

Emotions: A Cultural Studies Reader

Edited by

**Jennifer Harding
and E. Deidre Pribram**

Contents

<i>Notes on contributors</i>	viii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
Introduction	1
PART 1	
Disciplinary developments	25
I Culturalist foundations	35
1 Raymond Williams ON STRUCTURE OF FEELING	35
2 Alison M. Jaggar LOVE AND KNOWLEDGE: EMOTION IN FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGY	50
3 Lawrence Grossberg POSTMODERNITY AND AFFECT: ALL DRESSED UP WITH NO PLACE TO GO	69
II Contributions from cultural anthropology	84
4 Michelle Z. Rosaldo TOWARD AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF SELF AND FEELING	84

vi CONTENTS

5	Lila Abu-Lughod and Catherine A. Lutz EMOTION, DISCOURSE, AND THE POLITICS OF EVERYDAY LIFE	100
---	--	-----

6	Jennifer Biddle SHAME	113
---	--------------------------	-----

III Sociological perspectives 126

7	Virginia Olesen and Debora Bone EMOTIONS IN RATIONALIZING ORGANIZATIONS: CONCEPTUAL NOTES FROM PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE USA	126
---	--	-----

8	Simon J. Williams MODERNITY AND THE EMOTIONS: CORPoreal REFLECTIONS ON THE (IR)RATIONAL	139
---	---	-----

9	Ian Burkitt POWERFUL EMOTIONS: POWER, GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION IN THE 'WAR ON TERROR'	157
---	--	-----

IV Historical approaches 170

10	Carol Z. Stearns 'LORD HELP ME WALK HUMBLy': ANGER AND SADNESS IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA, 1570–1750	170
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11	Nancy Schnog CHANGING EMOTIONS: MOODS AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN WOMAN WRITER	191
----	--	-----

12	Carolyn Kay Steedman STORIES	210
----	---------------------------------	-----

**PART 2
Considering culture 223**

V Confounding nationhood 235

13	Arjun Appadurai FEAR OF SMALL NUMBERS	235
----	--	-----

14	Sara Ahmed THE ORGANISATION OF HATE	251
----	--	-----

15	Jennifer Harding EMOTIONAL SUBJECTS: LANGUAGE AND POWER IN REFUGEE NARRATIVES	267
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VI	Transforming the public	280
16	Lauren Berlant THE INTIMATE PUBLIC SPHERE	280
17	Michael Eric Dyson DOES GEORGE W. BUSH CARE ABOUT BLACK PEOPLE?	300
18	Elsbeth Probyn SHAMING THEORY, THINKING DIS-CONNECTIONS: FEMINISM AND RECONCILIATION	310
VII	Popular arts	321
19	R. Darren Gobert DRAMATIC CATHARSIS, FREUDIAN HYSTERIA AND THE 'PRIVATE THEATRE' OF ANNA O.	321
20	Linda Williams MELODRAMA REVISED	336
21	E. Deidre Pribram COLD COMFORT: EMOTION, TELEVISION DETECTION DRAMAS, AND COLD CASE	351
VIII	Affecting subjects	365
22	Fatima Mernissi SCHEHERAZADE GOES WEST: DIFFERENT CULTURES, DIFFERENT HAREMS	365
23	Denise Riley MALEDICTION	374
24	Judith Butler VIOLENCE, MOURNING, POLITICS	387
	<i>Index</i>	403

The present study examined cross-cultural differences in how group emotional expressions (anger, sadness, neutral) can be used to deduce a norm violation in four cultures (Germany, Israel, Greece, and the US), which differ in terms of decoding rules for negative emotions. As expected, in all four countries, anger was a stronger norm violation signal than sadness or neutral expressions. 1The Laboratory for the Study of Social Perception of Emotions, Interdisciplinary Center for Research on Emotions – Department of Business Administration, University of Haifa, Haifa, Israel. 2Department of Psychology, University of Crete, Rethymno, Greece. 3Department of Psychology, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Berlin, Germany. Culture provides structure, guidelines, expectations, and rules to help people understand and interpret behaviors. Several ethnographic studies suggest there are cultural differences in social consequences, particularly when it comes to evaluating emotions. For example, as Jean Briggs described in the Utku Eskimo population, anger was rarely expressed, and in the rare occasion that it did occur, it resulted in social ostracism.