Knowledge of Emotion Conference
1st and 2nd June, 2015

Location: Room G13D, Sackville Building, University of Manchester

Monday June 1st

9am – 9.15am Coffee and Introduction

9.15-10.30am Naomi Eilan (Philosophy, University of Warwick), *Emotion, the second person and other minds*

10.30-10.45am Coffee

10.45am -12pm Richard Weisman (Law, York University), *Regulating the expression of remorse and the building of moral communities*

12 – 1pm Lunch

1-1.20 Caterina Azevedo (Psychology, University Institute of Lisbon), *The language role of emotional mimicry*

1.20-1.40 Joanna Komorowska-Mach (Philosophy, University of Warsaw), *Self-ascriptions and third-person ascriptions: contradictory or complementary?*

1.40-2pm John Sabo (Psychology, University of Kent), with Roger Giner-Sorolla, *The fictive pass: Condemnation of harm, but not purity, is mitigated by fictitious contexts*

2 -2.15pm coffee

2.15-3.30pm Roger Giner-Sorolla (Psychology, University of Kent), *Should character count? On the admissibility of anger, contempt and disgust as legal emotions*

3.30-3.45pm Coffee

3.45-5pm James Sias (Philosophy, Dickinson College) and Dorit Bar-On (Philosophy, University of Connecticut), *emotions and their expressions*

5pm Workshop Close

7pm Workshop Dinner

Tuesday June 2nd

9am -10.15am Heidi Maibom (Philosophy, University of Cincinnati), *Becoming you: relocations in egocentric space*

10.15-10.40am Coffee

10.40am -11am Kirsty Lowe-Brown (Psychology, University of Buckingham), *The developing understanding of motives for hiding emotions*

11am – 11.20am Rebecca Simpson (Philosophy, University of Manchester), *Juries and empathetic perspective-shifting*

11.20 – 11.40am Murray Smith (Film Studies, University of Kent), *Knowledge of emotion in and through the movies*

11.40am -12pm Rita Rueff-Lopes (Psychology, University Institute of Lisbon), *A Markov chain analysis of emotional exchange in a real context: testing for the vocal mimicry hypothesis of emotional contagion.*

12pm – 1pm Lunch

1pm -2.15pm Jonathan Doak (Law, University of Durham), *Communicating emotions in the criminal process: in search of emotional intelligence in the justice system*

2.15 – 2.30 coffee

2.30-3.45pm Ursula Hess (Psychology, Humboldt University), *The social signal value of emotions: the impact of context and culture*

3.45pm – 4pm Coffee

4pm – 4.45pm Jacob Cartwright & Nick Jordan (Independent Film Makers), Film introduction and screening, *The Emotions of Others*

4.45pm – 5.15pm Joel Smith (Philosophy, University of Manchester), *Closing remarks*

5.15pm Workshop Close

Abstracts

Caterina Azevedo (Psychology, University Institute of Lisbon)

The language role of emotional mimicry

The present study aims to explore the role of Language in emotional mimicry. More specifically, we suggest that different Languages (L1 native vs. L2 second learned language) induce different perspectives of the same situation (perspective taking vs. egocentric anchoring). We propose that group membership modulation of the relation between perceived emotions and mimicry will occur only under an egocentric anchoring context (L1) and that under a perspective taking context (L2) there will be no mimicry differences between in-group and out-group emotions.

From an embodied perspective language comprehension involves simulation of action, perception, and emotion. Moreover, somatic responses are activated by linguistic representations of emotions (e.g., Barsalou, 2009; Foroni & Semin, 2009; Glenberg, 2008). According to the Emotion Mimicry in Context (Hess & Fischer, 2012) emotional mimicry depends on the interpretation of signals as emotional intentions in a specific context and ultimately functions as a social regulator. For example, individuals are more likely to mimic the emotional reactions of in-group members than those of out-group members (Bourgeois & Hess, 2008, see Hess & Fischer, 2012).

