

Is Emotion a Natural Kind?

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Abstract

In *What Emotions Really Are: The problem of psychological categories* I argued that it is unlikely that all the psychological states and processes that fall under the vernacular category of emotion are sufficiently similar to one another to allow a unified scientific psychology of the emotions. In this paper I restate what I mean by 'natural kind' and my argument for supposing that emotion is not a natural kind in this specific sense. In the following sections I discuss the two most promising proposals to reunify the emotion category: the revival of the Jamesian theory of emotion associated with the writings of Antonio Damasio and a philosophical approach to the content of emotional representations that draws on 'multi-level appraisal theory' in psychology.

Keywords: emotion natural kinds damasio somatic appraisal nussbaum appraisal theory

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