find our place in the social hierarchy. As long as we are outdoing others, the expression of pride could motivate us to climb the social ladder. As soon as we are outdone, the expression of shame could discourage us from attempting the next rung.

3.3.4. Summary

Figure XII summarizes the physiological functions that we’ve explored thus far. This list is by no means exhaustive. Rather, my aim has been to sample a few of the physiological functions of emotional expressions and to give a feel for how they are thematized by evolutionary biologists.
Figure XII. Physiological Functions of Five Emotional Expressions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Evolutionary Challenge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surprise</td>
<td>To help the organism to identify predators</td>
<td>Problems of Predation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>To help the organism to escape predators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgust</td>
<td>To prevent the organism from ingesting pathogens</td>
<td>Problems of Disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>To promote social success</td>
<td>Problems of Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>To prevent social failure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4. Stage Two: The Communicative Functions of Expressions

According to the Two-Stage Model, many first stage expressions evolved further—via the process of ritualization—to take on another function, namely that of communicating information to observers. What, in particular, did emotional expressions evolve to communicate? As in the case of their physiological functions, we may understand the communicative functions of expressions by looking at the specific challenges that they evolved to solve (Keltner & Haidt 1999; Keltner & Haidt 2001; Keltner, et al. 2006). I begin by returning to the three problems that I discussed earlier, since expressions can solve these problems even more successfully once
they’ve evolved into signals. I will then turn to two new problems, which signaling expressions are uniquely positioned to solve.

3.4.1. Problems of Predation

Alarm cries (conceived here as strategic expressions of fear\textsuperscript{16}) puzzled evolutionary biologists for a long time (Zahavi & Zahavi 1999). Granted, it benefits the group if one individual cries out upon perceiving a predator, since this warning would give the others a chance to flee. However, this cry would selectively disadvantage the individual who issued it, since it would draw the predator’s attention to that individual. If the individual that issues the cry is more likely to be predated than one that does not, then the genes responsible for this behavior would be selected against and hence would not proliferate.

The Zahavis (1999) offer a plausible solution to this puzzle. They suggest that the warning cry is not directed toward conspecifics at all, but rather toward the predator itself. The cry says, in effect, “I’ve seen you!” Because predators often rely on the element of surprise to catch their nimbler prey, it is not worth it for them to give chase once they’ve been spotted. Furthermore, the Zahavis contend that the warning cry is costly to produce: it requires energy that would be better spent on fleeing from the predator. As a result, only the fittest organisms will be able to absorb the costs. A weaker organism will need to conserve its strength for its flight, and thus will not waste any energy on producing the cry. Research suggests, first, that only the strongest individuals will issue the cries, and, second, that predators will rarely target the individual who

\textsuperscript{16} This claim is controversial, but see Seyfarth & Cheney (2003) for a persuasive defense.
issued the cry (Zahavi & Zahavi 1999). It’s as if the predator knows that any individuals who cry out will be hard to catch, while those who do not will be easier to catch.

In sum, expressions of fear can solve the problem of predation by signaling fitness to predators, thereby discouraging a chase that risks the prey its life, or, what is more likely, the predator its dinner. Unlike the expressions of fear considered in §3.3.1, these expressions did evolve for the sake of communicating.

3.4.2. Problems of Disease

Facial expressions of disgust prevent us from ingesting harmful substances. They can also prevent others from ingesting harmful substances by signaling disgust. Research suggests that expressions of disgust are highly contagious (Hess & Blairy 2001). If one individual witnesses another expressing disgust, then she, too, may feel and express disgust (Wicker, et al. 2003). Disgust expressions might have evolved, then, not only to gather information about harmful substances, but also to ensure that this vital information is shared with others. In being ritualized, these expressions become communicative signals.

3.4.3. Problems of Competition
I suggested earlier that emotional expressions make us better negotiators of social space by rewarding social successes and punishing social failures. More salient, however, are the ways in which emotional expressions function to signal social intentions, thereby reducing uncertainty in competitive contexts (Manstead & Fischer 2001; Van Kleef, et al. 2010).

In addition to boosting testosterone levels, the power stance may signal to onlookers that the expresser is motivated to compete, which will discourage less confident agents. Similarly, expressions of anger may signal an unwillingness to make concessions, which gives the expresser leverage over meeker agents (Frank 1988; Van Kleef, et al. 2010). However, research suggests that, while effective, these expressions reflect a scorched Earth strategy, as agents are less likely to engage with angry individuals in the future (Van Kleef et al. 2010, 75). Sometimes, expressions of happiness signal the expresser’s perceived advantage over others, which can prompt retaliation or increased competition (Van Kleef et al. 2010).

Shame expressions not only reduce testosterone levels, but may also signal to onlookers that the expresser is discouraged from competing, which will encourage more confident agents. Similarly, expressions of happiness may signal a willingness to make concessions, thereby prompting some social partners to become more aggressive (Van Kleef et al. 2010). And expressions of guilt signal that the expresser may feel that he or she has demanded too much, which would allow the observer to make greater demands or fewer concessions in the future.

In sum, competitive activities involve a great deal of uncertainty concerning the intentions and motivations of others. We arguably rely heavily on emotional expressions to reduce this uncertainty—to indicate what others are feeling and planning. Expressions forecast our emotions in ways that facilitate strategic interactions with others.
3.4.4. Problems of Cooperation

The Prisoner’s Dilemma illustrates a classic problem in decision theory. The dilemma goes like this: two criminals are arrested and imprisoned following a daring bank robbery. The investigating detective does not have enough evidence to charge them for bank robbery, but, because weapons were found in their homes, the detective can charge them with violating parole. Hoping to leverage a confession from at least one of them, the detective offers each the following deal (the two prisoners are separated and have no means of communicating with one another):

- If you keep mum but your partner rats on you, then he will got off scot free (0 years in prison) while you will serve the time for bank robbery (10 years in prison).
- If your partner keeps mum but you rat on him, then you will get off scot free (0 years in prison) while he will serve the time (10 years in prison).
- If both of you rat, then you will each received reduced sentences for bank robbery (5 years in prison).
- Finally, if you both keep silent, you will be punished only for the parole violation (2 years in prison).
Looking at total years served, the best outcome results from both men keeping mum (4 years in prison versus 10 years). However, when we look at the decision from the perspective of each prisoner, we find that the only rational decision is to rat. That’s because, regardless of what the other person does, one faces a lesser sentence from ratting than from keeping mum. If the other man rats, then one faces 10 years for keeping mum or 5 years for ratting, so ratting is preferable. If the other man keeps mum, then one faces 2 years for keeping mum or 0 years for ratting, so, again, ratting is preferable. Assuming that both men are rational, both will rat, and each will end up serving 5 years, which is considerably worse than had they kept mum.

Thomas Schelling (1966) sees in the Prisoner’s Dilemma a more general problem for cooperation, which goes like this: individuals stand to gain more by cooperating than by working alone, yet they stand to gain the most by reneging on a commitment to cooperate when others have already followed through on theirs. Because reneging is the dominant strategy for everyone, there’d be no reason to trust another’s commitment to cooperate in the first place, and, as a result, everyone would end up foregoing the benefits of cooperation. Schelling suggested that the commitment problem can be solved only if both sides make a precommitment to cooperating. In other words, each side must find a way to lock themselves into cooperating, such that reneging would carry a higher cost than following through on the commitment. By increasing the costs of reneging, cooperation becomes the dominant strategy for all involved.

Following up on Schelling’s proposal, Robert Frank (1988) speculates that the social emotions evolved in early hominin societies as precommitment devices to prevent cheats and shirks from taking advantage of others (cf. Greene 2013: 61-62; Sterelny 2012: 109). He argues that these emotions provide the motivation to follow through on commitments when defection
would be rationally preferable, and that their social expression garners trust from others. Guilt, for example, generates a disincentive against cheating, and since we have good reason to believe others will feel guilty when they defect, expressions of guilt bolster trust. Indignation, by contrast, provides the incentive to punish wrongdoing, even when doing so seems rash. Bullies will thrive where they aren’t punished for their social transgressions, but their wrongdoing often evokes anger. The precommitment to punishing social transgressions can increase the likelihood that people will follow social norms, and it can yield robust social and evolutionary benefits, including long-term patterns of cooperation (Boehm 2012). In sum, the social emotions and their expressions evolved to make us happier to follow the rules than to break them (cf., Klucharev et al 2009, 2011).

Paul Griffiths (2002; see also Griffiths & Scarantino 2009) offers a critical amendment to Frank’s work, building on the work of Jean-Paul Sartrre (1939). He hypothesizes that many social emotions and their expressions are Machiavellian. Instead of fostering a drive toward social conformity and cooperation, they allow us to juke the system for our own advantage. While he does not deny that social emotions can help to weed out cheats and shirks, he notes that they can also help us to become better cheats, and more sophisticated shirks. Against the backdrop of a cooperative enterprise, guilt might allow us to secure forgiveness from others when we are caught transgressing those norms. As Frank notes, if someone wrongs you but appears to be sorry, it is easier to forgive them and to cooperate with them in the future. But so if enough expressions of guilt have been followed by cooperation in the past, and if the expression of guilt isn’t too costly to cultivate, some people might be able to use the expression of guilt to secure re-acceptance into a collaborative community, thereby continuing to garner the
benefits of social life. This is not to deny that guilt may have served a more cooperative role in the past; but in a world designed to foster cooperation and to make defection more difficult, guilt can become part of a Machiavellian strategy for improved cheating and shirking. So perhaps social emotions do more than benefit us as precommitment strategies; perhaps they also help us to defect on commitments. In any case, the expressions of these emotions play a significant role in social communication.

3.4.5. Problems of Reproduction

Passing on one’s genes has never been so hard. Humans are the most cognitively sophisticated creatures to have ever walked the Earth, but, to be this smart, we require long periods of development and growth in which we are completely helpless and unable to fend for ourselves (Hrdy 2009). Because of this, parenting places a greater burden on humans that it does on most other animals. It is the job not just of one individual, but of two and, more often, of many more. To be able to pass on one’s genes to future generations, then, one must ensure that one’s offspring will receive the care and attention needed to survive. Because one cannot supply this care and attention all on one’s own, one relies on the loyalty and commitment of a partner. How can we secure this loyalty and commitment?

Frank (1988) suggests that the experience and expression of love can help to stabilize long-term partnerships. It would be imprudent to stay with someone who would leave whenever a better option came along, but since love increases the likelihood that they will suffer if they lose
you, it serves as a reliable signal that a partner will remain faithful. Once love enters the picture, the threat of defection is weakened, and long-term relationships become a worthwhile investment.

However, Griffiths (2002) argues, against Frank, that romantic love can also help people to get away with adultery in the context of committed long-term relationships. Having been caught in an adulterous act, it may be possible to plea (with varying levels of success), “I am so sorry! I was overcome by emotion, but I still love you!” And where this works, it allows for increase in reproductive fitness without the accompanying loss. In sum, expressions of love are used to solve an important problem of reproduction, namely the problem of securing the loyalty and commitment of a partner who can aid in the rearing of offspring, who will carry its parents’ genes into the next generation.

3.4.6. Summary

Figure XIII (below) summarizes the communicative functions that we’ve explored thus far. As before, the list is not meant to be exhaustive. It is meant to provide a helpful illustration of the diverse communicative functions of emotional expressions, based on the particular evolutionary challenges they evolved to solve.

It’s important to keep things in perspective. Looking at the communicative functions that expressions evolved to serve can be useful in thinking about how expressions communicate today, but it will not give us the whole story. Indeed, the ways in which expressions function in
communication today may look very different from the ways in which they functioned for our
hominin ancestors. Social norms and practices shape the meanings and significances of
emotional expressions, allowing them to do new and different things from before. In chapter 6, I
shall return to this question by investigating how expressions function in communication today.

Figure XIII. Communicative Functions of Nine Emotional Expressions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Evolutionary Challenge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>To discourage predators</td>
<td>Problems of Predation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgust</td>
<td>To prevent kin from ingesting pathogens</td>
<td>Problems of Disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>To signal a dominant status</td>
<td>Problems of Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>To signal an unwillingness to make concessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>To signal a subordinate status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>To signal a willingness to make concessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilt</td>
<td>To signal regret for a norm violation</td>
<td>Problems of Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indignation</td>
<td>To signal another’s norm violation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>To signal commitment to partners and offspring</td>
<td>Problems of Reproduction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5. Moving Forward

In this chapter we have learned that, according to the Neo-Darwinian “Two-Stage Model,” emotional expressions evolved in two separate stages. In the first stage, expressions emerged either as survival-oriented adaptations or as functionless by-products of other adaptations. In the second stage, expressions evolved further to serve as signals in communication. We surveyed a broad range of functions that emotional expressions serve by identifying the particular environmental and social challenges that these expressions evolved to address.

The philosophical upshot of considering all this empirical work is Darwin’s Diversity Thesis—or the claim that emotional expressions are a motley collection of behaviors that serve diverse functions. Philosophers are often tempted to treat emotional expressions as a unified functional class, but we ought to resist this temptation. Some expressions are used in communication, but others are not. In the next chapter I will go on to consider what emotional expressions really are, keeping Darwin’s Diversity Thesis in mind.
CHAPTER 4: THE ANALYSIS OF EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

“We see emotion.” – As opposed to what? – We do not see facial contortions and make the inference that he is feeling joy, grief, boredom. We describe a face immediately as sad, radiant, bored, even when we are unable to give any other description of the features. – Grief, one would like to say, is personified in the face. (Wittgenstein 2006: §570)

Having considered the science of emotional expression in some detail, I now turn to a series of philosophical questions concerning the expression of emotion. In this chapter, I shall defend an analysis of emotional expression—or an answer to the question, “What are emotional expressions, anyway?” In chapter 5, I shall offer an account of the interfacing of language and expression—or an answer to the question, “Is language a means of expression?” And in chapter 6, I shall develop a framework for analyzing the pragmatics of expression—or an answer to the question, “How do emotional expressions communicate?”

A satisfying analysis of “emotional expression” ought to specify the necessary and jointly sufficient conditions under which a bit of behavior will count as an expression of emotion. This analysis ought to tell us why a smile is an expression of joy, a pout is an expression of grief, and a growl is an expression of anger. Furthermore, it ought to tell us why other behaviors, like coughing and wheezing, aren’t expressions of emotion at all.

According to the analysis that I defend here, the Perceptual Analysis of Emotional Expression, behaviors express emotions by making them perceptually manifest. A smile is an expression of joy because an observer who sees a smile can see joy. A pout is an expression of
grief because an observer who sees a pout can see grief. And a growl is an expression of anger because an observer who hears a growl can hear anger. To the extent that neither coughing nor wheezing enables the perception of emotion, neither is an expression of emotion either.\textsuperscript{17} On this view, the enabling of the perception of emotion is both necessary and sufficient for the expression of emotion. Any behavior that enables the perception of emotion will count as an emotional expression, just as any behavior that doesn’t will not count as one.

I am by no means the first to suggest that expressions make emotions perceptually manifest. Indeed, many other philosophers have argued just that.\textsuperscript{18} But we should distinguish the claim that emotional expressions \textit{can} at times make emotions perceptually manifest from the claim that emotional expressions \textit{essentially} do so. The former is a modal claim about our perceptual capacities; the latter a conceptual claim about the nature of expression. Although the conceptual claim can presumably be true only if the modal claim is also true, it is possible for the modal claim to be true and the conceptual claim false—if, for instance, only some emotional expressions enable the perception of emotion.\textsuperscript{19} Sure enough, most recent work on the perceptibility of emotion has focused on substantiating the modal claim while either denying or

\textsuperscript{17} As we shall see in §4.2, however, it is possible for coughing and wheezing to be expressions of emotion, but, in those cases, they will also enable the perception of emotion.


\textsuperscript{19} Mitchell Green (2007a) argues just that. In his analysis of “self-expression,” which includes only those “expressions” that signal and show an agent’s occurrent mental state, Green argues that the enabling of perception is but one of three ways of showing. We can also show \textit{that} we have an emotion by providing evidence of it, and show \textit{how} an emotion feels by helping others to empathize with us. Green contends that agents can express their mental states via these other means of showing as well (2007a: 25, 212). Thus while Green agrees that emotional expressions \textit{can} and sometimes do enable the perception of an agent’s occurrent emotions, he denies that all do so, and thus he denies that the enabling of perception is essential to self-expression (and, \textit{a fortiori}, to expression more generally).
remaining agnostic on the conceptual claim (e.g. Zahavi 2007; Green 2010a; Gallagher & Zahavi 2012; Smith 2015). I buck this trend by intentionally pursuing the stronger conceptual claim. On my view, emotional expressions don’t just happen to enable the perception of emotion; rather, the enabling of perception is precisely what makes a behavior count as an emotional expression in the first place.

This is a bold thesis, which has far-reaching implications. One implication, which many are bound to find troubling, is that emotional expressions turn out to be fundamentally nonlinguistic—that language is not a means of emotional expression at all, since language does not enable the perception of emotion. I agree that the Perceptual Analysis commits us this conclusion, but, far from being troubled by it, I argue that this is precisely the right conclusion to draw. Although we can and often do express our emotions in speech (e.g. by saying “I am utterly crestfallen!”), it is always how we say something, and never what we say, that makes a speech act an expression of emotion. Chapter 5 goes on to consider the relationship between language and expression further.

The chapter is structured as follows: §4.1 develops the Perceptual Analysis in greater detail; §4.2 defends it against objections; and §4.3 considers alternative analyses.

