

P-755 Affect and Human Transformation

Fall 2011, Wednesdays from 8:30 am through 11:15 am, Room 162

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Purpose:

Affects and emotions are essential components in the channeling of developmental processes in family, community, and society. Likewise, the recursive evocation and patterning of affective and emotional expression in the intrapsychic, interpersonal, and systemic dimensions of our lives is a core element of practices of transformation in marriage and family therapy and in pastoral care and counseling. The purpose of this course is threefold: (1) to develop an understanding of family functioning relevant to developmental and dynamic issues in the mutual regulation of emotional expression and inhibition, (2) to reflect on the relationship of these dynamics to spirituality and theological reflection, and (3) to sort out the implications of the above for practices of transformation.

This course will ask you to reflect on your own emotional experience in family life and the emotional experiences of others as resources for making sense of and critiquing the theories of emotion that we will be discussing. We will focus our work around the following questions: (1) what are affects and emotions?, (2) how do contextual factors (gender and culture) influence the shape and direction of emotional development?, (3) how do dynamic systems influence the shape and direction of emotional regulation and expression?, (4) how should we understand the role of affects and emotions in processes of personal and systemic change?, (5) how does family dysfunction impact affective and emotional expression?, and (6) how can our understanding of human emotional life deepen our understanding of God and of humans in relation to God?

Requirements:

- (1) reading of assigned texts and articles
- (2) one group class presentation (see below). 20%
- (3) one group presentation of emotion in a religious tradition. The presentation should focus on the relevant reading below and should report interview with representatives of that religious tradition. 20%
- (4) one paper (counts 60% of course grade). The paper is to be 12 pages in length and address issues relevant to the topic of this course. Topics must be approved by the course instructor. Paper is due December 14 at noon.

Readings:

David Wallin, *Attachment and Psychotherapy*

Beatrice Beebe and Frank Lachman, *Infant Research and Adult Treatment*

Jon Allen, Anthony Bateman, and Peter Fonagy, *Mentalizing in Clinical Practice*

Dacher Keltner, *Born to be Good*

Susan Miller, *Disgust: The Gatekeeper Emotion*

Pehr Granqvist and Lee Kirkpatrick, "Attachment and Religious Representations and Behavior"*

Joseph LeDoux and Elizabeth Phelps, "Emotional Networks in the Brain"*

Leslie Brody and Judith Hall, "Gender and Emotion in Context"*

Melissa Raphael, "Gender"*

Frank Burch Brown, "Music"*

Either Andrew Tallon, "Christianity" or Joel Gereboff, "Judaism" and one of the following:
Heim, "Buddhism," Gade, "Islam," McDaniel, "Hinduism," Ebersole, "Japanese Religions," or
Cowan, "New Religious Movements." *

Robert Fuller, "Spirituality in the Flesh," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion**

Selections from Martha Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought**

*= on reserve

Class Presentation:

Each student will give a 20 minute group presentation to the class. The presentation will involve a representation of an "emotional exchange" within or between persons and an analysis of that exchange. The representation may be a film clip, a video of a real life event, a section of a novel, or a reenactment of some event. Approximately half of the presentation should be devoted to the representation and half to the analysis. The analysis should address questions such as: what is happening here? Why are the participants feeling the way they do? How does the emotional exchange develop over time? How are the emotions of the various participants affecting one another? What spiritual or religious themes are present or implied?

Attendance and Incompletes:

Attendance is important. Persons missing more than two class sessions for any reason will not successfully complete the class. Incompletes are strongly discouraged. They are granted only at the discretion of the Academic Dean.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is wrong. Don't do it. Ignorance of the policy is no excuse. If you don't know the policy, you are responsible for checking it out.

Use of Technology and Wireless Devices

Students are expected to pay attention to what is happening in the class and not distract other students. No texting, phone, or internet usage is permitted during the class unless authorized by the course instructor. Cell phones must be turned off or placed on mute. Students who violate this policy will be asked to leave the class, no exceptions.

Course Outline

The course schedule is structured around discussion of the various readings for the class. Remember, however, that **the class does not meet** on October 12 (Reading Week) or November 23 (Thanksgiving Recess).

Part I: August 31-September 7—Attachment and Emotion

We will study attachment theory with special attention to the ways emotions develop in the context of differing attachment styles. Emphasis will also be placed on therapy with personality disorders and how attachment theory helps us understand religion. Read Wallin and Granqvist/Kirkpatrick.

Part II: September 14—Emotions and the Brain/Gender and Society in Emotional Expression.

Read the articles by LeDoux/Phelps, Brody/Hall, and Raphael. Also, view *The Neuroscience of Emotions*, with Philippe Goldin on YouTube. How does our embodiment, mediated by the brain, shape our emotional lives? How might issues of emotional regulation be better understood by taking into account the neurobiology of emotions? Conversation will also focus on Leslie Brody's important study of gender differences in emotional expression and Raphael's discussion of the ways and reasons various religious traditions channel emotion expression through gender.

Part III: September 21-28—Mentalizing and the Regulation of Emotion

Peter Fonagy's notion of mentalizing, its developmental vicissitudes, its relation to attachment issues, and its implications for the regulation of emotion in individual and family context.

Part IV: October 5-19—Attachment, Systems and Development of Emotional Life

We will focus in more detail on the mutual regulation of affect in infancy and its impact on the emotional exchange in the clinical encounter. Read Beebe and Lachman.

Part V: October 26--November 2—Positive Emotion

Special focus on positive emotion, its developmental importance and its clinical relevance. Read Keltner.

Part VI: November 9-16: A Case Study: Disgust

A case study of the emotion of disgust and its place in interpersonal and systemic dynamics. Read Miller.

Part VI: November 30--December 7—Religion, Theology and Emotion

Thinking about emotion in the context of spiritual development and Christian theological perspectives on human life. Read Brown, "Music" (on reserve); Robert Fuller, "Spirituality in the Flesh," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (on reserve); selections from Martha Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought*; and either Andrew Tallon, "Christianity" or Joel Gereboff, "Judaism" and one of the following: Heim, "Buddhism," Gade, "Islam," McDaniel, "Hinduism," Ebersole, "Japanese Religions," or Cowan, "New Religious Movements."