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The Study of Discrete Emotions in Politics

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Summary and Keywords

Numerous empirical works document that discrete emotions have substantive and differential effects on politically motivated processes and outcomes. Scholars have increasingly adopted a discrete-emotions approach across various political contexts. There are different theoretical paths for studying discrete emotions. Appraisal theories contend that cognition precedes emotion, where distinct cognitive appraisal tendencies elicit discrete emotional reactions associated with specific coping mechanisms. Affective Intelligence Theory, another dominant paradigm in the study of discrete emotions in politics, argues for affective primacy. Others are more concerned with the level of analysis issue than the emotion-cognition sequence. For instance, Intergroup Emotions Theory calls for differentiating between individual-level and group-based discrete emotions, asserting that the latter form is a stronger predictor of collective political actions. Scholars also need to consider which methodological strategies they should employ to deal with a range of issues that the study of discrete emotions brings about. For instance, one issue is how to effectively induce a specific emotional state such as hope without also triggering other related yet discrete emotions such as enthusiasm in an experimental setting. Beyond these theoretical and methodological choices, there are various opportunities to diversify the field of study. Above all, the field needs more cross-national replications and extensions of U.S.-based findings to help resolve the debate over the universality versus contextuality of discrete emotions. The field would also benefit from the study of a wider array of emotional states by expanding beyond its main focus on negative discrete emotions. Contemporary developments—such as the increasing use of social media by the public and political actors—further offer novel platforms for investigating the role of discrete emotions.

Keywords: discrete emotions, negative emotions, positive emotions, politics, appraisal, valence, decision making, political decision making

Introduction

Political scientists have come a long way from examining political choices based on simple like/dislike judgments using feeling thermometers. Many scholars now prefer to employ elaborate theoretical frameworks and methodological tools that distinguish discrete emotional states (be it anger, fear, anxiety, hope, enthusiasm, compassion, and so on) and

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specific affective/cognitive appraisal systems for studying the role of emotions in politics. The result is an ever-growing field with numerous replications and expansions across diverse political contexts.

Discrete emotions are relevant to the study of decision-making in political science for a variety of reasons. Several studies show that discrete emotions have substantive effects on process-related aspects of political decision-making such as political information-seeking (e.g., Redlawsk, 2006) and risk perceptions (e.g., Lerner, Gonzalez, Small, & Fischhoff, 2003). Others demonstrate how discrete emotions affect political outcomes, including political participation and mobilization (Valentino, Brader, Groenendyk, Gregorowicz, & Hutchings, 2011), reactions to political issues and events (e.g., Albertson & Gadarian, 2015), policy preferences (e.g., Huddy, Feldman, Taber, & Lahav, 2005), and evaluations of political actors (e.g., Mattes, Roseman, Redlawsk, & Katz, 2018). Discrete emotions are also frequently employed as strategic rhetorical tools in the public appeals of political leaders (e.g., Erisen & Villalobos, 2014). The discrete-emotions approach has been especially valuable in the study of conflict behavior, peace negotiations, and conflict resolution (e.g., Halperin, Russell, Dweck, & Gross, 2011). These studies consistently validate that discrete emotions have distinct effects on political processes, judgments, and behavior.

Debating the Structure of Emotions

Emotions have long been on the research agenda of cognitive, developmental, and social psychologists and neuroscientists. Political scientists—and particularly political psychologists—started to follow suit in the late 1980s and found themselves drawn into an already ongoing central, heated debate within psychology circles over the structure of emotions: Are affective states dimensional or discrete? A scholar's position about the structure of emotions constitutes a critical decision point as it alters the course of one's research by determining the particular theoretical framework, design, and measurement choices one will employ (Barrett, 1998). While some political scientists choose to follow dimensional affective approaches (e.g., Lodge & Taber, 2005), others are becoming increasingly interested in the distinct effects that discrete emotions have on political phenomena (e.g., Skitka, Bauman, Aramovich, & Morgan, 2006; Valentino, Banks, Hutchings, & Davis, 2009).

Among scholars who follow dimensional approaches to emotion, some conceptualize the affective structure as composed of two independent (orthogonal) dimensions: (a) a bipolar *valence* dimension that ranges from pleasure to displeasure and (b) an *activation* dimension that represents a bipolar continuum of arousal (low vs. high), which captures a sense of mobilization or energy (Larsen & Diener, 1992; Russell, 1980). Note that the bidimensional differentiation in this particular view is between valence and activation—not between positive and negative emotions. In other words, positive and negative emotions are not conceptualized as two separate dimensions but rather as polar opposites of the *same* valence dimension (see Barrett & Russell, 1999).¹ Other scholars have challenged this notion of bipolarity, arguing that positive and negative emotions are two independent

valence dimensions (i.e., the two-dimensional valence approach; see Watson & Tellegen, 1985). According to this latter view, positive and negative emotions function *within* two broad motivational systems: (a) the approach system (the behavioral activation system) and (b) the withdrawal system (the behavioral inhibition system), which help regulate goal-directed and withdrawal behaviors (see, e.g., Gray, 1987). Operating in these two separate realms, positive emotions are primarily associated with the *approach* system motivating one to achieve positive outcomes for pleasure and reward, whereas negative emotions are exclusively linked to the *withdrawal* system designed to avoid negative outcomes for protection against pain and harm (e.g., Watson, Wiese, Vaidya, & Tellegen, 1999).

Scholars who employ discrete emotions, however, caution against simply associating positive emotions with positive outcomes and negative emotions with negative ones (Lindebaum & Jordan, 2012). For instance, ingroup empathy (a positive emotion) may hinder empathy for outgroups and may even trigger *schadenfreude*—feeling pleasure for other groups' misfortunes (Cheon et al., 2011; Leach, Spears, Branscombe, & Doosje, 2003; but see Sirin, Valentino, & Villalobos, 2016A, 2016B, 2017). On the other hand, guilt (a negative emotion) felt about the actions of one's own group may increase one's acknowledgment of collective responsibility and willingness to issue an apology, as well as demonstrate support for affirmative action, reparations, and other policies constructive for the intergroup peace process (Lickel, Steele, & Schmader, 2011). Those who follow the discrete-emotions approach also challenge the exclusive association of positive emotions with the approach system and negative emotions with withdrawal. Studying political behavior in Turkey through the lens of discrete emotions, Erisen (2018) finds that anger and enthusiasm both function as approach emotions and increase political mobilization (albeit motivating different types of engagement).