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20 Charles Taylor is perhaps the only other philosopher to defend the perceptual claim specifically as a conceptual claim (1979: 73-74). My version of the Perceptual Analysis differs from Taylor’s in several important respects, and answers objections that his version cannot. Dorit Bar-On (2004; 2010) defends a version of the Perceptual Analysis with respect to “natural expressions” of emotion, but not with respect to the expression of emotion more generally. See §5.2.1 for my take on Bar-On’s view.

21 Later, I shall respond to what seems like an obvious objection to this claim, namely the possibility of expressing our emotions in writing.
4.1. The Perceptual Analysis

The Perceptual Analysis defines emotional expressions as all and only those behaviors that enable the perception of emotion. To clarify this thesis, I shall distinguish between two kinds of perception (§4.1.1), explain what I mean by “enabling” the perception of emotion (§4.1.2), and then apply these concepts to three varieties of emotional expression (§4.1.3). Afterward, I will establish that this analysis is consistent with Darwin’s Diversity Thesis (§4.1.4).

4.1.1. Two Kinds of Perception

Philosophers often distinguish between two kinds of perception: perceiving and perceiving-as (Hanson 1958; Wittgenstein 2006; Dretske 1969). Although two people may see the same duck-rabbit drawing in a book, one may see it as a duck and the other may see it as a rabbit. In what follows, I shall assume two differences between perceiving and perceiving-as.

First, perceiving is a success term, which means that a person can perceive something only if what she perceives is truly there, whereas perceiving-as is not (Smith 2015; Searle 2015). Thus, a desert traveler who happens upon an oasis can see that oasis, while a desert traveler who happens upon a mirage cannot, since there isn’t an oasis there for her to see. The second traveler may nonetheless see the mirage as an oasis, where her illusory perceptual experience may be indistinguishable from the veridical perceptual experience of the first traveler.
Second, perceiving does not imply conscious awareness of what one has seen, whereas perceiving-as does (Dretske 2006; Smith 2015). Were you to mistake my painted mule Bucky for a zebra, then you would be unaware of having seen a mule but aware of having seen it as a zebra. It is often said that perceiving-as requires concepts and interpretation whereas perceiving does not (Hanson 1958; Wittgenstein 2006; but see Orlandi 2011 and Smith 2015 for non-conceptual accounts of perceiving-as). Both Bucky and I can see the Monet painting in the museum, but only I can see it as a Monet, because only I have a Monet concept. Illusions exploit our tendency to interpret what we perceive, thereby opening a rift between what we perceive and what we perceive it as. In the Müller-Lyer illusion, for instance, we see two lines of the same length, but we see them as two lines of different lengths.

Often, we perceive in both ways at the same time. I see the Monet, and I see it as a Monet. At other times, we perceive in only one way. I might confuse a Manet for a Monet, in which case I’ve seen something as a Monet without having seen a Monet. Or I might run my eyes over a Monet without recognizing it, in which case I’ve seen a Monet without having seen it as a Monet. As we shall see, both kinds of perception are important for expression.

4.1.2. Enabling Perception

According to the Perceptual Analysis, a behavior expresses an emotion just in case it enables the perception of that emotion. I’ve distinguished between two kinds of perception, but I’ve yet to explain what it means to enable perception. On my view, a behavior B enables the perception
of an emotion $E$ just in case observers can perceive $E$ (or perceive $B$ as $E$) as a result of perceiving $B$, without needing to perceive any other behaviors in between. Two comments are in order.

First, this formulation allows for $B$ to enable the perception of $E$ even if observers do not in fact perceive $B$. My solitary smile enables the perception of—and therefore expresses—my joy, even if no one else is around to see it. The claim is counterfactual: were someone to see my smile, then she would be able to see my joy (or to see me as joyous).

Second, the qualification, “without needing to perceive any other behaviors in between,” is added to prevent the analysis from being too permissive (cf. Bar-On 2004: 275). In the ordinary sense of “enable,” I can enable an observer to see John’s anger by pointing to John’s scowl. Yet, intuitively, I haven’t thereby expressed John’s emotion; only John’s scowl has expressed it. The problem is that “enabling” is a transitive relation, and thus any behavior that enables the perception of an emotional *expression* will also enable the perception of the *emotion* expressed. With the above qualification, however, “enabling” becomes a nontransitive relation. (We could call this stricter notion of enabling “direct enabling.”) Pointing to John’s scowl would not count as an expression of John’s anger, then, because observers who perceive the pointing must also perceive John’s scowl in order to perceive his anger. The only behavior that directly enables the perception of John’s anger—and, indeed, the only behavior that expresses it—is his scowl.²² (In what follows, I will use “enabling” to mean “directly enabling.”)

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²² Is it ever possible for one person to express another person’s emotions? I am tempted to say yes, as long as the first person “embodies” the second person, e.g. in a theatrical or musical performance. The actor who breaks down crying on stage during a production of *Antigone* isn’t expressing his grief; he’s expressing Creon’s grief, which he does by expressing grief while embodying Creon. Similarly, the violinist who plays a moving sonata may not be expressing her sadness, but rather the composer’s, whose subjectivity is embodied in the performance.
4.1.3. Three Kinds of Emotional Expression

According to the version of the Perceptual Analysis defended here, a behavior expresses an emotion just in case it enables at least one kind of perception of emotion, and fails to express an emotion just in case it enables neither kind of perception of emotion. Let us now distinguish between three kinds of emotional expression, and see what the Perceptual Analysis says about each.

*Natural expressions* occur spontaneously as part of an emotional episode, and take a species-typical form, which is to say that they correspond to how members of the species usually express an emotion. For humans, smiles are natural expressions of joy, pouts are natural expressions of grief, and scowls are natural expressions of anger (Ekman & Friesen 2003). Natural expressions normally enable both kinds of perception at once. When a person feels happy and smiles, observers who see this smile can both see the person’s joy and see her as joyful. Sometimes, however, an observer will fail to perceive the person as joyful. Perhaps this observer suffers from a rare disorder that prevents her from being able to recognize natural expressions of emotion, and so prevents her from perceiving the smile as joyful. In any case, the observer who perceives the smile will have perceived the expresser’s joy in her smile, where this perception is sufficient to make the smile an expression of emotion. (Here I am merely stating the view; I shall defend it starting in §3.1, below.)

*Idiosyncratic expressions* also occur spontaneously as part of an emotional episode, but take an individual-atypical form, which is to say that they depart from how an individual usually expresses an emotion. A person might idiosyncratically express joy by wincing, grief by
smiling, or anger by shuddering. Granting that such expressions are truly anomalous, they enable perception, but not perception-as. Should a person wince upon feeling happy, for instance, then an observer who sees this wince would see the person’s joy without seeing her as joyful.

Natural and idiosyncratic expressions are not discrete categories, but instead occupy two extremes on a spectrum of spontaneous expressions. In the middle of the spectrum we find individual-typical expressions, or expressions that are characteristic to particular individuals but not to the species (see Green 2007a, 140-141; Green 2010a, 51). Should a person wince whenever she feels happy, and should her friends know this about her, then her friends may be able to see her as joyful while strangers may not. Thus, I claim that while all expressions on this spectrum enable perception, only some of them enable perception-as. The more typical an expression is, the more likely it is that observers will be able to perceive the behavior as angry, sad, happy, etc.

Voluntary expressions, finally, tend to be typical (in either sense), but do not occur spontaneously as part of an emotional episode. Such expressions may be sincere or non-sincere. A person may not smile spontaneously when feeling happy, yet smile voluntarily for the sake of communicating her happiness to others. Or a person may not feel happy at all, yet smile voluntarily for the sake of deceiving others. Voluntary expressions enable only

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23 An expression is “sincere” only if the expresser feels the emotion that she expresses. An expression is “non-sincere,” in turn, only if the expresser does not feel the emotion that she expresses. (See Green [1970, 556] for a helpful discussion of how the term “insincere” can be misleading in this context.) There are at least three ways in which an expression can be non-sincere: (1) a person can put on an expression when she feels no emotion; (2) a person can put on an expression that differs in kind from the emotion that she does feel; and (3) a person can put on an expression that differs in intensity from the emotion that she feels (Ekman & Friesen 2003, 141).
perception-as. An observer who sees a voluntary smile may see the person as joyful without in fact seeing her joy. (Many philosophers deny that non-sincere expressions ought to be counted as true “expressions.” Some say that non-sincere expressions are “expressive” of emotion but not literally “expressions” of emotion. I believe that these philosophers are mistaken, and I shall return to this point in §4.2.3, below.)

We have, then, three kinds of emotional expression, and the Perceptual Analysis employs both kinds of perception in order to explain how these expressions make emotions perceptually manifest. Natural and idiosyncratic expressions always enable perception, whereas voluntary expressions always enable perception-as. Natural expressions may be distinguished from idiosyncratic expressions insofar as the former are more likely to enable perception-as. And it is because natural expressions typically enable perception-as that voluntary expressions can be mistaken for them.

4.1.4. Darwin’s Diversity Thesis

In chapter 3, I argued that any satisfying analysis of emotional expression ought to be consistent with Darwin’s Diversity Thesis, or the claim that emotional expressions evolved at different times, in response to different selection pressures, to serve different functions. In

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24 Alston (1965), Green (1970), Tormey (1971), Finn (1975), and Bar-On (2004), among others, insist that non-sincere expressions are not truly emotional expressions. Green (2007) argues that there are no such things as non-sincere self-expressions, although he allows for the possibility of non-sincere expressions more generally (see Green 2010b).
particular, this analysis ought to be consistent with the fact that some emotional expressions evolved to play a role in communication, whereas others did not.

The Perceptual Analysis is indeed consistent with this thesis. Those expressions that evolved to play a role in communication do so by enabling the perception of the expresser as emotional, such that the perceiver is aware of having perceived an expression and can make use of this information. Those expressions that did not evolve to play a role in communication may enable the perception of the expresser as emotional, but they need not. In any case, these expressions will always enable the direct perception of an emotion, and thus will count as expressions of that emotion.

In §2.1, I observed that scientists study emotional expression using two different types of studies. Component studies are used to determine which behaviors reliably co-occur with emotions—or which behaviors are components of emotions—whereas judgment studies are used to determine which behaviors are reliably identified as emotional expressions by observers. At the time, I claimed that each experiment picks out only a subset of emotional expressions. The Perceptual Analysis, illuminates why that is the case. Expressions that enable the direct perception of emotion are picked out by component studies, but not necessarily by judgment studies, whereas expressions that enable the perception of someone as emotional are picked out by judgment studies, but not necessarily by component studies. Some expressions enable both kinds of perception of emotion, and indeed they are picked out by both types of studies.

The Perceptual Analysis therefore provides a missing link to scientific theories of expression. Whereas scientists must employ divergent methods to study the expression of emotion, and have speculated divergent origins for these behaviors, the Perceptual Analysis identifies the glue that
bonds all expressions together as members of a common category. All of them, regardless of origin or measure, enable the perception of emotion.

4.2. Four Objections to the Perceptual Analysis

I shall now respond to four objections to the Perceptual Analysis. The first objection targets the weaker modal claim that expressions can at times make emotions perceptually manifest. The subsequent objections target the stronger conceptual claim that expressions essentially make emotions perceptually manifest. Each identifies a behavior that we intuitively identify as an emotional expression, and charges that the Perceptual Analysis fails to categorize this behavior correctly as an emotional expression. My responses to these objections support the conclusion that all—and not only some—actual and possible emotional expressions enable the perception of emotion.

4.2.1. Objection 1: The Perceptibility of Emotion

The first objection against the Perceptual Analysis is that it is literally false that we can perceive an emotion in its expression. Although there is something intuitively satisfying in the

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25 I assume that if the weaker modal claim is false, then the stronger conceptual claim must also be false.
claim that we can perceive joy in a person’s smile, sadness in her pout, and anger in her growl, this claim cannot literally be true (see Green 2007a: 89-91; Stout 2010; Green 2010a). After all, an emotion is not the sort of thing that can be perceived. We could give this objection a Rylean spin: one commits a category mistake in saying, “I am looking at Mary’s face, and although I see her eyes, her nose, and her mouth, I can’t seem to find her fear.” Mary’s fear is not literally a part of her face, and thus a person who looks at Mary’s face cannot literally see her fear.

The classic response to this objection was first suggested by Stuart Hampshire (1976: 74-75), but was later developed in detail by Alan Tormey (1971: 47-48) and Mitchell Green (2007a: 84-93; 2010a). We can literally perceive a person’s emotion in her expression, these philosophers argue, because (1) expressions are components of emotions and (2) perceiving a component of an entity is sufficient for having perceived that entity. The first premise is supported by empirical research, the second by the logic of perception. Let’s consider them in reverse order.

When I look out my window, I can see a dozen hippies forming a drum circle. Naturally, I do not see every part of these hippies; rather, I see only a few scattered parts of them. I see noses peeking out from behind long dreadlocks and scraggly beards. I see hands emerging from the sleeves of dusty Bajas. And I see shoeless, calloused feet tapping in time with the Djembes. Yet, despite the fact that I have seen only parts of these hippies, no one would deny that I have the hippies themselves. If I’ve see Dylan’s nose, for instance, then I’ve seen Dylan. If I’ve seen Blossom’s foot, then I’ve seen Blossom. Green dubs this kind of perception “part-whole perception,” and defines it as follows: in seeing part of an entity, one has thereby seen that entity (which is not to say that one has seen every part of it) (Green 2007: 86-87). Thus, should it turn
out that an expression is a part of an emotion, then, by seeing an expression, one has thereby seen the emotion.\textsuperscript{26}

The claim that expressions are components of emotions may ring counter-intuitive to many. Psychological surveys confirm that the folk identify emotions with feelings (Panskepp 2000; cited in Prinz 2004, 4). However, the difficulties of defining emotions in terms of feelings are well known (Deigh 1994), and thus we have some reason to think that the folk may be mistaken. According to a remarkably successful research program that integrates findings from behavioral psychology, affective neuroscience, and evolutionary biology, emotions are complex psychophysiological processes that often include perceptions, appraisals, feelings, expressions, and action tendencies (Tomkins 1964; Izard 1977; Ekman 1994; Griffiths 1997, 77; Russell 2003; Scherer 2005; Green 2007a, 88-90). “Fear,” for instance, names the entire process beginning with the perception of a bear, followed by the appraisal of that bear as dangerous, the sinking feeling in the pit of one’s stomach, the widening of one’s eyes, the increased heart rate, perspiration, and ending with the tendency to run in the opposite direction. Feelings may be an essential component of emotion, as the folk believe, but they are not the only component. Expressions stand out from the other components in that they can be directly perceived by observers. Two qualifications are needed.

First, expressions are not \textit{essential} components of emotions. It may be possible to experience an emotion without expressing it outwardly. Second, only \textit{some} expressions are components of

\textsuperscript{26} Stout (2010) objects to Green’s claim, although I am persuaded by Green’s (2010a) subsequent response (see also Bar-On 2010). Green (2007a: 89) goes on to add that, in some cases, observers may require certain conceptual capacities in order to perceive an emotion in its expression. I think this is a mistake. Certain conceptual capacities may be necessary to perceive a behavior \textit{as} emotional, but not to perceive an emotion via part-whole perception. In another mood, Green (2007a: 141) appears to agree.
emotions. For an expression to be a component, it must be a coordinated change in the somatic nervous system (Izard 1977, 48-49; Scherer 2005, 698; Scherer 2009, 1309), and thus occur spontaneously as part of an emotional episode. Both natural and idiosyncratic expressions qualify as components of emotions, then, whereas voluntary expressions do not. Granting, then, that expressions are components of emotions, and that perceiving a part of an entity is sufficient for having perceived that entity, it follows that we are able literally to perceive the emotions of others. According to the version of the Perceptual Analysis defended here, natural and idiosyncratic expressions always enable the part-whole perception of emotion (since they are components of emotions), which is a species of perception, regardless of whether they also enable perception-as. Voluntary expressions never enable perception (since they are not components of emotions), although they do enable perception-as.

4.2.2. Objection 2: Idiosyncratic Expressions

My response to the first objection demonstrates that emotional expressions can make emotions perceptually manifest. However, it does not follow that emotional expressions essentially make emotions perceptually manifest, since there could very well be other examples of emotional expressions that fail to make emotions perceptually manifest. To defend the

\[ \text{27 For alternative answers to this objection, see Overgaard (2006) and Gallagher & Zahavi (2012, 201-204).} \]
stronger conceptual claim, I shall consider a series of objections to it, each of which charges the Perceptual Analysis with failing to accommodate a specific type of emotional expression.

In this section, I shall consider the objection that the Perceptual Analysis fails to account for idiosyncratic (either in the sense of individual- or species-atypical) expressions. A person who expresses anger in the usual ways—e.g. clenched fists, scowls, and sneers—looks and sounds angry to normal observers (Smith 2015). We perceive this person’s behavior, and we perceive immediately that the person is angry. Indeed, research suggests that we are “wired up” to perceive expressions in this way. Newborn infants respond differentially to facial expressions (Reddy 2008), as do adults when they are flashed images of angry faces so quickly that they are not aware of what they have seen (Morris et al. 1999). However, a person who expresses anger in a completely idiosyncratic way—e.g. by raising an eyebrow or by wiggling a toe—does not look or sound angry. Thus, we may worry that the Perceptual Analysis will incorrectly predict that idiosyncratic expressions are not expressions at all.28

However, it does not follow from the premise that a person perceives $x$ to the conclusion that the person is aware of perceiving $x$ (Green 2007a: 89, 140-141).29 Indeed, this person may be completely mistaken about what she has seen. When people on the street mistake me for an incredibly attractive celebrity, for instance, they believe that they have seen this celebrity, but in fact they have seen only me. Analogously, in the case of idiosyncratic expressions, a person can

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28 Although my formulation of the Perceptual Analysis can overcome this objection, any formulation that takes the enabling of perception-as to be necessary for expression will have difficulty doing so (e.g. Taylor 1979). Green’s analysis of self-expression can accommodate individual-typical self-expressions (2007a: 89, 140-141), but not individual-atypical self-expressions.