But under which conditions would this group membership modulation happen? Recent studies (Azevedo, Garrido, & Semin, under prep) have suggested that L2 (vs. L1) a) activates a more global level of processing; b) enhances psychological distance; c) this pattern of results is only manifested for Late Bilinguals and not for Early Bilinguals. Cues for psychological distance improve perspective-taking performance, reducing the application of contents provided by the self (i.e. egocentric anchoring) (see Sassenrath, Sassenberg, & Semin, 2013). We propose that L2 will enhance perspective taking and L1 egocentric anchoring and that people will mimic in- group more than outgroup described emotions only under egocentric anchoring.

Thirty-eight participants read anger and happiness-related sentences regarding either Caucasian or Gypsy characters while their facial muscular reactions (Corrugator supercilii and Zygomaticus major) were recorded (EMG). Results revealed that for L1 anger-related sentences, corrugator activation was stronger for sentences regarding in-group characters (vs. out-group) whereas there was no mimicry difference between groups in L2 sentences. The same pattern of results was verified for happiness-related sentences – higher zygomaticus major activation for

sentences regarding in-group characters (vs. out-group). As expected, this pattern of results was verified for Late Bilinguals but not for Early Bilinguals, for whom there was no differences between languages. Results will be addressed in light with Embodied Cognition, Emotion Mimicry in Context and Bilingualism theories.

Jonathan Doak (Law, University of Durham)

Communicating emotions in the criminal process: in search of emotional intelligence in the justice system

Fact-finding, adjudication and sentencing in the criminal courts are conventionally viewed as objective and scientific exercises, with the infiltration of emotional states into the legal realm being widely perceived as a danger to its rationality. This position has, however, been questioned in recent years, and there now appears to be a growing acceptance that emotions may have a valuable role to play in the administration of criminal justice. Bolstering the emotional intelligence of the justice system may carry a number of benefits, including enhancing the quality of decision-making, improving levels of procedural justice, and may even transform relationships between victims and offenders. This paper explores the various ways in which victims and offenders are able to express their emotions to both the court as well as each other. Whilst a number of recent developments have certainly enhanced the emotional capacity of the criminal justice system, its paradigmatic entrenchment of adversarialism and retributivism means that an emotionally intelligent criminal justice system remains some way off on the horizon.

Naomi Eilan (Philosophy, University of Warwick)

Emotion, the second person and other minds

The paper argues for the adoption of a communication-theoretic approach to the role of the second person in bridging the first/third person divide, and locates the foundation of our knowledge of our own and others' emotions in the experiences underpinning mutual awareness of emotions in second person interactions.

Roger Giner-Sorolla (Psychology, University of Kent)

Should character count? On the admissibility of anger, contempt and disgust as legal emotions

Anglo-American law takes a complex approach to how a person's character should count in court. While some jurisprudential standards require that prior acts and reputation be discounted, others allow character to influence a court's findings and punishment. This represents a delicate negotiation between context-free and context-based standards of fairness. Drawing on research, including some from our own lab, I will argue that debates in philosophy about the legal and ethical appropriateness of various morally condemning emotions –anger, disgust, and contempt – relate to the way in which those emotions tend to respond differentially to evidence of bad acts versus bad character. The research evidence shows that disgust (and less conclusively, contempt) responds to evidence of bad character even when this does not harm anybody; while anger responds more directly to the harmfulness of acts even when committed by someone of good character. This has implications in turn for the status of the category of "victimless crimes" and for the role of character in judgment and sentencing. In both applications, care must be taken to distinguish between rational indicators of harm and character, and the irrational and contagious influence of mere disgust.

Ursula Hess (Psychology, Humboldt University)

The social signal value of emotions: the impact of context and culture

Facial expressions of emotions do not only signal emotional states, but also provide information about the expresser's traits and the situation in which the emotion was elicited. These inferences from emotion expression in turn occur within a socio-cultural framework in which information about the situation as well as socio-cultural rules, norms and expectations feed back onto both the recognition of expressions and the inferences drawn from them. In this talk, I will present the basic elements of a theoretical framework as well as empirical examples demonstrating this process.