In contrast to valence-based, dimensional approaches, scholars who study discrete emotions further argue that different emotions sharing the same valence—such as anger and sadness (both negative emotions) or pride and gratitude (both positive emotions)—may nevertheless have dissimilar (or even opposite) effects on decision-making processes and outcomes (Bodenhausen, Sheppard, & Kramer, 1994; DeSteno, Petty, Wegener, & Rucker, 2000; Hu & Kaplan, 2015; Lerner & Keltner, 2000). Several studies demonstrate that anger and contempt have distinct political causes and consequences (Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Redlawsk, Roseman, Mattes, & Katz, 2018). For instance, Mattes et al. (2018, p. 103) suggest that anger is an “attack” emotion whereas contempt is a “rejection” emotion exhibiting longer duration and lower prospects for reconciliation. As such, contempt felt toward a political candidate, elected official, or party is likely to be “more damaging and harder to reverse than anger” (Redlawsk et al., 2018, p. 175). Similarly, some scholars promote a demarcation even between fear and anxiety. For example, Bourke (2005) suggests that fear is associated with an immediate, objective threat while anxiety occurs in reaction to an anticipated, subjective threat. Lumping specific emotions together based on their valence structure would thus take away from their explanatory power. Empirical investigations that pit discrete emotions versus valence models against one another

demonstrate that discrete-emotions approaches indeed fare better in predicting judgment and behavior (Lerner & Keltner, 2000).

Theoretical Approaches

There is no scarcity of theory for the study of discrete emotions in politics. In fact, Neuman and colleagues (2007) count 23 theories, models, and approaches employed by the contributors to their volume on the dynamics of emotion in political thinking and behavior, and the number has since grown exponentially. This section focuses on three major theoretical approaches: (a) appraisal theories of emotion, (b) Affective Intelligence Theory (AIT), and (c) group-level theories of emotion (mainly, Intergroup Emotions Theory [IET], threat-based approaches, and Group Empathy Theory).

Appraisal Theories of Emotion

According to the appraisal theories of emotion, the brain draws on contextual information in determining which specific emotions to arouse and how to cope with them (Lazarus, 1991; Lerner & Keltner, 2000, 2001; Smith & Ellsworth, 1985). More specifically, a range of cognitive dimensions (i.e., pleasantness, anticipated effort, certainty, attentional activity, self-other responsibility/control, and situational control) define patterns of appraisal. These appraisals of one's circumstances differentiate one's emotional experiences, which in turn lead to discrete effects.²

In his proposal of a cognitive-motivational-relational theory of emotion, Lazarus (1991) proposes core relational themes to summarize the essence of the person–environment relationship. For instance, the core relational theme for guilt is transgression of a moral imperative whereas failure to live up to an ego ideal is related to shame. He suggests that while core relational themes are highly beneficial and parsimonious molar summaries, molecular analyses of appraisal patterns are necessary to decipher the complexity of discrete emotional responses. Lazarus identifies two types of appraisals: primary and secondary. Primary appraisals depend on the stakes one has in the outcomes of a given encounter (goal relevance)—otherwise, no emotion would arise. Encounters appraised as harmful or threatening lead to negative emotions while appraisals of benefit would result in positive emotional responses (goal congruence). The type of ego-involvement further determines what specific emotion will arise based on the kind of goal at stake (goal content). If, for example, the goal is preservation of a moral value (note how the goals are intimately related to the core relational theme), the resultant emotion of a harmful encounter would be guilt rather than anger. Secondary appraisals involve self/other-oriented blame/credit attributions (who holds accountability and control concerning the harm, threat, or benefit), coping potential (whether and how one will influence the person–environment relationship), and future expectations (about whether things will work out or get worse). These secondary appraisals would then further distinguish between specific emotions such as anger versus fear or hope versus enthusiasm.³

According to Lazarus (1991), each emotion (defined by its core relational theme and pattern of appraisal) involves its own innate “action tendency,” which refers to the state of readiness to execute a given kind of action (see Frijda, 1986). As Frijda suggests, different action tendencies or activation modes correspond to different emotions and, inversely, different emotions generally correspond to specific modes of action readiness. For instance, disgust is associated with “rejecting” whereas arrogance is linked to a “dominating” tendency. Building on this line of work, Lerner and Keltner (2000) take the next step by asking how specific emotions might influence judgement and choice. To answer this question, they formulate a theoretical framework known as the appraisal-tendency approach. The appraisal-tendency approach considers discrete emotions both as a cause and consequence of cognitive appraisals (Lerner & Keltner, 2000, 2001; Lerner et al., 2003). It combines the main tenets of cognitive appraisal theories (especially concerning the range of dimensions that define appraisal patterns underlying different emotions) with functional (evolutionary) approaches that point to the coordinating role discrete emotions play in dealing with different problems and opportunities. According to Lerner and Keltner (2000), “appraisal tendencies are goal-directed processes through which emotions exert effects on judgement and choice until the emotion-eliciting problem is resolved” (p. 477).

To elaborate, although fear and anger are both negative emotions, fear is linked to appraisals of uncertainty and situational control whereas anger is associated with appraisals of certainty about things that have happened and feelings of personal control (Lazarus, 1991; Lerner & Keltner, 2000, 2001; Smith & Ellsworth, 1985). Such distinct appraisal tendencies associated with different emotions are also connected to variations in information acquisition patterns and cognitive processing, as well as optimistic versus pessimistic assessments of risk. Specifically, several studies find that anxiety and fear are likely to raise one’s level of cognitive effort, vigilance, and perceived risks whereas higher levels of anger tend to trigger more superficial information searches, heuristic-based cognitive processing, and lower risk assessments (e.g., Bodenhausen et al., 1994; Lerner et al., 2003; Valentino, Hutchings, Banks, & Davis, 2008). Regarding policy preferences, studies show that anxiety and fear elicit a preference for more precautionary and defensive policy actions while anger increases people’s support for retaliatory and aggressive policy responses (e.g., Skitka et al., 2006). Anger is also more closely associated with a reluctance to consider alternatives, an unwillingness to engage in diplomacy and negotiation, and the rejection of compromise in dealing with political conflicts (MacKuen, Wolak, Keele, & Marcus, 2010; but see Halperin et al., 2011).