29 Some philosophers argue that perceiving does entail awareness of what one has seen (e.g. Searle 2015). I am persuaded by arguments to the contrary (e.g. Dretske 2006), but I concede that the truth of the Perceptual Analysis depends upon the falsity of that view of perceiving.
perceive such expressions even if she does not know what she has seen. Mary might idiosyncratically express sadness by laughing hysterically, for instance. If I see Mary laughing, then I might believe that I have seen her joy, even though in fact I have seen her grief. Should laughing turn out to be an individual-typical expression of sadness for Mary, however, then a person who knows Mary better than I do may know that she expresses her sadness in this way. And when this person sees Mary laughing, she is more likely to be aware of what she has seen, and hence more likely to see her as sad. As long as the idiosyncratic expression is still a component of the emotion in question, which it is as long as it is a coordinated change in the somatic nervous system, it will enable the perception of that emotion, and thus my formulation of the Perceptual Analysis is able to classify it correctly as an expression.

4.2.3. Objection 3: Non-Sincere Expressions

Wayne Davis (2008) objects to Green’s (2007a) analysis of expression on the ground that it excludes the possibility of non-sincere expression. A person can express sadness by pouting, Davis claims, even if this person is not feeling sad. (By “non-sincere expression,” I mean simply the expression of an emotion that one does not feel; polite smiles and play-acted expressions are “non-sincere” on this definition, regardless of whether they are performed with the intention to deceive, or are “insincere.”) Insofar as a non-sincere expression of sadness is not a component

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30 However, Green (2007a) is giving an account of “self-expression,” rather than of “expression” more generally, and thus Davis’ objection, while raising an important fact about expression, misses its mark. See Green (2010b).
of the expresser’s sadness, an observer who perceives the expression does not thereby perceive an emotion via part-whole perception.

There are two ways of responding to Davis’ objection. First, we could deny that so-called non-sincere expressions ought to be counted as true expressions, and thus deny that Davis’ objection should be taken seriously. Alternatively, we could argue that the Perceptual Analysis can indeed accommodate non-sincere expressions, and thus argue that Davis’ objection can be overcome. I shall pursue the second approach here, for several reasons. First, intuitions about whether non-sincere expressions ought to count as true “expressions” vary radically from philosopher to philosopher. 31 Given that intuitions vary as much as they do, we ought not to place too much weight on these intuitions when theorizing about the nature of expression. Absent some independent reason to exclude non-sincere expressions from the class of emotional expressions, our analyses ought to be able to accommodate them. Relatedly, I am suspicious of any attempt to police the proper use of “expression” from the armchair. A quick Google search reveals that the folk often and unhesitatingly refer to non-sincere expressions as “expressions,” and, again, without some reason to think that they are mistaken, other than a philosopher’s contrary intuition, we ought not to exclude non-sincere expressions from consideration. Finally, many philosophers analyze emotional expressions, rightly to my mind, as reliable signals (e.g. Green 2007; Bar-On 2010). In other words, expressions are observable behaviors that evolved or were otherwise designed to indicate that the expresser has a particular unobservable feeling, namely an emotion. Reliable signals have a high probability of being sincere, but, importantly,
they are not necessarily sincere (Maynard Smith & Harper 2004: 46). If emotional expressions are reliable signals, then the probability of them being sincere is less than one, and thus some emotional expressions are non-sincere. For these reasons and others, I agree with Davis that the Perceptual Analysis ought to be able to accommodate non-sincere expressions.

The Perceptual Analysis can indeed accommodate non-sincere expressions, because such expressions enable observers to view the expresser as emotional, even if they do not enable the part-whole perception of emotion. Let us say that a behavior enables the perception of an agent as emotional (angry, sad, happy, etc.) if and only if this behavior resembles a component of an emotion and an observer registers this resemblance (cf. Brewer 2011: 121-122; quoted in Smith 2015). Thus, a smile enables the perception of an agent as joyous just in case an observer registers the resemblance between this smile and smiles that are components of joy. There are several ways of analyzing perception-as (e.g. Hanson 1958; Kivy 1980; Orlandi 2011; Smith 2015), however, and the argument here relies on no analysis in particular. All I need is the claim that observers can perceive a feigned smile as happy, a feigned pout as sad, and a feigned growl as angry. Non-sincere expressions are like illusions. Even if we know that a feigned smile is not genuine, we often cannot help but see the person as happy, where this illusory perceptual experience may be indistinguishable from a veridical perceptual experience of that person’s happiness. The enabling of the perception of a behavior as emotional is sufficient, on my analysis, to make that behavior an expression of emotion. Two comments in order.

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32 The fact that a behavior resembles a component of an emotion does not entail that the behavior is not a component of an emotion. On my view, natural expressions resemble characteristic components of emotions whereas idiosyncratic expressions do not, although both are in fact components of emotions.
First, this analysis treats non-sincere expressions as observer-relative. In other words, behaviors count as expressions for particular observers only, depending on whether they are able to perceive the behavior as emotional (cf. Tormey 1971: 44-45). Analyzing non-sincere expressions in this way helps to explain why observers tend to be promiscuous in their ascriptions of emotional expressions. Not only pouts and tears, but also weeping willows, St. Bernards’ jowls, and slumping IKEA desk lamps “show up” to people as sad, leading them to say that such entities non-sincerely “express” sadness. Furthermore, this analysis helps us to make sense of attempted but failed non-sincere expressions. When the soap opera actor rends his shirt and grimaces, he is trying to enable his audience to see him as grieved, but, sadly, the audience sees him only as untalented.

Second, the perception of a behavior as emotional—even when this perception is illusory—presupposes the veridical perception of that behavior. Thus, although it’s possible, on my view, for a behavior to express a non-existent emotion (namely, by enabling the illusory perception of that behavior as emotional), it’s not possible for a non-existent behavior to express anything. Suppose that I hallucinate a woman smiling. Despite the fact that I have perceived this woman as happy, my analysis does not entail the existence of a phantom expression, since no behavior is in fact responsible for enabling this perception.

Philosophers who want to insist that expressions are necessarily sincere might suggest that so-called non-sincere expressions are “expressive” of emotion, but not truly “expressions” of emotion, where a behavior is “expressive” just in case it looks like an expression but isn’t really one, on account of its being non-sincere (Tormey 1971; Kivy 1980; Green 2007). However, as long as such philosophers analyze “expressiveness” in terms of the enabling of perception-as
(e.g. Kivy 1980; Davies 1980), it seems to me that we are in agreement about the nature of the phenomenon, and disagreeing only about how the word “expression” ought to be applied in rigorous philosophical discourses. I’ve given my reasons for thinking that even non-sincere expressions ought to be counted as true “expressions,” but I’m happy to call such behaviors “expressive” if these reasons fail to convince.

4.2.4. Objection 4: Linguistic Expressions

Intuitively, we can express joy by exclaiming “Woohoo,” sadness by moaning “I am utterly crestfallen,” and anger by yelling “I am pissed off.” Wittgenstein suggested, not implausibly, that human beings learn over time to replace natural, non-linguistic expressions of feeling with conventional, linguistic expressions (2006: §244). Thus, a person who is overcome by joy may express her feelings by smiling or clapping, on the one hand, or by saying “Woohoo” or “I am happy,” on the other (Bar-On 2004: 252-257). The former expressions are non-linguistic; the latter are linguistic.

Linguistic expressions pose a problem for the Perceptual Analysis for the following reasons. First, although various non-linguistic expressions are classified as components of emotions, and thus enable the part-whole perception of emotion, linguistic expressions are never classified as

\[33\] Davis (1988; 2003), Bar-On (2004), and Green (2007) offer spirited defenses of the claim that language is a means of emotional expression. A more comprehensive defense of the claim that language is not a means of emotional expression would need to address their arguments directly, a task that I must unfortunately put off for another day.
components of emotions, and thus do not enable the part-whole perception of emotion (Izard 1977: 48-49; Scherer 2005: 698; Scherer 2009: 1309). (Were we to classify linguistic expressions as components of emotions, however, then the objection would lose its grip. 34) Second, although various non-linguistic expressions enable the perception of someone as emotional, the production of language never enables the perception of someone as emotional, since linguistic utterances do not resemble the components of emotions in the relevant ways. (Again, were we to claim that the use of language could enable the perception of a speaker as emotional, then the objection would lose its grip. 35) In sum, linguistic expressions do not make emotions perceptually manifest, and thus the Perceptual Analysis is unable to accommodate such expressions. Dorit Bar-On (2010: 223-226) suggests that this is the most important objection that the Perceptual Analysis must overcome. 36

In response to this objection, I shall argue that although speech acts can indeed express emotions, they do so always in virtue of how they are said, and never in virtue of what they say. 37 More precisely, an utterance of, say, “I am happy” counts as an expression of joy just in case the speaker utters these words with a tone of voice, facial expression, or gesture that itself expresses

34 Bar-On (2004: 299) makes a strong case for linguistic utterances becoming components of mental states as they become habitual responses to specific stimuli. Thus, if “Ouch!” or “That hurts!” is a spontaneous response to stubbing one’s toe, then it is as much a component of pain as is a wince. However, I follow psychologists in classifying expressions as components of emotions only if they are coordinated changes in the somatic nervous system. Since the production of language is never such a change, I conclude that linguistic utterances are never components of emotions.

35 The best candidates for language that enables the perception of someone as emotional would be metaphors and poetry. My take, however, is that metaphors and poetry typically elicit emotions without expressing them.

36 As I read her, Bar-On responds to this objection by giving up on the Perceptual Analysis. She argues that linguistic expressions replace non-linguistic ones, and that, while the latter do indeed enable the perception of emotion, the former do not. Rather, the former express emotion by being produced by the same kind of causal process that produces the latter.

37 I am by no means the first to advocate such a view (Wollheim 1968: 228; Green 1970: 563). However, I believe that I am the first to defend it and to explore its implications.
joy. The paralinguistic behavior is the vehicle of expression; the linguistic utterance is along for
the ride. Assuming that I am right, the Perceptual Analysis can be saved: a speaker expresses her
joy insofar as she looks or sounds happy while saying something, and not for any other reason.
To support this conclusion, I shall argue that certain paralinguistic behaviors are both necessary
and sufficient to make a speech act an expression of emotion. Language interfaces with the non-
linguistic expression of emotion in several crucial ways, as we shall see, but it is not a means (or
vehicle) of emotional expression in and of itself.

I will hold off on presenting the argument until chapter 5, where I will address the
relationship between language and expression in far greater detail. My aim here has been simply
to sketch the response.

4.3. Alternative Analyses of Emotional Expression

So far, I have presented my own analysis of emotional expression and then defended it
against objections. I will now consider how my analysis fairs against four alternative analyses,
which have been proposed in the literature:

1. **The Hydraulic Analysis**: a behavior B expresses an emotion E just in case E is a brute or
   rational cause of B.

2. **The Evidential Analysis**: a behavior B expresses an emotion E just in case B provides
evidence of E.
3. **The Determination Analysis**: a behavior B expresses an emotion E just in case B constitutes or determines E.

4. **The Pragmatic Analysis**: a behavior B expresses an emotion E just in case B is governed by a rule according to which, all things being equal, one ought to perform B only when one feels E.

Each of these analyses highlights an important feature shared by many emotional expressions, but none of them offers a satisfactory analysis of emotional expression in general. Only the Perceptual Analysis survives close scrutiny.

4.3.1. The Hydraulic Analysis

According to a popular folk conception of emotion, the so-called “Hydraulic” or “Steam Engine” model, emotions are akin to bubbling, boiling fluids, which build up pressure inside of us until they are released through an outward expression (Roberts 2004: 173; Solomon 1976). Indeed, the language of expression is replete with metaphors of pumps and pressures. A person “bursts” with joy and “boils” with anger. She “vents” her disappointment and finds herself “unable to contain” her sadness. She “lets off steam” and “erupts” with passion. Freud cautioned that we ought not to let our emotions build up too much pressure, lest they manifest themselves unexpectedly and even violently. In most cases, we express our emotions either “naturally” through facial expressions, gestures, and tones of voice, or “conventionally” through
sign language and speech. Sometimes, however, we “channel” our emotions and express them through artistic creativity, athletic prowess, and other noteworthy deeds. Whatever the route, an emotion finds outlet only in an outward expression.

This folk theory maintains a powerful hold over our thinking about emotional expression. Philosophers and laypeople alike conceive expressing as the act of “releasing” or “venting” a pent-up state. In his famous essay on “Other Minds,” J. L. Austin describes the process of expressing as follows: “When we are angry, we have an impulse, felt and/or acted on, to do actions of particular kinds, and unless we suppress the anger, we do actually proceed to do them” (1946: 152). Phillip J. Koch writes that “It is a basic fact about humans that they crave a physical embodiment or representation of their (mental) experiences…An expression of emotion is an activity which has this physicalizing, externalizing, representing function” (1983: 179). And Dorit Bar-On, who defends the most sophisticated and plausible version of the process-first approach to date, describes expressing as the process of “airing,” “voicing,” “pressing out,” or “giving vent to one’s present state” (2004: 241, 257). Less metaphorically, a person expresses a mental state whenever her behavior “comes directly from” that state (2004: 254), which is to say that the mental state is either a brute or rational cause of that behavior (2004: 249). When the expression is spontaneous, the emotion is a brute cause; when the expression is intentional, the emotion is a rational cause. In either case, the emotion is the reason why the expression occurred.

Like the Hydraulic Model of Emotion more generally, the Hydraulic Analysis of Emotional Expression resonates deeply with our pre-theoretical intuitions. However, it faces several major challenges. First, it is too narrow. Even granting that emotions are brute causes of spontaneous
expressions and rational causes of intentional expressions, emotions cannot be the causes of insincere expressions. Wayne Davis notes that if expressions are symptoms,

then insincere expressions of emotion would be impossible. But people often express love, for example, without meaning it, that is, without being in love. “S expressed fear” must therefore be distinguished from “S expressed his fear.” The latter implies that S is in fact afraid, and excludes insincerity; the latter does not. Similarly, “S expressed his love for Mary” implies that S really does love Mary; “S expressed love for Mary” does not. (1988: 280)

Here we shall be concerned with a concept of “emotional expression” that allows for the possibility of insincere expression.

Second, the Hydraulic Analysis is too broad, especially if we allow emotions to be rational causes of their expressions. A person may buy tissues because she is sad, but buying tissues wouldn’t thereby be an expression of sadness. Similarly, a person’s sadness may give her reason to stay in bed all day, to listen to sad songs, and to write “do not disturb” on a sign posted to her door, but none of these behaviors is itself an expression of sadness. Philip J. Koch (1983) helpfully distinguishes the act of ‘expressing’ an emotion from the act of ‘coping’ with an emotion. Emotions are rational causes of both, yet that doesn’t make coping behaviors “expressions” of the emotions that caused them. Something else is needed to make a behavior an emotional expression.
Finally, although we tend assume that the experience of emotion is generally sufficient to cause an expression (recall Austin’s claim that emotions involve an “impulse” to expression), empirical studies suggest otherwise. Research on the ‘audience effect,’ for instance, shows that people are much less likely to express their emotions when alone than when in a group, leading many scientists to conclude that emotional expressions evolved to serve a communicative, rather than a physiological, function (Fridlund 1994: 145-168; see also Fernández-Dols & Ruiz-Belda 1997).

Expressing, it turns out, it not a causal relation. Many philosophers have instead proposed that expressing is an evidential relation. As we shall see, this analysis fares no better.

4.3.2. The Evidential Analysis

According to the Evidential Analysis, behaviors express emotions by providing observers with evidence of them. Thus, a smile expresses joy by providing evidence of the expresser’s joy; a pout expresses sadness by providing evidence of the expresser’s sadness; and a growl expresses anger by providing evidence of the expresser’s anger. To be clear, the claim is not simply that expressions often or even always do provide evidence of a person’s mental states; rather, the claim is that the providing of evidence is essential to expression—that the providing of evidence is what distinguishes expressions from related behaviors.
An early version of the Evidential Analysis was proposed by O. H. Green, who defined “emotional expression” as follows:38

It will be argued that a person’s behavior, verbal or nonverbal, is an expression of emotion when and only when it (1) provides evidence for saying that the person presently has the emotion expressed, (2) occurs in the appropriate circumstances, (3) is subject to the person’s control or modification, and (4) is honest. (1970: 551)

Not every behavior that provides evidence of emotion will count as an expression, however, and conditions 2–4 limit the scope of expression accordingly. Condition 2 requires that expressions by recognizable as such by normal observers, while condition 4 stipulates that a behavior can express an emotion only if the agent in fact experiences that emotion. Thus, Green’s analysis precludes the possibility of both unrecognizable and non-sincere expressions.

A similar analysis was defended by Alan Tormey in the only book-length treatment of expression in the 20th century, *The Concept of Expression*:

If A’s behavior B is an expression of X, then there is a warrantable inference from B to an intentional state of A, such that it would be true to say that A has (or is in state) S; and where S and X are identical. (1971: 43)

38 Karl Britton (1956) also discusses the kind of evidence provided by emotional expressions, but it is unclear whether he intends his discussion to form the basis of an analysis of “expression.”
According to Tormey, then, a smile is an expression of joy if and only if a person thereby has warrant—i.e., evidence—to conclude that the smiler is feeling joy. Like Green’s analysis, Tormey’s analysis precludes the possibility of both unrecognizable and non-sincere expressions.