Joanna Komorowska-Mach (Philosophy, University of Warsaw)

Self-ascriptions and third-person ascriptions: contradictory or complementary?

John says: 'I am sad'. At the same time Mary says to John: 'You are not sad'. It is natural to think that only one of them is right. In most cases, we would be inclined to agree with John. At the same time most contemporary philosophers agree that sometimes John might also be wrong. Possible falsity of self-ascriptions is accepted both by detectivists (e.g. Armstrong, Nichols & Stitch, Gertler) and by neo-expressivists (e.g. Bar-On, Finkelstein).

I will argue that the propositions expressed by John and Mary are not necessarily contradictory and that both of them can be considered true or false independently.

Putting aside the self-ascribing understood as a speech act (see Bar-On 2004), I want to concentrate on its products: propositions and compare them with third-person ascriptions of emotions.

The first- and third-person emotion ascriptions have significantly different practical functions. As a result, they focus on different aspects of emotions. From the third-person perspective, ascribing emotions enables to explain and predict overt behavior. From the first-person perspective, it is more important to accurately indicate an internal state of organism, which allows to induce accurate social response to our needs and enables self-regulation of behavior even before its observable consequences.

In normal conditions, those components of emotion (external circumstances, observable behavior, non-verbal expression, the physiological state of organism and its needs) highly correlate, co-creating a complex phenomenon recognized by folk psychology. In such cases, there is no discrepancy between first- and third-person perspective. But the language of emotions is quite coarse and in many cases external and internal components of what we call such-and-such emotion do not coincide.

In my presentation I will argue that in such cases the assignment of truth-values is the result of implicit negotiation over a hierarchy of possible truth conditions. In particular I will claim that in the case of John and Mary there may be no way to determine which of them uses the word "sad" more accurately. I will also analyze some consequences of violating what Bar-On calls Semantic Continuity and I will show how such interpretation influence our understanding of a first-person authority.

Kirsty Lowe-Brown (Psychology, University of Buckingham)

The developing understanding of motives for hiding emotions

One aspect of understanding emotions in others is knowledge that expression of emotions can be controlled and manipulated.

Research has shown that children do not understand that there may be a distinction between real and apparent emotions until around 4-6 years of age (Pons, Harris and de Rosnay, 2004) and may be influenced by context and emotion type (Sarni, 1979).

This present study investigated 128 children (58M 70F) aged 4-11 years' understanding of hiding emotions. A test re-test method used hypothetical everyday scenarios in which it would be expected that a person might attempt to suppress/hide their emotional displays to assess understanding at two time points (average of 4.2 months between test points). Children were asked to identify how another person would feel inside and how they would appear to others. The implications of hiding emotions on the other character were also assessed in terms of how the other character believed the protagonist felt and how they would then feel in response. Motivations for hiding emotions were manipulated so that they were made explicit or implicit and were either for self-protective or social convention reasons.

Free verbal response was selected as an alternative to forced choice response commonly used in research within the field, as it has been suggested that use of forced choice methodologies may bias such understanding in children. Expressive vocabulary was measured as a covariate using the EVT-2.

Results are discussed in terms of developmental changes in the level of hiding understanding and consistency between test points. Differences in understanding for different motives and emotions are discussed as well as the effect of explicit/implicit phrasing.

Pons, F., Harris, P.L., & de Rosnay, M. (2004). Emotion comprehension between 3 and 11 years: Developmental periods and hierarchical organization. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, *1*(2), 127-152.

Saarni, A. (1979). Children's understanding of display rules for expressive behaviour. *Developmental Psychology*, *15*, 424 - 429.

Heidi Maibom (Philosophy, University of Cincinnati)

Becoming you: relocations in egocentric space

When we take others' perspectives, we are to imagine that we are them in their stead. Doing so is thought to have a host of positive consequences, such as enhanced understanding and increased empathy. But can we really get such results from the mere machinations of our imagination? In this talk, I explore what is involved in egocentric perspective change. I examine the empirical evidence and conclude that there are, in fact, real consequences to changing our perspective. But they are not always what we expect, and they may not always be beneficial for interpersonal relations.