Affective Intelligence Theory

One of, if not the most, dominant set of paradigms for the study of emotions in politics is AIT (MacKuen et al., 2010; Marcus & MacKuen, 1993; Marcus, Neuman, & MacKuen, 2000). This theory differs from cognitive appraisal theories of emotions by asserting that emotion precedes cognition (i.e., affective primacy). According to AIT, emotional preconscious appraisal systems shape one’s consciousness and motivational states, as well as political attitudes and behavior. The *disposition* system manages the assessment of habits

and learned behaviors in response to familiar political stimuli that may generate either enthusiasm or aversion. Enthusiasm—an emotional reaction to familiar and rewarding contexts—motivates one to pursue positive goals and assures safely relying on habitual choices, whereas aversion—a reaction to recurring punishing or nonrewarding intrusions—marks strong normative disapproval and seeks to neutralize disliked elements. In contrast, the *surveillance* system is oriented around anxiety in response to novel, unfamiliar, and/or threatening political stimuli, which leads people to rely less on habit, increases attentiveness to information, and encourages more focused, deliberative engagement with the task at hand (Marcus, MacKuen, Wolak, & Keele, 2006).

Among different applications of AIT, some scholars use a three-factor model to generate scales of emotional responses where the key markers (a) “proud,” “hopeful,” and “enthusiastic” load on the enthusiasm dimension, (b) “anxious,” “worried,” and “afraid” fit into the anxiety dimension, and (c) “angry,” “contempt,” “frustrated,” “disgusted,” “bitter,” and “resentful” tap the aversion dimension (see Marcus et al., 2000). Others choose to further distinguish certain emotional markers from one another (such as anger and contempt) for nuanced investigations of the divergent effects of such emotional states (see, e.g., Mattes et al., 2018). Overall, AIT is considered a pioneering approach for discrete-emotions studies in political science since it moves beyond the valence-based positive/negative affect structure and distinguishes between enthusiasm, aversion, and anxiety (see Mattes et al., 2018; Redlawsk & Pierce, 2017).

Group-Level Theories

Appraisal theories of emotion and AIT are primarily individual-level approaches to the study of emotions. However, what happens when the issue of interest concerns group-related political attitudes and behavior? Some scholars suggest that moving from individual to group-level analyses may require applying theories of emotion specifically designed to understand intra- and intergroup dynamics (Smith, Seger, & Mackie, 2007; von Scheve & Ismer, 2013). The key rationale centers on the assertion that group-based emotions (i.e., emotions one feels as a result of one’s membership in and identification with a certain group) are distinct from individual-level emotions (Smith et al., 2007).⁴ For instance, Bar-Tal, Halperin, and De Rivera (2007) argue that while individual emotions are partly related to dispositional systems and physiological mechanisms, group-based emotions are mainly formed as a consequence of group-related experiences in particular societal contexts.

Intergroup Emotions Theory

An innovative theoretical approach to studying emotions at the group level is IET (see Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000). IET derives its fundamental assumptions of emotions from cognitive appraisal theories and draws its insights about group dynamics from social identity theory (see Tajfel & Turner, 1979). According to IET, events and issues that affect a given group one identifies with (thereby constituting one’s social identity) may elicit group-based emotions even when such events and issues do not personally affect the individual. Such group-based emotions may be largely independent from individual

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emotions due to their distinct appraisals. Since group-based emotions have a more direct line to the coping processes arising from such distinct appraisals (based on the salience of one's social group as the "extended self" rather than the "individual self"), they may be more influential than individual emotions in regulating attitudinal and behavioral tendencies that motivate collective, group-related acts such as one's participation in political movements, strikes, demonstrations, and large-scale societal changes (Smith et al., 2007).

IET points to a number of group-based appraisals that lead to discrete emotional reactions at the group level. One such key appraisal concerns perceptions of relative group strength (particularly in the form of perceived ingroup success), which activates distinct affective responses to various environmental stimuli such as threats against the group. Anger is most likely to arise when action against an agent responsible for a given threat is seen as likely to succeed; however, when a group is in a relatively weak position, anxiety and fear may dominate the group's emotional state and behavioral reactions (Huddy, 2013). Note that IET considers group strength to be a subjective judgment and highly dependent on one's strength of ingroup identification, which in turn may trigger different emotional reactions to group-related events. For instance, highly identified sports fans may feel angry after their team's loss while low identifiers may instead feel sad (Crisp, Heuston, Farr, & Turner, 2007). With regard to politics, one's strength of identification with a political party or national identity may therefore elicit discrete emotional responses and, in turn, attitudinal and behavioral outcomes.

Threat-Based Approaches

When members of one group perceive that another group is in a position to cause them harm, the resultant experience is intergroup threat (Stephan, Ybarra, & Morrison, 2009). According to the intergroup threat theory (or integrated threat theory), a concern about physical harm or loss of resources constitutes a realistic threat whereas a threat that involves concerns about harm to the integrity or validity of the ingroup's meaning system is classified as a symbolic threat (Stephan & Renfro, 2002; Stephan & Stephan, 2000). Whether realistic or symbolic, scholars find that intergroup threat may elicit strong affective reactions and cause highly negative political outcomes such as prejudice and racism (e.g., anti-Muslim attitudes; see Giner-Sorolla & Maitner, 2013).

Intergroup threat tends to invoke a range of discrete (yet almost exclusively negative) emotional responses, including fear, anxiety, anger, resentment, contempt, disgust, and collective guilt, among others (Stephan & Mealy, 2011; Stephan, Stephan, & Gudykunst, 1999). The particular emotional response depends on whether a threat is directed at individual group members or at the group as a whole: Emotions such as fear and vulnerability would be more closely tied to concerns for the self while anger, resentment, or collective guilt would be more likely affective responses to a concern for the welfare of the group (Stephan et al., 2009).

As an alternative to the intergroup threat theory and other group-based perspectives on prejudice, Cottrell and Neuberg (2005) propose a *sociofunctional threat-based approach* designed to provide more specific links between different threats and discrete emotions.

According to the sociofunctional threat-based approach, qualitatively distinct threats to ingroup resources and processes elicit qualitatively distinct, functionally focused emotional reactions associated with particular motivations to deal with the threat. For instance, homophobic heterosexuals may stereotypically misperceive gay men as moral and physical contaminants (due to the misperceived threat they pose to societal values and their misperceived association with contagious diseases such as HIV/AIDS) and thus experience feelings of disgust in connection with these specific threat profiles. The associated motivation is to minimize contamination, which would boost one's desire to maintain and confirm the value system (anti-gay legislation) and prevent the contagion (social ostracism and expulsion of gay men). More fine-grained predictions about intergroup attitudes and behavior may thus require more fine-grained theorizing about group-based threats and emotions.