Wayne Davis (1988; 2003) has defended what, in my view, is the best version of the Evidential Analysis to date. In his view,

\[ S \text{ expresses } \psi \text{ iff } S \text{ performs an observable act as an indication of occurrent } \psi \text{ without thereby covertly simulating an unintentional indication of } \psi. \]  
(2003, 59; cf. 1988, 282)

Thus, a person expresses joy if and only if she performs an observable act, such as a smile, that acts as an indication—or provides evidence—of her joy. In contrast to Green’s and Tormey’s analyses, Green’s analysis allows for both unrecognizable and non-sincere expressions. I will return to Davis’ analysis in chapter 5, where I will give a more thorough response to it.

As we can see, the Evidential Analysis can take many forms, but all of them share in common the idea that expressions essentially provide evidence of emotions to observers. The problem with this analysis is that it fails to capture what is distinctive about expression. To begin, note that while an agent can indicate other people’s emotions as well as her own—by saying “John is angry” for instance—an agent can express only her own emotions. When she indicates other people’s emotions, she is “reporting” them, perhaps, but she is not “expressing” them. Advocates of this analysis often stipulate that behaviors count as expressions only when
they indicate the agent’s own emotions, and no one else’s, but intuitively, the act of expressing (one’s own) emotion is very different from that of reporting (someone else’s) emotion, and hence there must be more to expression than the indication of emotion.

Second, note that it’s possible to indicate one’s own emotions without necessarily expressing them. Think of all the different ways in which a person can communicate that she is sad. She can say “I’m sad,” or “I’m having a terrible day,” or “I’m not happy,” or “This is the third day in a row that I’m feeling sad; I must be depressed,” or “Stop asking me if I am still sad; of course I am!!” She can nod when asked if she is sad, or even point to a sad face when given a chart of facial expressions and asked to identify her feelings. All of these utterances and behaviors provide evidence of the agent’s sadness, yet we needn’t assume that all of them are ‘expressions’ of that sadness (cf. Wittgenstein 2006: 160-161). To express an emotion is to communicate an emotion in a particular sort of way, not to communicate an emotion in any way whatsoever. Consider the injunction, “Don’t just tell me you love me; show me your love!” (Green 2007: 24). Green comments: “What is being called for is an expression of love not a report of it, and that expression had better embody some love” (ibid.). In sum, there is more to expression than the providing of evidence, and this analysis has failed to identify that special ingredient.

4.3.3. The Determination Analysis

Another analysis, the Determination Analysis, defines emotional expressions as all and only those behaviors that somehow constitute, determine, or individuate the emotions that they
express. An early version was suggested by R.G. Collingwood, who argues that we become conscious of having a particular emotion only by expressing it:

When a man is said to express emotion, what is said about him comes to this. At first, he is conscious of...a perturbation or excitement which he feels going on within him, but of whose nature he is ignorant..... From this helpless and oppressed condition, he extricates himself by doing something we call expressing himself. This is an activity which has...something to do with consciousness: the emotion expressed is an emotion of whose nature the person who feels it is no longer unconscious. It also has something to do with the way in which he feels the emotion. As unexpressed, he feels it in what we called a helpless and oppressed way; as expressed, he feels in a way from which this sense of oppression has vanished. His mind is somehow lightened and eased. (1938: 109-110)

This is an exceptionally rich passage, but the takeaway message is this: "expressing" is the process by which an indeterminate, vague feeling is transformed into a determinate, identifiable experience. A perturbation or excitement becomes fear (as opposed to anger or sadness), for instance, only through the act of screaming and fleeing in terror.

Another early version may be credited to Gilbert Ryle (1949), who claims that our emotion words do not name conscious feelings, but are rather useful paraphrases for complex patterns of behavior. Calling someone “angry” is, on his view, simply a way of explaining her past behavior and predicting her future behavior. As a result, Ryle flat out denies that an expression
is “the effect of a felt turbulence in the agent’s stream of consciousness” (1949: 114). Rather, he holds that expressions are partly constitutive of the emotions that they purportedly express. Since what it means to be angry is to perform certain actions, performing these actions determines one’s state as being that of “anger.” Ryle often puts the point in epistemic terms, echoing Collingwood:

If we now raise the epistemologist’s question ‘How does a person find out what mood he is in?’ we can answer that if, as may not be the case, he finds it out at all, he finds it out very much as we find it out. As we have seen, he does not groan ‘I feel bored’ because he has found out that he is bored, any more than the sleepy man yawns because he has found out that he is sleepy. Rather, somewhat as the sleepy man finds out that he is sleepy by finding, among other things, that he keeps on yawning, so the bored man finds out that he is bored, if he does find this out, by finding among other things he glumly says to others and to himself ‘I feel bored’ and ‘How bored I feel’ (1949: 102-103).

Expressions do more than simply providing evidence for what one is experiencing, however; they partially constitute that experience. Had one not performed these actions, or others like them, then the person would not have been angry to begin with.

In recent years, Sue Campbell has resurrected Collingwood’s analysis. She analyzes expression as follows:
I contend that *expression is the activity through which our psychological states, including our feelings, become individuated for both others and ourselves*. By *individuated*, I mean formed or created as the particulars they are in such a way that they can be recognized or identified. (1997: 48-49)

Campbell, like Ryle, is opposed to mainstream psychological theories of the mind, and denies that we can speak coherently of emotional states independently of their outward manifestations. We do not feel “anger” prior to expressing anger; rather, we experience a vague, indeterminate feeling, which only crystallizes into anger once we clench our fists, curl our lips, or growl. What makes a behavior an “expression,” on any of these formulations, is the fact that it was produced by a process that determined the agent’s occurrent emotional state. Like the Hydraulic Analysis, the Determination Analysis exemplifies the process-first approach to the analysis of expression.

To its credit, the Determination Analysis offers an interesting insight into the expression of emotion. I agree that we ought to abandon the Hydraulic Analysis and to appreciate the cases in which an expression is not simply a causal effect, or a symptom, of an underlying emotion. How we express ourselves can often influence what it is that we are feeling. Research on afferent feedback, for instance, suggests that the mere performance of an emotional expression can induce the emotion expressed (Ekman 2006). Stretch your mouth into a grin and you will start to feel happy. Screw your mouth into a grimace and you will start to feel sad. Puff out your chest and you will start to feel proud. Shrink away and you will start to feel shame. Furthermore, research on emotional intelligence suggests that there is a positive correlation between expressiveness and emotional self-knowledge: people who express themselves more understand
better what they feel (Goleman 1996). These are fascinating data, which the Determination Analysis puts into relief.

That being said, the Determination Analysis does not provide a plausible analysis of emotional expression per se. Although many expressions may indeed play a role in determining the emotion that one feels, many others conspicuously do not. For one, there are non-sincere expressions that do not induce the emotion expressed. An exhausted flight attendant can put on a cheerful smile while still feeling miserable on the inside (Hochschild 1979). Even if we limit our focus to sincere expressions, there are cases in which a person knows herself to feel an emotion, and then chooses to express this emotion outwardly. Suppose that a child opens a birthday present, experiences joy, knows that he experiences joy, and then, some seconds afterward, looks up to his parents and beams in delight. The child’s grin is surely an expression of his joy, despite the fact that it does not constitute or determine his joy, given that his joy was constituted or determined prior to the act of smiling. Finally, there is a problem of overdetermination. Suppose that a man slumps, pouts, moans, sniffs, cries, and rends his shirt. Each of these expressions is one of sadness, but it’s not true that each of them is necessary and sufficient to determine his state as one of sadness.

In sum, although the Determination Analysis points our attention to some interesting aspects of expression that may otherwise go unnoticed, it does not provide a satisfactory analysis of “emotional expression.” It fails to specify the necessary and jointly sufficient conditions under which a bit of behavior will count as an expression.
4.3.4. The Pragmatic Analysis

The last analysis that I will consider is the Pragmatic Analysis. According to this analysis, emotional expressions are rule-governed behaviors. More specifically, a behavior is an expression of an emotion just in case the behavior or the emotion is governed by a social or linguistic rule according to which a person ought to perform this behavior only when feeling this emotion. A smile is an expression of joy, on this view, because a person violates a norm either by smiling when she is not happy or by not smiling when she is happy.

In the first half of the twentieth century, many philosophers took for granted a sharp distinction between expressions, on the one hand, and assertions, on the other. In an influential article that challenged this distinction, William P. Alston argued that expressions are, in fact, very much like assertions, in particular since both are rule-governed behaviors. He analyzes (linguistic) expression as follows:

To express one’s [emotion $E$] in language is to utter a sentence (or produce a sentence-surrogate) while recognizing that one’s utterance is governed by a rule requiring that the speaker have [$E$]. (1965: 26)

(“Sentence-surrogates” included nonverbal behaviors like smiles and frowns.) Insofar as assertions of the form “I am E” are governed by the exact same norm, Alston claims that the distinction between expressions and assertions had been overblown by his predecessors. In many cases, expressions just are assertions, and vice-versa.
Building on Alston’s work, John Searle developed a similar view, which defines expressions in terms of the rules governing speech acts. In his words:

> Whenever there is a psychological state specified in the sincerity condition [of a speech act], the performance of the act counts as an expression of that psychological state. (1969: 65)

In order to perform a felicitous apology, for instance, a person ought to feel contrite. Otherwise, this person has violated the “sincerity condition” for an apology.

Robert Solomon also defends a version of the Pragmatic Analysis, but whereas Alston and Searle focus on the norms governing expression—i.e. one ought to feel the emotion one expresses—Solomon focuses on the norms governing emotion—i.e. one ought to express the emotion one feels. He defines expression as follows:

> An emotional expression is action demanded by the logic and ideology of the emotion and particular circumstances. (1976: 224)

Anger demands that one “punish” the wrongdoer (1976: 229), anxiety demands that one “hide, disappear, make oneself secure” (1976: 231), anguish demands that one “render oneself impotent,” and “protect oneself (and the world) from oneself” (1976: 233), and so on. The logic of emotion that demands that we express our emotions in certain ways. When we do not express them so, we have, Solomon claims, violated the norms of emotion.
Pragmatic Analyses are unique among the going analyses in that they take the relation between an emotion and its expression to be *conventional* rather than *natural*. However, this assumption is also their undoing. For while many emotional expressions are indeed governed by social norms, many others are not. Non-human animals express their emotions in ways that closely resemble human expressions, and yet non-human animal expressions are not governed by social or linguistic norms in the same kind of way.

More pressingly, the Pragmatic Analysis appears simply to push the analysis of expression one step back. Sure, there may be a rule that says that one should smile when happy and be happy when smiling, but why does this rule associate happiness with smiling, in particular? Why doesn’t this rule stipulate that we should pout when happy and be happy when pouting? The relationship doesn’t seem to be arbitrary—indeed, Darwin claimed that we can answer this question only if we attend to the natural history of expressions—and whatever establishes this relationship will replace the rule as the explananda for why the behavior counts as an expression in the first place.

In the end, the Pragmatic Analysis does not provide a satisfying definition of expression. The analysans is too narrow and it fails to illuminate the analysandum.

4.4. Conclusion

I’ve argued in this chapter that the Perceptual Analysis is correct—that behaviors express emotions just in case they directly enable the perception of those emotions. Furthermore, I’ve
considered four analyses of “emotional expression” in this chapter, but concluded that none is satisfactory.

- They *Hydraulic Analysis*—according to which a behavior B expresses an emotion E just in case E causes B—fails because it cannot accommodate non-sincere expressions of emotion, and because it counts all coping behaviors as emotional expressions.
- The *Evidential Analysis*—according to which B expresses E just in case B provides evidence of E—fails because many types of behaviors provide evidence of emotions without expressing them.
- The *Determination Analysis*—according to which B expresses E just in case B determines or constitutes E—fails because it cannot accommodate countless intuitive cases in which an emotion is determined independently of its expression.
- Finally, the *Pragmatic Analysis*—according to which B expresses E just in case B is governed by a rule according to which, all things being equal, one ought to perform B when and only when one feels E—fails because it can accommodate neither non-human animal expressions nor idiosyncratic expressions.

In the next chapter I will go on to consider, in much greater detail, the relationship between language and emotional expression.
“At this point we come to the central distinction between natural and conventional signs of feeling. If one could state this distinction exactly, many problems both of the philosophy of mind, and also of aesthetics, would lie open to clarification.” (Hampshire 1976: 74)

It is widely believed that language is a means of emotional expression—that words can express emotions in much the same way that facial expressions, gestures, and tones of voice can express emotions. Consider: a grief-stricken woman can express her sadness by sobbing or by crying out, “I am utterly crestfallen!” An enraged man can express his anger by stamping his foot or by shouting, “I am royally pissed!” And an awe-struck child can express his wonder by staring dumbfounded or by exhaling, “Wow!” In each case, the agent accomplishes the same end—expressing an emotion—using one of two different means—a nonverbal behavior or a verbal utterance.

In this chapter I argue that language is not a means of emotional expression—that words do not express emotions in anything like the same way that facial expressions, gestures, and tones of voice express emotions. I grant that a woman can express sadness by crying out, “I am utterly

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40 To clarify: my argument targets the view that language “expresses” emotion in the same sense of the term in which nonverbal behaviors “express” emotions. Some philosophers hold that language is a means of emotional expression, but insist that the sense in which language “expresses” emotion is completely different from the sense in which nonverbal behaviors “express” emotion. Alston, for instance, writes that “there is a fundamental difference between expressing a feeling by saying something (interjectional or declarative), and showing, demonstrating, or manifesting a feeling by a ‘facial expression’. To be sure, it would be an act of folly to place too much reliance on the word ‘express’ in this connection” (1968: 18). My arguments do not disprove this view, although I aim to show
crestfallen!”, that a man can express anger by shouting, “I am royally pissed!”, and that a child can express awe by exhaling “Wow!”, but I contend that speech acts express emotions always in virtue of how they are said—that is, in virtue of their nonverbal features—and never in virtue of what they say—that is, in virtue of their verbal features. Thus, the woman’s utterance of “I am utterly crestfallen!” expresses sadness because she cries it out. The man’s utterance of “I am royally pissed!” expresses anger because he shouts it. And the child’s utterance of “Wow!” expresses wonder because he exhales it. In each case, what first appears to be a verbal expression of emotion turns out to be a nonverbal expression of emotion, which accompanies a verbal utterance. Language, I conclude, is not a means of emotional expression at all.

Suppose that I am right. What, then, is the relationship between language and expression? I propose that language, though not a means of emotional expression, nevertheless augments the nonverbal expression of emotion in several crucial ways. First, we use language to “articulate” our emotions, or to communicate the contents of our expressed emotions to others. By saying “I’m afraid that you will hurt me,” for instance, I tell you why I am afraid. Second, we use language to “punctuate” our expressions, or to scaffold the ability of others to recognize them. By saying “I’m afraid that you will hurt me,” I help you to see that my fidgeting and moaning are expressions of fear, rather than, say, hunger. In many cases, observers are unable to discern a person’s nonverbal expressions without taking verbal clues into consideration. Language, on my

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41 Wollheim asserts that “Language is regarded as expressive if and only if it displays certain characteristics that in the first instance pertain to [nonverbal] behavior” (1968: 228). However, he does not offer any arguments on behalf of this claim.
view, is a tool for helping others to think about our emotional expressions more clearly and effectively, rather than a means of emotional expression per se.

The chapter is organized as follows: §5.1 builds a case for my claim that language is not a means of emotional expression. §5.2 develops an alternative view of the relationship between language and expression. And §5.3 concludes with a discussion of how this view may be situated within broader debates in the philosophy of mind.

5.1. The Case against Linguistic Expression

When I deny that language is a means of emotional expression, I am denying that language can be used to express emotions—as opposed to propositions and other mental states—in the same way that facial expressions, gestures, and tones of voice can be used to express emotions. *Speech acts* can express emotions, to be sure, but they do so always in virtue of how they are said, and never in virtue of what they say. On my view, then, an utterance of “I am royally pissed!” is an expression of anger just in case it is spoken *angrily*, or with a tone of voice or gesture that expresses anger. The words themselves, as vehicles of semantic content, contribute nothing to the speech act’s status as an emotional expression. Having stated the thesis, I shall now defend it.
5.1.1. The Argument

To begin, I take it to be relatively uncontroversial that certain paralinguistic behaviors are sufficient to make a speech act an expression of emotion. If we agree that a person’s tone expresses anger, for instance, then we ought to agree that her speech act expresses anger too, regardless of what she says. Were she to growl “I am pissed off,” then of course we would take her speech act to express anger. Were she to growl something that has nothing whatsoever to do with anger—e.g. “Take your next left!”—then, again, we would agree that her speech act has expressed anger. Even if she were to bang her fist on the table and shout, “I am not angry,” we’d say that her speech act is an expression of anger.

Empirical studies confirm that my intuition is widely felt. In one set of experiments, psychologists recorded actors speaking nonsensical pseudo-sentences—e.g. “Hat sundig pron you venzy”—in tones of voice corresponding to a variety of emotions, and then played the tapes back to participants, who had little difficulty identifying which emotions the actors had expressed (Banse & Scherer 1996). In another set of experiments, psychologists had actors claim to be feeling one emotion while displaying paralinguistic behaviors evocative of another emotion, and then asked subjects which emotion the actor had expressed. 93% of the time, subjects judged that the actor had expressed an emotion that was displayed paralinguistically (Mehrabian & Ferris 1967; Mehraban & Wiener 1967). Thus, there is general agreement that speech acts spoken sadly express sadness, that speech acts spoken happily express happiness, that speech acts spoken angrily express anger, and so on.
Far more controversial is the claim that certain paralinguistic behaviors are *necessary* to make a speech act an expression of emotion. Although utterances of “I am happy” are typically spoken joyously, it certainly seems possible for an utterance of “I am happy” to express joy without being spoken joyously—that is, without being accompanied by paralinguistic behaviors that themselves express joy. Insofar as my view holds that it is impossible for an utterance to express joy without being spoken joyously, those who have the intuition that it is possible will be unmoved. To persuade the skeptics, I will first offer an intuition pump to draw out the intuition that it is indeed impossible for a speech act to express an emotion without paralinguistic behaviors that express that emotion, and then I will explain why intuitions to the contrary are misleading.

