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Edited by Bert S. Moore and Alice M. Isen  
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*Studies in Emotion and Social Interaction*

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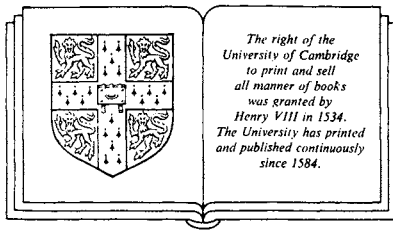
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# Affect and social behavior

*Edited by*  
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## Preface

The study of emotional processes has had a long and checkered history in psychology. Scientists have studied emotion partly because of its pervasiveness and inherent interest, and partly because emotions are seen as organizers and regulators of a variety of behaviors. The centrality of affective processes in human behavior has an axiomatic quality: most theoretical positions address in some fashion questions centered on how affect influences behavior. However, for all of the consensus regarding the important regulating role of affect in behavior, the empirical investigation of that role has often been stymied by the difficult issues of definition and operation. So little agreement exists among investigators regarding the phenomena to be investigated that the development of any sort of coherent view of affective processes has been difficult to achieve. Investigative tactics have often been so heterogeneous as to render agreement that they were investigations of the same phenomena difficult.

The last 20 years, however, have seen an important revolution in the investigation of affect's role as a moderator of social behavior. Laboratory and field investigations have begun to clarify the complex interplay among affect, cognition, and behavior. The literature that might support a coherent picture of the ways emotion influences behavior has been scattered. Relevant elements exist in such work as the effects of success and failure on behavior; clinical literature on emotion; laboratory investigations of happiness, sadness, anxiety, and anger; and correlation work that relates mood to a variety of personality measures and day-to-day behavior. What has begun to emerge from these diverse domains is a picture that emphasizes that affect is an important moderator of social behavior and that the relationships are often subtle ones.

The present volume brings together some of the foremost contributors to this "affective revolution" and reviews work in a number of important

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social domains. It is in the area of social behavior that we might expect affective processes to have the most important role and, indeed, much of the empirical work of recent years has been in relation to social responses. However, that research has advanced piecemeal, and there have been few attempts to impose order on these diverse bodies of work. This volume grew out of our perception of the need for one resource that brings together work from different areas and tries to establish common principles, as well as acknowledging domain-specific phenomena. The authors of these chapters have addressed important questions of how affect influences such important behaviors as aggression, prosocial behavior, and consumer behavior, and what the mechanisms of those influences are. In addition, the authors have provided a number of important distinctions that are likely to influence research in these areas in the future.

The lead chapter in this volume was prepared by the editors and attempts to provide an integrative overview of affect's role in regulating social behavior. In Chapter 2, Ellen Berscheid addresses the fundamental question of the definition of emotional terms and explores the issue of how we speak about emotional processes and how our choice of terminology influences our understanding of the relation between affect and social behavior. In Chapter 3, Julie Norem and Nancy Cantor provide an overview of affective and cognitive processes and outline the ways in which the interplay of these processes act to influence social behavior. In their chapter they examine traditional distinctions between "affect" and "cognition" and provide an integrative reformulation to serve as a guide for thinking about our traditional tripartite division of affect, cognition, and behavior.

The chapter by Paul Bell and Robert Baron examines the mediating role of affect in aggressive behavior. Bell and Baron pose the question of why affect has been so little examined in the aggression literature, in distinction to such explanatory mechanisms as frustration and social context. By examining older literature in a new way and relating it to investigations in other domains, Bell and Baron provide a provocative model for examining aggression. Counterposed to Bell and Baron's discussion of aggression is Batson's examination of the other side of human social action: altruism. Altruism is a domain where a great deal of empirical work has been conducted regarding the mediating role of affect, and also where there have been a number of conceptual debates. Dan Batson provides an illuminating review of the existing research and



points the direction to new understanding of affect's role in understanding altruism.

Elaine Hatfield and Richard Rapson address the challenging topic of romantic love in their chapter. In their extensive review of the growing literature in this domain, Hatfield and Rapson relate traditional literatures in attraction to try to understand the emotional underpinnings of passionate love.

From romantic love, we turn to the Joel Cohen's chapter on "Attitude, affect, and consumer behavior," where he brings together, in a new fashion, the affective underpinnings of attitude formation and activation and examines how they influence consumer behavior. This extension of the affect literature into consumer behavior affords Cohen the opportunity to provide a integrative examination of attitude and decision-making and the subtle and not-so-subtle ways that affect influences them.

In Gifford Weary's chapter entitled "Depression and sensitivity to social information," she examines the ways in which affect acts to bias our processing of social information with a focus on depression. Dr. Weary provides some recent findings that provide a new focus on the selective function that affect serves as we respond to social stimuli.

In the final chapter, Charles McCoy and John Masters present a comprehensive review from a developmental perspective of how children acquire the capacity for regulating emotional expression, as well as the emotions of others. Their examination of these issues leads them to pose general questions regarding processes of self-regulation and how children learn to respond to and moderate social exchange.

This book is the first comprehensive attempt to bring together experts from different domains of social research to address the various roles that affect plays in mediating social exchange. In addition, the authors have provided blueprints for future directions in research that utilizes a more comprehensive approach to understanding the affect-cognition-behavior nexus.

Alice M. Isen  
Bert S. Moore