Group Empathy Theory

Individual-level theoretical approaches to discrete emotions generally assume that psychological mechanisms should apply equally to all individuals regardless of their group-based affinities. Consequently, a majority of works that study the role of discrete emotions at the individual level treat the public as a monolithic entity and expect that all racial, ethnic, religious, and other cultural subgroups react similarly to emotive stimuli. Accordingly, there are usually no group-specific hypotheses formulated to reflect the possibility that different groups in a society may differ in the type or intensity of discrete emotions they feel. Nevertheless, several scholars have started to provide empirical evidence that majority versus minority citizens' emotional reactions and subsequent political judgments do not necessarily overlap. For example, Albertson and Gadarian (2013) find that African Americans' immigration attitudes tend to be unmoved by threatening political appeals, including those designed to induce fear by portraying immigrants as depressing American wages and engaging in crime. This is in contrast to Whites, who prefer significantly more punitive immigration policies upon exposure to fear-laden, threatening political ads.

To explain such intergroup differences in political reactions to other groups, Sirin et al. (2016A, 2016B, 2017) developed Group Empathy Theory. In its affective form, empathy can be both *reactive* (i.e., responsiveness to the emotional experiences of another) and *parallel* (i.e., experiencing discrete emotional states similar to those of another; see also Davis, 1994; Stephan & Finlay, 1999). For instance, if one witnesses an incident of racial profiling, one may affectively respond with sympathy and compassion for the targeted person's well-being. But, if the observer also experiences feelings such as anger and disgust in response to such unfair treatment, he or she is paralleling the discrete emotional states of the other. Since minorities are more likely to have first-hand experience with discrimination and other forms of injustice, they are also more prone to experiencing discrete empathic reactions (both in reactive and parallel forms) toward stigmatized outgroups compared to the majority.

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Based on a series of national survey experiments covering various political contexts including immigration, national security, and humanitarian crises, Sirin et al. (2016A, 2016B, 2017) demonstrate that African Americans and Latinos exhibit higher empathy for stigmatized outgroups even though they display similar (and at times heightened) perceptions of cultural, economic, and political threats as compared to Anglos. Such high outgroup empathy among minorities in turn significantly mediates their levels of support for policies that benefit outgroups in need as well as their proclivity for political action to help such groups. Sirin et al. also empirically show that group empathy is not the same construct as individual empathy and is actually a better predictor of group-related political attitudes and behavior (such as attending a rally in defense of another group), which is in line with the aforementioned studies that differentiate between individual-level versus group-level discrete emotions (e.g., Bar-Tal et al., 2007). These findings call for disaggregating the mass public to uncover key intergroup differences in studying the links between discrete emotions and politics—a step that would be vital for further theory development and refinement in the field.

Methodological Considerations

Empirically studying discrete emotions in politics is not an easy task. Unlike neuroscientists, political scientists rarely have access to tools such as functional magnetic resonance imaging that would allow for direct observations of brain activity associated with specific emotional states, so they generally rely on indirect measures of emotional reactions such as self-reports. Subsequently, the field must deal with a range of methodological issues, including concerns about reverse causality and endogeneity, as well as reliability and validity of measurement. Depending on the type of research design that scholars choose to employ—experimental or observational—the form and degree of a given methodological concern may vary.

Experimental Data on Discrete Emotions

While establishing the causal order is generally not a concern for experimentation, a key methodological question in employing this research design is how to effectively induce discrete emotions. In fact, even if the causal order is not in question, concerns about endogeneity are not fully escaped in the experimental induction of emotions. Ladd and Lenz (2008) assert that emotion measures referring to the same target as the outcome variable may reflect mere rationalizations of a person's political choice, which they label as an endogenous affect. While other scholars take issue with such a reductionist approach (e.g., Brader, 2011), they are still cautious about the issue of endogeneity when inducing specific emotional states.

Thematic Relevance

As a solution to the potential endogeneity problem, some scholars advocate the induction of discrete emotional states that are incidental/irrelevant to the decision-making process. For instance, Renshon, Lee, and Tingley (2015) experimentally induce anxiety that is ex-

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ogenous to the issue of immigration (by using a video stimulus unrelated to politics) and find that the resultant physiological arousal (measured by tonic skin-conductance levels) significantly mediates the path between anxiety and stronger anti-immigration attitudes. Despite this significant mediational effect, they do not find evidence of a total or direct effect of anxiety on immigration attitudes.

However, other scholars suggest using thematically relevant triggers to induce discrete emotions. For instance, Villalobos and Sirin (2017) systematically compare the effects of anger experimentally induced by thematically relevant versus irrelevant triggers on public support for military interventions in civil conflict. They find that the induction of anger via thematically relevant emotive triggers (an anger-eliciting story embedded in a presidential speech on a given civil conflict abroad) leads to higher levels of support for policy options to deal with said civil conflict whereas the effects of anger observed in the thematically irrelevant condition (the same emotional story embedded in a presidential speech about crime in U.S. cities) do not differ significantly from an emotion-neutral control condition. They conclude that members of the public tend to compartmentalize their feelings within the relevant policy sphere, thus negating a “carry-over” effect of incidental, irrelevant emotive stimuli they experience in their personal lives, which also helps explain Renshon et al.’s (2015) results concerning the nonsignificant direct effect of irrelevant anxiety on immigration attitudes.

Method of Induction

Another concern is how to induce a specific emotion that is robust enough but without also triggering other related emotional responses. One may consider two different methods of induction: (a) visual stimuli versus (b) writing exercises. Choosing a specific method for inducing emotions in experimental procedures may potentially affect one’s experimental results. For instance, Neuman, Just, and Crigler (1992) suggest that vivid video presentations help break the attention barrier and make the personal relevance of issues more apparent, which in turn facilitate emotional arousal. In the visual stimuli method, however, the researcher has less control over the induction of a particular emotion that is isolated from other related emotions. If that is the case, the hypothesized effects stemming from anger, for instance, may not be fully observed if other emotions with potentially opposite, confounding effects (such as anxiety or fear) are induced alongside anger upon one’s exposure to a video as the experimental treatment. By comparison, Small and Lerner (2008) argue that self-reflective writing is likely to elicit discrete target emotions such as anger with only minimal levels of related but nontargeted emotions (such as sadness), partly because the instructions of the writing exercise specifically solicit writing about memories and experiences associated with a given emotion. Nevertheless, a writing exercise may not have the power of visual stimuli in eliciting potent emotional reactions if the subject is not motivated enough to effectively engage said writing task.

To elude this trade-off between potency versus specificity, political scientists have begun to combine both visual stimuli and writing exercises as a two-way emotion induction procedure. This technique asks participants to recall and focus on incidents and people that lead them to experience a particular emotion while simultaneously viewing an image of a

person with a facial expression reflecting that emotion (Banks, 2014, p. 500; see also, e.g., Lerner & Keltner, 2001; Valentino et al., 2009).