Let’s return to our poor soap opera actor from chapter 4. After his debut performance, the critics complain that his acting was “wooden,” that he consistently failed to express the emotions that his character was supposed to be feeling. What did the actor do wrong? The writing may have been partly to blame. Perhaps his lines were so bad that even the best actors would have struggled to give a convincing performance. But even the best writing can’t make up for bad acting. In order for the actor to express his character’s emotions, he must do more than read the lines he’s been given, no matter how authentic or eloquent those lines may be; he must *deliver* those lines naturally. And to do that, he must speak his lines with the appropriate facial expression, gesture, and tone of voice. Without the correct delivery—that is, without the correct paralinguistic behaviors—his speech acts will fail to express his character’s emotions. Here we
can feel the pull of the intuition that paralinguistic behaviors are not only sufficient for emotional expression, but also necessary.\textsuperscript{42}

But surely there are situations in which the “correct” delivery of an emotional expression is in fact a “neutral” delivery. Angry people don’t always express their anger by shouting or by stamping their feet; sometimes, angry people express their anger by coolly and calmly stating, “I’ve had it with you,” or even “You’re making me angry.” Am I denying that such utterances express anger? Not quite. Recall that the Perceptual Analysis is consistent with the possibility of idiosyncratic expression. Under certain circumstances, a “neutral” sounding tone of voice can, in fact, be a component of a speaker’s anger, and can thereby enable the direct perception of that anger. Observers may not recognize the tone as angry—it may sound perfectly “neutral” to them—but it still would be an expression of anger. Had this person spoken in another tone of voice, the thought runs, then the speech act wouldn’t have been an expression of anger at all. In sum, paralinguistic behaviors are never independent of expression; rather, paralinguistic behaviors constitute expressions, which is not to say that the same types of paralinguistic behaviors always constitute the same types of expressions. In cases of idiosyncratic expressions, even tones of voice and facial expressions that appear “neutral” can turn out to express emotion.

That being said, I contend that it is a mistake to assume that anytime a person uses language to communicate that she is experiencing an emotion, she is thereby “expressing” that emotion. In fact, the expression of emotion is but one species of communication about emotion. Wittgenstein illustrated this point nicely:

\textsuperscript{42} Indeed, clinicians who specialize in prosody disorders, which impair individuals’ ability to inflect their speech with emotional tones of voice, conclude that such individuals cannot express their emotions in speech act all (Marchi et al. 2009).
Are the words “I am afraid” a description of a state of mind?

I say “I am afraid”; someone else asks me: “What was that? A cry of fear; or do you want to tell me how you feel; or is it a reflection on your present state?”—

Could I always give him some clear answer? Could I never give him one?

We can imagine all sort of things here, for example:

“No, no! I am afraid!”

“I am afraid. I am sorry to have to confess it.”

“I am still a bit afraid, but no longer as much as before.”

“At bottom I am still afraid, though I won’t confess it to myself.”

“I torment myself with all sort of fears.”

“Now, just when I should be fearless, I am afraid!”

To each of these sentences a special tone of voice is appropriate, and a different context…

The words “I am afraid” may approximate more, or less, to being a cry. They may come quite close to this and also be far removed from it. (2006, 160-161)

The takeaway point is that we can use language to talk about our feelings in a variety of ways that do not necessarily amount to “expressions” of those feelings. Suppose that Jim suffers from clinical depression and is seeking therapy. One day, his therapist begins the session by asking him how he feels. Jim introspects, and is surprised to find that, for the first time in recent memory, he is feeling quite happy. He answers, in a surprised tone of voice, “I didn’t realize it
until you asked, Doc, but I’m actually feeling happy today!” Here, Jim is certainly *communicating* that he is happy, but he is not *expressing* his happiness. If his speech act expresses any emotion, it expresses surprise. (Were Jim to say the same thing in a joyful tone of voice, however, then he would be expressing his happiness.)

Dorit Bar-On (2004: 216), following Wilfred Sellars (1969: 520-521), draws an important distinction between the expression of a proposition (or “semantic expression”) and the expression of a mental state (or “mental state expression”), such as an emotion. The distinction that I am proposing is closely related. We often express propositions about our emotions in order to communicate that we are feeling those emotions, but it would be a mistake to conclude that every time we communicate that we are feeling an emotion, we thereby express that emotion. Returning to Wittgenstein’s examples, only the utterances of “I am afraid” that resemble a cry are clear-cut “expressions” of fear. The other utterances exemplify different ways of communicating that a speaker is afraid. And what distinguishes the expression of an emotion from other ways of communicating an emotion is, I argue, the presence of paralinguistic behaviors that themselves express that emotion. The cool and calm utterance of “You’re making me angry” may be an idiosyncratic expression of anger, but it’s more likely to be an act of communicating anger that doesn’t amount to an expression of that anger. (As we saw in §4.3.2, a major problem with the Evidential Analysis is that it tends to treat *every* act of indicating an emotion as an expression of that emotion.)

The distinction between expressing and otherwise communicating an emotion helps us to see why I am not denying that we can perform so-called “expressive” illocutionary acts—such as apologizing, thanking, and congratulating—without speaking in an expressive tone or with an
expressive gesture. My claim is that, in such cases, these illocutionary acts simply fall short of expressing the emotions in question, even if they succeed in otherwise communicating those emotions. Some speech act theorists infer from the fact that speech acts have sincerity conditions to the conclusion that they express the states specified in their sincerity conditions (e.g. Alston 1965: 26; Searle 1969: 65; Bach and Harnish 1979). Thus, because an apology is sincere only if the speaker is in fact remorseful, an apology must be an expression of remorse.

However, I contend that there is an intuitive sense in which an apology can fail to express remorse, even if the speaker indeed feels remorseful. As a child, I hated being told by my parents to apologize for anything. (I believed, incorrectly, that an apology was meaningless if commanded.) So when prompted to apologize, I would mutter a perfunctory “I’m sorry” before scurrying off to my room, even if I did feel remorse over what I had done. And my parents would rightly chastise me afterward for failing to express my remorse in my apology. Thus, the fact that remorse is specified in the sincerity condition of an apology does not imply that apologies always express remorse. An apology that is not spoken remorsefully—that is, with a remorseful tone or gesture—communicates that one is remorseful, and has the force of an apology, but fails to express remorse.

In sum, whether a speech act counts as an expression of emotion or not depends in every case on how the words are spoken—i.e. on the paralinguistic aspects of the speech act. To be an expression of emotion, a speech act must be spoken with a tone of voice, facial expression, or gesture that makes an emotion perceptually manifest, which is just what the Perceptual Analysis predicts.
5.1.2. The Expression of Emotion in Writing

But surely we can express our emotions in writing. After all, we encourage angsty teenagers to express their emotions in diaries, and we celebrate novelists who channel their feelings with unparalleled creativity. Writing, along with the visual and performing arts, is championed as an especially constructive means of self-expression. However, when we write, we record only what we wish to say, and not how we wish to say it. A spoken utterance of “I am sorry” is accompanied by regretful tones of voice, facial expressions, and gestures. A written inscription of “I am sorry” is not. Thus, if a speech act must be accompanied by such nonverbal behaviors to count as an expression, as I claimed in the previous section, then it would seem to follow that written language cannot be used to express our emotions at all. But, intuitively, we can express our emotions in writing, so there must be something wrong with my view.

In response, I contend that Perceptual Analysis, far from contradicting the possibility of written expression, in fact sheds light on how the written expression of emotion works. The idea is deceptively simple: although paralinguistic behaviors are not physically present in written texts, authors employ a number of techniques to make these paralinguistic behaviors virtually present in their writings. By substituting virtual for physical behaviors in these ways, authors empower their readers to imagine the words being spoken in a particular way, where the readers’
imaginative engagement with the text enables authors to express their emotions virtually—though not physically—to their readers.\footnote{My thesis is heavily influenced by Shapin’s (1984) analysis of “virtual witnessing” and Levinson’s (1996) analysis of musical expression.}

An obvious example involves the use of emoji. By inserting a smiley face into a text, we substitute for the real smile that would accompany a spoken utterance of the same words. More interesting, however, are the ways in which we substitute for vocal prosody (tones of voice). We use (1) typographical styling, (2) punctuation, and (3) nonstandard spellings, among other techniques, to insert a dimension of tone into our writings. By italicizing a word, for instance, we substitute for the vocal emphasis that we deploy in speech. By ending a sentence with an exclamation mark instead of a period, we substitute for an emotionally excited tone of voice.

Consider the following line of dialogue from Mark Twain’s *Huckleberry Finn*: “De Lord God Amighty fogive po’ ole Jim, kaze he never gwyne to fogive hisself as long’s he live!” (2014: 130). Twain could have written: “The Lord God Almighty, forgive poor old Jim, because he is never going to forgive himself as long as he lives.” Both convey the same verbal information, but the former conveys nonverbal information not conveyed in the latter. By writing the dialogue in this way, Twain empowers his readers to vividly imagine Jim speaking these words himself. We hear Jim’s accent, but also his affect. To borrow a metaphor from Wittgenstein, Jim’s emotions “come alive” in this dialogue, due in no small part to how Twain has rendered his speech (Wittgenstein 2006: §537). It’s not *what* Jim says, it’s *how* he says it, which is precisely what the Perceptual Analysis predicts.
Context also plays a crucial role, since these techniques will be more or less effective, depending on the context (Yigit 2005). Furthermore, context can influence how we read default sentences, or sentences that lack alternative stylings, punctuation, and spelling. In so-called “task-functional contexts,” where an author is interested in conveying information rather than expressing his or her mental states, readers do not read tone into default sentences. In so-called “socio-emotional contexts,” by contrast, where an author is interested in expressing his or her mental states rather than conveying information, readers do read tone into default sentences, thereby reading them as expressions (Yigit 2005). Much more on this topic needs to be said, and I am developing an account of written expression elsewhere. The take-away point is that, for writing as well as for speech, it’s not what one says that matters for expression, it’s how one says it.

My proposal may be summarized as follows: to express an emotion in writing, an author must create a virtual presence in the text, which is to say that the author must substitute for the nonverbal behaviors that physically express emotion in speech. This virtual presence constitutes a virtual expression just in case it empowers readers to vividly imagine the author (or character) speaking the text with these nonverbal behaviors.44 That being said, many purported instances of

44 It is tempting to think that poetry can express emotions purely through word choice. Consider the following stanza of a sonnet by Pablo Neruda:

I love you without knowing how, or when, or from where,
I love you directly without problems or pride:
I love you like this because I don’t know any other way to love,
except in this form in which I am not nor are you,
so close that your hand upon my chest is mine,
so close that your eyes close with my dreams. (Neruda 2004: 143)

This poem does not substitute for nonlinguistic behaviors in any way, and so would not qualify as a virtual expression of emotion. My take on this poem is that while it semantically expresses a great deal about Neruda’s love—mostly through the use of metaphor—it doesn’t express love, or at least not in the same way that a smile
the written expression of emotion will turn out, on my view, to be means of communicating about emotion that do not qualify as expressions of emotion. More often than not, we use writing to “report,” “confess,” “intimate,” “betray,” “vent,” or otherwise non-expressively communicate what it is that we are feeling at the time of writing.

5.2. Language and Expression

If the arguments presented thus far are sound, and speech acts express emotions always in virtue of how they are said, and never in virtue of what they say, then why do we avow our mental states using language at all? Why do we bother to say “I am afraid,” for instance, when a shriek would suffice? In what follows, I shall propose a novel account of the relationship between language and expression.

Language, I propose, augments the nonverbal expression of emotion, rather than serving as a means of emotional expression. More specifically, I suggest that we adorn our nonverbal expressions with language in order to increase the amount of information contained in our expressions—I dub this function “articulation”—and to increase the probability that observers will recognize and give uptake to these expressions—I dub this function “punctuation.” Although I focus on these two specific functions of language with respect to expression, I want

expresses joy. To express love, Neruda would need to manifest it through his nonlinguistic behavior, or to substitute for nonlinguistic behaviors that would manifest it.
to emphasize that I do not take this list to be exhaustive. I readily acknowledge that language may augment our expressions in ways other than those I discuss here.

5.2.1. Articulation

I’ve argued that the (mental state) expression of an emotion is distinct from the (semantic) expression of the content of that emotion. Expressions of emotions are, in and of themselves, opaque: they convey information about which emotion someone is in (and at which intensity), but they do not convey information about the contents of that emotion. To express the contents of our emotions, we must employ a semantic expression.\(^\text{45}\) Hence, regardless of whether I am afraid of bears or wolves, my trembling voice expresses only my state of fear. Regardless of whether I am angry at my boss or at my children, my scowling voice expresses only my state of anger. And regardless of whether I am laughing with you or at you, my laughter expresses only my state of amusement.

Here is one place where language enters the picture. We can use language to articulate the contents of our mental states so that others may come to know what we fear, revile, regret, etc. The difference between crying and saying “I am devastated that you didn’t come to my birthday party” while crying is that the latter act, but not the former, makes it clear to observers why the expresser is sad. And although a cowering utterance of “I am afraid you will hit me” expresses

\(^{45}\) Mitchel Green (2007a: 13-14) claims that expressions are translucent in the sense that expressions can convey both the type and the content of an emotion. However, this claim conflates mental state and semantic expression.
the same mental state as a cowering utterance of “I am afraid you will leave me,” namely fear, the use of language to communicate the contents of the speaker’s fear distinguishes them. Language, I claim, augments our nonverbal expressions by conveying additional information about them. Hence, I draw a sharp distinction between nonverbally “expressing” a mental state and verbally “articulating” it (which does, however, involve the semantic expression of a proposition).

My distinction between nonverbal “expression” and verbal “articulation” is further supported by recent accounts of the evolutionary origins of language. Cheney and Seyfarth (2007) hypothesize that, without a theory of mind, animals are unlikely to articulate the contents of their mental states, as they are unable to grasp that others might not have the same attitudes as them. Human language likely emerged with the development of a robust theory of mind, specifically for the purpose of articulating the contents of the mental states that natural expressions opaquely express (cf. Zawidzki 2013). This is most clear in the case of expressing belief. Although my facial expressions, gestures, and tones of voice express belief, rather than, say, uncertainty or speculation, these nonverbal cues do not communicate the content of my belief. To inform you as to what I believe, I typically must avail myself of language. But, as in the case of emotion, our words do not express our beliefs; rather, they articulate the contents of our beliefs (by expressing propositions).

My account of articulation explains why we use language to augment our expressions in some situations, but it does not explain why we do so in all situations. An utterance of “I am

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46 An important exception are the predator-specific warning cries of vervet monkeys. These cries not only express the fear of the vervet monkey, according to Cheney & Seyfarth (2007), but articulate what it is that the monkey is afraid of.
afraid of heights” augments the fearful tone of voice in which it is uttered by communicating why the speaker is afraid. But what about cases in which a person says simply “I am afraid”? This utterance does not articulate the contents of the speaker’s fear, so what function is language serving here, if any? I turn now to the second augmentation provided by language, which I call “punctuation.”

5.2.2. Punctuation

Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen (2003: 13) identify a class of nonverbal gestures and intonations that they dub “conversational punctuators,” or “punctuators” for short. These behaviors call attention to particular words or phrases that the speaker utters, in order to scaffold the ability of listeners to grasp the speaker’s meaning. For instance, a person might raise the pitch of her voice at the end of a sentence to signal that it is a question. Or she might bend her index and middle fingers in the air, manually placing a word within quotation marks, to signal that she is mentioning rather than using that word. In every case, the nonverbal punctuator functions to call the listener’s attention to particular features of a sentence, in an attempt to aid the latter in grasping the speaker’s meaning. Punctuators are a crucial part of successful and efficient verbal communication.

I propose that words and phrases can be used to “punctuate” nonverbal behaviors in the same way that nonverbal behaviors are used to “punctuate” words and phrases. By using a specific word or phrase, a speaker can call attention to her tone of voice, facial expression, or gesture,
and thereby help her audience to notice her expression. Such punctuators come in three basic flavors.

“Affect punctuators” call attention to the fact that the speaker is expressing an emotion with her tone or gesture, but without indicating which emotion she is expressing. Many expletives fall under this category. Consider: a person can say “Damn!” out of frustration, joy, anger, awe, etc. In each case, the person will say it in a subtly different tone of voice, facial expression, or gesture, and I contend that a function of the word “damn” is to call attention to which tone, expression, or gesture accompanies the word (cf. Hom 2010: 165). When the awe-struck child exhales the word “Wow” in our leading example, he uses an affect punctuator, since this word can punctuate the expressions of other emotions besides awe.

“Emotion punctuators” call attention to the fact that the speaker is expressing one particular emotion with her tone or gesture. “I am utterly crestfallen!” punctuates expressions of sadness, while “I am royally pissed!” punctuates expressions of anger. Many avowals of emotion serve as emotion punctuators in precisely the same way. By saying “I’m jealous,” I help my audience to focus on the jealous aspects of my tone of voice and body language, which are difficult to recognize without help. Similarly, by saying “thank you” I help my audience to hear that I am grateful, which, again, is an emotion that is difficult to discern from nonverbal cues alone.