Rita Rueff-Lopes (Psychology, University Institute of Lisbon)

A Markov chain analysis of emotional exchange in a real context: testing for the vocal mimicry hypothesis of emotional contagion.

A central plank of the emotional contagion theory is that people automatically mimic emotional cues of others (facial, postural and/or vocal) and through an afferent feedback process become emotionally influenced by it. Although afferent feedback has been tested for all types of stimuli (vocal, postural, and facial), the mimicry hypothesis had yet to be tested in the vocal proposition. This gap urgently needs to be filled for two main reasons: 1) several scholars take the vocal proposition for granted (and conduct studies based on it) although only the feedback part has been tested, and 2) since voice-to-voice communication is becoming more and more prevalent, it urges to scrutinize all its underlying dynamics.

We conducted a longitudinal field observational research in a call-center. We listened live to 967 telephone interactions between employees and customers, and registered the emotional displays of each intervener's *turn-to-talk*. In all, we analyzed 8747 sequences and built a Markov chain to ascertain the likelihood of vocal mimicry occurring. We also tested for previous findings of the emotional contagion theory that were yet to be explored in vocal contexts. Results showed that mimicry of emotions is significantly present at all levels. Our findings fill an important gap in the emotional contagion theory, opening doors for new research questions concerning the mimicking of vocal cues of emotion (such as its antecedents and consequences).

John Sabo (Psychology, University of Kent), with Roger Giner-Sorolla

The fictive pass: condemnation of harm, but not purity, is mitigated by fictitious contexts

Media (i.e. video games and films) that display immoral content is vastly popular, yet no research has examined how one moral evaluates individuals who enjoy engaging with immoral fiction. For the present research we manipulated vignettes to display impure (e.g. sexual norms) or harmful (e.g. autonomy violations) behavior in different contexts such as in real-life, as watched in films, as performed in a video game, or as imagined. Evaluations of harm violations, more so than purity violations, should be mitigated by fictional contexts (Gutierrez & Giner-Sorolla, 2007; Russell & Giner-Sorolla, 2013). Here, I present three studies that support this hypothesis by displaying that fictional harm evokes less anger, disgust, and moral condemnation than real-life harm. By contrast, evaluations of fictional purity violations were relatively more similar to their real-life counterparts (Studies 1 & 2). Furthermore, the relationship between fictional purity and moral condemnation is explained by people's concerns that fictional purity corrupts one's moral character (Study 3). These findings suggest that even purity violations are "make-believe", they are nevertheless "symbolically potent" (Young & Whitty, 2011, pg. 15), and associated with very real consequences.

James Sias (Philosophy, Dickinson College) and Dorit Bar-On (Philosophy, University of Connecticut)

Emotions and their expressions

We often speak of *seeing* anger or delight in someone's face, or discomfort in someone's bodily demeanor; we speak of *hearing* disappointment or annoyance in a person's voice, or *feeling* the tension in their body. What substance is there to these figures of speech? According to one recent view, we can literally perceive emotional states of individuals courtesy of the fact that their expressive behaviors *show* the relevant states. In this paper, we explore the following question: What can emotions *be* so that it might make sense to think of them as *shown* (and thus made perceptible) *through* the behaviors that express them?

[Rebecca Simpson](Philosophy, University of Manchester)

Juries and empathetic perspective-shifting

The success of certain defences in criminal law depends upon the jury believing that the defendant had a particular emotion at the time of the offence. However, the method used to accurately make this judgement involves jurors imagining that they are the defendant in the situation in which the offence occurred, a task which is conceptually impossible.

In this paper I focus on murder trials where the partial defence of loss of control is raised. The jury is required to make a judgement as to whether the defendant was experiencing either fear or anger at the time of the killing, and whether the extremity of that emotion was enough to result in her losing control, such that her role in the killing was the result of this loss of self-control. The defence directs jurors to make the decision by answering the question of whether the defendant held the evaluative belief that would, if true, justify the resulting emotion: whether the defendant genuinely believed either that she had been seriously wronged or was in danger of serious violence.