Longevity of Induction

Some scholars raise concerns about whether experimentally induced, temporary discrete emotional states are effective substitutes for long-term discrete emotional states such as persistent anger in intergroup conflict. According to Halperin and Gross (2011), a key limitation of conflict studies that examine anger is that they

almost always have been conducted in a laboratory setting and focused on short-term contributors to the development of anger. Despite the continuous nature of intractable conflicts, even studies that have dealt with antecedents of intergroup emotions in the context of such conflicts have not examined the potential contribution of long-term factors to the development of these emotions. (p. 478)

To address such concerns, scholars should be open to conducting more longitudinal research and field studies.

Longitudinal research designs and field studies are instrumental for examining not only the political causes of long-term versus short-term emotional states but also for investigating their political consequences. For instance, Cohen-Chen, Halperin, Porat, and Bartal (2014) empirically examine the effects of long-term fear and hope on information processing in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They conduct their study in two waves: In the first wave, they measure long-term emotions toward the conflict and Palestinians. In the second wave (fielded five months later), they provide participants with seemingly reliable information regarding a new opportunity for peace and examine their openness to such information through their processing patterns. They find that long-term hope is linked with an inclination toward acquiring information that is supportive of a peace-making opportunity whereas long-term fear is associated with a tendency toward attaining information that rejects the same opportunity.

Observational Data on Discrete Emotions

For scholars who seek to employ already available political survey datasets that contain measures of discrete emotions, the American National Election Studies (ANES) is the primary go-to source. Starting from 1980, the ANES regularly included several measures of discrete emotions in reaction to presidential candidates and political figures. ANES measures of “candidate affect” generally ask (albeit with some variations in the wording, number, and type of emotion measures each election year): “Now we would like to know something about the feelings you have toward [name]. Has (name)—because of the kind of person he or she is or because of something he or she has done—made you feel (angry/afraid/hopeful/proud)?” Given the ANES’s use of a random, representative sample of the U.S. electorate, a large number of observations, and a wide time span that captures changes in the U.S. political landscape, many scholars have come to rely on the ANES database. Indeed, for a long time, the ANES was the only observational data set available

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that included measures of emotions toward politicians over time (Ragsdale, 1991). As Brader (2011) notes, ANES measures are more consistent with discrete-emotions theories while also compatible with dimensional approaches.⁵

Some reservations exist about the ANES affect measures. For instance, Valentino et al. (2008) express some concern that the ANES measures of emotion might not fully differentiate between discrete emotional traits and discrete emotional states, mainly because the particular cause of the distinct emotions felt about candidates remains indeterminate due to the question structure. Valentino et al. suggest that it would be ideal to distinguish whether the respondents who report feelings of anxiety about a presidential candidate are also generally anxious about politics as a whole (which would signify trait anxiety) or whether they feel anxious in response to a presidential candidate based on a specific event, statement, or crisis (which would signify state anxiety).

Some scholars further argue that ANES measures do not necessarily capture emotional reactions to political candidates but rather cognitive candidate evaluations based on beliefs and other nonaffective considerations (Ladd & Lenz, 2008). This would indicate that emotional reactions to political actors and cognitive evaluations of those actors (such as presidential approval) are simply alternative measures of the same underlying construct. Others oppose such a notion of tautology. For instance, Ragsdale (1991) suggests that the near-perfect statistical associations one usually observes among tautological measures are not observed between the ANES's emotion variables and approval or vote choice, which he considers as evidence for the conceptual and statistical separateness of emotions and judgments.

As a measurement strategy for moving beyond candidate evaluations and capturing participants' general emotional states, several political scientists combine the ANES measures of specific emotional reactions to both Republican and Democratic candidates (Groenendyk & Banks, 2014; Marcus et al., 2000; Rudolph, Gangl, & Stevens, 2000; Valentino et al., 2011). A number of scholars also choose to complement ANES data with original experimental and observational data for their hypothesis testing and sensitivity analyses (see, e.g., Groenendyk & Banks, 2014; Miller, 2011; Valentino et al., 2011). Overall, the ANES continues to constitute a key database for the study of discrete emotions in politics.

Self-Reports of Discrete Emotional States

Both experimental and observational designs generally rely on self-reports. Unlike many of the neurophysiological direct measures of emotion that require elaborate laboratory conditions and/or high-tech equipment, self-report emotion measures are simple and accessible and can be used both in the field as well as the laboratory. That said, while self-reports are convenient and parsimonious, they also raise concerns about reliability and validity.

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Social desirability bias is among the key issues associated with self-reports (Arnold & Feldman, 1981). People high in social desirability may be less willing or less capable of reporting certain emotional states that they may deem inappropriate, objectionable, or against societal norms and may instead give responses they think display desirable qualities (Mauss & Robinson, 2009). For instance, some people may not want to admit hatred toward other groups or may want to appear compassionate even if they do not feel that way. If so, bluntly asking participants to report on their specific emotional states related to controversial issues (such as racism) may guarantee no more than face validity.

Certain emotional states (such as anger and disgust) are indeed quite difficult to tease out based on self-report measures (Nabi, 2002). As one example, in his study on the links between dehumanization and immigration attitudes, Utych (2018) finds that self-reported disgust and anger are highly correlated ($r = .77$). To address the possibility that self-reported feelings of disgust may actually be tapping anger, he also asks participants to indicate whether immigrants make Americans more prone to infectious diseases, which operationalizes the construct of contamination disgust. Such manipulation checks via alternative measures should be encouraged in the field.

Recent research has developed alternative techniques to systematically check the reliability and validity of self-reported emotions in measuring actual specific emotional states. For instance, Maestas and Pope (2016) explore whether subjects' self-reports of a specific emotion correspond to observable evidence of such emotion. To do so, they conduct a pilot study that uses a recently commercialized software, FACET, which machine codes facial expressions of subjects to detect discrete emotions. They find that self-reports and observed emotions are not strongly correlated and that observed emotion performs better than self-reports in predicting attitudes about drone warfare. Other scholars, however, caution that not all emotional states are amenable to physiological measurement techniques. For instance, Tangney and Dearing (2002; cited in Hopfensitz & Reuben, 2009) suggest that unlike primary, more external emotional states such as anger and joy, more internal emotions such as shame and guilt involve neither clearly recognizable nor easily codable facial expressions. Under such circumstances, self-reports may be a more feasible and reliable way to measure certain discrete emotions.