Pejoratives (including insults and slurs) serve as emotion punctuators of contempt. Similarly, the Zahavis suggest that pleasantries, such as “good morning,” are punctuators of positive emotion in the following way:
Do our coworkers really need to be reassured that it is a good, rather than a bad, morning? The greeting enables our colleagues to detect, by the tone of our voice, fine differences in our daily moods. A colleague’s mood is very important to people working with him or her—they need to know what to expect from their colleague that day. Since mood affects one’s posture and body tension, we can tell the mood of our acquaintances by listening to the sound of their voices. It is precisely the standard nature of the greeting that lets us detect fine differences in mood—detection that is to the benefit of both greeter and listener. This simple method seems to be far more effective and reliable than would be long, detailed, wordy descriptions of our daily moods. And indeed, sometimes the response to a good-morning is, “Are you all right? What happened?” (1999: 71)

By saying, “good morning,” then, a person punctuates the tone of voice in which these words are spoken, thereby making it easier for her coworkers to determine her present mood and emotion.

Finally, “intensity punctuators” call attention to the fact that a speaker’s tone or gesture expresses an emotion at a particular intensity. A person who says “Close the damn door!” typically expresses a lower intensity of anger than a person who says “Close the fucking door!” (Potts 2007; Hom 2010). Thus, while both “damn” and “fucking” can be used to punctuate the expressions of many emotions—and hence also serve as affect punctuators—“damn” punctuates the expressions of lower intensities of those emotions compared to “fucking.”

Because of the tight association between specific punctuators and specific nonverbal behaviors, punctuators foster the expectation that the speaker will utter these words with certain
tones of voice, facial expressions, or gestures that express emotions. A person who says “I am utterly crestfallen” in a neutral tone of voice violates this expectation, as does a person who says “Close the fucking door!” with only mild anger. Because people expect a speaker to say “I am utterly crestfallen!” in a sad tone of voice, for instance, I suspect that there will be cases in which people think that a speaker has done so, even though she in fact has not. Thus, punctuators are likely to generate false positives in the recognition of nonverbal emotional expression.

My discussion of articulation and punctuation shows that language stands in an important relation to expression, worthy of further investigation, even if it is not itself a means of emotional expression.

5.3. Mind, Language, and Expression

Understanding the complex relationships between language, mind, and expression is central to the philosophies of mind and language. Traditionally, language was viewed both as the primary medium of thought and as the principal means of expressing our minds to others. In recent years, however, several aspects of the traditional view have come under fire. It has been argued, for instance, that language is not the primary medium of thought and that, even if language is indeed a principal means of expressing our mental states to others, it is much more than that: language is also a tool for thinking (Jackendoff 1996, Clark 1996, Dennett 1991). By articulating our thoughts in language we can, for instance, hold them in working memory and marshal additional computational resources to process them.
My account develops this general project further by calling into question an aspect of the traditional view that has not yet been challenged—the idea that language is a principal means of expressing our mental states to others. As I see it, language is not a vehicle of expressing our mental states at all. Rather, language augments our expressions by scaffolding the abilities of others recognize our expressions and by articulating the contents of our expressed states so that others may come to comprehend them. If Jackendoff, Clark, and Dennett are right, then language is a tool that helps us to think about our mental states in novel ways. If I am right, then language is a tool that helps others to think about our mental states in novel ways, too. However, language is neither the primary medium of thought nor a principal means of expressing our mental states to others.

It is widely believed that humans have developed a novel means of expression, language, which enables them to express themselves in ways that are categorically distinct from the ways in which animals express themselves. We can see now the folly in this proposal. Humans express themselves in just the same sorts of ways that animals do, but humans use language both to increase the amount of information conveyed in an expression and to increase the probability that the expression will be perceived and recognized by others. Language interfaces with our nonverbal expression software; it doesn’t replace it.
CHAPTER 6: THE PRAGMATICS OF EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

“The movements of expression in the face and body, whatever their origin may have been, are in themselves of much importance for our welfare. They serve as the first means of communication between the mother and her infant; she smiles approval, and thus encourages her child on the right path, or frowns disapproval. We readily perceive sympathy in others by their expressions; our sufferings are thus mitigated and our pleasures increased; and mutual good feeling is thus strengthened. The movements of expression give vividness and energy to our spoken words. They reveal the thoughts and intentions of others more truly than do words, which may be falsified.” (Darwin 2009: 359)

Writing in 1806, three quarters of a century before Darwin would write The Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals, the great anatomist Sir Charles Bell remarked:

The violent passions mark themselves so distinctly on the countenance, both of man, and of animals, that we are apt in the first instance to consider the movements by which they are indicated, by certain signs or characters provided by nature for the express purpose of intimating the internal emotion, and to suppose that they are interpreted by the observer in consequence of a peculiar and instinctive faculty (1806: 84).
Bell makes a number of claims in this exceptionally rich passage. First, he claims that humans and animals alike express their emotions in distinctive ways, which observers can instinctually recognize. In chapter 2, we learned that experimental evidence strongly supports this contention. Second, Bell claims that expressions consist of those movements that “indicate” emotions. In chapter 4, I argued that while many expressions do indeed indicate emotion, emotional expressions are best conceived as those movements that enable the perception of emotion, since some bodily movements indicate emotions without expressing them. Third, Bell claims that nature provided us with these expressions “for the express purpose of intimating the internal emotion.” This claim is doubly wrong. In chapter 3, we learned that emotional expressions evolved for a variety of purposes, some communicative, and others not, and thus that it is a mistake to assume that expressions form a unified functional class. Furthermore, even when we restrict our attention to those expressions that were provided by nature for the sake of communicating, we find that these expressions communicate in a rich variety of ways, above and beyond simply “intimating” emotions.

This last mistake I have termed the “expressivist fallacy,” or the false assumption that emotional expressions communicate in every case by revealing or evincing underlying emotions (cf. Scarantino 2014). In truth, we use emotional expressions to communicate in many different ways. Consider the following examples:

1. A child falls down on the playground, and, unsure of how to react, looks up to his mother. The mother grins, and the child bursts into laughter. Here, the mother’s grin doesn’t tell the child what she feels; rather, it tells the child what he ought to feel. The
grin exemplifies the appropriate emotional response. Had the mother gasped in horror, then the child will have burst into tears.

2. A student begins to misbehave in class, but stops when she sees the teacher frowning directly at her. The teacher might be angry at the student, but even if he is not, the frown still succeeds in warning the student to stop misbehaving.

3. A flight attendant smiles at passengers as they board the aircraft. The purpose of this smile is not to communicate that she is happy to serve them, but rather that she is willing to serve them. Social smiles often signal a person’s commitment to playing out certain social roles, rather than an emotion per se.

In short, emotional expressions are richly textured communicative acts, and not merely the emotional “read-outs” that they are often taken to be.

My aim in this final chapter is to develop a theoretical framework for analyzing the many ways in which emotional expressions can function in communication. To preview the basic idea, I argue that emotional expressions communicate on three distinct “levels,” corresponding to three notions of communication. Furthermore, I shall argue that, at each level, emotional expressions can communicate in a number of different ways.

At the first level—corresponding to information-theoretic models of communication—emotional expressions communicate by transmitting information, or by reducing uncertainty about a certain state of affairs. A smile, for instance, may increase the probability that the expresser is feeling joy, or that the expresser will engage in pro-social behavior, or that the expresser will make concessions, and so on. At this level, the information conveyed by an
expression needn’t be intended by the sender or even understood by the receiver. Emotional expressions are an abundant source of information, but most of this information is lost on receivers.

At the second level—corresponding to signaling models of communication—emotional expressions communicate by serving as biological signals, or by having evolved to influence the behavior of others in mutually beneficial ways. A cry of fear, for instance, signals to predators that they have been perceived by their prey, which discourages a mutually costly chase. An angry growl, by contrast, forecasts the expresser’s willingness to fight a competitor over food or territory, which discourages a mutually costly fight. Senders tend to produce these signals and receivers tend to respond to them instinctually, given that both their ancestors benefited from the uptake of the signal.

At the third level—corresponding to speech act models of communication—emotional expressions communicate by updating the normative statuses of agents in a discursive community. A disapproving frown, for instance, reproaches an agent for wrongdoing, calling upon her to acknowledge her transgression and to make amends. A polite smile, by contrast, shows respect for others, inviting them to respond in kind. At this level, communication is typically intentional, and receivers are typically aware of what’s being communicated and respond deliberately.

These descriptions are still very abstract and formal, but at the end of the chapter I will work through a series of concrete examples to demonstrate the usefulness of these distinctions. I begin the chapter by exploring several senses of the word “communication” (§6.1). I then develop a
general framework for analyzing the pragmatics of emotional expression (§6.2). Finally, I apply this framework to a series of examples (§6.3).

6.1. Three Models of Communication

There are several ways of conceiving communication, some of which are more restrictive than others. At one end of the spectrum, we find the most permissive models, according to which communication is a ubiquitous phenomenon. Not only humans but also non-human animals, machines, and even microbes are capable of it. At the other end of the spectrum, we find the most restrictive models, according to which communication is characteristic of human beings. Infants, non-human animals, and other entities do not typically engage in this activity, the thought runs, since they do not have language, cannot form complex beliefs about other minds, cannot take responsibility for their utterances, etc.

There is no right answer to the question, “What is communication really?” Each of these models captures a coherent activity, which may legitimately be called “communication.” When we investigate the ways in which emotional expressions communicate, then, we must clear about how restrictive a notion of “communication” we have in mind. In what follows, I will review three models of communication, which range from very permissive to very restrictive.
6.1.1. Communication as Information Flow

Sometimes, people use the term “communication” to refer to any flow of information whatsoever. It is often remarked, for instance, that we communicate with more than just our words: accents communicate heritage, clothes communicate status and employment, body language communicates intention and comfort level, etc. Rarely do we mean to communicate anything with our accents, clothes, and comportments. Rather, these things happen to correlate with certain biographical facts, which astute observers can “read off” of them. Even inanimate objects can communicate in this way, insofar as even they can be a source of information flow. Red spots communicate information about the measles and clouds communicate information about the weather. Anything that carries information may be said to “communicate,” in this liberal sense of the term.

Although emotional expressions certainly communicate in this broadest sense of the term, I am more interested in how they communicate in more restrictive senses of the term. Thus, I shall set this sense of communication aside, and focus entirely on two other senses of the term.

6.1.2. Communication as Signaling

Signaling theory, as it has been developed in the biological sciences, provides a somewhat more restrictive notion of communication. Central to this theory is a distinction between signals and cues. Let us define a “cue” as any act or structure that functions to alter the behavior of
another organism. Let us define a “signal,” in turn, as any cue that was designed by evolution specifically for this purpose. Thus, a behavior counts as a signal just in case (1) part of the reason for why it occurs is that the same behavior or structure increased the fitness of an ancestor, and (2) part of the reason for why receivers give uptake to it is that their ancestors benefited by giving uptake to it (Maynard Smith & Harper 2004.). So defined, a signal is a special type of cue. However, to avoid confusion, I will henceforth use the term “cue” to refer only to those cues that are not signals.

On the signaling model of communication, signals compose a more restrictive notion of communication. This notion is more restrictive because it conceives communication as something that can take place only between organisms, and because it requires that the expression has a history of mutually benefiting both sender and receiver. Notice that in defining signals as behaviors that were designed by evolution to alter the behavior of other organisms, the signaling model avoids couching communication in terms of “information.” Although information flows through every animal signal, it is notoriously difficult to characterize this information (see Cheney & Seyfarth 2007: ch. 10). In light of this difficulty, Maynard Smith and Harper strategically “black-box” the information contained within a signal, focusing instead on what creatures do in response to it, and on who benefits from it. Regardless of what the babbler’s warning cry “means,” raptors respond to it by abandoning the hunt, which is beneficial to both of them.

In §6.2.2, I shall explain how many emotional expressions communicate in this sense of the term as well. Different expressions evolved to elicit different responses from receivers, where these responses tend to benefit sender and receiver alike.
6.1.3. Communication as Illocution

Lastly, there is something special about linguistic communication, which sets it apart from mere signaling. It's hard to say what it is, exactly, that sets it apart, but it presumably has something to do with the fact that linguistic communication is typically overt (Strawson 1962)—that when people communicate with language, both the sender and the receiver are aware of the fact that communication is taking place and can typically agree on what the speaker means to communicate (Grice 1957). Relatedly, language users are capable of communicating about communication, for instance when someone responds to a comment by saying, “What do you mean by ‘communication’? Finally, when people communicate, they take responsibility for their communicative acts, such that they may be required to clarify, defend, or substantiate their conversational contributions (Brandom 1994; Kukla & Lance 2009).

Speech act theory, first developed by J. L. Austin (1975) and John Searle (1969), seeks to explain this third, most restrictive notion of communication. Central to it is Austin’s famous distinction between three types of acts that we typically perform every time we speak:

**Locutionary acts**, or acts of speaking.

**Illocutionary acts**, or acts in speaking.

**Perlocutionary acts**, or acts by speaking.

A speaker performs a *locutionary act* whenever he or she utters or writes words, individually or strung together. The words may or may not be meaningful, and they may or may not be
structured in accordance with the rules of grammar. Speaking the words “and how,” for instance, involve a locutionary act, regardless of when, why, or where they are uttered. Locutionary acts pertain always to the production of linguistic signs.

A speaker performs an illocutionary act, in turn, whenever he or she performs a locutionary act for the purpose of communicating with a listener. Illocutionary acts are best illustrated by example. Assertions, questions, commands, requests, threats, promises, and apologies are all examples of illocutionary acts. Whereas locutionary acts can often be described without reference to a conversational context, illocutionary acts are essentially context-bound. If someone is telling me what to do, I can request information about how to do it by asking, “and how?” If someone is telling me about how great the concert we saw last week was, I can confirm her statement by exclaiming, “and how!” And finally, if someone is asking me about how to translate the German phrase “und wie” into English, I can answer her question by responding, “and how.” Illocutionary acts therefore involve something more than the simple uttering of words; they moreover require that these words are uttered with a particular illocutionary force. It is in virtue of this force that spoken utterances may serve a role in communication. It’s possible to perform a locutionary act without also performing an illocutionary act—by testing a microphone, for instance—but it’s impossible to perform an illocutionary act without at the same time performing a locutionary act.

Finally, a speaker performs a perlocutionary act whenever he or she causes something to happen as a result of speaking. Sometimes, the perlocutionary effects of speaking have little or nothing to do with communication. Shattering a wine glass with one’s voice is a perlocutionary act, as is startling someone by jumping out from behind a corner and shouting “boo!” More
often than not, however, we are interested in perlocutionary acts that pertain to communication. When I say, “you’d better be careful!”’, for instance, I perform a perlocutionary act (1) by making you feel threatened, (2) by confusing you, (3) by persuading you to exhibit more care, and so on. Perlocutionary acts pertain always to the causal *effects* of speaking, regardless of whether they are effects on minds or on the world. To the extent that speaking always causes something to happen, every locutionary act will also be a perlocutionary act. That being said, not every perlocutionary act will be an illocutionary act, as in the case of speaking gibberish to test a microphone.

According to Searle (1965), illocutionary acts are the minimal units of linguistic communication. One communicates, in the third, most restrictive sense of the term, just in case one performs an illocutionary act. Locutionary acts can communicate in the sense of transmitting information, and perlocutionary acts can communicate in the sense of signaling, but only illocutionary acts can communicate in the sense of striving to update the normative statuses of members of a discursive community.

Several frameworks for analyzing illocutionary acts have been proposed over the years (e.g. Austin 1975; Searle 1970; Bach & Harnish 1979), but here I shall adopt the framework recently advanced by Rebecca Kukla and Mark Lance (2009), as it is particularly well-suited to illuminating the pragmatics of emotional expression.47 They view illocutionary acts as “performances constitutive of changes in normative status among various members of a

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47 Searle argues that every illocutionary act can be decomposed into a propositional content and an illocutionary force, and he conceives illocutionary force, in part, as a function of the direction of fit of that content. Since emotional expressions do not have propositional content, Searle’s notions of illocutionary act and illocutionary force does not apply to them. More on this point later.
discursive community” (2009: 12). An assertion grants others the *entitlement* to use a particular claim in reasoning, for instance, while a command bestows on someone the *obligation* to perform a particular act.48

Kukla and Lance propose a functional classification of speech acts, which focuses on their normative inputs and outputs. A speech act’s “inputs” consist of “the normative statuses constitutive of entitlement to a given speech act” (2009: 15). A speech act’s “outputs” consist of “the normative changes (in the status of the speaker, or of others in the discursive community) that the act strives to produce” (2009: 15). To perform a command, for instance, a speaker must have the requisite authority (input), and, once performed, this command obliges its target to do what’s been commanded (output).

Furthermore, Kukla and Lance suggest that inputs and outputs can be either “agent-relative” or “agent-neutral,” depending on whether the relevant statuses are indexed to specific individuals or groups, or to no one in particular. Thus, we end up with four basic categories of speech acts, depending on the nature of their inputs and outputs (see Figure XIV).

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48 For Kukla and Lance, as for Searle, illocutionary acts are essentially normative phenomena. Perlocutionary acts persuade, coerce, and generally *cause* things to happen, while illocutionary acts entitle, oblige, and generally *permit* things to happen.
Figure XIV. Kukla and Lance’s Typology of Speech Acts

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<tr>
<th>Agent-Neutral Output</th>
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<th>Agent-Relative Input</th>
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<td></td>
<td>agent-neutral input</td>
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<td>agent-neutral input</td>
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Let’s apply this framework to a couple of examples. Assertions have agent-neutral inputs and agent-neutral outputs. If some fact is known within a linguistic community, then any member who has reason to assert this fact is entitled to do so, regardless of his or her status or position in society. And even though a speaker might direct an assertion to one person in particular, anyone who overhears an assertion is given license by the speaker to update his or her beliefs with the fact asserted. Commands, by contrast, have agent-relative inputs and agent-relative outputs. A special authority is required to issue a command, and a command creates an obligation that only the target can discharge. (See Kukla & Lance 2009, Lance & Kukla 2013, and Kukla 2014 for demonstrations of the fruitfulness of this general framework.)