How can a juror know this? Jurors use a number of factors to judge a defendant's mental state at the time of trial, including the nature of the crime, the life and character of the defendant, and her behaviour and demeanour at trial. In loss of control cases they would need to use these factors to judge not the defendant's current mental state, but her mental state at a particular time in the past. The only way they can do this is to perform 'empathetic perspective-shifting', imagining that they *are* the defendant in the situation in which she performed the killing in order to predict what she would believe.

To successfully empathetically perspective-shift jurors needs to adopt the defendant's characterization in a way that does not directly impinge upon the imagined narrative (the thoughts, feelings, and emotions) of the defendant; they have to imagine seeing the defendant's situation from the actual perspective of the defendant, which requires them to imagine having the dispositions of the defendant *without* being consciously aware of having the dispositions, a task which is conceptually impossible. Thus instead jurors may resort to imagining themselves in the defendant's situation, and, when they cannot imagine believing what the defendant did, erroneously attribute the defendant's actions to assumed vicious character traits, rather than to their fear or anger.

Murray Smith (Film Studies, University of Kent)

Knowledge of emotion in and through the movies

When we go to the movies, we expect to be moved; mainstream cinema, at least, is almost synonymous with the idea of powerful, entertaining and rewarding emotional experience. In this paper, I address three questions arising from the enduring association between film and emotion. The first question concerns the representation of emotions: how are emotions depicted (facially, vocally, gesturally, situationally) and verbally represented in films, and thus how do we come to know what emotions are (fictionally) displayed, expressed and experienced? Second, how do we 'detect' emotions in films, both perceptually and through a variety of other mechanisms, some of which involve low-level 'affective mimicry' or higher-level empathic imagining of character emotions? And third, to what degree can films be a source of knowledge *about* emotion? Can fiction films and documentaries add to our stock of knowledge regarding emotions, and if so, how?

In answering these questions I draw on research on emotion from the cognitive sciences as well as from philosophy and film theory, ranging from cognitive theories of emotion (Carroll) to the neo-Jamesian 'bodily' view of emotions (Robinson, Prinz), surveying the influence of these and other trends in emotion research within philosophical aesthetics. After mapping out the debates, I focus on a specific problem: the problem of *stillness*. Emotion expressions occur in time; expressions are dynamic events, little 'episodes' in the lives of faces (and other expressive parts of the body) with a dramatic arc all of their own. Facial expressions possess an apex or 'dramatic climax' at which they are at their most recognizable, and it is for this reason that we usually have a reasonably clear sense of what sort of emotional state a person or character is in, based on a still representation. Nonetheless, in extracting (and abstracting) a still image from the moving medium of cinema, one cannot fail to notice how many subtle but telling additional cues to the emotional state are lost. Visual artists working with still media are likely to develop strategies addressing this problem in a way that is simply not demanded of filmmakers. For this reason, stills from films, illustratively useful as they are, may be incomplete or even misleading in the way that they render emotional expression in a manner qualitatively different from paintings and photographs. Thus we need to be attentive to the distinctive epistemic virtues and vices of different media of representation in relation to emotion.

Richard Weisman (Law, York University)

Regulating the expression of remorse and the building of moral communities

My objective in this paper is to build on previous research to show how expressions of remorse are regulated both by the court and by the multiple moral communities that coexist whether or not peacefully in the larger society. I want to use this as an opportunity to clarify the concept of moral community and to give examples of how expectations are imposed on members of moral communities both to feel and to express remorse and not to feel or express remorse. In the course of using examples drawn from communities undergoing rapid social change such as shifts from peace to war or transitions between regimes with radically divergent political orientations as well as examples drawn from political trials in which there are multiple moral communities in conflict with each other, I hope to make the work that these communities do to regulate the emotions of their members more easily discernible. Finally, I want to show how failure to mesh one's moral emotions with the expectations of the community can lead to exclusion from the category of persons whose suffering matters and to whom remorse is owed.