PHIL 255
Week 8: Perception & Emotion
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Please turn off and put away all electronics.

Please avoid the last 2 rows.

Perception

Imagery

Emotion

1

R&R Identity Theory

Identity theory: All mental events, states, and processes are brain processes resulting from neural mechanisms.

Restricted: Applies only to human minds. Birds, octopuses, computers etc. may be different.

Revisionist: Some mental concepts may require revision or even elimination.

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Perception

Examples: see, hear, touch, smell, taste, pain, heat, hunger, balance, kinesthetic, fullness,

Perceptual experience = pattern of firing in populations of neurons

Brain processes: Perception =

receptors + signals + interpretation

= bottom up (sensory input) + top down (memory)

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Memory

Memory formation = new synapse connections between neurons

Cortex: slow learning of semantic relations

Hippocampus: fast learning of episodes

Memory retrieval = reconstruction of a pattern of firing resulting from sensory inputs and synaptic connections

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Realism

Illusion problem: sometimes our senses are wrong.

Direct realism: we see objects as they are.

Indirect realism: we see objects as they approximately are.

Idealism: objects are mental.

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Discussion Question

Which is a more plausible view of perception: direct realism, indirect realism, or idealism?

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Mental Imagery

Applies to all senses: see, hear, touch, smell, taste, pain, heat, hunger, balance, kinesthetic, fullness,

Brain mechanisms: memory retrieval (i.e. recreate pattern of neural firing) and transformation

Transformations are sense-specific, e. g. for vision we can do zoom, flip, rotate, scan, etc.

Transformations can be multisensory, e.g. imagine someone singing

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Theories of Emotions

Examples: happy, sad, fear, anger, disgust, surprise, pride, envy, guilt, shame, gratitude, etc.
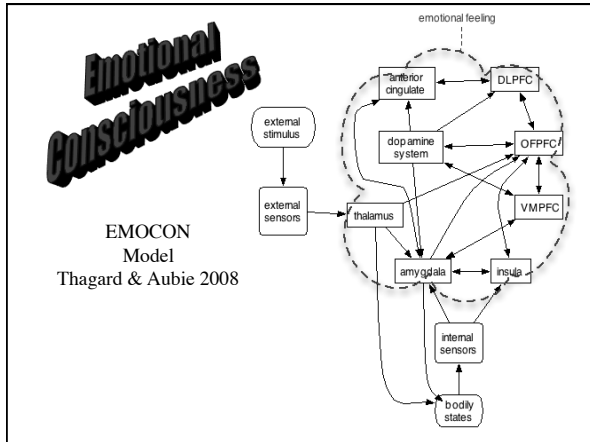
Skeptical: there are no brain mechanisms common to emotions.

Cognitive appraisal: emotions are judgments concerning how a situation is relevant to goals.

Physiological perception: emotions are reactions to bodily changes.

Synthesis: combine cognitive and physiological

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EMOCON
Model
Thagard & Aubie 2008

Emotional Imagery

Examples:

Imagine how you would feel if you won the lottery.

Method acting: generate emotions for a character.

Empathy: Generate an emotion and project it onto someone else.

Brain mechanisms: Memory retrieval (recreate pattern of neural firing) + transformations.

Emotion transformations: intensity, combination, projection, etc.

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Discussion Question

Do you think that scientific developments will lead to the elimination of folk psychology?

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