In §6.2.1, I shall explain how some emotional expressions can communicate even in this third, most restrictive sense of the term. Like speech acts, emotional expressions can constitute changes in the normative statuses of both senders and receivers.
6.2. The Pragmatics of Emotional Expression

In “How to Do Things with Emotions” (2014), Andrea Scarantino argues that the basic tools of speech act theory can be usefully applied to the pragmatics of emotional expression as well. Just as we can distinguish between three different types of acts that we typically perform in speaking, so too can we distinguish between three different types of acts that we typically perform in expressing an emotion:

- **Emotive acts**, or acts *of* expressing.\(^{49}\)
- **Illemotive acts**, or acts *in* expressing.
- **Peremotive acts**, or acts *by* expressing.

As in the case of speech acts, it’s possible to perform all three acts at once with a single expression. However, as we shall see, many expressions communicate while constituting only one or two types of emotive acts.

An agent performs an *emotive act* whenever she contorts her face, moves her body, or speaks in a tone of voice in a way that makes her emotion perceptually manifest. A smile, for instance, is an emotive act regardless of whether it is genuine, polite, or deceptive. A frown is an emotive act regardless of whether it is used to reveal anger, to disapprove, or to threaten. Emotive acts

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\(^{49}\) Scarantino names these acts “expressive acts,” but I wish to reserve this term for a specific type of illemotive act, discussed in §6.3.1, below.
pertain in every case to the *production* of an emotional expression, which I analyze as any behavior that enables the perception of emotion.

A speaker performs an *illocutionary act*, in turn, whenever he or she performs an emotive act for the purpose of communicating something to an observer. Illocutionary acts, like illocutionary acts, are best illustrated by example. A smile can communicate that I am happy, that I acknowledge your presence, that I am willing to serve you, that I am sorry and willing to make amends, that I want you to be happy, and so on. Whereas emotive acts can often be described without reference to a conversational context, illocutionary acts are essentially context-bound. What my smile means depends, in part, on the situation in which it occurs. Illocutionary acts therefore involve something more than the simple contortion of the face, movement of the body, or speaking in a tone of voice; they moreover require that these physiological changes occur with a particular *illocutionary force*. It is in virtue of this force that a facial expression, gesture, or vocalization may serve a role in communication. It’s possible to perform an emotive act without also performing an illocutionary act—if I’m practicing my facial expressions in the mirror, for instance—but it’s impossible to perform an illocutionary act without also performing an emotive act.

Finally, a speaker performs a *perlocutionary act* whenever he or she causes something to happen as a result of expressing an emotion. Sometimes, the perlocutionary effects of emoting have little or nothing to do with communication. Shattering a wine glass with one’s bloodcurdling scream is a perlocutionary act, as is startling someone by lunging angrily toward him or her. More often than not, however, we are interested in perlocutionary acts that pertain to communication. When I smile, for instance, I perform a perlocutionary act by making you believe that I am happy, by making you feel relieved that I am not angry, by making you feel happy, too, and so on. Perlocutionary acts
pertain always to the causal effects of emoting, regardless of whether they are effects on minds or on the world. To the extent that expressing an emotion always causes something to happen, every emotive act will also be a peremotive act. That being said, not every peremotive act will be an illemotive act, as in the case of worrying my nosy mother when she sees me practicing my sad face in the mirror.

Echoing Searle, Scarantino (2014) suggests that illemotive acts are the minimal unit of affective communication, and then goes on to develop a framework for analyzing illemotive acts, which is based on Searle’s theory of illocutionary acts. However, I find Scarantino’s framework incomplete for two reasons. First, Searle’s theory requires illocutionary acts to have sentential content insofar as he analyzes illocutionary force primarily in terms of the direction of fit of that content. Assertions describe how the world is, for instance, while directives dictates how the world ought to be. Yet we have seen that emotional expressions do not have sentential content, and thus Searle’s concept of illocutionary force is unsuited to the expression of emotion. Kukla and Lance’s theory does not require illocutionary acts to have sentential content, making it much better suited.

Second, Scarantino does not distinguish between different models of communication. Illocutionary acts—and thus illemotive acts, by extension—communicate always in the third, most restrictive sense of the term, yet many of Scarantino’s examples of emotional expressions communicate only in the more permissive sense of signaling. Non-human animal expressions, for instance, will often fail to qualify as illemotive acts, even though they still communicate in the sense of serving as biological signals. Expressions can communicate in a variety of interesting ways without being illemotive acts, and our theory ought to accommodate such
expressions. In sum, I applaud Scarantino for applying the tools of speech act theory to the expression of emotion, but I argue that we must also apply the tools of signaling theory in order to get a more comprehensive picture of the pragmatics of expression. Thus, I intend my framework to be a friendly extension of Scarantino’s framework, rather than an outright replacement.

In what follows, I shall propose a novel framework for analyzing the pragmatics of emotional expression, which is based on Scarantino’s distinctions between emotive, illemotive, and peremotive acts, but integrates all three models of communication. Very roughly, the idea is this:

- At the level of information flow, emotional expressions communicate in virtue of being emotive acts that reduce uncertainty relative to a set of information channels. A smile, for instance, may increase the probability that the expresser is feeling joy, that the expresser will engage in pro-social behavior, that the expresser will make concessions, etc.

- At the level of signaling, emotional expressions communicate in virtue of being a special kind of peremotive act. More specifically, they communicate because they evolved for the purpose of eliciting mutually beneficial responses from observers, and because observers likewise evolved to respond to them in these ways. Let’s call peremotive acts that elicit the responses that they evolved to elicit “proper peremotive acts.”

- Finally, at the level of illocutions (or rather, “illemotives”), emotional expressions communicate in virtue of being illemotive acts. More specifically, they communicate
because they are “constitutive of changes in normative status among various members of a discursive community” (Kukla & Lance 2009: 12).

In what follows, I will develop this framework further, and then apply it to a series of examples. I’ll consider the levels of communication in reverse order, starting with illemotive acts, and turning then to peremotive acts. As I mentioned before, I will not get into the details of emotive acts, so that I may focus more closely on peremotive and illemotive acts.

6.2.1. Emotional Expression and Illocution

Emotional expression often communicate in ways that resemble standard speech acts. A man asks his friend, “Do you like kimchi?” and the friend responds with an exaggerated facial expression of disgust, meaning that he doesn’t. A student begins to misbehave in class, and his teacher gives him the evil eye, meaning that the student should stop. A motorist yelling at a cyclist, and a pedestrian shrugs to the cyclist, meaning that the cyclist should ignore the motorist. A shopper lets a man with fewer items enter the line in front of her, and he clasps his hands together, communicating thanks. In each case, the communication is overt: both the sender and receiver know that communication is taking place, and each can articulate, roughly, what the
message is.\textsuperscript{50} We could add that the communication is typically intentional and performed in accordance with local conventions.

Borrowing Kukla and Lance’s framework, we may analyze illemotive expressions in terms of their normative inputs and outputs, and whether they are agent-neutral or agent-relative. Recall the man who screwed his face into a knot when asked if he likes kimchi. His expression as an agent-relative input because only he is entitled to express his own disgust for kimchi, but it has an agent-neutral output because anyone is entitled to conclude that he dislikes kimchi on the basis of seeing his expression. Think now of the teacher’s admonishing glare. This expression has an agent-relative input because the teacher issues the reproach from her own authority within the classroom, and it has an agent-relative output because it reproaches the misbehaving student, and no one else (although it may also serve as a warning to others). Finally, consider the pedestrian’s sympathetic shrug. This expression has an agent-neutral input, because anyone is entitled to exemplify an appropriate response to the situation, but it has an agent-relative output because the exemplar is a recommendation for the cyclist, and no one else. Figure XV populates Kukla and Lance’s typology with these examples:

\textsuperscript{50}One might object that while the aforementioned acts may look like emotional expressions, they aren’t really. I suspect that this worry is motivated by implicit adherence to the Hydraulic Analysis of Expression, discussed in chapter 3. It is assumed that since these acts are purposive and deliberate, and not the instinctual outpourings of emotions, they do not “express” those emotions. However, I argued that this analysis ought to be abandoned, and that we should instead conceive emotional expressions as behaviors that enable the perception of emotion. In each of the above cases, the sender’s behavior enables receivers to perceive the sender as disgusted, angry, amused, or grateful, and thus the behavior does indeed count as an expression of that emotion. One of my primary aims in this dissertation is to expose the folly of the assumption that expressions communicate in every case by spontaneously “venting” or “airing” an emotion.
Kukla and Lance’s typology provides a useful framework for analyzing illemotive acts, or those emotional expressions that communicate in the third, most restrictive sense of the term. These expressions make up an important yet often overlooked part of linguistic communication. We often respond to words with expressive gestures, and to expressive gestures with words. By extending Kukla and Lance’s framework to account for illemotive acts, we can better appreciate how illocutionary and illemotive acts can interact fluidly in conversation. Most importantly, this framework allows us to sidestep the thorny question of meaning. We needn’t specify what an expression means to know what it does, since we may analyze the pragmatics of emotional expressions entirely in terms of their normative inputs and outputs. Although it is natural and appropriate to ask of speech acts what they mean, it’s less natural and less appropriate to ask of emotional expressions what they mean, not least because it’s unclear what a correct answer to this question would even look like.

Although many emotional expressions communicate by constituting illemotive acts, others communicate without constituting such acts. Some emotional expressions communicate in virtue of constituting biological signals, for instance, which I analyze as constituting proper peremotive
acts. I shall now explain how signaling expressions differ from illemotive expressions, while situating them within a more general framework of emotional communication.

6.2.2. Emotional Expression and Signaling

Many emotional expressions evolved specifically to serve as biological signals, and hence to communicate in this sense of the term. Recall some of the examples from chapter 2: retching evolved to warn conspecifics about potentially toxic substances, smiles evolved to encourage cooperation, frowns evolved to discourage norm violations, and so on. Signaling expressions differ from illemotive expressions in that the former tend to exhibit the following three characteristics: (1) senders produce them instinctually and without deliberation, (2) receivers respond to them equally instinctually, and (3) the ways in which receivers respond are of mutual benefit. I’ll take each in turn.

First, senders tend to produce signaling expressions automatically and without purposeful intent. We retch when disgusted, shake our fists when angry, and smile when approaching a potential social partner, without meaning to communicate anything by these expressions. Automaticity is an adaptive feature of these expressions, which ensures that we will continue to enjoy the benefits that our ancestors received when they first produced these expressions (recall Darwin’s first principle, the Principle of Serviceable Habits). That being said, humans have also evolved the capacity to produce signaling expressions deliberately, allowing for more flexible
and strategic uses of them. They do not cease to be signals when they are produced deliberately, although they do tend to be less credible.

Second, not only do senders tend to produce signaling expressions automatically, but these expressions tend to elicit automatic, instinctual responses from receivers. Some communicate via emotional contagion. One person vomits in disgust after drinking curdled milk, and soon everyone in the vicinity is gagging as well. A child is unsure of how to act in a novel situation, but empathetically mirrors whatever expression her parent puts on. A person smiles at us, and we reflexively smile back. Other expressions signal not by contagion, but by other sorts of automatic emotional processing. Research on “blindfright” demonstrates that humans react to facial expressions of anger with fear, even when they are unaware of having seen the facial expression in the first place (Scarantino 2010). Furthermore, humans, who have evolved a sophisticated theory of mind, make snap judgments about what people are feeling on the basis of their outward expressions. Although this emotion recognition is a “system 1” process, it makes emotional information available to “system 2” processes, allowing humans to respond reflexively and creatively to the expression of emotion (Kahneman 2011). Even this more sophisticated response to signaling expressions is an adaptive instinct, which has been calibrated and tweaked by natural selection.

Third, expressions maintain their signaling value because they tend to benefit sender and receiver alike. If my expression of disgust prevents a family member from consuming rotten meat, both of us benefit. If my smile encourages a stranger to cooperate with me, it’s a win-win situation. The sustainability of signaling systems is thought to depend upon ongoing mutual benefit (Fridlund 1994). If a signal doesn’t benefit the sender, then there is selective pressure
against its production. If a signal doesn’t benefit the receiver, then there is selective pressure against its uptake. Mutual benefit is thus the key to a signal’s long-term success.

We may be tempted to ask, “What do these expressions mean?” Thankfully, signaling theory allows us to sidestep this thorny question entirely. By “black-boxing” the information contained in signals, we can focus on the conditions under which they are produced (their inputs), and the particular responses that they happen to elicit (their outputs). Thus, regardless of what a warning cry means, we know that babblers produce them upon seeing a raptor and that they cause raptors to abandon the hunt. And regardless of what a smile means, we know that people produce them when they need help and that they cause others to be more willing to help. In Millikan’s (1984) terminology, expressions communicate in this sense of the term by having the “proper function” of causing a change in the receiver. They won’t always cause this change, but they are “supposed” to, in the same way that a heart is “supposed” to pump blood.

Signaling expressions, like illemotive acts, may be usefully categorized in terms of their inputs and outputs. However, we shall see that the inputs and outputs of signaling expressions initially look very different from those of illemotive expressions. The inputs of a signal are the conditions under which the signal is performed “honestly”—which is here stipulated to mean the conditions under which the signal benefits the receiver as evolution intended. For instance, a smile “honestly” signals a willingness to engage in cooperation just in case the sender actually does cooperate, thereby benefiting the receiver. If the sender reneges, however, then the signal is “dishonest,” because the receiver does not benefit. This sense of “honesty” is distinct from the everyday sense. To help remind readers that I am using the term in its technical sense, I will place it in quotation marks.
Often, whether an expression is “honest” or not depends upon the state of the expresser. The babbler’s warning cry is “honest” just in case the babbler has truly perceived a predator. A threat is “honest” just in case the expresser is truly willing to fight. At other times, whether an expression is “honest” or not does not depend upon the state of the expresser, but rather on the state of the world. A display of disgust, for instance, is “honest” just in case the cause of the signal truly is toxic. In the ordinary sense of “honest,” we’d say that the display of disgust is honest just in case the expresser truly feels disgust, but, in fact, the function of the signal is to prevent receivers from ingesting toxins rather than to inform them about what the expresser is feeling. Indeed, even if the expresser isn’t feeling disgust in response to a toxic substance, her display of disgust benefits receivers by discouraging them from ingesting it, and therefore counts as “honest” in the technical sense. When the “honesty” of an expression depends upon the state of the expresser, I shall classify it as “agent-relative.” When the “honesty” of an expression does not depend on the state of the expresser, however, I shall classify it as “agent-neutral.”

The outputs of a signal are the particular responses that they evolved to elicit. The output of the smile is the receiver’s cooperation. The output of retching is the receiver’s avoidance behavior. Outputs are “agent-neutral” when the sender benefits from anyone responding in this way, and “agent-relative” when the sender benefits only from certain individuals responding in this way. The smile has an agent-neutral output because the sender can benefit from anyone’s willingness to cooperate, while retching has an agent-relative output because the sender benefits only from kith and kin adopting avoidance behavior. Thus, we see that the inputs of a signal concern the conditions under which the signal benefits the receiver, while the outputs of a signal concern the conditions under which the signal benefits the sender.
Although the inputs and outputs of signaling expressions look very different from the inputs and outputs of illemotive expressions, we may also categorize signaling expressions based on whether their inputs and outputs are agent-relative or agent-neutral. Furthermore, I argue that it is useful to apply the same typological scheme to signaling and illemotive expressions, since many expressions will fall under the same box, regardless of whether they communicate as signals or as illemotive acts (or both). That’s because illemotive acts are often—though not always—performed with the aim of bringing about the same peremotive effects elicited by signaling expressions. For instance, just as a signaling expression of anger may have evolved to discourage norm-violation, so too may an illemotive expression of anger be performed with the aim of discouraging norm-violation. They may achieve their ends by different means—the signaling expression does so by causally eliciting an automatic affective response, while the illemotive expression does so by calling for the target to acknowledge the norms governing his or her action—but they share the same end nonetheless. Thus, we end up with following taxonomical scheme:
6.3. How to Do Things with Emotional Expressions

I shall now turn to a series of examples, which showcase the myriad ways in which emotional expressions communicate, as well as the fruitfulness of the conceptual framework that I’ve proposed.
6.3.1. Expressives

When people think of emotional expressions, they tend to think first (and exclusively) of expressions that function to reveal, evince, or exhibit the occurrent emotional state of the expresser. A child opens a birthday present to find a much coveted item inside, and grins. A woman learns that her mother has passed away, and she bursts into tears. A man opens a carton of curdled milk, and gags. These expressions reveal that the child is happy, that the woman is sad, and that the man is disgusted. In keeping with tradition, let’s call such acts “expressives.”

Expressives can be “played” in a variety of ways. The child in our example can smile spontaneously, as a natural outcome of feeling overjoyed, or he can smile deliberately, with the conscious intention of revealing his joy to his onlooking parents. When he smiles deliberately, he may covertly attempt to make the smile look spontaneous, in an attempt to deceive his audience, or he may smile overtly, indicating that he knows that his audience knows that the smile is deliberate. It would be a mistake to assume that deliberate smiles are always dishonest, however. The child can genuinely feel overjoyed and yet intentionally produce an overt grin to communicate his joy to his parents. Regardless of how an expressive is produced, it says, in effect, “I am happy/sad/disgusted/etc.”