Diversifying the Field of Study

The study of discrete emotions in politics has flourished over the past three decades. Yet, there is still more room to grow. The following are several suggestions for some key paths to further diversify the field and contribute to the accumulation of knowledge.

Universal Versus Contextual Discrete Emotions

Research on discrete emotions would greatly benefit from a wider range of cross-national studies in diverse political and sociocultural settings. Thus far, most scholars study the role of discrete emotions within the U.S. political sphere. However, cross-cultural explorations are vital for testing the generalizability of the findings beyond the U.S. context.

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While scholars in neuroscience, social psychology, and anthropology have long sought to explore whether discrete emotional responses are universal or contextual (see Ekman, 1993; Elfenbein & Ambady, 2002; Shaver, Wu, & Schwartz, 1992; van Hemert, Poortinga, & van de Vijver, 2007), comparative studies of discrete emotions in political science remain relatively scarce.

A growing number of scholars, however, have started moving away from a U.S.-centric focus by testing the premises of discrete emotions in politics within other contexts. For instance, Garry's (2014) study on how anger and anxiety distinctively affected voting in European Union (EU) referendums (with a focus on Irish voting) was the first published work on the emotional underpinnings of EU attitudes. Garry's findings show that anxiety is associated with issue voting (heavier reliance on substantive EU issues) whereas anger leads to second-order voting (heavier reliance on domestic politics such as partisanship and government evaluations). Building on Garry's pioneering study, Vasilopoulou and Wagner (2017) empirically demonstrate the divergent effects of anger, fear, and enthusiasm on public opinion formation in the United Kingdom regarding European integration. Their findings indicate that angry citizens are more supportive of leaving the EU than anxious citizens while enthusiasm boosts support for EU integration.

In addition to EU-related attitudes, several scholars have set out to examine the role of discrete emotions in public reactions to recent terrorist attacks on European soil. Employing panel and cross-sectional public opinion data from France, Vasilopoulos (2018) finds that fear encourages political information-seeking yet hinders participation in political rallies, whereas anger is not related to information-seeking but motivated participating in both political rallies and elections in the aftermath of the 2015 Paris attacks. In another study on the terror attacks in Paris, Vasilopoulos, Marcus, and Foucault (2018) show that terror-induced anxiety pushes left-wing voters toward authoritarian policy preferences while anger bolsters extant authoritarian views among right-wing voters. Such studies are thus not only useful for testing the external validity of findings concerning U.S. public reactions to terror threats but also add new knowledge to the field.

There are also several comparative studies that lend credence to the universal effects of discrete emotions in politics. Valenzuela and Bachmann (2015) conduct a three-country study—on Chile, Switzerland, and the United States—to examine how discrete emotions affect one's tendency to engage in disagreeable political discussions. They find a significant relationship between feelings of pride (but not anger) and exposure to cross-cutting political talk across all three national settings. Still, other scholars assert that emotional responses are culturally constructed and opt instead for a constructionist, contextual approach. Crigler, Cui, Gee, and Just (2012) find substantive differences in the emotional reactions of American versus Chinese students to environmental advertisements, with Chinese students displaying more intense emotional reactions (particularly feelings of hope) and more pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors than their American counterparts. To help resolve this universal versus contextual debate, the field needs more cross-national replications and extensions of U.S.-based findings.

Studying the role of discrete emotions in other cross-national contexts also opens up pathways to a wider array of dependent variables (such as regime change) that are not relevant to the current U.S. case as a developed, consolidated democracy. For instance, Brockett (2005) identifies emotions as key motivators of collective action in his comparative case study of political mobilization and participation in the social movements that rallied against oppressive governments in Central America with a focus on El Salvador and Guatemala (see also Erisen, 2018). He suggests that strong emotional responses such as anger, fear, and grief are what turn objective circumstances into grievances that propel contentious movements. Similarly, Montiel and Boller (2016) conduct a qualitative comparative study of democratic transitions in the Global South and find that discrete, large-scale political emotions—namely, collective anger, rage, courage, fear, terror, respect, and competitive intolerance—are essential facilitators (and at times destructive forces) of social action and change.

Other cross-national studies demonstrate that discrete emotional states continue to be essential in the aftermath of a regime transition. Tackling two common conditions observed in the young democracies of Latin America—class polarization and dissatisfaction with electoral outcomes—Hughes and Guerrero (2009) analyze micro-level decision-making about whether to participate in the 2006 Mexican presidential election. They find that emotional appraisal of a polarizing candidate generated fear in wealthy participants versus hope among poorer ones and that, across both socioeconomic class positions, “hope that things could get better, or fear that they may get worse drove even disenchanting citizens to vote” (Hughes & Guerrero, 2009, p. 355). These two primary emotional states can thus boost enthusiasm for voting even in the presence of extreme dissatisfaction with democracy.

Conducting more cross-national research on discrete emotions would be particularly valuable in the study of intergroup conflict. For instance, although the question of whether anger motivates political action has been well studied, scholars have yet to fully establish under what conditions anger and action arise, why some groups are angrier or more fearful than others, and to what extent variations in certain group-based emotions may mediate the impact of key antecedent higher-order causes of intergroup conflict. Expanding the field to diverse cross-national contexts would allow researchers to explore why certain groups experience higher levels of anger and become supportive of forceful action while others take a less confrontational stance under comparable levels of deprivation and repression in civil conflict. To illustrate, there are two main minority groups in Turkey—Alevi and Kurds—with notable variations in their emotional states as well as in their proclivity for political action. In a national survey among these minorities, Sirin (2013) finds that fear is the dominant emotional state for Alevi (who have historically been less forceful in their political demands) while anger is the main emotional state for Kurds (who have at times resorted to more forceful initiatives in their political struggles). In another study, Zeitzoff (2014) conducts a “lab in the field” experiment and finds that experimentally induced anger leads to opposing outcomes in two southern Israeli cities (Sderot and Ofakim) that are affected to different degrees (high and low) by rocket fire from the Gaza Strip. Such diverse sociocultural configurations, as in the Turkish and Is-

raeli cases, would provide exclusive contextual opportunities and natural experimental settings for investigating the impact of discrete emotions on intergroup political attitudes and behavior, especially in conflict environments.