Expressives can be signaling expressions, illemotive expressions, or both. As a signaling expression, an expressive is a proper peremotive act that falls under box 2. It has an agent-relative input, because the expresser’s mental state determines whether the signal is “honest” or not. If the smiling child is happy, then the smile an “honest” signal. If the smiling child is not
happy, then it is a “dishonest” signal. (As we shall see, other types of signaling expressions are “honest” irrespective of the expresser’s occurrent emotional state.)

This peremotive act has an agent-neutral output because it evolved to make anyone who sees it believe that the expresser is feeling the emotion expressed. The child’s smile evolved (in part) to make observers believe that the child is happy. The woman’s tears evolved (in part) to make observers believe that the child is sad. And the man’s gagging evolved (in part) to make observers believe that the man is disgusted. When the signal is “honest,” both sender and receiver generally benefit. When it is “dishonest,” however, the sender may benefit at the receiver’s expense. Thus, audiences typically respond to expressives primarily by judging—consciously or unconsciously—the likelihood that they are “honest.” In the above example, the child’s parents may judge whether the child’s grin tracks his actual occurrent feelings. They will assign a higher probability to a grin that appears spontaneous than to a grin that appears deliberate, but, knowing that it is possible to deliberately produce a grin that appears spontaneous, they ought to assign a spontaneous-looking grin a probability of less than one. The parents can employ further strategies to determine whether the grin is sincere. They can prod the child, “do you really like it?” prompting him to express his feelings a second or even a third time. And if the subsequent expressions are any less persuasive than the first, then the parents may doubt that the child is truly overjoyed by the gift. Furthermore, the more intimately that the parents know the child, including his expressive habits, the easier it will be for them to detect insincerity. The takeaway point is that observers give uptake to an expressive by judging the likelihood of its sincerity. As we shall see, there are other types of expressions for which this would be an inappropriate or irrelevant response.
When an expressive is produced deliberately and openly, it is an illemotive expression, which also falls under box 2. It has an agent-relative input because the only person entitled to reveal one’s emotions is oneself. Indeed, a general constraint on expression is that a person can express his or her own feelings, but no one else’s. Expressives are, we could say, irreducibly first-personal. A person can abuse her entitlement, expressing an emotion that he or she does not in fact feel, but insincerity does not prevent an expression from functioning as an expressive. It still says, in effect, “I am happy,” even though it turns out to be a lie.

This illemotive act has an agent-neutral output, in turn, because it licenses anyone who sees it to judge that the expresser feels what he or she expresses. The child may direct his smile toward some people in particular, e.g. his parents, but this does not prevent anyone else who sees the child’s smile from taking the smile to license the belief that the child is overjoyed.

It’s easy to underestimate the differences between peremotive and illemotive expressives, especially given the structural similarities that I have just pointed out. The differences may be put into relief by focusing on cases of failure. Peremotive expressives fail just in case the receiver does not respond in the way ancestors responded. If an observers sees the child’s smile but is not led to believe that the child is, in fact, happy, then the signal has misfired. By contrast, illemotive expressives have a sphere of appropriate uptake that extends far beyond the response intended by the peremotive expressive. If the child overtly grins but his older brother protests, “Aw, come on, you don’t really like it,” then the brother has given proper uptake to the child’s smile, even though he has not responded in the way that the child may have intended. Thus, signaling expressions strive to elicit a particular behavior, whereas illemotive expressions strive...
to constitute changes in the normative statuses of discourse participants, who may respond to these changes in a wide variety of ways, above and beyond those intended by the expresser.

It is very tempting to think that all emotional expressions are expressives, in this sense of the term. I’ve suggested already that this temptation is motivated by the Hydraulic Analysis of Expression, which conceives emotional expressions as all and only those behaviors that spontaneously “vent” or “air” a person’s outpouring emotional feelings. However, just as this analysis is mistaken, so too is the assumption that all emotional expressions function pragmatically as expressives. The following example exposes the folly of this assumption.

6.3.2. Exemplars

Other emotional expressions, which I shall call “exemplars,” serve not to reveal the expresser’s own emotion, but rather to exemplify the emotion that someone else should feel in a situation. A young girl finds a dead bird on the sidewalk, and, unsure of how to react, looks up to her father in confusion; the father pouts, and the daughter’s eyes well up with tears. (Developmental psychologists dub this activity “social referencing”: young children, unsure of how to feel in new situations, look to adults for guidance; and adults produce prototypical expressions to convey the appropriate response.) A woman is unsure of whether her boss’s forward behavior was sexist; but when she explains it to a friend, the friend contorts her face in moral disgust. A motorist shouts at a cyclist for slowing him down; a pedestrian looks at the cyclist and shrugs. In each case, the expression says, in effect, “You should be sad/disgusted/
indifferent/ etc.” Rather than revealing the expresser’s own emotion, it exemplifies the emotion that the target feel.51

As a signaling expression, an exemplar is a peremotive act that falls under box 3. It has an agent-neutral input because whether the signal is “honest”—that is, whether the signal benefits the receiver as evolution intended—depends not on whether the expresser feels what he or she shows, but rather on whether the emotion shown is in fact the appropriate emotion to feel in the present context. This peremotive act has an agent-relative output, in turn, because it evolved to elicit a response from the target only. When the father pouts, he is exemplifying the sadness that the daughter should feel. When the friend sneers, she is exemplifying the moral outrage that the woman ought to feel. And when the pedestrian shrugs, she is exemplifying the indifference that the cyclist ought to feel. Others may see the expression and mirror it, too, but this signal didn’t evolve for its effect on third-parties.

When an exemplar is overt, it is an illemotive act that likewise falls under box 3. It has an agent-neutral input, because the normative status constitutive of the entitlement to perform it is not indexed to anyone in particular. More simply, anyone can exemplify the emotion that a target ought to feel, regardless of his or her particular identity. An illemotive exemplar has an agent-relative output because the expression makes it appropriate only for the target of the

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51 Again, one might worry that exemplars are not really emotional expressions. But, again, this worry is motivated by the now defunct Hydraulic Analysis. Exemplars count as emotional expressions, on the analysis that I’ve defended, because they succeed in enabling the perception of the expresser as emotional. The father looks sad when he pouts, even though he may not be and even though the function of this expression isn’t to reveal (honestly or dishonestly) the father’s felt emotion. The woman’s friend looks disgusted—again, regardless of whether she really is or not—and the pedestrian looks indifferent.
expression to feel the emotion exemplified. The expression makes it appropriate for the child to feel sadness, for the woman to feel disgusted, and for the cyclist to shrug off the motorist.

Again, we can appreciate the differences between the peremotive and illemotive varieties of exemplars by considering cases of breakdown. The peremotive exemplar misfires whenever the target does not go on to feel the emotion exemplified. The illemotive exemplar, by contrast, can function properly even if it doesn’t have the intended peremotive effect. For instance, the woman in our example might protest her friend’s interpretation of the boss’ behavior, saying, “No, it wasn’t like that.” (Let’s say that it was, though.) In this case, the woman gives uptake to her friend’s expression as an exemplar, but decides that the response is not the appropriate one after all. Similarly, the cyclist might acknowledge the pedestrian’s exemplar, yet decide to flip-off the motorist anyway. To put the point in more general terms, illemotive/illemotive acts can be successful even if they don’t bring about their intended peremotive/peremotive effects. Thus, the illemotive exemplar can succeed even where the peremotive exemplar fails.

6.3.3. Rebukes and Reproaches

Expressions of anger, disappointment, and other negative “reactive attitudes” (Strawson 1962) are often used to *reprimand* a person for a norm violation, beyond simply exhibiting anger/disappointment with respect to that violation. A mother walks into the kitchen to find her daughter with her hand in the cookie jar, and frowns. A woman forgets to take out the trash after promising to do so, and her husband sighs. One motorist cuts off another, and the latter shakes
his fist at the former. These expressions may be expressives, revealing or exhibiting the expresser’s anger or disappointment, but, in any case, they are more than that. They call upon the target to acknowledge a norm violation, and perhaps also to make amends for it.

It will be helpful to stipulate a difference between two kinds of reprimand. *Reproaches* reprimand someone who has wronged the reprimander himself or herself, whereas *rebukes* reprimand someone who has wronged a third party.\(^{52}\) Returning to the example of the cookie thief, the mother can *reproach* the daughter for disobeying her rules, whereas a guest can only *rebuke* the girl for disobeying her mother’s rules. This distinction is not meant to track differences between ordinary uses of the words “reproach” and “rebuke”; rather, it is meant to track a pragmatic difference between kinds of reprimand, where I am reserving the word “rebuke” to pick out one kind and “reproach” to pick out the other.

According to Stephen Darwall (2006), rebukes and reproaches make a *demand* on someone, namely that he or she should apologize, make amends, and refrain from violating the norm in the future. Coleen Macnamara (2013) argues that the language of “demands” is much too strong, and that rebukes and reproaches simply call upon the target to recognize that the expresser is holding the target responsible for a norm violation, without necessarily demanding any particular response. Either way, rebukes and reproaches engage their targets in a far more complex way than does a simple expressive.

Rebukes fall under box 3—they have agent-neutral inputs but agent-relative outputs—whereas reproaches fall under box 4— they have agent-relative inputs and outputs. As signaling

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\(^{52}\) This distinction draws on Strawson’s (1962) helpful distinction between resentment (which, like a reproach, is aimed toward someone who has harmed the resenter) and indignation (which, like a rebuke, is aimed toward someone who has harmed a third party).
expressions, both rebukes and reproaches are proper peremotive act that elicit pro-social behavior from the target, which often takes the form of an apology or an entreaty to return to the expresser’s good graces. If the signal does not elicit one of these responses, then it has failed. As illemotive expressions, rebukes and reproaches are illemotive acts that calls upon the target to acknowledge the expresser’s acknowledgement of the norm violation. Here, the sphere of appropriate uptake is much larger. The target can take the rebuke or reproach up as a reprimand, yet challenge the expresser’s standing to make the reprimand, offer an excuse for why the action wasn’t \textit{really} a norm violation, or protest in another way. In such cases, the rebuke or reproach doesn’t have the peremotive effects that the speaker may have intended to elicit, but it still succeeds in affecting the target’s normative status, calling him or her to account for a misdeed.

6.3.4. Threats

Related to reprimands are threats. Whereas rebukes and reproaches are backward-looking, threats are forward-looking. They call upon a target to refrain from committing behavior that is in some way offensive to the expresser. A man sees another man flirting with his wife, and then approaches the man, shaking his fist. A teacher sees a student begin to misbehave in class, and shoots a glare in his direction. Two motorists vie for a single empty parking space, and one narrows her eyes at the other, as if to say, “Don’t even try it!” In each case, the goal of the threat is to get someone else to refrain from committing offensive behavior, based on the expresser’s willingness to punish him or her for it.
At first blush, it is tempting to treat threats simply as expressives. But there is more to them than that. Rather than revealing anger, threats communicate a commitment to punish. Note that a threat can be “played” in several ways. (1) One might feel anger and be committed to punishing the target of the threat. (2) One might not feel anger, but nevertheless be committed to punishing. (3) One might feel anger, but not be committed to punishing. Finally, (4) one might neither feel anger nor be committed to punishing. In scenarios 1 and 2, the threat is real: the expresser is committed to following through with the threat. In scenarios 3 and 4, the threat is empty, a bluff: the expresser performs the threat yet is not committed to punishing the target of the threat.

From the perspective of the audience, determining whether the threat is a bluff or not is far more important than determining whether the expresser is truly angry or not. Feelings of anger provide a motivation to fight, however, and thus taking a threat display to be a sincere expression of anger provides the audience with some reason to think that the threat is real, but what really matters is only whether the threat is real, and not whether the motivation to fight comes from anger or some other source. To give uptake to a threat display, the audience must judge how likely it is that the expresser is truly committed to following through on the threat.

Like reproaches, threats fall under box 4 regardless of whether we consider them as illemotive or as proper peremotive acts. They have agent-relative inputs because the expresser communicates his or her willingness to punish, and no one else’s. They have agent-relative outputs, in turn, because they cause the threatened—and no one else—to refrain from the offensive behavior by way of committing the expresser—and no one else—to following through
on the threat. The function of the threat is in either case to get the threatened to recognize the expresser’s commitment to punish.

6.3.5. Pleasantries

We smile for many reasons besides being happy. One reason why we smile is that we wish to be polite. A flight attendant smiles at passengers as they board the aircraft. Two strangers make eye contact on the street and smile. An employee smiles despite being berated by an irate customer. Let’s call polite smiles “pleasantries,” since they involve the attempt to appear happy or “pleasant” to others. What’s their function? (“Pleasantries” may not be the best term for the category I have in mind, but there is no term in English to pick out this particular category.)

I suggest that the function of the polite smile is to demonstrate one’s capacity for emotional management, which one can use to purchase entry into a cooperative arrangement. Both Hobbes and Hume saw pleasantries (both in the ordinary and in my technical sense) as “social lubricants.” Or, to borrow another metaphor from Schopenhauer, social life resembles a pack of porcupines in winter, who want to huddle close enough to stay warm, but not so close that they prick one another. It’s difficult to interact with people who are hot-tempered or excessively dour, and so we prefer to engage with people who are more “diplomatic” or “cool”—people who can moderate and hide their emotions when appropriate.

Cynics see pleasantries as “empty gestures,” or as vestiges of archaic social practices with little or no meaning today. But even though it’s easy to slap on a smile in low stakes social
interactions, it’s extremely difficult to maintain a chipper disposition in the face of an irate customer or in a disgusting or offensive environment. In such contexts, pleasantries are reliable signals of strong emotional agency, because they are so difficult to fake. Try putting on a genuine-looking smile the next time someone on the street accosts you. I am confident that you won’t be able to do it.

Pleasantries, like expressives, fall under box 2, but, importantly, their function is not to reveal feelings of happiness. Their function, as I have said, is to demonstrate emotional agency, and, more specifically, the capacity to manage one’s expressions. As a signal, a pleasantry elicits pro-social behavior. As an illemotive expression, a pleasantry expresses one’s commitment to civility.

6.3.6. Conclusion

I have so far considered six examples of emotive acts, and placed them within my taxonomy (see figure XVII). At this point, one box remains conspicuously empty. None of the examples that I have mentioned thus far fit into box 1. Why is that? As I see it, emotional expressions tend to be fundamentally personal modes of address, meaning that we can expect the either input or the output of an emotional expression to be agent-relative. The go-to example of a box 1 speech act, the assertion, is fundamentally impersonal. It concerns public truths that everyone in a discursive community has equal claim to. As a result, I find it unsurprising that emotional expressions tend not to have this pragmatic structure.
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That being said, I believe that it *is* possible for emotional expressions to exhibit this elusive structure. Imagine that you read about a certain bushy-haired politician’s most recent inflammatory remark, and you shake your head in disapproval. You may be evincing your own disgust for this politician’s offensive remarks (thus making it a box 2 emotive act), but you may also be exemplifying what you take to be a proper emotional response to vicious bigotry. Unlike the exemplars considered in §6.3.2, however, which were directed toward specific individuals,
this exemplar is directed toward everyone and no one. Anyone could give it proper uptake by shaking her head in turn (if she agrees with your political outlook), or by challenging the appropriateness of this response (if she disagrees with it). This shaking of the head functions, then, much like an assertion of “That politician is despicable.”

Emotive acts, much like speech acts, can do many different things. The idea that emotional expressions communicate always and only by evincing or revealing a person’s occurrent feelings prevents us from appreciating all the other things that emotional expressions can do. My aim here has been to liberate emotional expressions from the expressivist fallacy, and to take a few steps in the direction of elaborating the myriad ways in which emotional expressions function in communication.

6.4. Where to Go from Here

In this dissertation, I have defended a novel analysis of emotional expression, and then used it to explore the myriad ways in which emotional expressions function in communication. I argued that behaviors express emotions just in case they enable the perception of those emotions. Thus, a smile is an expression of joy because observers who see this smile can see joy, a pout is an expression of sadness because observers who see this pout can see sadness, and a snarl is an expression of anger because observers who hear this snarl can hear anger. I argued further that while language is not a means of emotional expression per se, language can be used to augment the nonverbal expression of emotion, namely by communicating the contents of one’s expressed
emotion and by scaffolding the ability of observers to recognize and give uptake to one’s nonverbal expressions. Finally, I developed a novel framework for analyzing the pragmatics of emotional expression, based on the idea that expressions communicate in many ways and on several levels. The idea that emotional expressions communicate always and only by evincing or revealing a person’s feelings is both incorrect and counter-productive.

Where should the philosophy of emotional expression go from here? An important next step would be to use the tools developed in this dissertation to examine and evaluate the various Expressivist theories that have been advanced in philosophy. While these theories differ dramatically in their aims and subject matter, they are all based on the idea that some target phenomenon can be usefully explained by analogy with the nonverbal expression of emotion. In Metaethics, for example, Expressivism names the view that moral claims are more like grunts and groans than truth-evaluable assertions (Ayer 1936; Bar-On 2004). In the Philosophy of Language, by contrast, Expressivism names the view that meaning is generated by the expression of mental states, where the expression of emotion provides a model for the expression of mental states more generally (Grice 1957; Davis 2003). Finally, in Epistemology, Neo-Expressivism is the view that avowals, or self-ascriptions of mental states in the present tense, are nearly incorrigible to the extent that they are expressions, rather than reports, of the avowed mental states (Finkelstein 2003; Bar-On 2004). Each of these Expressivism makes substantive assumptions about the nature of emotional expression, yet many of these assumptions seem, at first blush, to conflict with the claims that I have defended here. As a result, my work on emotional expression allows us to scrutinize more closely a common form of explanation, found in many subfields of philosophy, often to great effect, but perhaps without equal merit.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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