A Wider Range of Discrete Emotions

For the most part, scholarly interest has mainly focused on two key negative emotions, anger and anxiety/fear (e.g., Huddy et al., 2005; Lerner et al., 2003), while a dimensionally constructed measure of enthusiasm has been the primary focus of research on positive emotions (e.g., Marcus & MacKuen, 1993; Marcus et al., 2000). Going beyond anger and anxiety/fear, several scholars have lately ventured to study other negative emotions including disgust (e.g., Ben-Nun Bloom, 2014; Clifford & Jerit, 2018), guilt (e.g., Pagano & Huo, 2007; Zebel, Zimmermann, Viki, & Doosje, 2008), hatred (e.g., Halperin, Canetti-Nisim, & Hirsch-Hoefler, 2009; Halperin et al., 2011), and contempt (e.g., Mattes et al., 2018; Redlawsk et al., 2018). In one instance, Clifford and Jerit show that disgust impedes information-seeking and political learning. Disgust is also a facilitator of political judgments. Ben-Nun Bloom finds that priming disgust (compared to the nonmoral emotional prime of sadness) prior to the evaluation of a political issue increases the likelihood of categorizing that issue within the moral domain (i.e., moral conviction) and leads to a harsher moral judgment. Another negative emotion that scholars have begun paying closer attention to is guilt, which is strongly associated with prosocial action tendencies. Pagano and Huo find that guilt over the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq was a key predictor of the U.S. public support for reparative actions while moral outrage toward Saddam Hussein's regime was the primary determinant of preventative and retributive actions (i.e., warding off future governmental abuse of the Iraqi people and punishment of the perpetrators). In another cross-national context, Zebel et al. demonstrate that stronger feelings of guilt among the Dutch people about the involvement of Dutch UN soldiers in the fatal events that led to the Srebrenica genocide in 1995 are linked to higher support for reparation policies toward Bosnian Muslims.

As for the fewer studies that look into the effects of discrete positive emotions, evidence indicates that certain positive emotions such as hope, pride, joy, and contentment may be as influential as their negative counterparts on political judgment and behavior (e.g., Cohen-Chen, Crisp, & Halperin, 2017; Cohen-Chen et al., 2014; Dolan, 2016; Gross, Brewer, & Aday, 2009). For example, Greenaway, Cichocka, Veelen, Likki, and Branscombe (2016) empirically demonstrate that hope predicts support for social change above and beyond all other emotions thus far investigated in collective action research. Rosler, Cohen-Chen, and Halperin (2017) argue that discrete positive emotions may have differential effects at different stages of intractable conflicts. Situating their research design in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they find that empathy (but not hope) is negatively associated with aggressive attitudes during escalation in the conflict, whereas hope (but not empathy) is significantly linked with conciliatory attitudes during the de-escalation stage. Focusing mainly on negative emotions, and particularly only on anger and anxiety/fear, would thus give us an incomplete picture of the political world.

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An even less explored path in the field is how such diverse emotions interact with one another, how and why a certain emotional state may become dominant over the others, and whether discrete emotions with opposite effects may negate or moderate one another. Halperin et al. (2009) demonstrate that hatred mediates the effects of anger and fear on political intolerance. In another study, Halperin et al. (2011) assert that contrary to mainstream works that conceptualize anger as a destructive force in intergroup conflict, anger may actually have constructive effects for those with low levels of outgroup hatred. Schori-Eyal, Tagar, Saguy, and Halperin (2015) find that group-based pride can motivate guilt in intergroup conflicts among high (but not low) glorifiers.

The field also needs more research on the comparative effectiveness of positive versus negative emotive triggers on political preferences and actions (see, e.g., Valentino et al., 2011). One question is: When does hope sell, and when does hate triumph? Over the past few election cycles, the United States has witnessed the success of both positive and negative emotional campaign appeals. Consider, for example, President Barack Obama's public messages of progressive change (embodied in the 2008 slogan "Yes We Can!") rooted mainly in enthusiasm and hope (see Civettini, 2011) versus Donald Trump's negative-valence discourse of returning to a glorified state of the union in the past (i.e., "Make America Great Again") situated in discrete emotions of contempt, anger, and hatred (see Mattes et al., 2018; Redlawsk et al., 2018).

The Emotive Power of Social Media

A contemporary avenue for diversifying the field of discrete emotions research lies in social media research. For many people, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and other social networking platforms have become primary sources for political information. Emotions abound in such platforms, bolstered and disseminated by likes, shares, tags, mentions, and trends. Social capital—the very fabric of our connections with one another—that Putnam (2000) once cautioned was falling by the wayside along with dwindling numbers of memberships in everything from unions to bowling clubs, has in a way transformed itself into *social network capital*. Yet, the word is still out on whether virtual social connections will save people from *bowling alone* or will instead mutate into *tweeting alone*.

Amid the exponential presence of social networking in the public sphere, a number of scholars have started investigating the extent to which discrete emotional responses triggered by social media shape political judgment and action. For instance, Ryan (2012) uses Facebook as a platform for a new type of digital-age field experiment. He does so by embedding in Facebook political ads that are designed to stimulate either anger, anxiety, or a neutral state and then invites subjects to click through a political website for more information. The results suggest that anger, when evoked alone, leads to information-seeking. However, contrary to most mainstream perspectives, anxiety did not differ from emotion-neutral control conditions in eliciting political interest and information-seeking. In a parallel study, Park (2015) examines the effects of negative news on Twitter users' emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses by conducting an online experiment with South Korean voters during an election cycle. The results show that negative news stories

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on Twitter significantly increased feelings of anger and disgust (particularly among young adults) and motivated voters to seek more information related to the stories.

In addition to information-seeking, discrete emotions triggered by social media can also affect key political outcomes such as political participation. Lu and Myrick's (2016) experimental study reveals that exposure to cross-cutting social media news can motivate *cheap* participation (i.e., sharing and talking with others and paying attention to political issues) more than *costly* participation (i.e., volunteering and donating money), and anger and anxiety mediate the mobilizing effects of such cross-cutting exposure. Recent research also shows that social media can at times be extremely toxic and serve as a breeding ground for adverse emotion-laden societal reactions. Using data collected across Finland, France, Norway, Spain, and the United States after the 2015 Paris terrorist attacks, Oksanen et al. (2018) find that exposure to "cyberhate" fuels societal fear and uncertainty, which can then instigate intergroup conflict in the absence of societal resilience.

The use of discrete emotions in social media is not only relevant for public attitudes and behavior but also for elite decision-making and actions. In fact, social networking venues have become primary outlets of political leaders' public appeals in recent years (Owen & Davis, 2008). U.S. presidents have increasingly been "governing by tweeting," which is particularly the case for Donald Trump (Sirin & Villalobos, 2018). With the ability to reach millions of Americans on a daily basis, presidential social media appeals—especially emotion-laden ones—may help set the public agenda in a political environment where many policy issues are competing for salience. Sensational social media messages may even allow political leaders to divert the public's attention away from certain controversial or difficult issues.

To address the surge in the political use of social media sites, Borah (2016) examines the emotional content of Facebook posts by U.S. presidential candidates in 2008 and 2012 as part of their campaign strategies. The results of his content analysis indicate that John McCain and Mitt Romney resorted to a higher percentage of fear appeals, whereas Barack Obama's political posts contained more humor and enthusiasm. More recently, Brady, Wills, Burkart, Jost, and Van Bavel (2019) examine the "moral-contagion" effect—the diffusion of moralized content on social media among political elites—by analyzing the moral-emotional language embedded in the Twitter messages sent from federal politicians (including presidential candidates as well as members of the Senate and House of Representatives) in the year leading up to the 2016 U.S. presidential election. They find that moral outrage—namely, anger and disgust—led to greater message diffusion across both sides of the aisle, whereas moral emotional expressions classified as "joy" (with references to religion and patriotism) were more impactful for conservative elites. All of these studies demonstrate that the emotional layers of social networking are highly promising for the field.

Novel Applications of Discrete Emotions to Existing Theoretical Frameworks

Recent works on discrete emotions have modified some established theoretical frameworks that broadly incorporate emotions and affect but not necessarily differentiate between specific emotional states in their premises. One key example is the theory of motivated political reasoning (Kunda, 1990; Redlawsk, 2002), which proposes that citizens are biased-information processors since they tend to evaluate attitudinally congruent information as stronger and more compelling than incongruent information (see Lodge & Taber, 2000, 2005; Taber & Lodge, 2006). A central tenet of this theory, known as the “hot cognition hypothesis,” is that all sociopolitical concepts are affect laden (Lodge & Taber, 2005). Automatic affective processes drive partisan goals and subsequent selective information, determining the direction and strength of such biases (Taber & Lodge, 2006). The conceptualization of affect in this original model is valence based—positive versus negative—rather than discrete.

Scholars who employ the discrete-emotions approach refine this earlier model by suggesting that the process of motivated reasoning does not solely involve a preconscious positive/negative affect (Erisen, Redlawsk, & Erisen, 2018; Suhay & Erisen, 2018). Suhay and Erisen suggest that as an initial response to a given stimulus, a simple affective response may automatically occur, yet the emotional experience becomes more differentiated once cognition becomes engaged. In fact, Weeks (2015) asserts that the affective processes activated in partisan motivated reasoning that lead to biased processing of information might be primarily driven by the discrete emotion of anger rather than other negative emotions or general negative affect. Weeks finds strong support for this claim in a controlled experimental setting. Consistent with Weeks’ findings, Suhay and Erisen also experimentally show that anger aroused in reaction to arguments contradicting one’s point of view is the primary mediator of one’s issue attitude position whereas enthusiasm triggered by congruent arguments plays a much smaller mediating role. Anxiety, on the other hand, does not exert a significant mediating effect on biased reactions to opposing issue arguments. Such recent works on motivated reasoning illustrate how innovative applications of discrete emotions to existing theoretical frameworks might further enrich the field.

Conclusion

The study of emotions in politics begets key choices researchers must make. One such choice is to decide whether the structure of emotions is dimensional versus discrete. Those who choose to take on a dimensional approach often group different emotions under the umbrella of positive versus negative valence. However, numerous empirical works document that discrete emotions have substantive and differential effects on politically motivated processes and outcomes. Scholars have thus increasingly adopted a discrete-emotions approach across various political contexts.

Scholars who choose to employ the discrete-emotions approach can follow different theoretical paths. Appraisal theories of emotion contend that cognition precedes emotion, where distinct cognitive appraisal tendencies elicit discrete emotional reactions that are associated with specific coping mechanisms to deal with problems and opportunities (e.g., Lazarus, 1991). AIT, another dominant paradigm in the study of emotions in politics, argues for affective primacy. According to this view, multiple independent (yet interactive) emotional preconscious appraisal systems shape one's consciousness, motivational states, and, in turn, political judgments (see Marcus et al., 2006, p. 36). Other theoretical alternatives are concerned more with the level of analysis issue than the emotion-cognition sequence, suggesting that moving from individual to group-level analyses may call for theories of discrete emotions specifically designed to understand intra- and inter-group dynamics. For instance, IET calls for differentiating between individual-level and group-based discrete emotions, asserting that the latter form is a stronger predictor of collective political actions (Mackie et al., 2000).

Scholars also need to consider various choices regarding the methodological strategies they plan to employ to properly deal with a range of issues that the study of discrete emotions brings about, including how to effectively induce and measure a specific, targeted emotional state while avoiding (or at least minimizing) the confounding effects of other emotions that may be simultaneously triggered. Depending on the type of research design—experimental or observational—the form and degree of a given methodological concern (such as endogeneity) may vary.

Beyond these choices, there are various opportunities to diversify the field of study. Above all, the field clearly benefits from cross-national replications and extensions of the U.S.-based findings to help resolve the debate over the universality versus contextuality of emotions. More recent research has also expanded the accumulation of knowledge in the field by investigating a wider array of emotional states and going beyond primary negative discrete emotions (particularly anger and anxiety). Contemporary developments—such as the increasing usage of social media by the public and political actors—offer novel platforms for investigating the role of discrete emotions. The study of discrete emotions in politics thus provides fertile ground for further scholarly development.

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Notes:

(1.) Such dimensional approaches to emotions are at times referred to as circumplex models since mood descriptors can be systematically placed around the perimeter of a circle (Russell, 1980; Watson et al., 1999).

(2.) Because all of the designated dimensions denote cognitive appraisals, this group of theories is also referred to as cognitive appraisal theories. Still, Smith and Ellsworth (1985, p. 819) emphasize that although the goal is “to explore the cognitive aspects of emotion,” appraisal theories do not conceptualize emotion solely as a product of cognition.

(3.) According to Lazarus (1991), secondary appraisals can even identify variations within a given emotion such as pouting anger versus gloating anger (associated with secondary appraisals of less control versus greater control over a situation, respectively).

(4.) Some scholars further differentiate between group emotions (specific to a particular group in a given society) versus more general, collective emotions—emotions shared by large numbers of individuals in society (Bar-Tal et al., 2007; Stephan & Stephan, 2000; von Scheve & Ismer, 2013).

(5.) For example, Marcus et al. (2006) adapt ANES items to fit their three-dimensional, circumplex model in line with the tenets of AIT where (a) the item “angry” is used as the main measure for the aversion dimension, (b) “afraid” fits into the anxiety dimension, and (c) “proud” and “hopeful” together fit into the enthusiasm dimension.

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